

2005 Estate Grown Pinot Noir Aliette

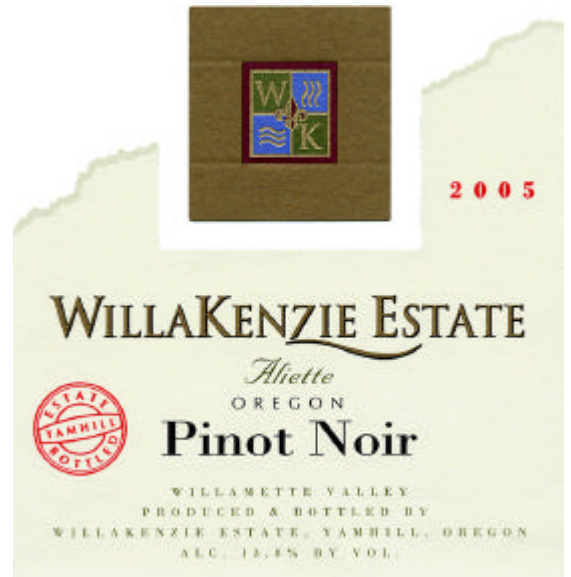
Varietal: 100% Pinot Noir

Appellation: Willamette Valley
Yamhill-Carlton District

Production: 676.5 Cases (1353 6-Packs)

Released: March 2008

Retail: \$45.00



VINTAGE

2005 started with an unusually warm and dry winter from January through the first half of March, resulting in an early bud break around March 15. The weather then turned wet and cold, so the vines did not grow until the return of warm weather in mid April. Rain and cold returned in May and most of June. Bloom occurred around June 15, and the fruit set was just about normal for our site. The first pink berries appeared on August 3 with veraison throughout the vineyards during the last week of the month. We began harvest on September 27 in the Terres Basses blocks, but we stopped from September 29 until the first week of October due to showery conditions. Harvest resumed on October 5 with the Pinot Noir Kiana blocks and finished on October 20. Showery, cool weather persisted throughout that period, but our attentive vineyard management practices enabled WillaKenzie Estate to avoid rot and mildew. We picked all of our grapes in excellent condition at Brix levels ranging from 23.3° to 25.4°. The 2005 vintage produced wines with the power of the 2003 vintage and elegance reminiscent of the 2004 vintage.

VINEYARDS

The 2005 Aliette is a selection of our Estate grown Pinot Noir Pommard from the Aliette vineyard (named after owner Bernard Lacroute's mother) and small amounts of the Dijon clones. Aliette was the first vineyard planted at WillaKenzie Estate, in 1992. It is situated on a gentle hill that ranges in elevation from 560 to 600 feet. The ground has a deep layer of WillaKenzie soil on top of harder to penetrate sandstone. As a result, the vines have spread their roots deeply and rarely need irrigation. The plants are grafted onto phylloxera-resistant rootstock and trained into an upright, double guyot trellising system. Approximately half the fruit was dropped (thinned at the time of veraison) to assure low yields and maximize flavor and intensity. The blocks of Pinot Noir were closely monitored as the harvest date approached, and the picking date was chosen based on taste and maturity.

Yield: 2.5 tons/acre

Brix: 24.2°

pH: 3.50

TA: 6.5

WINEMAKING

In our gravity-fed winery, this 2005 Pinot Noir was handcrafted to achieve a fully extracted and complex style. During this process, a cool maceration preceded the open-top, Burgundian style fermentation for a total of 25 days of skin contact and daily punchdowns by 'Bigfoot', our pneumatic punchdown device. The wine was then gravity fed directly to barrels where it underwent 100% Malolactic fermentation during the next 8 months. The wine spent a total of 12 months in 60% new French oak from a selection of four coopers. The wine was bottled unfiltered and unfinned.

Alcohol: 13.8%

pH: 3.80

TA: 5.3

TASTING PANEL COMMENTS

2005 Pinot Noir Aliette offers complex, lively red fruit aromas, including cranberry, strawberry and pomegranate with suggestions of spice and violets. The flavors follow the aromas with the addition of tart red cherry, spiced plum and rhubarb leading to hints of earthiness and caramel on the long finish. The palate impression is refined and elegant, with a pleasing balance of fruit, acidity and well integrated tannins. Approachable now, the wine will improve in the cellar for 2 to 3 years from the release date and age well for up to 10. Pair it with such dishes as seared Ahi tuna, or roasted duck breast. We recommend that you open and decant the wine an hour before serving.

For more information visit www.willakenzie.com, e-mail us at tastepinot@willakenzie.com or call 503-662-3280