



WHITE ROSE ESTATE

2008 White Rose Vineyard Whole Cluster Pinot Noir

The Vintage and Vineyards

Although the growing season got off to a sluggish start, the end of 2008 brought ideal weather with dry, warm days and cold nights throughout the entire month of October. All our vineyards benefited from this weather pattern and consequently produced ripe, balanced fruit with great structure. Concerns of over-ripeness, mildew, botrytis and other weather-related problems were non-existent, affording us the luxury to pick vineyard sites only when flavors were optimal: mature, concentrated and layered. At 860ft elevation atop the Dundee Hills, the 28 year-old vines of White Rose Vineyard benefited tremendously from the lengthy growing season, producing extraordinary fruit that could be the best ever from this storied vineyard. Yields at harvest averaged approximately 1.5-2 tons per acre.

In The Winery

To enhance structure and complexity and achieve the desired fruit character, this wine was fermented 100% whole-cluster. The clusters' cold soaked for 6 days before being inoculated for fermentation in a small, open-top fermentation tank. Primary fermentation lasted 5 days with an additional 15 days of post-fermentation maceration yielding a total of 26 days of skin contact. We pressed off in our old world, half-ton, wooden basket presses, a process that reduces the yield we garner from the must, but insures soft tannins and delicate aromatics. After pressing, the wine is barreled down in French oak for 14 months of aging in the cellar. While in barrel, we rack once after malolactic fermentation and then again just before blending.

The Wine

Beyond our selfish desire to create a wine that appeals to our palates, our objective with the 100% Whole-Cluster pinot noir is to create a wine that focuses on the character of the fruit rather than the amount and intensity of the fruit. Whole-cluster fermentation restrains the sweetness or sappiness while leaving a dense and layered fruit profile. Ultimately, as the whole-cluster characteristics integrate, the secondary characteristics are intensified evolving into a wine that has the potential to evoke those rare transcendent experiences.

Technical Data

Vineyards: White Rose Vineyard – Block 1
Harvest: October 25, 2008
Cooperage: 100% French Oak (neutral) for 14 months.
Bottled: December 10, 2009
pH: 3.51
Alcohol: 13.8%
Production: 98 cases

Press

The ideal conditions prevailing in 2008 allowed the stems to ripen fully yielding a wine with brooding black fruit aromas, sandalwood, Asian spices, incense, underbrush, black cherry, and plum. Dense and full-flavored on the palate but light on its feet, this impressive, masculine-styled Pinot Noir may well evolve for 5-6 years and see its 20th birthday. (RP 94+)

Owner Greg Sanders is in love with whole cluster Pinot Noir and 2008 was a perfect vintage to express his vision.

– Jay Miller (The Wine Advocate / erobertparker.com)