



2014 Louise Vineyard Pinot Noir

History

Louise Vineyard was named for founder Paul Gerrie's maternal grandmother and was the first vineyard Cristom began planting in 1993. Louise Vineyard is distinctly different from our other estate Pinot Noir vineyards on the hillside because it can be divided into "upper" Louise and "lower" Louise across the 290 feet to 440 feet (88 m to 134 m) elevation change. Upper Louise is planted at 2,311 vines/acre (5,710 vines/ha) in very deep Columbia River Basalt soils known as Jory that grades downslope to moderately deep Nekia. Both of these soils are known to be mineral rich and very well draining allowing the roots to drive deep in the ground. The upper corner of the 9.31 acres (3.77 hectares) vineyard lies in a sun shadow and is often the last fruit harvested off of the estate.

"Lower" Louise has a strong influence of Missoula Flood deposits in addition to the moderately well drained soils formed from sedimentary rocks. The Pinot Noir vines planted closest to the winery are planted at 1,815 vines/acre (4,485 vines/ha) entirely on Missoula Flood silts known as Helvetia, a very deep, moderately drained silt loam that formed over clay, and is often the first fruit harvested at Cristom. Louise Vineyard is the only Pinot Noir vineyard on the Cristom estate that can claim this dramatic soil diversity and we believe it has contributed to the balance in the wines that have come from this densely planted vineyard since its initial release from the 1996 vintage.

Louise will often produce the most firmly structured Pinot Noir of all the single vineyards and can have the darkest fruit profile in the estate lineup. It typically has more acid and tannin than other single vineyard estate Pinot Noirs – a result of its lower elevation and warmer site. Full of deep and silky tannins, Louise lingers on the palate, her story will slowly unfold for years to come.

Clones and Rootstocks

Louise Vineyard has 9.31 acres of Pinot Noir vines planted with Dijon clones 113, 114, 115, 777 and Pommard.

Mesoclimate

The maritime climate of Louise Vineyard has moderately warm days and especially cool nights, allowing the vines to retain acidity and produce intense and fragrant aromas and flavors. Thanks to a slope that separates the upper and lower parts of the vineyard, Louise is distinctive because it usually has some of the first and last fruit harvested each year. As the vineyard with the lowest elevation, Louise is the last estate vineyard to receive the cool Pacific Ocean breezes that flow through the Van Duzer Corridor. The corridor allows cool marine breezes to flow east into the Willamette Valley and moderates high summer temperatures, cools the vines, and moves air through the canopy to reduce disease pressure. This cool ocean air results in lower average temperatures at night than the northern Willamette Valley, and helps to maintain good acid structure in the wines. Due to our altitude and



location on the 45th parallel, there is a high diurnal temperature variation at our estate – meaning that there is a significant difference (often 35 degrees or more) between Louise’s daytime high and nighttime lowest temperature during the growing season. This significant temperature shift preserves the natural acids in the grapes, helps encourage the grapes to ripen slowly, and often can result in later picking dates and thus more hang-time on the vine.

Farming

Farmed sustainably since we purchased the property in 1992 all of the estate vineyards have been certified sustainable by Low Input Viticulture and Enology (LIVE) since 2007.

Vintage Notes

The 2014 vintage will be remembered as one of the great vintages in Willamette Valley winegrowing history. A warm, but nearly ideal growing season delivered the rare combination of abundant quantity and exceptional quality fruit that developed into aromatic wines of balance, depth and concentration. The season got off to a warm and dry start with the earliest budbreak and bloom we have recorded at the Cristom Estate in our history to that point - a full two weeks earlier than our twenty-year average. Growing conditions were mostly dry and warmer than normal throughout the spring providing a great environment for flowering and fruit set and the vineyards produced heavy clusters and large berries. The warm weather conditions continued throughout the summer leading to record high temperatures and the earliest start date to harvest in over two decades. The 2014 vintage broke the previous record for heat accumulation during the growing season, set in 1992.

With such exceptional vine fruitfulness and set, we made the deliberate decision to thin more modestly than we historically have per vine, leaving more fruit spread out across the canopy. Our reasoning behind keeping more clusters on the vine in 2014, was given the unusually warm growing season, we were trying to gain hang time at the end of the season. If we thinned more aggressively as we do in an average year, we feared we would shorten the season and the fruit would result in high sugars and green flavors. We hung just over 2.8 tons/acre in many areas of Louise Vineyard as opposed to our twenty-year average of 2.0/tons acre. Our gamble paid off, and the expected abundant quantity and additional hang time combined for dark and concentrated fruit with balanced acids and sugars without experiencing any heat stress. We picked the estate Pinot Noir grapes between September 9th and September 27th, 2014. Truly a year to remember, the 2014 harvest gave us a range of wines from refreshing and vibrant to more rich, powerful and concentrated wines that remain graceful with balance and moderate alcohol.

The 2014 harvest began on September 9th picking the first 3.6 tons of Pommard clone Pinot Noir off of Louise Vineyard that surround our parking lot harvested at a ripe 24.6 degrees Brix. Because Louise lies at our lowest elevation on the estate, the earliest ripening blocks are often the first fruit picked every year. Over a three day period of September 11th- 13th the 777, majority of 115 and remaining Pommard was hand picked bringing nearly 15 tons, or 57% of Louise Vineyard to the winery



ranging between 23.6 degrees Brix and 24.9 degrees Brix. Just seven days after picking began in Louise, the last of the fruit came out of the vineyard on September 16th. The last fruit from the 113, 114, 115 blocks of Pinot Noir in Louise came in on a spectrum of ripeness and flavor profiles ranging from 23.6 degrees Brix to a ripe 25.1 degrees Brix.

The 2014 Louise Vineyard Pinot Noir is a thirty-nine barrel selection of some of the favorite barrels from the vineyard. The overall blend is composed of 5 clones of Pinot Noir: 26% 777; 26% 115; 23% Pommard; 18% 113; and 8% 114. In the winery after tasting, we think the 2014 Louise Vineyard exhibits dark fruits, and a dusty, earthy nose with balanced oak vanilla as the high note. The palate has mouth-coating tannins with great persistence and balance. The fruit profile is mixed on the palate with a combination of concentrated black currant, black cherry, and black licorice, along with bright, vibrant red fruit and great integration of cinnamon spice from the stem inclusion.

Origin 100% estate fruit

Clones Dijon clones (113, 114, 115, 777) & Pommard

Sub-Appellation Eola-Amity Hills

Appellation Willamette Valley

Soils Columbia River Basalts, Marine Sediments and Missoula Flood deposits, including: Jory, Nekia, Wellsdale, Woodburn, and Willamette soils.

Winemaking

- Hand harvested and hand sorted, sustainably farmed estate fruit
- 42% whole clusters
- No cold soak before primary fermentation
- Minimum effective additions of sulfur and tartaric acid
- Native yeast fermentations
- 1-3 punch downs daily in 1-5 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

Aging 18 months in French cooperage, 51% new oak. 8 different coopers, including: 30% Tonnellerie François Frères, 25% Seguin Moreau, 15% Sirugue, 10% Tonnellerie Remond; 5% Tonnellerie de Mercurey, 5% Tonnellerie Meyrieux, 5% Tonnellerie Rousseau, 5% Tonnellerie Atelier

Bottled May 23rd, 2016

Alcohol 14.0%

Total Acidity 5.8 g/L

pH at Bottling 3.78

Production 39 Barrels; 894 cases