

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.

The Southeast Block sits just below the Flat Block, but despite their proximity in both age and location, the Southeast Block expresses the darker and more savory side of Bethel Heights, showcasing more structure and sinewy muscle under a dense core of black fruits.

THE 2016 VINTAGE

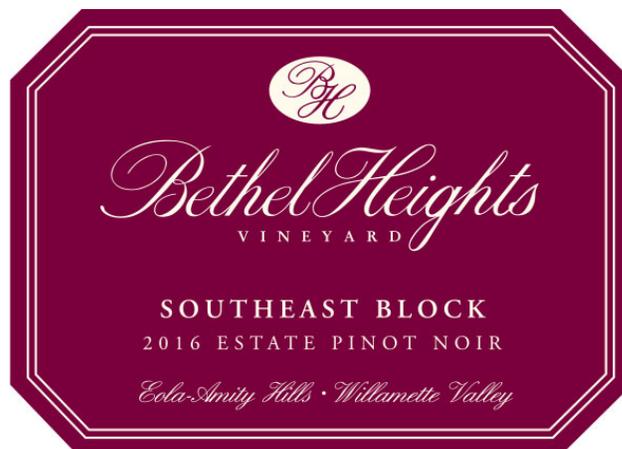
From start to finish 2016 was the earliest vintage we have ever seen in the Willamette Valley. At Bethel Heights we were almost a month ahead of “normal” at every turning point in the season. Veraison began in early August due to hot August temperatures, and harvest started on August 27, the first time we ever harvested fruit in August. Our last fruit was harvested on September 24, the first time we ever finished harvest before the end of September.

Surprisingly, the wines of 2016 are not the uniformly opulent offerings one would expect from a year defined by its precocity. Ripeness came early, but not at the expense of purity and elegance.

95 THE WINE ADVOCATE

The 2016 Pinot Noir Southeast Block is pale to medium ruby-purple with a nose of spiced blueberry and black cherry pie, cloves, cardamom, smoked meat, dried leaves and floral perfume—there's lots of spice here! Medium-bodied, it packs in the sweet blue and black fruits in the mouth, laced with beautiful spice and savory notions, mouthwatering acidity and very ripe, fine-grained tannins, finishing very long and very spicy.

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2016 PINOT NOIR • SOUTHEAST BLOCK

LIVE Certified Sustainable

Harvest date: September 22, 2016

Grapes at harvest: Brix 23.4 pH 3.14, TA 7.1 g/L

Finished wine: Alcohol 14.2%, pH 3.52, TA 5.6 g/L

Barrel aged 15 months in French oak

40% new barrels

120 cases produced

Bottled unfiltered, February 2018

VINIFICATION: The fruit was completely destemmed into a 30 hectoliter open topped oak tank, and settled at ambient temperature (60 F) for 3 days prior to the onset of fermentation. Given the heat of the growing season and the small crop, we elected to keep our fermentations relatively cool (Peak of 75 F) and extraction minimal to preserve freshness and vibrancy. Then new wine was pressed at dryness and settled for 7 days prior to racking to barrel.

WINEMAKER NOTES: Unfortunately, a poor fruit set in 2016 led to a very small amount of the 2016 Southeast Block produced, but low yields and a warm growing season resulted in a wine of almost unprecedented depth and structure. At once dense and coiled with bright acidity and firm tannins, there is also darks fruits and savory, forest floor character to balance the structure. This wine will benefit from 3-5 years in the bottle and certainly decanting a few hours ahead of time.