

2009 PINOT NOIR TRIPLE BLACK SLOPES



- Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir
- Appellation: Yamhill-Carlton
- Release Date: March 2012
- Suggested Retail: \$60

WILLAKENZIE ESTATE

TASTING NOTES:

Concentrated and focused with a lovely perfume of clove, cinnamon spice, vanilla and violets that carries over to the palate. Juicy red fruits and velvety tannins meld perfectly into an amaro and cassia jam finish. This medium bodied and exceptionally balanced wine offers a distinctive profile and seamless integration, which will continue to improve with age. We recommend holding for 1 to 2 years before opening, or if not, decant at least one hour before serving. Aging potential is 8-10 years. The wine will pair well with roasted pheasant with quince or a pepper crusted steak.

VINEYARDS:

The "Triple Black Slopes" vineyard is composed of 4 blocks facing due south. Each slope is separated from the other by canyons where blackberries and quails abound. As the name indicates (it comes from the black diamond ski slopes designation), it is the steepest part of the vineyard and we farm the "slopes" with narrow track tractors and our best tractor drivers. The elevation varies from 500' to 675'. The vineyard was planted in 1999 to Dijon clones 114 and 777. The rows are oriented north-south with an average density of 1750 plants per acre, and the vines are trained into an upright double guyot trellising system. The combination of the steep terrain, the south-facing orientation and the clonal selection contributes to the intensity of the wine.

Yield: 2.4 tons/acre Brix: 24.8° pH: 3.5
TA: 6.2

WINEMAKING:

In our gravity-fed winery, the 2009 Triple Black Slopes Pinot Noir was handcrafted to achieve a fully extracted and complex style. A cool maceration preceded the open-top, Burgundian style fermentation for a total of 26 days of skin contact and daily punch downs by 'Bigfoot', our pneumatic punch down device. The wine was then gravity fed directly to barrels where it underwent 100% malolactic fermentation during the next 6 months. The wine spent a total of 15 months in 50% new French oak from a selection of coopers.

Alcohol: 14.4 % pH: 3.7 TA: 5.3

VINTAGE:

The 2009 vintage started with a slightly delayed budbreak in the third week of April. After swift canopy growth from mid-May to June, full bloom ensued by June 18th, resulting in a healthy fruit set. By July, summer heat spells hastened fruit development and seed hardening. By executing a strategic leaf pulling program, we were able to delay exposing the fruit, despite the potential for sunburn damage, which was minimal compared to other sites in the valley where pulling was heavy and early. The growing season provided ample vegetative growth with a focus on maintaining a contained canopy, guiding the plant from green growth to fruit growth. Our clusters were abundant in number and plump with the start of veraison, from August 5th, onward. With appropriate hedging and fruit thinning, we managed to keep our target yields. The fruit matured progressively with very little fruit rot and increasingly lower yield, as dehydration set in. Harvest began on September 21st with Terres Basses and ended on October 12th. The overall quality of the fruit was exceptional with full, heavy clusters, good color, and an ideal balance of sugars and acids.

