

ROCO WINERY

2019 KNUDSEN VINEYARDS PINOT NOIR

ABOUT KNUDSEN VINEYARDS PINOT NOIR

One of the oldest plantings in the Willamette Valley, Knudsen Vineyards was planted by Cal Knudsen in 1971 and is still owned by the Knudsen family. These vineyards sit atop the world famous Dundee Hills AVA at 800ft of elevation and are entirely red clay Jory soils. ROCO is one of a few wineries able to source this amazing fruit due to Rollin's long-standing relationship with the Knudsen family. Knudsen Vineyards produce strong, dark fruit flavors with spice notes on the front and mid-palate and a distinct minerality on the finish that is unique to ROCO Pinot Noir.

2019 VINTAGE NOTES

This was quite the "Yo-Yo" growing season, so definitely not boring to this old Veteran Vintner, Rollin Soles. The warmer-than-normal start in May with temperatures into the 90's was a worry as there is normally a colder temp at the time. Then, when the shoots were a good 6-8" long, a cold, rainy mid-May hit came for a full two-week period. Then, a warm long summer kicked in. And just as anticipated, from first of September to the 19th, we were presented with nearly 3" of cold rain. Mt. Hood looked fantastic with its early mantle of white snow!

Cool temps and refreshing rains after such a long time dry in the vineyards, lifted the aromatics (think "floral" qualities) and the elegance in the palate and in the fruit flavors. It's becoming a pattern here in the Willamette, where we receive a "refreshing wash" of cold rain at the end of August or into early September (15, 16, 17, 19 for example). Seems to brighten and lift the fruit and acidity of our wines.

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

Knudsen Vineyards Pinot noir is consistently the "silkiest" in texture in ROCO's cellar. Ripe black cherry fruit is held aloft on floral violet/blueberry blossom, cinnamon toast, Maltese leather, and iron ingot complexities. The palate is satin smooth and rich with semi-dried black cherry with a touch of pomegranate. Beautiful Pinot noir spices include white pepper, a pouch of savory spices, and a seam of porcini mushrooms lying on a bed of forest floor earthiness. The bright acidity is reminiscent of blood orange rind citrus. Ripe, fresh fruit, palate length, and solid acidity bode well for long term cellaring. - *Rollin Soles, Winemaker*

VARIETAL: 100% Pinot Noir
APPELLATION: Dundee Hills AVA
VINEYARD: Knudsen Vineyard
SOIL: Jory, Red Clay Volcanic Basalt
CLONES: 667 and true 828/4407

OAK: 13% New French Oak
ALCOHOL: 14.5%
PRODUCTION: 350 cases
RETAIL: \$65



Wine Spectator
92 points