



## **2013 Marjorie Vineyard Pinot Noir**

### **History**

When Cristom Vineyards founder Paul Gerrie purchased the property in 1992, there were established vineyards with ten year-old struggling vines planted on the east-facing hillside. He re-named the vineyard Marjorie, in honor of his late mother, and the vineyard would go on to produce the first estate fruit for the winery in 1994.

The site is distinctive at Cristom both for being own-rooted and for its lower density plantings (605 vines/acre; 1,495 vines/hectare) than our subsequently planted vineyards. Marjorie Vineyard is 8.5 acres (3.4 ha) of vines planted in the heart of the hillside between the lower slopes of Louise Vineyard and Eileen Vineyard at the top of the hill. The vineyard has a gentle slope from 480 feet to 600 feet (146 m to 183 m), planted in moderately deep Columbia River Basalt soil called Yamhill with a small section of the vineyard planted over shallow Witzel on the north end and very deep Saum on the southern edge. The 15.5 million year old soils drain well and allow the roots of the vines to drive deep into the ground. Being planted on its own roots, the vineyard became susceptible to the root louse phylloxera and the vineyard started to struggle. By 2004, Marjorie was being re-planted with young vines grafted to phylloxera-resistant rootstocks to supplant the older original vines. Now, with the current release of Marjorie the young vines are mature and we are able to select the first barrels of young vine fruit to contribute to the Marjorie Vineyard bottling.

Marjorie Vineyard can be the brightest and most red-fruit driven of the four estate Pinot Noirs, often supported by a layered and textured structure. The first of the “Four Ladies” to be sold out, Marjorie has achieved a rightfully earned cult status, consistently generating some of Cristom’s best fruit.

### **Vintage Notes**

The growing season began with a warm and early spring that continued into one of the warmest summers in the past ten years. From March through mid-September, 2013 will be remembered as a warm and generous growing season with above average temperatures throughout the spring and summer. Budbreak, bloom and veraison were all a week earlier than average leading us to the earliest start to vintage since 2006.

The first of the Marjorie grapes to be picked in 2013 was a block of own-rooted, old vine Pommard Pinot Noir brought down the hillside to the winery on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013. And then, with the earliest blocks of Marjorie fermenting in the winery, a weeklong rainstorm hit the Willamette Valley between September 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> bringing the vintage to a halt as we stood and helplessly watched the sideways rain. After the storms passed, we had dry weather for the rest of harvest allowing the fruit to gain beneficial hangtime and continue to ripen as the season extended into October. Picking resumed in Marjorie on October 6<sup>th</sup> and the resulting wines from the young vine blocks of Dijon clones produced elegant and complex expressions of Pinot Noir.



Though the growing season was warm leading us to an early start to harvest, the rainstorm in late September changed the very nature of the vintage. You can speak about 2013 as two vintages in one because the wines produced from the fruit harvested before and after the rain made very different wines stylistically. Because of the warm spring and summer, the first blocks harvested before the rain produced ripe expressions of Pinot Noir with great depth of flavor and concentration. The fruit picked after the rainstorm produced more refined, elegant expressions of Pinot Noir as if grown in a cool Willamette Valley vintage.

Like many cooler vintages, our winemaker made the deliberate decision to use less whole clusters in 2013, resulting in spicy aromatics without overpowering the wine with tannin. The 2013 Marjorie Vineyard is a fourteen barrel blend of the best barrels to come out of the vineyard including twelve barrels from the original own-rooted vines planted in 1982. To our palates, the Marjorie presents itself like a cool Willamette Valley vintage Pinot Noir with bright, red-fruit aromatics, great complexity of delicate flavors and a balanced, elegant structure defined by its acidity.

**Origin** 100% estate fruit

**Clones** Pommard, Wädenswil and Dijon clones (114, 115, 777)

**Sub-Appellation** Eola-Amity Hills

**Appellation** Willamette Valley

**Soils** Columbia River Basalts, including: Yamhill, Saum and Witzel.

**Winemaking**

- Hand harvested and hand sorted, sustainably farmed estate fruit
- 37% whole-clusters
- No cold soak before primary fermentation
- Native yeast fermentations
- Minimum effective additions of sulfur and tartaric acid
- 1-3 punch downs daily in 1 – 2.0 ton open-top fermenters
- Gently pressed in a pneumatic bladder press and moved to barrel by gravity, and never racked, unless necessary
- Undergoes a full malolactic fermentation in barrel
- Fined with egg whites, unfiltered

**Ageing** 19 Months in French cooperage, 57% new oak

**Bottled** May 5, 2015

**Alcohol** 13.5%

**Total Acidity** 5.6 g/L

**pH at Bottling** 3.65

**Production** 14 Barrels; 311 cases