



2015 Lia's Vineyard, Pinot Noir Chehalem Mountains Appellation

Location: Chehalem Mountains is one of Oregon's newest AVAs, and a sub-appellation of the existing Willamette Valley region. This viticulture area is 19 miles southwest of Portland and 45 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. It is 20 miles in length and 5 miles wide.

Wine history: Chehalem Mountains' winegrowing history dates back to 1968 when UC Davis refugee Dick Erath purchased 49 acres on Dopp Road in Yamhill County. He aptly called the property Chehalem Mountain Vineyards. By the mid to late 1970s, there was a patchwork of vineyards in the area, including those owned by such modern wine pioneers as the Adelsheims and the Ponzis. Over the next three decades other reputable winegrowers planted roots in the area. The appellation was approved in the late fall of 2006.

Climate: Chehalem Mountains' elevation goes from 200 to 1,633 feet, resulting in varied annual precipitation (37 inches at the lowest point and 60 inches at the highest) as well as the greatest variation in temperature within the Willamette Valley. These variations can result in three-week differences in the ripening of Pinot noir grapes.

Soils: Chehalem Mountains have a combination of Columbia River basalt, ocean sedimentation, and wind-blown loess derivation soil types.

Topography: Chehalem Mountains is a single landmass made up of several hilltops, ridges and spurs that is uplifted from the Willamette Valley floor. The appellation includes all land in the area above the 200-foot elevation. They are the highest mountains in the Willamette Valley with their tallest point, Bald Peak, at 1,633 feet above sea level.

Site Characteristics: Lia's Vineyard is adjacent up the hillside from Olenik Vineyard in the Chehalem Mountain Appellation. In that part of the Chehalem Mountains vineyards lower on the hillside consist of marine sedimentary soils and vineyards higher on the hill are volcanic soils. Lia's Vineyard straddles that transition with sections of the vineyard toward the bottom being in marine soils and sections toward the top being planted in volcanic soils. The vineyard largely faces west with portions of it rolling off to the south and southwest with the western face being highly exposed and the southern face having some tree cover. Just as in 2012 we received Pommard planted in 1993 and Dijon 115 planted in 1999, the former in volcanic soil, the latter in the marine. There is a small (less than half an acre) section in the middle of Lia's Vineyard planted to the Mariafeld Clone of Pinot Noir (also known as Clone 23). This is a very rare clone in Oregon and was something that we coveted from Day 1.

Wine Making and Notes: This represents the Lia's Vineyard Pinot Noir bottling we were desirous of making when we first looked at the vineyard back in 2009. We are accustomed to getting what we want when it comes to blocks of vineyards. We are really picky about that. Lia's Vineyard, to us, is about the unusual (in Oregon) combination of soil types due to the change in elevation that the vineyard has over a relatively small amount of overall acreage. That is what makes this vineyard fascinating and, in our cellar, completely unique. The Pommard at higher elevation in volcanic soil produces intense, sultry and concentrated Pinot Noir, the Dijon 115 leans to a much more structured and savory style since it is in marine soil at the bottom of the vineyard (this is still in the middle of the overall hillside) and the Mariafeld is at an even lower spot on the hill than the Dijon 115 and it adds its own little thing to the whole situation.

We chose ten barrels of the Dijon 115, four of the Pommard and two of the Mariafeld to make the Lia's Vineyard bottling in 2015. We felt like we were capturing the entire essence of the hillside the vineyard sits on by doing so. The Pommard gives the wine the sappiness that makes it incredibly appealing, the Dijon 115 stretches out that sweet fruit over a layer of dark fruit and some ripe tannins and the Mariafeld with its high acidity and high tannin binds

everything together very nicely even though there is very little of it proportionally speaking. The wine is, along with the Reserve, easily the most forward, lush and drinking-well-in-its-youth sort of Pinot Noir we have. Despite that we think there is the pedigree and stuffing for this wine to do well with time.

Production: 391 cases bottled.