



ST. INNOCENT

PINOT NOIR
WILLAMETTE VALLEY AVA

FREEDOM HILL VINEYARD

PRODUCED AND BOTTLED BY
ST. INNOCENT WINERY, JEFFERSON, OREGON, BW-OR-144
ALCOHOL 13.5% BY VOLUME. CONTAINS SULFITES.

WILLAMETTE VALLEY, OREGON

Technical Details

Production: 960 Cases
Crop Level: 2.3 tons/acre
Harvest: 9/27/20 & 10/1/20
Bottled: April 2022
Alcohol: 13.5%
Aging: Drink now

Vineyard

Freedom Hill Vineyard is located in the foothills of the Coast Range, 10 miles SW of Salem, Oregon. During the day warm air rises from the valley floor ripening the skins. At night, cool ocean breezes act to retain acidity. Planted on old sedimentary soils, the vines have a SW exposure at an elevation of 520' to 580. Our Pinot noir comes from two blocks, one planted in 2004 with Pommard and Wädenswil and one planted in 2008 with 777.

Production

The de-stemmed grapes were fermented in 4-8 ton stainless steel fermenters with no SO₂, allowing the fermentation to proceed naturally. After gentle pressing and settling, the wine aged in French oak barrels, 22% of which were new, for 16 months before bottling by gravity and without fining.

2020 PINOT NOIR FREEDOM HILL VINEYARD *WILLAMETTE VALLEY AVA*

Tasting Notes

Lots of dark fruit aromas, dried flowers, roasted spice, and earth. Earthy spices & grilled fruits on the palate with a good backbone of acidity and some floral hints into the finish.

A Note About The 2020 Vintage From Mark Vlossak,

Winemaker

At the beginning of September 2020, the vintage looked to be an almost perfect growing season with very small open clusters and a lot of excitement about the quality of the upcoming harvest. Then, the fires began in the Santiam Canyon west of Salem. Located 20-35 miles from our vineyard sites, the actual fires were not close to vineyards. However, a significant amount of smoke blew east from the Santiam Canyon into the Willamette Valley, especially for the first 4-5 days. At that time, there was little research about how to test for smoke taint, and only general advice on treatment if you knew you had a smoke problem in the wine. The problem was: did we?

As we did not detect smoke in the grapes or the fermenters, I picked the grapes, made the wines, and observed for signs of smoke taint. We found none, even after a year in barrel, so after 17 months of aging, we decided to bottle the wines as vineyard designates. Now, this wine is available for sale at a significantly reduced price. Why? Recent research suggests that some smoke compounds can be present in a non-aromatic state – “glycosylated”- or hooked to a glucose molecule. Over some time, even years, those compounds can shed their glucose and become smoky, even if they are lovely now. So, they may not be age-worthy. You trust the wines I sell to be top quality, whether you drink them now or in a decade. So, every bottle will be marked with a fire/smoke graphic and have a QR code link to a full explanation.

After assessing these wines in a series of blind tastings with senior staff, we decided to release the 2020 Pinot noir, Freedom Hill Vineyard to the market at a significantly reduced price. Drink this wine before 2026. I am concerned about longer-term aging.