

Notes from the Winemaker *On blending the Casteel Reserve*

Over the past twenty years Bethel Heights has been known for limited bottlings of distinctive vineyard designated and block designated Pinot noir wines. In 2002 we took a new path and produced our first Casteel Reserve Pinot Noir, a blend of select barrels from several different vineyard sites, selected to represent the best of the vintage. The blend has been different from vintage to vintage. It is the only Bethel Heights Pinot noir that carries our family name rather than a place name, which gives the winemaker considerable poetic license.

The 2009 blend draws primarily from several sections of our Justice Vineyard (58%), Zena Crown East (24%), and our Estate (18%). Justice clones 667 and 777 lend both lush fruit and racy acidity, which is nicely complemented by the dense structure of 667 from Zena Crown East.

THE 2009 VINTAGE in the Willamette Valley was warm and sometimes hot during the summer, with a couple of extraordinary heat spikes. September was atypically sunny and warm. October continued dry, but cool enough to extend hang time without losing balance in the fruit. The grapes were harvested during the first three weeks of October, quite ripe, with great acidity and flavor development.

FOOD RECOMMENDATION: The 2009 Casteel Reserve has deep reserves of fruit, supported and enhanced by a backbone of new wood. Give it breathing time, and then consider pairing it with braised brisket, or lamb shanks and barley risotto. (Both recipes on our website.)

OREGON CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE WINE



The OCSW logo on the back label guarantees that the wine was made using responsible agriculture and winemaking practices, and that both of those processes were certified by an independent third-party. Read more about our sustainability program at bethelheights.com.

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2009 PINOT NOIR • CASTEEL RESERVE

Certified Sustainably Grown

Harvest dates: October 1 – 13, 2009

Grapes at harvest: Brix: 23.5 - 24.6, pH: 3.2 - 3.3,

TA: 6.9 - 8.2 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.97%, pH: 3.58, TA: 5.2 gr/liter

Barrel aged 12 months in French oak, 47% new barrels

464 cases bottled October 1, 2010

Suggested Retail \$ 60

VINIFICATION: All the fruit was destemmed without crushing. After a five to 8 day cold soak, the fermenters warmed naturally and were inoculated with our favorite cultured yeast. The wines were racked once before blending and bottling in October 2010.

TASTING NOTES: The wine opens with aromas of raspberries, blueberries, oak spice notes and black pepper. The palate shows juicy raspberries and Bing cherries with bright acidity giving the wine focus and length. The mid-palate shows citrus zest, flinty mineral, and sea salt over fine grain tannins with lingering flavors of cinnamon.

AGEABILITY: The 2009 Pinots as a whole should age beautifully for at least ten years for those who want to see persistence of primary fruit. For those who enjoy the development of secondary character (leather, spice, and all that other fun, weird stuff), this vintage has the acidity and moderate alcohol levels to age for 15 years. I'll be right there with you. *Ben Casteel*

93 WINE SPECTATOR

"Firm in texture up front, with a mineral cast to the dark berry, cherry, licorice and spice flavors, finishing with generosity as the finish soft-shoes smoothly offstage. Drink now through 2019."