

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 2021 VINTAGE

Throughout the Willamette Valley, 2021 is considered an outstanding vintage. It was generous in terms of yields, ripeness, and quality and health of the fruit. 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 early October. The pendulum swings from explosive heat to extended cool periods prolonged the growing season in 2021 and allowed for terrific hang time and flavor development while maintaining balance in alcohol and acidity.

96 WINE ADVOCATE

The 2021 Pinot Noir West Block takes some coaxing to reveal scents of cranberry, rhubarb and pomegranate with nuances of tobacco, dried earth, bitter orange and Angostura bitters. The medium-bodied palate is silky and energetic, with an intriguing touch of bitterness reminiscent of amaro carrying the long, layered finish. This has notable detail but will require more time in bottle to unwind.



2021 PINOT NOIR • WEST BLOCK

Certified Organically Grown

Harvest date: October 7, 2021

Grapes at harvest: Brix: 22.2, pH: 3.06, TA: 7.5 gr/liter
Finished wine: Alcohol 12.8%, pH: 3.33, TA: 6.1 gr/liter
Barrel aged 11 months in French oak, 40% new barrels

190 cases produced

Bottled unfined August 30, 2022

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 West Block continues to have the healthiest of the original ungrafted vines at Bethel Heights, standing tall and imposing along the northern border of the property. Notoriously late ripening, in 2021 we had to wait until mid-October to pick the West Block under grey skies that looked heavy with rain, and yet the fermentations yielded wines of bountiful candied red fruits, the succulent acidity this block is known for, and a purity and persistence that is unmatched anywhere else on the property.