



Tasting Notes 2012 McCutcheon Pinot Noir



Vintage A much more favourable season than 2011 though not without several interesting periods. Spring conditions were ideal for budburst and early season growth. With small bunches from the previous season's cool, wet summer and a moderate to cool spell during flowering we saw moderate to low yields with highly concentrated flavours. An average overall hang time but our longest ever veraison-harvest interval (70 days v 57 day average) resulting in intensified flavour and colour development. A record difference between harvest in the lower north and the higher south (31 days v 17 day average).

Vineyards :: Clones McCutcheon :: MV6 (57%) [Ridge Block], G5V15 (43%) [Lake Block]

Harvest date :: Yield Hand picked 4-5 April 2012 :: 1.6 tonnes/ha (0.6 t/acre, ~9.6hl/ha)

Brix :: pH :: TA 23.4-24.0° (13.0-13.3° Baumé) :: 3.51-3.55 :: 9.4-9.6 g/l

Winemaking Hand harvested in early April and, on arrival at the winery, 100% destemmed. A 5-6 day pre-ferment maceration preceded a 100% wild yeast fermentation with manual plunging throughout, followed by a short post-ferment maceration (a total of 19-20 days on skins). Following pressing and a short settling period the wine was transferred to both new (25%) and old French oak barriques. After a natural 100% MLF with the onset of warmer temperatures in spring, the wine was bottled lightly fined and unfiltered following a total of 16 months of oak maturation.

Winemakers Jeremy Magyar, Richard McIntyre, Martin Spedding

Aging :: Oak 16 months :: 25% new French oak barriques (medium toast; very tight grain; François Frères)

Malolactic Complete

Residual sugar Dry (0.38 g/l)

Finished pH :: TA 3.54 :: 6.4 g/l

Alcohol 13.5% (8.0 standard drinks/750ml bottle)

Production 123 dozen :: bottled 16 September 2013 :: screwcap

Release date June 2014

TASTING NOTES

Sometimes, we wine lovers are stricken by self-doubt. The idea of a blind tasting scares us and the challenge of putting wine into words is often daunting. So it's useful to taste wines side by side so their differences are brought into clear relief. It's often striking, for example, how obviously different two Pinots can taste, and how restorative this can be in terms of our own confidence when tasting.

Taste this next to the Judd Pinot Noir and you will immediately note the McCutcheon's rich, round flavour profile in contrast to the Judd's jauntier, brighter fruit. Indeed, there's a thickness to this wine's aroma that suggests flesh, such is its substance and density. Fruit notes remain distinctly Pinot-like in character, with red berries and fresh sap overlaying sharp oak spice, but the overall vibe is strong and muscular.

When opening this wine young, give it time and air. There's an abundance of structure, with both acid and tannin contributing a firm mouthfeel and taut lines. Fruit is, as the nose suggests, effortlessly intense and toothsome, a range of notes cascading over one another - red berries, sous-bois, brown spice, cherry skins - all swarthy and brooding. Ten Minutes by Tractor Pinots always age well, but this wine positively screams to be given time to relax.

Julian Coldrey [January 2014, commissioned by TMBT]

Food :: Temperature Decant well and serve with food that will help it to relax; roast lamb rump served nice and pink would be perfect. Serve at 14-17°C.

Best drinking 2015-2026

REVIEWS

The McCutcheon Vineyard Pinot is a wine of immense structure, innate layered complexity, power and depth. Aromas and flavours of raspberry, sour cherry and an intriguing note of blueberry. Sap, gum leaf and struck flint. A good deal of power for such an agile wine. The acidity is a touch nippy but the architecture is shared evenly with assertive, tightly knit tannin. Extremely complex spice to close. My guess is that this will be something truly special in five to ten years.

94+ :: Jeremy Pringle :: January 2014 :: www.winewillbeatitself.com