

## BETHEL HEIGHTS FLAT BLOCK

The Flat Block is a three-acre section of our Estate vineyard planted in 1979. The soil is volcanic in origin, very shallow and gravelly. The vines are 100% own-rooted Pommard selection, some of the last own-rooted Pinot noir remaining in the Willamette Valley.

Since its first separate bottling in 1991, the Flat Block has been our standard of grace and purity, a stark contrast to its sibling Southeast Block that sits just below.

## THE 2016 VINTAGE

From start to finish 2016 was the earliest vintage we have ever seen in the Willamette Valley. At Bethel Heights we were almost a month ahead of “normal” at every turning point in the season. Veraison began in early August, and harvest started on August 27, the first time we ever harvested fruit in August. Our last fruit was harvested on September 24, the first time we ever finished harvest before the end of September.

Surprisingly, the wines of 2016 are not the uniformly opulent offerings one would expect from a year defined by its precocity. Ripeness came early, but not at the expense of purity and elegance.

### 95 THE WINE ADVOCATE

2016 Pinot Noir Estate Flat Block opens with bramble berry jam, smoked meats and black peppercorn aromas over notes of baked red cherries, cinnamon stick and floral perfume. Medium-bodied, it fills the mouth with warm, ripe black and red cherries and berries notions, swelling with lovely sweet perfume and spice, structured with fine, grainy tannins and gobs of freshness, finishing very long with tons of sweet fruit.



## 2016 PINOT NOIR • FLAT BLOCK

*LIVE Certified Sustainable*

Harvest date: September 22, 2016

Grapes at harvest: Brix: 22.9, pH: 3.24, TA: 6.5 g/L

Finished wine: Alcohol 14.2%, pH: 3.55, TA: 5.5 g/L

Barrel aged 15 months in French oak. 25% new barrels

90 cases produced

Bottled unfined February 2018

**VINIFICATION:** The Flat Block was completely destemmed into 1.5 ton fermentation bins and cold soaked for 3 days prior to the onset of fermentation. Given the heat of the growing season and the small crop, we elected to keep our fermentations relatively cool (peak of 80 F) and extraction minimal to preserve freshness and vibrancy. The new wine was pressed at dryness and settled for 7 days prior to racking to barrel.

**WINEMAKER NOTES:** Unfortunately a very poor fruit set led to a miniscule quantity of 2016 Flat Block available this year, but the low yields and a warm growing season resulted in a broader, richer wine than we're produced in a decade. Brimming with fruit and succulent, balanced acidity, this wine can be enjoyed now but will benefit from 5-7 years in the cellar for those who desire freshness, and longer for those looking for something more evolved.

[www.bethelheights.com](http://www.bethelheights.com)