



2014 Marjorie Vineyard Pinot Noir

History

In 1992, founder of Cristom Vineyards Paul Gerrie purchased a piece of ground that he saw tremendous potential to grow world class Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes. The property was an east-facing hillside in the Eola Hills on primarily basalt soils rising up from 200 feet to 600 feet (61 m to 183 m). The upper field was planted to Pinot Noir in 1982 but it had been abandoned in the late 1980's. Paul would re-name the upper field Marjorie Vineyard, in honor of his late mother, and the vineyard would go on to produce the first estate fruit for the winery in 1994.

Marjorie is distinctive at Cristom both for being own-rooted and for its lower density plantings (605 vines/acre; 1,495 vines/hectare) than our three other estate 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 silty clay loam 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 finest barrels of young vine fruit to contribute to the Marjorie Vineyard bottling.

Marjorie is planted 6 feet between vines and 12 feet between rows, homage to the by-gone era of farming vines with a wide orchard tractor. Marjorie's rows run from north to south on the gently sloping east-facing hillside, vines are vertically shoot positioned and cane pruned, and this vineyard is one of the few places on the farm that is double-guyot trained along the fruiting wire. After rigorous cluster thinning to ensure low yields and maximize flavor concentration and complexity, Marjorie's vines are left with 18-22 clusters per vine that each weigh 70 - 80 grams/cluster, depending on the vintage – a testament to the fact that this vineyard produces very small, highly concentrated clusters, and exceptionally dramatic wines.

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. A true example of terroir, the soil, elevation, climate, and vine age meet and produce a wine capable of great depth, complexity, and long-term age ability. The first of the single vineyards to be sold out, Marjorie has achieved a rightfully earned cult status, consistently generating some of Cristom's best fruit.

Clones And Rootstocks

Marjorie is the only estate vineyard at Cristom that was originally own-rooted when it was planted in 1982. The original plantings were Pommard, Wädenswil and Martini clones of Pinot Noir. In 1999, we grafted over the Martini clone to Dijon clones 114, 115, and 777. Phylloxera began to take hold with noticeable damage in 2000, and by the 2014 vintage, just less than 3 acres (1.21 ha) of the old vines were still producing high



quality fruit. Beginning in 2004, we began re-planting Marjorie with Pommard, Wädenswil, 114, 115, 777 grafted onto phylloxera resistant rootstocks 3309C and 101-14.

Mesoclimate

The maritime climate of Marjorie Vineyard has moderately warm days, especially cool nights and strong nightly winds that cool the vines and the fruit allowing the clusters to retain acidity and produce wines of great structure and length. Lying due west of the Cristom estate is a low-lying corridor in the coastal mountain range known as the Van Duzer Corridor. The Pacific Ocean winds that rush east hit Marjorie Vineyard with nightly gusts of 20-25 mph throughout the growing season. These chilly marine breezes moderate high summer temperatures, move air through the canopy lowering disease pressure and cool the vines helping 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 – meaning that there is a significant difference (often 35 degrees or more) between Marjorie's daytime high and nighttime low 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 2.25 tons/acre in many areas of Marjorie 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.

Marjorie Vineyard was picked over the course of just two days in 2014 and we harvested just less than 8 tons of fruit. The 2014 vintage began in Marjorie Vineyard on September 14th, when 2 tons of the original vine Pommard was picked at a near optimal ripeness of 24.3 degrees Brix and 3.23 pH. The following day on September 15th, just over 2 tons of original vine Marjorie Wädenswil was picked along with just under 4 tons of the Marjorie young vine fruit picked at 23.9 degrees Brix and 24.7 degrees Brix respectively. The clusters were very small, with small and concentrated berries as the fruit almost always is in Marjorie resulting in wines of depth and power.

The 2014 Marjorie is a seventeen-barrel blend of some of the finest barrels in the cellar. The overall 2014 blend is composed of five clones of Pinot Noir, including: 29% original vine Pommard, 24% original vine Wädenswil, and 47% young vine Pommard, Wädenswil, 114, 115 and 777. The 2014 Marjorie Vineyard Pinot Noir explodes from the glass with concentrated red-fruits, dusty earth aromas, savory spices and baking spices. There is a pleasing strawberry briar patch note that blends with a sweet pipe tobacco as the wine opens up. There is a richness of fruit on the palate, with soft delicate tannins that marry well with juicy acidity that lingers and lingers. This wine is approachable now, and it will reward those with patience for 12-15 years or more.

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.

Picked September 14 & 15, 2014

Winemaking

- Hand harvested and hand sorted, sustainably farmed estate fruit
- 48% 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

Aging 18 Months in French cooperage, 47% new oak. 5 different coopers, including: 39% Tonnellerie François Frères, 25% Tonnellerie Remond, 12% Tonnellerie Meyrieux, 12% Tonnellerie Rousseau, 12% Sirugue

Bottled May 20, 2016

Alcohol 13.5%

Total Acidity 6.0 g/L

pH at Bottling 3.63

Production 17 Barrels; 380cases