

BETHEL HEIGHTS WEST BLOCK

The West Block at Bethel Heights is a five-acre section planted in 1977 to own-rooted Pinot noir of the heritage Wädenswil selection. These are the oldest Pinot noir vines at Bethel Heights, and some of the last remaining own-rooted Pinot noir vines in the Willamette Valley.



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, 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. 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.

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Extremely aromatic with dried strawberry, cedar and some incense. Medium body with firm tannins that are firm, polished and nicely integrated. Tight and firm at the finish. Drink after 2023, to allow it to open.

2019 PINOT NOIR • WEST BLOCK

LIVE Certified

Harvest date: October 7, 2019

Grapes at harvest: Brix: 22.5, pH: 3.05, TA: 7.4 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.0%, pH: 3.31, TA: 5.6 gr/liter

Barrel aged 11 months in French oak, 37% new barrels

186 cases produced

Bottled unfined August 2020

VINIFICATION: The fruit was completely destemmed into a five-ton stainless steel fermentation tank and cold soaked for three days prior to the onset of fermentation. To maintain aromatic intensity and complexity we kept our fermentations relatively cool (peak of 80 F) and extraction minimal to preserve freshness and vibrancy. The new wine was pressed at dryness and settled prior to racking to barrel.

WINEMAKER NOTES: The oldest vines at Bethel Heights continue to produce one of the most energetic and vivacious wines in our portfolio, and 2019 was no exception. Whereas other sections of the property have added dimension and weight to the palate over the years, the West Block continues its lively expression of candied, succulent red fruits over an electric vein of acidity. Looking at the old, gnarled plants from 1977 it's hard to picture that they produce one of our most charming wines, but it's a picture that has been painted for forty-three years and counting.