

ÆOLIAN PINOT NOIR

Named for the wind that defines our Eola-Amity Hills AVA, the Æolian Pinot Noir is our vehicle to explore the dynamic evolving landscape that we farm. The sense of place and specificity that we value most highly in our wines takes many years to evolve. With our oldest vines we allow each block to speak for itself in a separate bottling. The second-generation vines at Bethel Heights, on the other hand, are just beginning to find their voice. In these years in between, the Æolian allows us the freedom to dream of what lies beyond the horizon.

THE 2019 VINTAGE

In contrast to the previous five vintages which were all dry and quite warm, 2019 started with cool, moist weather in the Spring that persisted into early summer. Even after it warmed up somewhat in mid-summer, we had unusually high levels of humidity, and this continued into a cool, damp Fall. Maturation was delayed and disease pressure (mildew, botrytis), amplified by the humid conditions, challenged growers every step of the way.

In spite of these challenges, 2019 had a happy ending. The crop was small, with small berries and lots of intensity. The cool season also allowed us to outperform on “hang time” (the time from bloom to harvest). Instead of the normal 100 days, we were able to leave the fruit on the vines for 110 to 120 days without excess sugar accumulation, giving us enhanced depth and complexity.

“2019 allowed us to slip into the past, into vintages where Oregon wine balanced on the margins of viticulture, striving to get grapes as ripe as we were able to get them as opposed to as ripe as we wanted to get them. As with any dichotomy, there is plenty of room in the middle, but if we think about vintages being defined by the sun versus vintages defined by the soil, 2019 was a welcome return to the soil.” Ben Casteel



2019 PINOT NOIR • ÆOLIAN

ESTATE GROWN

LIVE Certified Sustainably Grown

Fruit source: East 777, East 115, Steep Slope

Harvest date: September 29, 2019

Grapes at harvest: Brix 22.3, pH 3.1, TA 7.5 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.1%, pH 3.56, TA 5.7 gr/liter

Barrel aged 10 months in French oak, 30% new barrels

387 cases produced (775 six-pack cases)

Bottled unfiltered August, 2020

VINIFICATION: All the fruit was hand sorted and de-stemmed into 3 and 4-ton stainless steel tanks. After a 4-day cold soak, the fermenters warmed naturally and were gently punched down once a day at the onset of fermentation. After the fermentations had reached peak temperatures (83-90 F), the new wine was aerated once a day, and pressed at dryness. The wine was racked to barrels after settling for one week in tank.

WINEMAKER NOTES: The Æolian has evolved in the eight vintages since we started making this wine, beginning as a means of expressing the ever-changing nature of our younger blocks and now settling in, as most things do at Bethel Heights, as a wine defined by ‘place’. Three blocks planted in 2002 high above the rest of the vineyard now make up this wine in its entirety. The 2019 Æolian presents both purity and power; aromas of black cherry, rhubarb, and black tea, tremendous tension through the mid palate, and firm, fine grain tannins through the finish.