

ROCO WINERY

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Wine Spectator - 90 Points

A polished white, with a pretty clove and cream overlay to the melon and citrus flavors, finishing gracefully. 100 cases made. ~ Harvey Steiman



2009 WILLAMETTE VALLEY CHARDONNAY

2009 VINTAGE NOTES

Early on the vines set an interesting mix of normal and tiny berries on the clusters. This is a good thing as each size berry ripens at different rates and flavors adding complexity. Off to a great start!

Then, In July we experienced a number of days where the temperatures did not drop to chill the Valley off at night. Instead, Oregonians flocked to the Pacific Oceanside and mountains for relief from the warm weather, this was an unusual event and the first I can remember in 26 years of farming the Willamette Valley

What I didn't know was that this brief event would speed up the rate that the vines matured the fruit regardless of the elevation of the vines.

As summer neared its end, significant amounts of cold rain fell over Labor Day Weekend. Fortunately the fruit was not ripe enough to fall to mold infections. Then in mid September we experienced a typical event where very warm, dry air whipped into the Valle from the Columbia River Gorge in Easter Oregon/ Washington. This drying wind can desiccate ripe berries, causing the berries to lose connection to the vine. Lucky for us, At Wits end, we are blessed with a full time fresh water spring, so we irrigated the vines just enough before the "furnace" arrived, to allow the vines to withstand the drying effect of this high desert wind.

After the east wines, the weather cooled down to normal Oregon Fall temperatures, and beautiful conditions brought rich, ripe luscious fruit to our fermenters.

VINEYARD

The Soles' small Wits' End Vineyard is situated on the southwest slope of the Chehalem Mountain Range. The site is superbly located at an elevation of 400' and is protected from the winds by the coastal range to the west and the Dundee hills to the south. The vineyard is planted to a high plant density (2,200 vines per acre) on devigorated rootstocks with what Rollin considers the three distinctive Dijon Pinot Noir clones. The site is predominantly marine sedimentary soil and farmed for low yields. It is irrigated by a fresh water spring that flows year-round through the property. The Chehalem Mountains are a single uplifted landmass with spurs, mountains and ridges.

WINEMAKING

ROCO Pinot Noir is hand picked and then chilled overnight to 38F in our large cold room. The chilled bunches are gently de-stalked and the whole berries fall into small 1.6 ton open fermenters. The

berries soak for about 5 days before beginning ferment with our proprietary, house-cultured wine yeast. Soaking allows gentle extraction of color and flavor from the berry skin, and not the bitter tasting seeds. The fermentations are hand punched twice a day to mix skins and fermenting juices. Ferments are allowed to reach about 28C. A post fermentation soak occurs until the wine is just right for removing from the skins and seeds. At that time the ferments is gently pressed in our large tank press. The young wine is sent to barrel for Malo-lactic fermentation to soften the acidity and to add further complexity. After MLF, the wines are racked once to a mix of new and 3-year-old tight grained, French oak barrels. The wines are aged in barrel for 18 or more months before bottling



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ALCOHOL	14%
VARIETAL	100% OREGON PINOT NOIR
APPELLATION	CHEHALEM MOUNTAINS & DUNDEE HILLS
VINEYARD	WITS' END VINEYARD & KNUDSEN VINEYARD
HARVEST DATE	SEPTEMBER 28, 2009
BOTTLING DATE	MARCH 22, 2011
CASES PRODUCED	2,750