



2023 Freedom Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir, Dijon 115 Clone

AVA: Mt. Pisgah-Polk County

LOCATION: Bursell Rd.

ELEVATION: 500'

SOIL TYPE: Bellpine (ancient seabed)

YEAR PLANTED: 2004

CLONAL MATERIAL: Dijon 115

VINEYARD SIZE: 3.35 acre block

PICKING DATE: September 20th

TONS/ACRE: 9.94 tons at 2.97 tons/acre

OWNER: Dan and Helen Dusschee

PRODUCTION: 487 cases bottled

2023 Vintage Story: *2023 was my 30th 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 Hills AVA 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.

The Block: Since 2012 when we initially began sourcing fruit from Freedom Hill Vineyard, we have chosen a sub-set of the different blocks to bottle based upon the clone within the block. Not all blocks in this (or any vineyard for that matter) are equal. In the case of this bottling, for instance, we get Dijon 115 from three separate parts of the vineyard but the Dijon 115 bottling comes entirely from just this one section in a portion of the vineyard called East Liberty. Like many great vineyards in the world Freedom Hill is not especially dramatic to either look at or look out from. It is modestly hilly and modestly sloped and in conjunction with the topography around it. This part of the vineyard inches up to its highest point and rolls both to the south and the east. This block, along with the nearly 3.5 acres of Wadensvil we get that is adjacent, produces fruit that sings the Freedom Hill song of darker toned-fruit but also brings in a level of red fruit and acidic vibrancy that sets it apart in our minds

from the other Dijon 115 blocks lower down the hill in the Heritage section of the site. This block has always provided 100% of the fruit for this particular bottling.

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 to 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 wide range of blocks producing single vineyard quality wines.

Picking Dates, Tonnages, Tons/Acre: 9.94 total tons harvested September 20th; 2.97 tons/acre.

Vinification: From this highly prolific block there were 7 fermenters, all done in 1.75 ton containers with four being 100% whole cluster, at 75% whole cluster and the remaining two done entirely destemmed.

Winemaking: Fermentations were managed by a combination of pump overs 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 for the 40% whole cluster ferments and 4-5 days for the 100% whole cluster. Full fermentation from beginning to pressing was at 18 days for the 40% whole cluster and 20 days for the 100%. 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: For this 20-barrel bottling, 4 new barrels were used with two each coming from Tonnellerie, Cadus and Tonnellerie Damy. Twelve of the barrels come from the 100% whole cluster fermenters and the other eight from the entirely destemmed portion of the fruit.

Notes: Dijon clones were initially planted in Oregon to be earlier ripening and have more “fruitiness” to them at the same time. Many of the opulent, fruit-driven Pinots coming from Oregon are entirely or largely Dijon clone-based. We feel that this site and block, in particular, transcend that paradigm and be a complete, nuanced and complex Pinot Noir while still having a wonderful, ripe fruit character. Over the years this wine has been 50% whole cluster, even 100% whole cluster in 2018 and that has served this bottling very well. This wine follows in that footsteps with an “overall whole cluster” percentage of 60%. However, because this was sourced from two diametrically opposite styles of fermentation, the two sources bring their strengths to ensemble with dramatic results.

This finished with a TA of 5.5, a pH of 3.48 and was bottled with under 30 ppm free SO₂ and less than 70 ppm total SO₂.

Tasting Note: *Please be aware that I 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).*

As good as I feel our wines have been over the years and as much as I think we have shown and seen improvements in every aspect of the winemaking, there is a unique character to the quality, intensity and complexity of the 2023 vintage that I believe puts virtually every wine we produced in 2023 over every other bottling of the same wine from any other vintage. The 2023 Freedom Hill Vineyard, Dijon 115 Clone bottling is a particularly excellent example of the vintage's impact on the fruit and resulting wine. Freedom Hill Vineyard tends toward dark fruited wines. The Dijon 115 Clone bottling tends to veer against that and offers deeply red and succulent cherry flavors. The 2023 allows this bottling to lean back into the site's *raison d'être* and shows its darker notes in a way that is both unique and tantalizing. The destemmed fruit provides a crystalline sort of blackberry/black currant essence and the 100% whole cluster fruit provides structure and gravitas behind all that. This is an extraordinary version of this bottling.