



2015 Estate Vineyard Pinot Noir

Location: Ribbon Ridge is a sub-appellation of the Willamette Valley AVA that sits 22 miles southwest of Portland, 4 miles northwest of Dundee and 40 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. Ribbon Ridge is contained within the larger Chehalem Mountains AVA - which is contained with the Willamette Valley AVA.

Wine history: In 1980, Harry Peterson-Nedry planted the first wine grapes on Ribbon Ridge at his Ridgecrest Vineyards. Two years later, the first commercial vineyard was established with the planting of 54 acres of Pinot noir and Chardonnay. It was Yamhill Valley Vineyards who first used these grapes to make wine in 1985. Other vineyards were soon planted in this relatively small ridge. The appellation became official in 2005.

Climate: Protected by geographical features to the north, south and west, Ribbon Ridge's grape-growing hillsides are slightly warmer and drier when compared to the adjacent valley floors. Ribbon Ridge's moderate climate is well suited for early grape growth in the spring, consistent and even ripening over the summer and a long, full maturing season in the fall.

Soils: The Ribbon Ridge region contains primarily sedimentary soils that are younger, finer and more uniform than the alluvial sedimentary and volcanic soils of neighboring regions. These moderately deep, well-drained silty-clay loam soils are part of the Willakenzie soil series and are of low fertility and ideal for growing high-quality wine grapes.

Topography: Geographically, Ribbon Ridge is a 3.5-mile long by 1.75-mile wide ridge that extends from the Chehalem Mountains. The ridge rises 683 feet from the Chehalem Valley floor, giving it an island-like appearance.

Site Characteristics: The two sets of plantings (1990-1994 and 1997-2001) continue to show enormous distinctions between one another giving us these two unique bottlings. The Estate bottling consists of 11 separate sections of the vineyard that were planted in the 1997-2001 window. For this bottling we have many sections of the vineyard to choose from and clones ranging from Pommard, Wadensvil, Dijon 114 and Dijon 777. Over the years the base of this wine has been the Pommard and it's powerful, rich and oft times gamey signature. However, the block with the most potential has always been the 1997 planting of Wadensvil. While it has taken fifteen years for that block to begin realizing its enormous potential the first sign of it is in this bottling. Nearly 40% of the wine is from Wadensvil Clone while the rest is made up of nearly equal parts Pommard and Dijon 114. While this shift does not inexorably change the bottling there is a bending toward some more red-toned fruit even while this wine remains darker, earthier and more structured than most of our other wines.

Wine Making and Notes: This bottling has always been the powerful view of this vineyard site. The wine is dark in color, dense in earth-tinged dark fruits and relatively thick with tannins. However, as the vineyard has aged fewer blocks are still producing this style of wine that seems to be indicative of the young vines than the older one. This comes from just two blocks: a 1998 southwest facing planting of Pommard and a 2000 south facing planting of Dijon 777. The wine is two-thirds Pommard and one third Dijon 777. The fruit was 100% de-stemmed, went through a standard cold soak of about 4-7 days depending on the block, fermented in 1.75 ton open top fermenters and was punched down 1x/day before being pressed and allowed to settle for 3 days. This spent a little less than a year entirely in barrels that were previously used between three and six times so there is little to no oak influence in this wine.

These vines do not have the root depth of the significantly older sections of the vineyard and therefore do not necessarily feed upon and drink the same material. Since we dry farm these younger vines, even at 16-18 years of vine age they are still under a bit of duress. This leads to small, tight clusters and generally fairly thick skins. This gives the wine its trademark dark, almost purplish color and hefty, dense tannic structure. This is filled in quite easily by

liqueur-like dark fruit. This can be a bit savage in nature when youthful but it comes around surprisingly quickly and, of course, is good for years and years.

Production: 417 cases bottled.