

ROCO WINERY

2021 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.

2021 VINTAGE NOTES

The Spring start to 2021 was one of the driest on record. Heaps of sunshine and warmth gave us the prospect of a nice crop of winegrapes. Just as the clusters bloomed, we received a shot of cold, wet drizzle. The result was rather poor pollination, limiting a potentially large crop. The Summer progressed normally until record heat hit us over the 25-28 July period. By plan, most of our vineyards are setup to drip irrigate if required. Watering vines a couple of days before the 25th seemed to allow the vines to "weather" the heat. Much of our chardonnay and pinot noir was harvested under sunny Fall skies. A refreshingly cold rain dropped snow down to 5500' on the 19th and 28th which benefited our later ripening Pinots. The last day of harvest was October 14th. The wines are delicious, do not lack for acidity, and due to our ability to drip irrigate vines and chill whole clusters at the winery, fruit expression is concentrated and fresh

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 9 months before bottling.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES

Perfumed purple violets, pomegranate blossom, give way to a "vinous" sur bois earthiness before a nice kick of feral blackberry, ripe blueberry, and fig jam fruitiness proofs this wine is Pinot noir centric after all. Aromatically, this wine would stump the best of trained sommeliers.

The palate is not just big, but BIG! Got to love the HUGE tannin grip from skins, seeds, and stalks (stems) in this wine. Black cherry fruit is almost over shadowed by a spice rack of Mediterranean Italian spice mix, cardamon, forest floor, browned stems, and wet slate minerality. This is a robust wine from start to long, long finish. "Honey, I'm thinking rack of lamb tonight!" - Rollin Soles, Winemaker

VARIETAL: 100% Pinot Noir

APPELLATION: Willamette Valley AVA

SOILS: Marine Sedimentary

OAK: All neutral oak

ALCOHOL: 14%

PRODUCTION: 2,500 cases

RETAIL: \$45



90 pts
Wine Spectator

