



## 2023 Freedom Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir

**AVA:** Mt. Pisgah-Polk County

**LOCATION:** Bursell Rd, Dallas, OR

**ELEVATION:** 500'

**SOIL TYPE:** Bellpine (ancient seabed)

**YEAR PLANTED:** 1982 and forward

**CLONAL MATERIAL:** Multiple-see below

**VINEYARD SIZE:** 100ish-acre vineyard

**PICKING DATE:** Variable-see below

**TONS/ACRE:** Variable-see below

**OWNER:** Dan and Helen Dusschee

**PRODUCTION:** 1,330 cases bottled

**ABV:** 13.8%

**2023 Vintage Story:** *2023 was my 30<sup>th</sup> vintage making wine in Oregon. I had always wondered what a vintage would be like if everything basically just went right. Well, that's the 2023 vintage. Superlative weather throughout the spring and summer leading into another earlier (by historical standards) harvest where the weather was excellently agreeable. This is both a bountiful and beautiful vintage. Across the board every vineyard performed to their highest level. Every bottling, and we did 34 bottlings of Pinot Noir, is at an apex. In short, at least in the here and now, I think this has a very good case for being considered the greatest vintage in Oregon's history. At the very least, this is the best Patricia Green Cellars of our 24 vintages.*

**Site History:** The vineyard was established in 1982 by the people who still own and manage it to this day: Dan and Helen Dusschee. While they may not have realized it at the time, they were settling onto a site destined to be one of the top Pinot Noir vineyards in the state of Oregon. Their rigorous and professional approach to the management of the vineyard has brought about that greatness, and even though the vineyard suffered through a scourge of phylloxera replanting's, expansion of the site has shown that there is a distinct and indomitable terroir. Few non-estate vineyards in Oregon can reach as far back in history with regards to being bottled as a single vineyard designated wine as Freedom Hill Vineyard. Panther Creek Winery began designating the site in the late 80s. St. Innocent began doing so in the early 90s. In 2013 their son, Dustin, rejoined the farm and began taking over day-to-day management operations. Even while expanding to slightly over 90 acres over the years, this vineyard remains a family owned, lived upon and operated venture, something that is becoming increasingly rare and, thus, that much more special in Oregon.

**Site Characteristics:** Freedom Hill Vineyard lies toward the eastern edge of the Coast Range Foothills. While associated geographically with the Eola Hills, the site lies south and west of the border of the Eola-Amity Hill Appellation outside of the town of Monmouth. The vineyard is planted on a marine sedimentary type of soil known as Bellpine. The vineyard is also located just south of the Van Duzer wind corridor which allows for more consistent average temperatures due to a lack of afternoon and evening offshore breezes rolling through. This site is known for powerful or, at least, extremely intense Pinot Noirs. Wines tend to be very dark in color and operate on the blue, purple, black end of the fruit spectrum. Tannin structure can be impressive. This vineyard has the capacity to produce some of the most extraordinary wine made in the state.

**PGC Blocks:** This is a bottling largely based on three Dijon 115 blocks (41 of the 60 barrels come from these 3 blocks) but with fruit from other interesting and diverse sources to round it out into a unique and delicious Freedom Hill Classic bottling.

- **Patty's Block Courty Clone:** 1.58 acres. 2012 planting. Planted and re-named in honor of Patty's contribution to the Oregon wine business.
- **Dijon 115 East Liberty Block:** 3.35 acres. Planted in 2000. Rolling block that is the source of the Dijon 115 bottling.
- **Dijon 115 Heritage Rows 1-25:** 2.25 acres. Planted in 1998. Heritage block has very long rows. This has been used to produce the Perspicacious bottling in 2014 and 2019.
- **Dijon 115 Heritage Rows 60-81:** 2.00 acres. Planted in 1998. Adjacent to the Pommard Block.
- **Pommard:** 2.05 acres. Planted in 1998. Both the source of the Pommard Clone bottling and the Perspicacious bottling in 2022 and 2024.

- **Wadensvil East Liberty Block:** 3.03 acres. 2002 planting. Rolling block towards the apex of the vineyard. Source of the Wadensvil Clone bottling and Perspicacious bottling in 2021 and 2023.

**Farming Practices:** Since 2013 Freedom Hill Vineyard has been moving diligently and consistently from conventional farming practices to organic farming. While not 100% turned to organic practices it is closer to that than it is too so-called “sustainable farming.” Great attention has been paid to specific cover cropping, foliar feeding and cultivation. The result is a healthier vineyard with a greater range of blocks producing single vineyard quality style wines.

**Picking Dates, Tonnages, Tons/Acre:** September 19: Patty’s Block Coury 4.869 tons (3.08 tpa), Pommard Clone 6.86 tons (3.43 tpa); September 20 East Liberty Dijon 115 9.9405 tons (2.97 tons/acre); September 21 Dijon 115 Rows 60-81 6.555 tons (3.28 tons/acre); September 23 Dijon 115 Rows 1-25 6.9305 tons (3.08 tpa); September 24 East Liberty Wadensvil 9.9395 tons (3.26 tons/acre).

**Vinification:** Multiple different approaches:

- Destemmed: Heritage Dijon 115 Rows 1-25 and Rows 60-81 (6 fermenters), Patty’s Block Coury Clone (2 fermenters), Pommard Clone (1 fermenter), East Liberty Wadensvil (2 fermenters)
- 60% Whole Cluster: East Liberty Wadensvil (2 fermenters), Heritage Dijon 115 Rows 60-81 (2 fermenters)
- 100% Whole Cluster: East Liberty Wadensvil (2 fermenters), East Liberty Dijon 115 (2 fermenters)

**Winemaking:** Fermentations were managed by a combination of pumpovers early in the process and exclusively prior to fermentation beginning as well as pigeages to ensure gentle handling, extraction and delicate tannin construction. Cold soaks were generally 3-4 days with a couple of blocks getting up to between 6-7 days. Full fermentation from beginning to pressing was 16-17 days except for the 100% whole cluster ferments which were between 19-20 days. 24-48 hour settling prior to being racked to barrel. All wines on full lees until assemblage for bottling. Bottled without fining or filtration.

**Barrels:** This 54-barrel bottling consists of a variety of barrel ages and cooperages. There are no new barrels and only 4 once-used barrels in this bottling. The attempt here is to minimize the barrel tannin and darker flavors on a wine that already is tannin dense and darkly fruited. We believe in the natural gravitas of this vineyard and wine. We also want to provide people buying this at the incredible price it comes at the opportunity to drink it on the younger side and enjoy the primary fruit that stuffs this wine but that can be easily obscured by a set of newer barrels that work with the wine’s inherent darkness and structure and makes the wine perhaps more precious and precocious but not something that matches up with its price point.

- Patty’s Block Coury Clone: 6 barrels
- Dijon 115 East Liberty: 11 barrels
- Dijon 115 Heritage Block Rows 1-25: 22 barrels
- Dijon 115 Heritage Block Rows 60-81: 11 barrels
- Pommard Clone: 1 barrel
- Wadensvil East Liberty Block: 1 barrel

**Notes:** This bottling represents one of our highest QPR wines each and every vintage. Because we have fully committed to this site, we take more acreage of Pinot Noir than any of the other wineries that pull fruit from here. Because we take a lot by both volume and diversity of blocks and clones and because we choose to bottle some barrels from some of the individual blocks, we can create a larger bottling that is still full of Freedom Hill goodness while coming in at a price atypical of Freedom Hill Vineyard made by any other producer. We’re proud to be able to offer a Pinot Noir from one of Oregon’s premier vineyard sites at a price that many entry level, blended Pinot Noirs go for. This finished with a TA of 5.6, a pH of 3.42 and was bottled with under 25 ppm free SO<sub>2</sub> and less than 75 ppm total SO<sub>2</sub>.

**Tasting Note:** *Please be aware that I am loathe to write tasting notes on our wines. Each person has an individual palate and therefore unique experiences with every wine. Also, what a person has tasted in their life and what they enjoy informs them on what a wine is like. If I tell you a wine tastes like cherries and you either have never had a cherry or don’t like cherries what I am saying is irrelevant information. That being said I have been asked to include my thoughts on each wine (since we have so many).*

The 2023 Freedom Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir doesn’t miss a beat with the numerous Freedom Hill classic bottlings that have come before it. Freedom Hill is known for dark, elaborately pigmented wines with a wealth of fruit, generous mouthfeel and a generous dollop of tannins that gives the wine framework and dimension. This is our 11<sup>th</sup> bottling of the Freedom Hill classic (as we refer to it) bottling, dating back to our first vintage in 2012. Were we not to have the elaborate clonal bottlings this would be seen as one of the greatest Freedom Hill Vineyard bottlings we have ever done. The dark fruit has a sweeter tone to it, the structure is dense, as per usual, but the wine is flush with red and black fruit and a freshening level of acidity that contains the sheer mass of the wine that makes it both beautiful and profound.