

William Hatcher

THE ESSENCE OF MY WINEMAKING IS THAT LESS IS MORE

The fruit reveals the wine to the winemaker. Accordingly, the winemaker shepherds the wine rather than makes it. Notably, there is no word for “winemaker” in French, Italian or Spanish: one is a *vigneron*, *viticoltore* or *vinicultor*, the idea being that the wine is made in the vineyard.

In a given vintage, the optimal blend may comprise only half or so of the barrels I make. As with the preparation of a fine meal, it is a question of what precisely informs the whole. Too much of the finest ingredient may overwhelm the balance. Thus, REX HILL and A to Z are always blessed with some beautiful barrels.

The 2008 William Hatcher Pinot noir radiates from a core of dark fruits: black cherries, loganberries, figs and plum. The nose is further accented with rose, balsam, coffee and mocha. On the palate, a trace of minerality runs counterpoint to the initial sensation of black fruit. As is my goal with every wine, the mid-palate is supple and rich before descending into a long finish.

The best wines of 2008 will be long-lived. Here, one will be rewarded with perhaps five years of cellaring, knowing that there will be another ten to fifteen years to discover the changing nuances.

Pinot Noir

2008 VINTAGE

As with most recent vintages in Oregon, 2008 proved again that making Pinot noir in Oregon is not for the faint-hearted. While 2010 and now 2011 have eclipsed it, at the time, 2008 was the latest vintage on record with spring cold and rain persisting into June. The last rain fell on the 10th and from then into late October, apart from two brief spikes of torrid heat, growing conditions were ideal.

These conditions produced perhaps Oregon's most quintessentially balanced Pinot noirs. The languid warmth of an Indian Summer meant that winemakers could pick vineyards of all elevations at their optimum so that the full expression of diverse soils and exposure is manifested in what is perhaps the best vintage I have seen in my 25 years here.



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