



2014 Estate Vineyard, Old Vine Pinot Noir Ribbon Ridge Appellation

Location: Ribbon Ridge is a sub-appellation of the Willamette Valley AVA that sits 22 miles southwest of Portland, 4 miles northwest of Dundee and 40 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. Ribbon Ridge is contained within the larger Chehalem Mountains AVA - which is contained within the Willamette Valley AVA.

Wine history: In 1980, Harry Peterson-Nedry planted the first wine grapes on Ribbon Ridge at his Ridgecrest Vineyards. Two years later, the first commercial vineyard was established with the planting of 54 acres of Pinot noir and Chardonnay. It was Yamhill Valley Vineyards who first used these grapes to make wine in 1985. Other vineyards were soon planted in this relatively small ridge. The appellation became official in 2005.

Climate: Protected by geographical features to the north, south and west, Ribbon Ridge's grape-growing hillsides are slightly warmer and drier when compared to the adjacent valley floors. Ribbon Ridge's moderate climate is well suited for early grape growth in the spring, consistent and even ripening over the summer and a long, full maturing season in the fall.

Soils: The Ribbon Ridge region contains primarily sedimentary soils that are younger, finer and more uniform than the alluvial sedimentary and volcanic soils of neighboring regions. These moderately deep, well-drained silty-clay loam soils are part of the Willakenzie soil series and are of low fertility and ideal for growing high-quality wine grapes.

Topography: Geographically, Ribbon Ridge is a 3.5-mile long by 1.75-mile wide ridge that extends from the Chehalem Mountains. The ridge rises 683 feet from the Chehalem Valley floor, giving it an island-like appearance.

Site Characteristics: Relatively early on into our time here we began to conclude that there were different natures not only to the separate blocks but a distinct stylistic difference between the two sets of plantings (vines planted between 1984-1990 and the vines planted between 1997-2001 along with the new 2010 planting). Since we dry farm here to encourage the downward growth of roots the older plants and the younger plants are at different root depth levels in the sub-soil and consequently have access to different levels and types of water, nutrients and minerals. The root system is what feeds the plants and ultimately the fruit on the vine and in this soft Marine soil this translates into very different flavor and texture profiles in the grapes. The Estate bottling consists of 13 separate sections of the vineyard that were planted in the 1997-2001 (and 2010) window. The Estate Old Vine bottling can come from the remaining 5 blocks although sometimes 1 or 2 of those blocks are bottled separately.

The 30 acre Estate vineyard is an amazingly diverse site given its 360 degree hilltop planting, multiple vine ages and clonal differences. This is why we split it into different bottlings based upon specific characteristics. From 5 different blocks with vines of 25, 28, 29 and 31 years of age we created a wine that displays the elegant characteristics of Pinot Noir and Ribbon Ridge.

Wine Making and Notes: The difference between the older and younger blocks here is always pretty amazing to people. As the vines continue to age these older vines continue to sink deep root systems into the soft sandstone sub-soil. Our water is spring fed and very minerally in nature. That is what these older vines have tapped into and that is what they pull up and put into the fruit. Savory and bringing in both black and red fruit spectrums so this has a wide range in the mid-palate. Ultimately this wine is defined by the mineral laden "ribbon" that intertwines the fruit and carries the flavors onto the sinewy tannin structure underlying the wine. This is refined and elegant while still being surprisingly broad shouldered. 32% new barrel.

Production: 679 cases bottled.

