



2008 Benton-Lane Pinot Noir — FIRST CLASS

Grape Source:	100% Benton-Lane Estate Vineyard, Willamette Valley, 100% Pinot Noir
Sugar at Harvest:	23.3 – 25.0° Brix
Harvest Dates:	October 1 st – October 13 th
Total Acidity:	5.3 grams per liter
pH:	3.77
Alcohol:	13.75% by volume
Winemaker:	Chris Mazepink

Growing Season: Heralded as a “classic” vintage from Wine Spectator magazine, the 2008 growing season began with cooler than usual springtime temperatures. The month of May enjoyed some relatively intense heat, but the summer months were also very cool with a moderate amount of rainfall in August. Thinking that ripening a normal crop would be a challenge this vintage, we trimmed a fair amount of grape clusters off of the vines on the estate vineyard hoping to achieve maturity with the remaining clusters. Fortunately, a warm, dry October led to very even ripening of the fruit. Although it was one of the latest harvest periods to date for the estate, the grapes came in looking very good and at optimum levels of maturity. The resulting wines show great finesse, complexity and balance.

Vinification: The must underwent a pre-fermentation “cold soak” to increase extraction of flavor. Fermentation took place in small 1.25-ton open top fermenters with the cap being punched down by hand. The individual lots were fermented with specially chosen yeast and after pressing, the wine underwent malolactic fermentation naturally in French oak barrels. The barrels selected to be included in the First Class cuvee were pre-blended to ensure consistency and a proper “marriage” of flavors and then racked back into barrel to complete the aging process.

The Wine: This deep ruby colored wine exhibits classic aromas of cherry, blackberries and wet earth, with complex underlying flavors of mocha, anise and blueberries. Very ripe, fine tannins and balanced acidity create a rich, velvety texture that leads into an extremely long finish. The First Class pinot noir represents the “best of the best” individual lots from a given year and is produced in small quantities only in vintages of optimal quality.

Production: 1,481 6-pack cases **Suggested Retail:** \$60 **Date of Release:** 3/15/2010

Accolades: The previous 2 vintages of this wine scored 92 points from Wine Spectator magazine

BENTON-LANE WINERY

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