



2003 BRYAN CREEK VINEYARD PINOT NOIR

BACKGROUND In an effort to become less dependent on purchased grapes, planting at Bryan Creek Vineyard began in 1989. Our neighbors Jess and Joy Howell (whose 60-acre property is directly across the road from our original estate vineyard at Quarter Mile Lane) had agreed to lease us 20 acres to plant. Initially, the grapes from those first plantings were blended into our Oregon series Pinot noir. By 1998, the oldest plantings had begun producing wine rich and complex enough to warrant a single-vineyard bottling.

GROWING SEASON By Spring (and in spite of a typical rainy Oregon winter) we suspected that 2003 would be an early vintage. The first clear indicators were that bud-break came before Easter and flowering took place in mid-June. There was such a large crop that it took two passes of thinning to get the level down low enough to insure flavor intensity. A very warm August and September meant that all the grapes seemed to ripen at once. The Pinot noir grapes for this wine were harvested on September 29th.

VINEYARD Bryan Creek Vineyard is sited high on the southern slopes of the Chehalem Mountains, on basaltic-origin, clay-loam soils that store enough moisture to get the grapevines through our annual summer droughts. The 700+ foot elevation approaches the upper limits of where we like to plant, but its direct southern exposure provides some compensation. The grapes ripen a few days later than most of our other sites, allowing longer hang-time for great complexity and intensity of flavor. This wine comes from Blocks 3, 5 and 12, all planted to clone UCD 5 "Pommard."

WINEMAKING Gentle handling techniques were employed to produce this silky, sexy Pinot noir (destemming, cold soak for greater flavor and color extraction, fermenting in temperature-controlled, open-top fermenters which are punched down twice per day, and moving the juice by gravity-flow). Great focus was given to obtaining great fruit intensity and textural richness, while insuring that the wines stayed fresh and without flaw. This wine underwent its secondary, malolactic fermentation in small, medium-toast, French oak barrels (one-third new) and was aged in those barrels for 11 months. The wine was bottled in August 2004 without fining or filtration.

THE WINE This 2003 Pinot noir has an outrageously pretty nose – brambly, fresh (not jammy) fruit with a minerality that is the hallmark for Bryan Creek Vineyard. The luscious flavors in the mouth repeat the same fruit. The wine has a firm texture with enough tannin for ten years of aging, no problem, and balanced alcohol. The wine doesn't have the "sweetness" found in our wines from lower elevation; the trade off is the incredible penetrating fruit flavors that grab your attention. It would be the perfect accompaniment to savory, lighter meat dishes (fowl, rabbit, pork), grilled salmon, and rich vegetarian fare.

THE LABEL Bob Bredemeier created this stylized, naïve view of Bryan Creek Vineyard and the surrounding Chehalem Mountains, with the Adelsheim winery superimposed below. The lunette shape and one-point perspective were inspired by the work of the Flemish painter Giusto Utens, who produced a famous series of 14 tempera paintings depicting the Medici family villas in 1599.

THE QUANTITY We produced 882 bottles (750ml), which are packaged in cases of 6 bottles.

