

2012 ROCO Marsh Estate Vineyard Pinot Noir



91 points

Stephen Tanzer's Int'l Wine Cellar

Vivid ruby-red. Sexy spice-laced black raspberry and cherry-cola aromas are complemented by deeper notes of mocha and licorice. At once lush and lively, offering broad dark berry flavors and a bracing kick of peppery spices. Silky tannins shape the finish, which clings with excellent clarity and persistent smoke and spice notes. 7/14

90 points

Wine Spectator

Taut, spicy and distinctive, with atypical apricot and pear overtones and a light layer of gravelly tannins underlying a core of black cherry and smoke flavors. Has depth, but needs cellaring to harmonize. Best after 2015. 2/15

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Winemaker's 2012 Vintage Notes

The 2012 vintage could be tagged as a "Mother Nature made these wines" sort of vintage for the most part. Bloom and fruit set traveled from normal to well below normal. Cold weather and some negative effects from hail drove yields generally down. But, that can be a GOOD thing as smaller clusters and good dry weather leads to ripe fruit for wine. When a grower cannot over crop their vineyards, all wineries can win with high quality.

The key challenge to the successful farmer this year was the fact that the period of July through October was the driest since record keeping began in the late 1800's. Potential desiccation was further exacerbated by very dry, east winds coming out of Eastern Oregon/Washington's high desert. This wind period was the longest I can remember in my 27 years of Oregon winemaking. Vines already starved for moisture will not fair well under these late fall conditions.

Belief in the weather forecast and seeking balanced fruit, caused us to give our vines a nice drink of water just before the east wind event. This allowed the vines to continue to photosynthesize and for the berries to stay plump and fruity.

If I had to compare this vintage to past ones, I'd probably pick a 50/50 blend of 2000 and 2008. We got excellent ripeness while retaining fresh natural acidity and mineral mouthfeel. Across the board, all ROCO wines white and red turned out extraordinary quality!

We were allowed to pick fruit under lovely fall sunshine at a leisurely pace, and with perfectly dialed-in maturity. Happy Days!

While Mother Nature delivered rich, wonderful wines, ROCO customers should not procrastinate purchasing the 2012 wines, as quantities are quite low.

-Rollin Soles

Marsh Estate Vineyard

Marsh Estate Vineyard, owned and farmed by Doug and Pat Marsh, is nestled on a lower slope just west of the Dundee Hills in the Yamhill-Carlton AVA.

The vineyard was planted in 2007 at a density of 1820 plants per acre in Willakenzie, Goodin, Carlton and Steiwer-Chehulpum sedimentary soils.

ROCO Winery purchases grapes from the upper slopes of the vineyard at an elevation of roughly 300 feet. The irrigated vines are planted on Riparia Gloria root stock.

Winemaking

ROCO Pinot noir is hand picked and then chilled overnight to 38°F 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 five days before beginning ferment with our proprietary, house-cultured indigenous 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 28°C. A post-fermentation soak occurs until the wine is just right for removing from the skins and seeds. At that time the ferment 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 one, two and three-year-old tight-grained, French oak barrels.

The wines are aged in barrel for 18 or more months before bottling.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Alcohol:	14%
Varietal:	100% Pinot noir
Appellation:	Yamhill-Carlton
Vineyard:	Marsh Estate Vineyard
Harvested:	October 9, 2012
Clones:	85% Dijon, 15% Wädenswill
Production:	425 Cases
Retail:	\$50

This vineyard is sustainably farmed, LIVE Certified and Salmon Safe.