

THE CASTEEL PINOT NOIR

For many years Bethel Heights was recognized primarily for our limited bottlings of distinctive vineyard and block designated Pinot noir wines from our estate vineyard. In 2002 we took a new path and produced our first Casteel Pinot Noir, a blend of barrels from several different blocks, selected to express the epitome of that particular vintage at Bethel Heights. This is our only Pinot noir that carries our family name rather than a place name, which gives us considerable poetic license to select our favorite barrels from each vintage.

THE 2021 VINTAGE

Throughout the Willamette Valley, 2021 was generous in terms of yields, ripeness, and quality and health of the fruit. Overall, the growing season was earlier than average. Harvest started on September 14 and finished on October 12. There were a couple of extreme heat events early in the summer that were devastating to some crops in the Valley, but in the vineyards the timing was just right to scour the powdery mildew out of the vineyard without harming the fruit, which had not yet begun to soften. August was also very hot, but temperatures cooled significantly in September, and rain showers in September and early October allowed us to take advantage of an extended ripening period for enhanced flavor development.

CERTIFICATION

Bethel Heights Vineyard and Justice Vineyard achieved Organic certification in 2021. Lewman Vineyard, acquired in 2020, is in its second year of probation for Organic certification. All three estate vineyards are certified LIVE, assuring our commitment to continual reduction of off-farm inputs, continual reduction of energy and water consumption, and increasing biodiversity on the whole farm.



2021 PINOT NOIR CASTEEL

Fruit source: Bethel Heights Vineyard 114,

Lewman Vineyard 667 & 777, Justice Vineyard 667

Harvest date: September 17 - 28, 2021

Grapes at harvest: Brix 23, pH 3.13, TA 6.6

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.1%, pH 3.5, TA 5.6 gr/liter

Barrel aged 11 months in French oak, 40% new barrels

415 cases produced

Bottled unfined August 29, 2022

VINIFICATION: Coming in at different times from four different sections of our three estate vineyards, the fruit was hand-sorted and destemmed into a variety of different vessels. After a 4-day cold soak, the fermenters warmed naturally and were gently punched down once or twice a day at the onset of fermentation. After fermentations reached a peak temperature of 88 degrees, the new wine was aerated once a day, and pressed at dryness. The wine was racked to barrels and aged 11 months on lees.

WINEMAKER NOTES: The 2021 vintage was a moment to reflect on the Casteel blend. The components hadn't changed for a number of years, having focused primarily on the western side of Bethel Heights. I'm not sure what compelled me to change it in 2021, but with our new Lewman Vineyard in the fold, it felt like a moment in time to see what could be accomplished among our now three estate vineyards. The 2021 Casteel Pinot Noir is the result of many hours spent with the team at the blending table to show the best of what the 2021 vintage had to offer.