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## AMALIE ROBERT ESTATE PORTFOLIO FOCUS: PINOT MEUNIER 2018 VINTAGE JUST RELEASED!

HELLO AND WELCOME,

THIS IS A PORTFOLIO FOCUS ON [PINOT MEUNIER](#) FROM [@AMALIEROBERT](#) ESTATE. [A FLOG COMMUNICATION](#).



PINOT MEUNIER, THE HIDDEN GEM OF CHAMPAGNE, IS THE SUBJECT OF OUR PORTFOLIO FOCUS. MOST PROMINENTLY, PINOT MEUNIER IS ONE OF THREE GRAPES GROWN IN CHAMPAGNE, ALONG WITH CHARDONNAY AND PINOT NOIR, TO MAKE THE REGION'S MOST INTERESTING WINES. WHILE RARELY A SINGLE VARIETY BOTTLING, AND NEVER INCLUDED IN A BLANC DE BLANC, PINOT MEUNIER IS, OF COURSE, OFTEN PART OF THE FINAL ASSEMBLAGE.

AND WHILE DENA DOES HAVE A VERIFIABLE ADDICTION TO CHAMPAGNE (WE PRODUCE THE BELLPINE PEARL – MORE ON THAT IN A BIT) WE CHOOSE TO VINIFY PINOT MEUNIER AS A STILL RED WINE. BUT NEVER THAT MUCH OF IT. OUR HALF ACRE

OF VINES FROM BLOCK 1 USUALLY PRODUCES 3 TO 4 BARRELS OF WINE AND THAT'S IT FOR THE WHOLE YEAR, FOR THE WHOLE COUNTRY AND HAWAI'I TOO!

OH, AND LET'S COVER THE PRONUNCIATION, IT'S A FRENCH THING. [PINOT MEUNIER \(PEE-NO MUH-N'YAY\)](#) 'MEUNIER' MEANS 'MILLER' IN ENGLISH. THE MILLER IS THE GUY GRINDING GRAIN INTO FLOUR. THE VINE HAS THIS NAME BECAUSE THE CLUSTERS ARE SMALL AND PINECONE SHAPED LIKE PINOT NOIR, BUT THE LEAVES HAVE THE APPEARANCE OF A DUSTING OF FLOUR, HENCE THE NAME MILLER OR MEUNIER.





IN NEIGHBORING AUSTRIA PINOT MEUNIER IS KNOWN AS THE MILLER'S BURGUNDY. ALSO, THE FEMININE FORM IS 'MEUNIÈRE', WHICH YOU MAY HAVE SEEN ON A MENU. WHITE FISH SUCH AS SOLE IS DREDGED IN FLOUR, PAN FRIED IN BUTTER AND SERVED WITH THE PAN DRIPPINGS, PARSLEY AND LEMON. VOILÀ, SOLE MEUNIÈRE!

PINOT MEUNIER WINE, HOWEVER, IS OUR PORTFOLIO FOCUS. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO LOVE THE TRANSPARENCY OF PINOT NOIR, PINOT MEUNIER WILL ABSOLUTELY DRIVE YOU WILD! AS A CLOSE COUSIN, OR PARENT OF PINOT NOIR, THE WINE'S COLOR IS OFTEN AS LIGHT OR EVEN LIGHTER AND BRIGHTER THAN PINOT NOIR. THAT IS THE NATURAL COLOR OF THE WINE AND WE CELEBRATE IT!

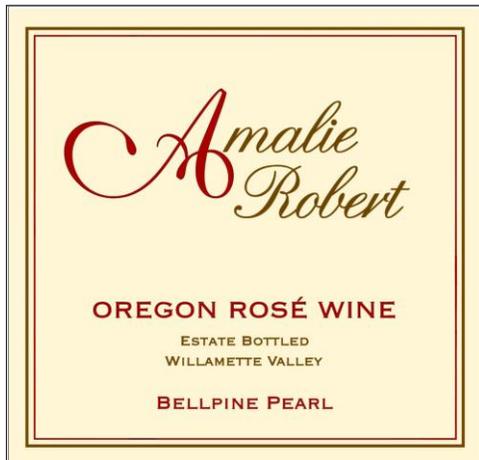
FROM A WINEMAKING POINT OF VIEW, OUR GOAL IS TO SHOWCASE THE ELEGANCE AND PURITY OF PINOT MEUNIER AND PRESENT IT AS A YOUNG WINE. WE FERMENT WITH INDIGENOUS YEAST AND WITHOUT ANY STEM INCLUSION SO AS NOT TO INTRODUCE HARSH STEM TANNINS THAT WILL TAKE YEARS TO EVOLVE. WE BARREL MATURE IN OLD, NEUTRAL FRENCH OAK, MORE OF A HOLDING VESSEL THAN TO INFLUENCE THE AROMA, FLAVOR OR TEXTURE WITH TOASTY NEW OAK. THE WINE IS BOTTLED WITHIN A YEAR OF HARVEST UNFINED AND UNFILTERED. IT CAN BE CONSIDERED VEGAN.

NOW, IF WE HAVE DONE OUR JOB RIGHT IN THE VINEYARD AND WINERY, THE AROMAS OF RIPE RED RASPBERRIES AND ROSE PETALS SHOULD BE PROMINENT. JUST AS PRETTY AS THE DAY IS LONG. ON THE FIRST SIP, THE WINE IS LITHE AND JUICY, COLONIZING YOUR PALATE BY STIMULATING ALL THE UNSATIATED NOOKS AND CRANNIES. AND WHILE THIS IS ALL PROPER AND PLEASANT, THE REASON PINOT MEUNIER IS A CHAMPAGNE GRAPE IS ABOUT TO BE REVEALED. THE WINE'S FINISH IS A CRESCENDO OF FIRM TANNIN AND PUNCTUATING ACIDITY, STIMULATING THE SENSES AND LOOKING FOR A PERFECT PAIRING. IT COULD BE WITH YOU!

HERE AT THE VINEYARD, PINOT MEUNIER FINDS A GOOD HOME WITH SALMON, A CHARCUTERIE BOARD, WARM DUCK CONFIT TOPPED SALAD, OR MAYBE JUST ABOUT A QUARTER TO 5 ON A FRIDAY NIGHT. PINOT MEUNIER, ALONE AND UNAFRAID, BROUGHT TO YOU BY BLOCK 1.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE BELLPINE PEARL? ERNIE MADE A DEAL WITH DENA THAT WE WOULD NOT PRODUCE SPARKLING WINE, BUT INSTEAD WOULD FOCUS ON MAKING EXCELLENT PINOT MEUNIER RED WINE. AND IF THAT WORKED OUT ERNIE WOULD BUY DENA CHAMPAGNE. ROSÉ CHAMPAGNE TO BE SPECIFIC AND PINOT MEUNIER ROSÉ CHAMPAGNE IF IT COULD BE FOUND DOMESTICALLY. OR MAYBE A WEEKEND SHOPPING SPREE IN PARIS WOULD SUFFICE.

RIGHT. SO, A COUPLE YEARS BACK OUR 2016 PINOT MEUNIER EARNED THE HIGHEST REVIEW EVER FOR AN OREGON PINOT MEUNIER AT 92 POINTS FROM [@VINOUSMEDIA](#) - THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO KNOW GOOD WINE. DENA CALLED IN HER MARKER AND ERNIE WENT SHOPPING FOR CHAMPAGNE, PINOT MEUNIER ROSÉ CHAMPAGNE TO BE SPECIFIC. AND THAT WAS THE DAY THE BELLPINE PEARL TOOK CONCEPTUAL FORM.



SIMPLY PUT, THE BELLPINE PEARL IS A PINOT MEUNIER AND PINOT NOIR STILL WINE. IT IS MADE FROM THE EARLY HARVEST OF THE WINGS OF BOTH THE PINOT MEUNIER AND PINOT NOIR CLUSTERS. IF THE PLANETS EVER ALIGN AND THE MOON IS RIGHT, THERE COULD BE A SECONDARY FERMENTATION LEADING TO SPARKLING WINE. BUT NOT YET.

THE PINOT MEUNIER AND PINOT NOIR GRAPES ARE SEPARATELY, VERY GENTLY, WHOLE BERRY PRESSED WITH VERY LITTLE SKIN CONTACT TIME. THE FREE RUN JUICE IS THEN COMBINED AND CO-FERMENTED TO DRYNESS IN STAINLESS STEEL. WE BOTTLE VERY SOON AFTER FERMENTATION TO CAPTURE AS MUCH OF THE CARBON DIOXIDE IN THE WINE AS POSSIBLE.

WHILE THE WINE IS NOT EFFERVESCENT IT DOES TAKE SOME TIME TO INTEGRATE. MUCH LIKE CHAMPAGNE, CARBON DIOXIDE THEN TAKES ON THE ROLE OF STEWARDSHIP AS THE WINE SLOWLY UNWINDS THROUGH BOTTLE MATURATION UNTIL EVENTUALLY THE CARBON DIOXIDE IS FULLY DEPLETED.

KINDEST REGARDS,

DENA & ERNIE

## ABOUT AMALIE ROBERT ESTATE:



IT WAS THE SPRING OF 1999 WHEN WE HAPPENED UPON BOB AND HIS MONTMORENCY CHERRY ORCHARD. WE HAD BEEN STUDYING SOILS AND CLIMATE IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY AND DOING OUR LEVEL BEST TO EVALUATE AS MANY WINES AS WE COULD. IT DIDN'T TAKE TOO LONG BEFORE ERNIE SAID, "BOB, I GOT HERE TOO LATE. YOU HAVE YOUR CHERRY ORCHARD SITTING ON TOP OF MY VINEYARD."

WE CHOSE THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY BECAUSE IT WAS THE LAST BEST PLACE ON THE PLANET TO GROW PINOT NOIR. ALL OF THE OTHER PLANETS HAD ONE ISSUE OR ANOTHER - SOILS, CLIMATE OR THE PROXIMITY TO ESTABLISHED MARKETS WERE SOME OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DRAWBACKS.

AND SO IT BEGAN. APRIL OF 1999 IS WHEN WE BECAME CHERRY GROWERS FOR JUST LONG ENOUGH TO BRING IN THE HARVEST. FROM THERE ON OUT, OUR SINGULAR FOCUS WAS TO DEVELOP OUR 60 ACRE PROPERTY INTO A WORLD CLASS VINEYARD AND TRADITIONAL WINEMAKING OPERATION THAT WE WOULD OWN AND OPERATE OURSELVES.

THE BENEFIT OF STARTING WITH A CHERRY ORCHARD IS THAT YOU ARE NOT BUYING SOMEONE ELSE'S VINEYARD AND THEIR DEEPLY ROOTED MISTAKES. YOU HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE YOUR OWN MISTAKES - AND LEARN FROM THEM. FROM THOSE HUMBLE BEGINNINGS WE DECIDED ON OUR OWN ROOTSTOCKS, VINEYARD SPACING, TRELLIS DESIGN, VARIETIES OF WINES TO GROW AND THEIR SPECIFIC CLONES. WE LEARNED HOW TO FARM WINE TO SHOWCASE THE INHERENT QUALITIES OF OUR VINEYARD. WE HAD HELP FROM SOME GREAT AND PATIENT MENTORS INCLUDING BRUCE WEBER, DICK ERATH, MIKE ETZEL, STEVE DOERNER, AND MANY, MANY OTHERS.

WHEN IT CAME TIME TO DESIGN THE WINERY, WE ONLY WANTED TO BUILD ONE, SO WE FOUND THE BEST ARCHITECT WITH THE MOST EXPERIENCE IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY AND THAT WAS ERNIE MUNCH. ASIDE FROM THE AESTHETICS AND SITE PLACEMENT, THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE WAS GRAVITY FLOW. OUR CROWN JEWEL IS THE 1,200 TONS OF BELOW GRADE CONCRETE THAT MAINTAINS OUR NATURALLY CLIMATE CONDITIONED BARREL CELLAR AND THE 500 OR SO BARRELS ENTRUSTED TO MATURE OUR WINES.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE NAME? AMALIE ROBERT IS A COMBINATION OF DENA'S MIDDLE NAME, "AMALIE" (PRONOUNCED AIM-A-LEE) AND ERNIE'S, "ROBERT."

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD ENJOY THIS NEWSLETTER, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO FORWARD TO A FRIEND.