

ILLAHE VINEYARDS

“Illahe” is a local word from Chinook jargon meaning “earth” or “place” or “soil.”

Illahe Vineyards, established in 2001, is located in the mid-Willamette Valley, in the hills east of the town of Dallas. It is a warm site with shallow clay soils that experiences slightly earlier budbreak and flowering than many other vineyards in the Willamette Valley. Illahe’s owner-grower, Lowell Ford, is recognized for his careful viticulture and commitment to sustainability.

The Pinot noirs from Illahe bear a resemblance to their neighbors - long time friends of Bethel Heights at Freedom Hill Vineyard: fragrant aromas of dried flowers and red fruits over deep earthy, almost clay-like aromas. They also have the same phenolic potential to make dense, tannic wines. Our approach, as detailed in the vinification notes, is to handle the fruit as gently as possible to capture aromas and flavors without excessive tannin.

94 WINE SPECTATOR

“Firm and focused, in an expansive style, this light-footed version melds black currant, plum and delicate spice flavors into a mouthfilling package that floats through the long finish. Drink now through 2022.” – H.S.

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD

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2012 PINOT NOIR • ILLAHE VINEYARDS

Certified Sustainably Grown

Harvest date: October 9, 2012

Grapes at harvest: Brix 24.2, pH 3.27, TA 6.8 g/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.9 %, pH 3.55 TA 5.4 g/liter

Barrel aged 14 months in French oak, 20% new barrels

118 cases produced (234 six-packs)

Bottled unfiltered and unfined on September 28, 2014

THE 2012 VINTAGE began slowly with a cool spring, but by late June the momentum shifted and we were tracking ten days ahead of 2011 at bloom. For the rest of the season we enjoyed warm temperatures and perfect ripening conditions. Harvest began almost three weeks earlier than in 2011, with fruit at optimum ripeness.

VINIFICATION: All the fruit was destemmed without crushing. After a five to eight-day cold soak, the fermenters warmed naturally and were gently punched down only once per day at the onset of fermentation. After the fermentations had reached their peak temperatures (82-88 F), the new wine was aerated once a day, and pressed at dryness. After settling for one week, the new wine was racked to barrels.

WINEMAKER NOTES: Aromas of cedar and sandalwood overlaying plum and black pepper. Richly textured and balanced, the lush fruit profile of the 2012 vintage is nicely tempered by a bright vein of acidity running through the length of the wine. The structure is rich and firm, not overbearing, leading to a wine that is approachable now but will certainly benefit from five to seven years of cellaring.