

Willamette Valley Hillside

Oregon's wine pioneers came to the Willamette Valley looking for the perfect place to grow Pinot noir – a place where longer hours of daylight and cooler growing conditions allow wine grapes to ripen slowly, with a long period of flavor development at the end of the growing season, and harvest in late September or early October. Ninety percent of the Pinot noir grown in Oregon is grown in the Willamette Valley.

But once that most fundamental choice has been made, it must be said that most of the acres in the Willamette Valley are not really suitable for growing fine wine. Indeed, most of the acres of the Willamette Valley are deep, rich valley-floor soils brought to us all the way from Montana by the Missoula Floods at the end of the last ice age. These valley floor soils are paradise for a great diversity of crops, but they can spell trouble for Pinot noir. Pinot noir at low elevations is subject to frost damage in the spring, and in such deep soils it can become overly vigorous, and unable to ripen its fruit properly.

In almost all cases, the great Pinots of the Willamette Valley are grown on hillside sites well above the valley floor. That is the common denominator of the Willamette Valley appellation, regardless of a significant diversity of soil types and weather patterns in the various sub-regions of the Valley.

Certified Sustainably Grown



The OCSW logo on the back label of our 2010 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir guarantees that the wine was made using responsible agriculture and winemaking practices, both certified by an independent third-party. Both Illahe Vineyards and Carter Vineyard were certified by LIVE and Salmon Safe for the 2010 vintage. Bethel Heights winery facility and processing were certified by LIVE.

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD

6060 Bethel Heights Road NW
Salem, Oregon 97304 USA
Phone (503) 581-2262
www.bethelheights.com



2010 PINOT NOIR ♦ WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Harvest dates: October 21 – 26, 2010

Fruit source: 86% Illahe Vineyards, 14% Carter Vineyard

Finished wine: Alcohol: 12.8%, pH: 3.42, TA: 5.85 g/L

Barrel aged 10 months in French oak, 28% new barrels

296 cases produced. Bottled September 21, 2011

Suggested retail \$28

THE 2010 VINTAGE The growing season in the Willamette Valley started very slowly, with cool, damp weather in both April and May. June was also cooler than normal. A hot spell in early July finally fired up the flowers, but for a variety of reasons, the crop set was very small throughout the Willamette Valley. A cool summer followed and we knew we were faced with a very late harvest. The first three weeks of September were cool and showery. But then the skies cleared and a perfect Indian Summer carried the fruit to ideal maturity in late October, giving us wines of moderate alcohol and excellent fruit intensity.

VINIFICATION: The fruit was gently destemmed into 1.5-ton fermentation bins and cold soaked for 8 days. Primary fermentation lasted 7 days, with minimal punching down at the onset and only pump-overs after a peak temperature of 82 degrees was achieved. The new wine was pressed at dryness and settled for 7 days before being racked to barrels.

TASTING NOTES: The wine initially displays earthy aromas of beet root, celery seed, and camphor with underlying notes of orange zest. With aeration aromas of almond and rainier cherries begin to blossom in the glass. Flavors of blackberry and currants with subtle dark chocolate and tobacco lay over a bright vein of acidity and a brooding structure that promises a long life ahead.