

## BETHEL HEIGHTS WEST BLOCK

The West Block at Bethel Heights is a five-acre section planted in 1977 to own-rooted Pinot noir of the heritage Wädenswil selection. These are the oldest Pinot noir vines at Bethel Heights, and some of the last remaining own-rooted Pinot noir vines in the Willamette Valley.

## THE 2018 VINTAGE

2018 was the sixth vintage in a row defined by heat in the Willamette Valley. Following a wet winter, the spring and summer were very dry and warm, leading to the first signs of veraison in early August. Fortunately our reliable marine winds kept night-time temperatures cool, preserving acidity in the fruit as it ripened, and welcome rain events in September carried the vines through the final ripening period. The very dry hot summer made for small clusters with very small berries that in many ways defined our 2018 wines. The wines are significantly darker than is typical at Bethel Heights, with increased potential for tannin.

*“The dark brooding nature of the vintage is unmistakable. Not since 2008 have we seen wines with the early exuberance of fruit that one expects from a warm vintage, combined with such a lean muscular structure of tannin and acid promising significant ageability.”* Ben Casteel

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This has a very attractive, ripe dark and red-cherry nose with plenty of spices, leaves and dry forest wood. The palate delivers an impression of depth with cherry and cocoa flavors, wrapped in very long, succulent and sturdy tannins. Great concentration here. This is a powerfully struck, singular note of pinot. Try from 2024.



## 2018 PINOT NOIR • WEST BLOCK

*LIVE Certified Sustainable*

Harvest date: October 1, 2018

Grapes at harvest: Brix: 23.2, pH: 3.13, TA: 9.0 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.3%, pH: 3.36, TA: 6.4 gr/liter

Barrel aged 9 months in French oak, 55% new barrels

250 cases produced

Bottled unfined July 26, 2019

**VINIFICATION:** The West Block fruit was completely destemmed into two 4-ton stainless steel fermentation tank and one 1.25 ton bin and cold soaked for 3 days prior to the onset of fermentation. To maintain aromatic intensity and complexity 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 prior to racking to barrel.

**WINEMAKER NOTES:** Our forty-year-old Wädenswil vines are massive by current standards, standing three feet of gnarled and twisted wood, yet they continue to produce the most poised, electric wines in our portfolio, their structure defined more by acidity than tannin. The 2018 West Block is a wine outside the characteristics of the vintage, eschewing structure for vibrancy.

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