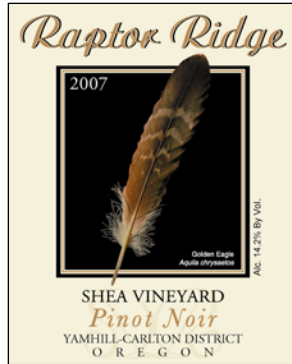




Raptor Ridge



2007 PINOT NOIR **Shea Vineyard**

Bottled Sept. 23, 2008
14.3% Alcohol
3.59 pH
6.1 g/L TA
Released Oct. 2008
465 Cases Produced

94 Points
Wine & Spirits
August 2009



In the Vineyard

Though there was much press about heavy rains during the 2007 growing year in Oregon, substantial heat unit accumulation permitted ripening during the early summer months. This drove solid tannin development. Rain during the last few weeks of the vintage, when the fruit was coming to final ripeness, was a challenge but not insurmountable. We sorted every cluster and intervened in the cellar more than in past years.

In these “extended” vintages, Pinot noir often evolves slowly and young wines are not full of obvious fruit. Their nuanced details, complex flavors, and layered tannins shroud the wines until fruit begins to reveal itself and provide balance as it ages. Vintage 2007 is much more balanced than past “hotter” vintages. The 2007 wines are the “thinking person’s” Pinot noir.

At the Winery

Harvested September 27, fruit arrived at the winery quite warm from a late afternoon scramble to beat impending rains. Fruit chemistry measured ripe but with acidity and structure: 24.8 Brix fermentable sugars, 3.21 pH, and 6.3 g/L TA.

Grapes were 100% de-stemmed, while adding 57ppm of SO₂. The resulting must was 70°F, so a heat-exchanger was employed until 3 a.m. to chill fermenters to below 50°F. During six days of pre-fermentation maceration, temperatures slowly rose as native fermentations kicked-off. On day seven, lagging fermenters were heated to 75°F, and all were then inoculated with various strains of commercial yeast.

Wine was pressed after 18 days of skin contact. Though fermentation temperatures were modest, the wine was quite extractive and tannic. Pressed wine settled for two days in stainless steel tanks, was racked, barreled and inoculated with M/L culture. Wine was raised in 49% new French oak using the following cooperage: Remond (42%), Ermitage (33%), Cadus (13%), Rouseau (8%), and Seguin Moreau (4%). At ten months, wine was racked and settled for another 30 days in stainless steel, where final polymerization of tannin chains dramatically softened this highly-structured wine.

At the Table

The color of this wine is remarkable: dark garnet with a gem-like clarity. The Shea 2007 boasts aromas of juicy pomegranate and beeswax, with a bit of the classic “forest floor” mossy sandalwood perfume that has been common with Shea across the vintages. This young wine is amazingly ready to drink upon release, reminding us of a bowl of fresh Oregon blackberries and cream. More time in the bottle would only allow the ripe, polished tannins, framboise core, and black pepper finish to soften and lengthen.