



2018 THE STALKER PINOT NOIR

ABOUT THE STALKER PINOT NOIR

The Stalker Pinot Noir is a unique wine. The fermentation style was developed by ROCO's owner/winemaker, Rollin Soles in a quest to develop deeper, richer flavors in a Pinot Noir without adding heavy, over-the-top green tannins. The name refers to Rollin's time in Australia, where they call the grape stems 'stalks'. The label features Rollin being "stalked" by our logo, a Thunderbird: It was conceptualized by his wife and co-owner, Corby Stonebraker-Soles and was carved into a linoleum block for printing.

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. 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.

WINEMAKING PROCESS

Hand picked Pinot Noir grapes are chilled overnight to 40F. The next day, whole berries are de-stemmed into small 1.6 tons fermenters for a 10-Day cold soak. During this cold soak, 100% of the stems that were removed are collected and separately aged for 7 days under inert gas. Removing the stems is a paramount step, since traditional whole cluster fermentation does not ensure fully ripe stems. Then the aged stalks/stems are hand punched into the cold grape berry fermenters, kicking off the fermentation. They are punched down twice a day until end of fermentation. The grapes are then gently pressed and the juice is transferred to French oak barrels and matured for 18 months before bottling.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES

Whoa Buddy, this is a whopper of a Willamette Valley Pinot Noir! The aged grape stems really contribute to the wine's aromas. Look for spices including vanilla, cinnamon, cocoa nibs, and black licorice, with a touch of fennel leaf. The fruit profile is cherry pie compote! It makes a huge flavorful impression with rich, tannin-gripping texture that entices your taste buds. The 100% stem inclusion contributes so much complexity. Look for dried tobacco leaf, burnt caramel /sugar (like the torched top of crème brûlée), worn Corsican leather, and caraway seed spices. Rich, ripe fruit includes blueberry and black cherry. The finish is forest floor earthy, with a hint of grape cluster stems. A lovely balance of flavors and texture.

- Rollin Soles, Winemaker



VARIETAL: 100% Pinot Noir

APPELLATION: Willamette Valley AVA

VINEYARDS: Wits' End Estate

SOILS: Marine Sedimentary

CLONES: 777, 667 & 828

OAK: 4% New French Oak

ALCOHOL: 14.5%

PRODUCTION: 596 cases

RETAIL: \$40

