

ROCO WINERY

2018 GRAVEL ROAD PINOT NOIR

ABOUT GRAVEL ROAD PINOT NOIR

The hills in the Willamette Valley are punctuated by gravel roads, which lead to the regions finest vineyards. ROCO's Gravel Road Pinot Noir is a blend of several of these distinctive vineyards including the Soles' own Wits' End Vineyard in the Chehalem Mountains AVA. An outstanding value, the Gravel Road Pinot Noir flavor profile surpasses many other wineries flagship Pinot Noirs. The old world style offers bold flavor with balance and grace to pair well with nearly any food.

2018 VINTAGE NOTES

The 2018 growing season felt more typical to California than the Willamette Valley due to a nearly record dry May that started the season. May saw six days at +79F, with an 89F thrown in for good sunny measure. We received less than an inch of rain in June, and none in August. July and August racked up a total of 10 days at +95F. September shifted into cold, cloudy Willamette Mode with lowered snow levels and a bit of rain. After a nice shot of rain in early October, ideal conditions prevailed from 10th to 22nd for beautiful Willamette ripening. ROCO sets itself up nicely harvesting from vineyards that have capacity to irrigate in these increasingly dry growing seasons.

The wines made are going have generous ripe fruit flavors, yet maintain balanced acidity due to our ability to give each vine a bit of moisture at the right moments of a grapevine's season. ROCO's signature rich mid palate and juicy finish is going to be a winner in the 2018 vintage.

WINEMAKING PROCESS

ROCO Pinot Noir is handpicked 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 ten 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 modern tank press. The young wine is then sent to barrel for malolactic fermentation to soften the acidity and to add further complexity, then racked once to 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.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES

This Pinot noir has a surprising expression of red fruit, especially given the blacker fruits usually associated with a warm growing season like 2018. Pronounced aromas of rhubarb/strawberry, juicy red plum, and black raspberry fruit is layered with allspice with a bit of cinnamon stick spice. Bright, zippy fruit of strawberry/rhubarb tartlet, red to black plum lifts upon a raft of delicious, poised tannin. Classic spices like cardamom, allspice, and cinnamon stick contribute to this wine's attractiveness. With some age, I believe lovely black cherry will slip out from behind the door making this a very interesting, complex Pinot noir. Fresh fruity, berries ride a sanded tannin raft that sails on to the finish. *-Rollin Soles, Winemaker*

VARIETAL: 100% Pinot Noir

APPELLATION: Willamette Valley AVA

VINEYARDS: Wits' End, Marsh Estate, Russell-Groeter and Hopewell

SOILS: Sedimentary & Basalt

CLONES: Pommard, Dijon and Wädenswil

OAK: 0% New French

ALCOHOL: 14.5%

PRODUCTION: 6,900 cases

RETAIL: \$25



WINE ENTHUSIAST

91 points

Editors' Choice

Wine Spectator
91 points

