

BETHEL HEIGHTS SOUTHEAST BLOCK

The Southeast Block is a six-acre section of own-rooted Pommard clone vines planted in 1979 on a south-facing slope between 420 and 520 feet elevation. The red clay soil is volcanic in origin, three feet deep and well drained.

“Since my father first started bottling wines from the Southeast Block as single-block designates in 1991, this block has given us wines with a firm backbone combined with robust savory fruit that is unique to this place.” - Ben Casteel

THE 2015 VINTAGE

2015 was characterized by early bud-break, early bloom, plenty of sunshine and a big heat spike in early August. A hot summer like this can push potential alcohols, forcing an early harvest that precludes hang time. But September brought mercifully cool temperatures and chilly evenings. Sugar accumulation was arrested and the vineyard was allowed to develop flavor. Not overripe flavors. Not high alcohol flavors, but instead the integrated, intense, and focused flavors only afforded by generous hang time at cool temperatures.

93 THE WINE ADVOCATE

“The 2015 Pinot Noir Southeast Block conjures notions of cherry cordial, raspberry preserves and mulberries on the nose with touches of baking spice, chocolate box and anise, plus a waft of black soil. The palate is wonderfully spicy and earthy, with a medium-bodied core of flesh well-framed by velvety tannins and great freshness, finishing with lingering cinnamon and clove notes.”

94 WINE ENTHUSIAST

“This offers compelling aromas of tea leaves, citrus oil, bark and other botanicals. Black cherry fruit mixes with dried cherry and cranberry flavors, creating lush complexity all through the palate.



2015 PINOT NOIR • SOUTHEAST BLOCK

LIVE Certified Sustainable

Harvest date: September 22, 2015

Grapes at harvest: Brix 23.5 pH 3.13, TA 6.7 g/L

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.3%, pH 3.6, TA 5.4 g/L

Barrel aged 17 months in French oak

30% new barrels

266 cases produced (532 six-packs)

Bottled unfined, April 11, 2017

VINIFICATION: The fruit was all destemmed into a 30 hL upright oak tank and received an ambient temperature soak for 48 hours before fermentation began. At the onset the tank was gently punched down once a day until it reached a peak temperatures between 84-88 degrees, then the tank was gently aerated once a day for the remainder of fermentation. After the completion of alcoholic fermentation the new wine was lightly pressed, settled for seven days, and then racked to a variety of French oak barrels. After 17 months the wine was racked to tank, allowed to settle for one month, and bottled in April of 2017.

WINEMAKER NOTES: Aromas of nectarine, rhubarb, sassafras, and sandalwood dominate, with hints of Rainier cherry and orange blossom in the background. The palate is laden with stone fruit and all the flavors of summer, making this perhaps the most atypical Southeast Block we can remember. The acidity is refreshing, giving urgency to tightly coiled tannins that promise a long, bright future.