

2012 Maple Ranch Pinot Noir, Estate

Foris Vineyards is one of the true Pioneers of Oregon Pinot Noir. Since 1974 when founder Ted Gerber planted his first vines, Foris has continued to be on the forefront of understanding this noble grape variety. Located in the far southwestern reaches of the Rogue Valley AVA, the Illinois Valley offers a unique Alpine climate and ancient volcanic soils that create an expression of Pinot Noir that showcases finesse and purity of flavor over sheer power and weight.

Foris was one of the first vineyards to plant the now ubiquitous “Dijon Clones” 113, 115 and 375. Starting with just twenty five buds of each, Gerber patiently tended and propagated the vines until he had enough plant material to start supplying nurseries in California. Quickly word spread about the quality of these new clones. Today, many of California and Oregon’s most famous Pinot vineyards can trace their parentage directly back the original clone field on Foris’s flagship Maple Ranch Vineyard.

Although the vineyard determines the ultimate quality of a wine, there are many choices that both the grower and wine maker have in shaping its overall style. One of the most important decisions is harvest dates. We have long felt that while ripe is good, over ripe is not better. We also walk lightly in our use of oak, preferring to incorporate a percentage of once-filled French oak barrels each year instead of the more heavy handed new wood. Our primary fermentations are entirely done in small, ¾ ton open-top bins that allow us to gently punch down the cap by hand. Overall, it’s a very minimal approach to wine making that respects the integrity of our wonderful fruit.

The 2012 vintage was a welcome change from the near record-setting late vintage of 2011, and was characterized by a long, warm summer and fall, perfect for ripening Pinot noir in our Alpine valley.

This blend comes together by first identifying our most unique lots that showcase purity of fruit, then a barrel by barrel selection process to fine tune the balance of dark fruits and spices. Scents of freshly crushed raspberry, black cherry and lavender mingle with coriander, cardamom and clove creating a heady perfume of Pinot. A bit of savory mushroom adds depth of flavor. Perhaps the most alluring aspect of Pinot noir is texture. While this wine is soft and delicate up front its youthful nature may mislead with early accessibility, yet it will continue to improve for five to eight years from vintage.

Average brix at harvest: 24.5
Analysis at bottling: pH 3.48, TA 6.0 g/L, Alcohol 13.9%
Bottled September 2013
Cases produced: 691



Nestled in a pristine alpine valley in southwestern Oregon's rugged Siskiyou Mountain range, Foris Vineyards has been a true viticultural pioneer for over thirty five years. Specializing in Alsace varietals and Pinot Noir, Foris Vineyards consistently garners accolades for both quality and value. The dramatic natural beauty and purity of our surrounding environment is reflected in the vibrant epicurean wines that have earned us a place in some of America's finest restaurants and wine shops.