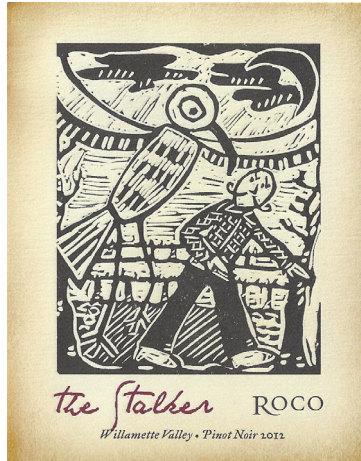


2012 *The Stalker* ROCO Pinot Noir



94 points
Wine Spectator

Sleek and racy, with vibrant notes of black cherry, dark plum and earthy spice playing against fine tannins and lively acidity. Mineral and maple syrup aromatics add to the finish. Drink now through 2022.

91 points

Stephen Tanzer's Int'l Wine Cellar

Vivid ruby-red. Aromas of pungent dark berries, black tea, cola and lavender, with a spicy nuance adding lift. Expansive blackberry and boysenberry flavors are lifted by gentle acidity and a hint of blood orange, which adds refreshing cut. Finishes smooth, sweet and long, with lingering smokiness and soft, round tannins. 7/14

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

Stalker Winemaking

There are a few ways that winemakers use grape stalks to flavor their wines... and then there's my way.

While I've never been a fan of whole cluster fermentation for my wines, I am influenced by the way the Valpolicello region of Italy air-dry whole clusters.

I also agree with the late winemaker, Aaron Hess' distaste for fresh stalks. And, I have an abiding love of whole berry fermentation.

With these preferences in mind, I took a bit of a "walk on the wild side" to produce a unique Stalker Pinot noir.

One of the tricks is to keep air flowing around the stalks and ensure that mold is held at bay. I also continued my commitment to whole berry fermentation. The rest of the process will remain a mystery.

I can tell you that it takes a heck of a lot of manual work, but results in a wine with spice-laced tannin from the stalks, without the "greenness" of the fresh stalks. The unexpected surprise is an increased sense of middle palate juiciness.

After fermentation, the pressing and barreling remains the same as for our other Pinot noirs. The wine is aged in a mix of new to three-year-old French oak barrels for at least 18 months.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Alcohol:	14%
Varietal:	100% Willamette Valley Pinot noir
Appellation:	Chehalem Mtn./Yamhill-Carlton
Vineyards:	Wits' End & Marsh Estate
Harvested:	October 8 & 10, 2012
Clones:	777 and Pommard
Production:	325 Cases
Retail:	\$50

These vineyards are sustainably farmed, LIVE Certified and Salmon Safe.

ROCO
WINERY

13260 NE Red Hills Road
Newberg, OR 97132

Phone 503-538-7625
Fax 503-538-8683
info@ROCOwinery.com
ROCOwinery.com