

BLUE ROCK PINOT NOIR 2021



TECHNICAL

Alcohol:	14 %
Total Acid:	5.0 g/L
pH:	3.69
Residual Sugar:	<1.0 g/L
Bottled:	Nov 2022

VINTAGE & VINE

The 2020/2021 growing season was a stark reminder for many of us in the grape farming community that we deal with a seasonal crop and a vineyard is a business without a roof over it! Mother nature doesn't care that cold, wet springs are really, really tough on us! One factor which made the previous harvest such a pleasure was the long warm Autumn we experienced during picking. The Indian summer continued through the winter months of June and July with plenty of blue-sky days and little rainfall. Winter did eventually arrive, but it arrived in spring! We battled a record number of frost events and had to deal with persistent cold, wet southerly fronts throughout the key flowering period in late October/early November. Normally flowering takes place over a week or so and ideal conditions are dry with moderate winds. We got the opposite in the extreme!

A good grape farmer will plant and cultivate a diverse array of clones and varieties in part to help negate challenging growing conditions. Different clones/varieties flower at different times, some early, some much later. In any given season there will be clones/varieties which do much better than others and this is normally down to the conditions during the key flowering stage. By having diversity, you can better ensure a consistently good outcome. So goes the theory! Yields across all varieties and all clones were well down in 2021. Pinot clones Abel and 777 fared much better than pretty much all the rest. Our Pinot Meunier, normally a real stalwart, suffered as well. Syrah flowers much later so was largely unaffected. White varieties did a little better but still well down. In the end we were down on yields by around 30-40% ... Ouch! Luckily, for us at least, due to an excellent long and dry ripening period, the quality of what was harvested was outstanding.

Harvested at Blue Rock Vineyard in late March. This vintage was sourced from Jims' block 114/115 and Highfold C block 777. Average vine age for these blocks is 26 years. All bunches were destemmed directly into two and three ton open top fermenters. Every effort was made to preserve as much "whole berry" as possible. This, along with the use of cooling helps to ensure a slow onset of full fermentation allowing the native non-saccharomyces yeasts time to perform an initial ferment before the stronger, more dominant native saccharomyces yeast strains take over and complete full alcoholic fermentation. Plunging was limited one or at most, two times each day. Total maceration time for this vintage was between 20-30 days before gentle pressing. Once the wine had settled in tank for three or four days it was transferred to French oak puncheons for maturation.

Malolactic fermentation completed naturally during the following spring. In total the wine spent 12 months in barrel and around 6 months settling in tank post blending. New oak in the finished wine is around 20%. The only additions were sulphur dioxide post malolactic fermentation, followed by a small top up prior to bottling. Bottled Unfined and Unfiltered.

WINERY

TASTING NOTE

Vibrant and youthful ruby red. An abundance of pretty, floral notes, very enticing with rose and violet aromas. There is a deep and complex core of ripe cherry, classy oak and savoury earth at the heart of it all. This wine is certainly not hiding its light under a bushel! The palate is very precise and poised. An abundance of ripe, plush flavours and tannins all delivered with an elegance that really belies the serious power of this wine.