



# ROCO WINES

## **ROCO 2005 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

This wine is a blend of the winemaker's favorite Willamette Valley Pinot Vineyards including his own Wit's End Vineyard. Tasted early, this wine already is a winner. During the cool extended fall of 2005 Rollin had the advantage of more than two decades of Oregon wine making to handle this especially cold, wet vintage. The wine is dark, smooth and full of rich berry flavors with wonderful cool climate Pinot Noir characteristics.

The Soles' prefer not to tell the consumer how the wine tastes, but instead ask the consumer to discover the full essence of the wine on his or her own. THAT, they believe is the true mystery and delight of the wine. Thus, you won't find any tasting notes on the ROCO label. Still, many people request descriptors of the wine for a variety of reasons and can find tasting notes on the ROCO Website.

### **2005 ROCO Tasting Notes**

He says, "Having spent only a few weeks in bottle I like the ruby red '05 Willamette Valley Pinot already. The nose reveals violet, deep black cherry, mother's roast beef and red currant jelly. I get the red currant in the front of the mouth, a mineral sweet center, and the finish is black cherry that includes a long hint of cinnamon with gripping youthful tannins."

She says, "Black cherry and vanilla aromas with a dusty earth scent that is typical of the Chehalem Mountain AVA. The cherry nose follows through on the tongue with honey flavors, and a sampling of vanilla, cloves and cinnamon. The wine is spicier than the '04 Willamette Valley Pinot."

### **The Winemaker's 2005 Vintage Notes**

Mother Nature often balances out her allocation of rain, sunshine, and heat throughout a year. Yet in 2005, we enjoyed one of the sunniest, warm March's on record while May and June was

miserably wet and cold. As the result, grape flowering was sporadic with overall yields for the Willamette Valley down some 30-40%. For the first time in many years, botrytis infection on grape flowers promised to be a problem. Strangely, within a given vineyard one vine block would have very little fruit and an adjacent block would have a somewhat normal fruit set. Berries were small to normal resulting in much lower cluster weights.

Due to increased soil saturation in June, the vines showed no water stress until deep into August. Yet, grapevine vigor was an issue that led to excessive lateral shoot growth. With little fruit hanging, the vines tended to grow vegetatively rather than focus on fruit ripening. Extra effort to remove leaves in the fruit zone and drop green second crop grape clusters was essential to formation of mature fruit flavor. The end result was a mix of over-ripe no seed berries and under-ripe normal berries within the same fruit cluster! When to pick, when to pick?

September was much cooler than normal, but sunny. Fruit ripened slowly under bright sunshine. The fruit retained acid due to cool weather, but developed 'hidden' ripe flavors behind this bracing acidity. A very good move at the end of September was to pick a large portion of one's crop based on 'faith' that fruit was indeed ripe flavored and that once fermentation was complete the excessive acidity would precipitate with the increase in alcohol. So far this seems to be the case. Fruit harvested before 29 September is displaying bright, complex flavor, nice mineral structure, and some exciting wines. It is amazing how much color the Pinot Noir wines have considering the 'on the vine' impressions one could make. We had Pinot Noir sugars up to as high as 25 Brix!

ROCO's Wits' End Vineyard was picked on September 28 and 29th. Perfect timing in an imperfect growing cycle.

