

Freedom Hill Vineyard

Established in 1982 by our friends Dan and Helen Dusschee, Freedom Hill is planted in the foothills of Oregon's Coast Range on sedimentary (Bellpine) soils. The wines grown there are distinctively different from wines grown on the volcanic soils of Bethel Heights estate vineyard in the Eola Hills; more robust and structured with firm tannins, the wines from Freedom Hill age extremely well. For years Freedom Hill has provided fruit for highly acclaimed single-vineyard wines from such notable Oregon producers as Panther Creek, Ken Wright Cellars and St. Innocent.

Bethel Heights made its first Freedom Hill Vineyard designated Pinot noir in 1997, breaking with our long standing tradition of making only estate grown wines.

The Pinot noir we received from Freedom Hill in 2003 came primarily from Pommard clone vines planted in 1988 and trained on the exotic "wishbone trellis."

The 2003 vintage

This was one of our warmest vintages in twenty years, reminiscent of 1992. Fortunately the Spring was quite rainy so we began the season with a full charge of water in the soil. Summer saw many days over 90°, but our reliable maritime breezes kept the nights cool, preserving acidity and balance in the wines. Having learned in 1987 the folly of picking too early in a hot vintage, we let the sugars go where nature took them and picked the fruit when it was perfectly ripe.

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD

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2003 PINOT NOIR ♦ FREEDOM HILL VINEYARD

Harvest date: October 4, 2003

Grapes at harvest: Brix : 24.5, pH: 3.4, TA: 6.0 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 14.5 %, pH: 3.78, TA: 5.6 gr/liter

Barrel aged 12 months in French oak (Allier), 50% new

Bottled unfiltered January, 2005

100 Cases produced

Suggested Retail \$38

Winemaker notes: Freedom Hill Pinot noir never lacks for structure. Our job is to unleash enough of the fruit and spice to balance out the inevitable acid and tannin. We always pick Freedom Hill Pinot noir late. The tannins need time to ripen out of the green spice dimension into the brown and black - cinnamon, cardamom, black pepper. And the fruit needs to move from red cherry to black cherry, red currant to black currant (cassis) and black plum. There is also a floral note of dusty rose that emerges. These beautiful flavors and aromas are all tightly held when the wine comes out of the fermenter. We just put the wine into barrel and wait. The tannins slowly soften and move back further on the palate. The flavors and aromas sweeten and deepen, and slowly but surely, the wine finds its balance. As the wine comes together, I always smell a hint of salty oyster shell underlying the fruit and spice.

2003 Freedom Hill: This is perhaps the best Freedom Hill Pinot noir we have ever made. Highly structured and packed with black cherry and blackberry fruit, the wine currently shows its raw power and promise. Left open to the air, it simply gets better and better.

Terry Casteel, Winemaker