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2018
Earl Stephens
Pinot Noir



Stephens Vineyard sits on a steep north-facing hill in the heart of the Russian River Valley. With well-draining Goldridge soil and cool mornings and evenings, this property is ideal for growing top-notch pinot noir. To achieve maximum complexity, fruit is sourced from a cross section of exceptional clones: 4, 115, 667 and 777.

After a long 2018 growing season, in the run-up to harvest we had a perfectly timed heat spike, followed by an equally fortuitous cooldown that allowed the grapes to ripen to perfect maturity, yielding a beautifully dark and well-balanced Pinot Noir. The fruit from Stephens Vineyard was harvested by hand at night to ensure that it arrived at the winery cool, and in pristine condition. It then went through a five-to-seven-day cold soak, followed by a native yeast fermentation, with punch-downs applied twice-daily. The four clones were co-fermented, with 95% destemmed grapes and 5% whole clusters. The wine was aged for 11 months in French oak barrels, 35% of which were new.

"This generous, concentrated and full-bodied wine offers an earthy, peppery accent over the ripe black-cherry aroma before unleashing a broad spectrum of black fruits, clove and anise on the palate ... great structure." —*Wine Enthusiast*, 93 points

APPELLATION: Russian River Valley

VARIETAL: 100% Pinot Noir

CLONES: Pommard, 115, 667 and 777

CLIMATE: Relatively cool, consistent fog during the ripening season

PLANTED: 1999

YIELD: 3.0 tons per acre

SOIL: Goldridge

COOPERAGE: 35% new; François Frères, Louis Latour, and Taransaud

PH: 3.65

T.A.: 5.7

ALCOHOL: 14.29%

PRODUCTION: 230 cases

CELLAR RECOMMENDATION: Enjoy now through 2028.