

2018 Fall Diverse Reds

2016 Merriman South River Cabernet Sauvignon 30/BTL

The inaugural release of Merriman's South Slope Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of 76% Cabernet Sauvignon from McDuffee Vineyard and 24% Merlot from La Pines Vineyard, both on the Oregon side of the Columbia Gorge. Aged on the lees in Bordeaux barrique for 22 months, the fragrant nose showcases blackberry, currant, mocha, and licorice. Meanwhile, the youthful palate is vibrant and red with a hint of cocoa nibs, asking to either be decanted or given time to flesh out in the cellar.

2013 Andrew Rich Ciel du Cheval Grenache 35/BTL

Usually I blend this Grenache with Mourvèdre and Syrah for my Glacial bottling, but some years I will hold back a little bit—in this vintage just one barrel—to bottle on its own. Every wine should get its chance to shine, right? While Grenache is known for its lush, even voluptuous body, when grown at Ciel du Cheval, in the tiny Red Mt. AVA of eastern Washington, the results tend to be a bit more upright (corseted?), with a surprising mineral component. You can expect spice notes and black raspberry on the nose, with a full but somewhat restrained palate showing more red fruit and a hint of mystery that may be due to five percent Syrah. At full maturity now, this is a wine to accompany a roast leg of lamb or daube de boeuf Provençal when the cold winds blow.

2014 Andrew Rich Marine Pinot Noir 42/BTL

With the 2014 vintage, Andrew has launched his new *Elements* series, representing a deeper exploration of soil types. (Some club members received the Glacial blend of Syrah, Mourvèdre, and Grenache last fall.) Of the three Pinots, the Marine Sedimentary, planted on shallow, droughty soils accumulated over millions of years when the Pacific Ocean covered what is now the Willamette Valley, is the most structured. The 2015 Marine Sedimentary showcases an intense nose of darker berries with a suggestion of briar patch. The palate shows concentration without weight, surprisingly lively acidity, terrific density, and firm tannins that have rounded with time in bottle. This is a Pinot that can complement fairly robust dishes, including red meat, and can be expected to develop well over the next five or six years. Wine Spectator 93/Wine Enthusiast 93/Vinous 93

2016 Ratio Jessie James Pinot Noir 50/BTL

Jessie James Vineyard sits high up in the northern end of Eola-Amity Hills. The 2016, made with 30% whole cluster, explodes from the glass with juicy red and black fruits intermingled with cocoa, tobacco, iron, and sandalwood. You might think there is new oak here, but it was made entirely in neutral barrels; the stems add the woody complexity. The supple palate is bright and fresh with surprising vitality: cranberry with a pop of Meyer lemon. Together all these traits warrant time in the bottle, but this wine is lovely at the table now with cranberry-glazed pork, roasted bird, or sage-infused butternut squash soup.

2014 Hamacher "Signature" Pinot Noir 50/BTL

The nose opens to broad aromas of bright red fruits, jasmine blossoms, cedar and savory dried herbs. The mouth opens with a juicy intensity and flavors that are true to the nose. The supple, ripe tannin frame is overlain by silky, mouth-filling sweetness that lingers. Pair with pan seared salmon with a lemon garlic cream sauce

2015 Lazy River August Wilhelm Reserve Pinot Noir 52/BTL

The 2015 rendition of August Wilhelm Reserve is a worthy successor to the inaugural 2014. The highly perfumed, complex nose combines black cherry, subtle vanilla, and brioche with toasted nuts and intricate spice. The palate is fresh and focused while, at the same time, showing great concentration and power. Raspberry and spice resonate on the extremely long finish. This is a wine that delivers right now but is also built for the long term in bottle.