



Raptor Ridge



2003 PINOT NOIR **Shea Vineyard**

Released Dec 2004
244 Cases Produced

92 Points
Wine Spectator
May 2005



In the Vineyard

Raptor Ridge celebrates 8 vintages of quality fruit from Shea Vineyard with the 2003 bottling. Located about 5 miles east of Yamhill, Oregon, Shea was planted in 1988 by owner Dick Shea. The site's well-drained Willakenzie soils paired with meticulous care of the vines by vineyard manager Javier Marin, yield spectacular fruit that is sought after by many winemakers.

Vintage 2003 was comprised one-half of fruit from the original planting of Block 26, a Wadenswil clone of Pinot noir. The other half of our grapes came from newer plantings of Dijon clones 777 and 115 on grafted rootstock. Grapes were harvested in a range of 25 to 26 degrees Brix, with a pH of 3.45.

At the Winery

Fermentations were carried out with both commercial and indigenous strains of yeast. The wines were cold-soaked for four days, then each tank inoculated with either BM 45 to promote spice-rack flavors of anise and cedar or 71B, to elevate fruitiness. Wines were then cellared for 11 months in a selection of 30% new French oak, balanced with a range of cooperage from one to five years of age. The finished wine was racked once, egg-white fined, and placed back into barrels for an additional 3 months. We then racked again prior to bottling.

At the Table

Translucent garnet in color with a rich nose of ripe strawberry preserves and vanilla bean, this vintage of Shea is a dichotomy of subtle aroma and flavor with powerful wine strength. Well-integrated oak lends a brown spice characteristic. The mouth feel is viscous, broad and soft, with a lingering finish reminiscent of blueberry cobbler. We suggest pairing this vintage with subtler flavors of fish and fowl, rather than heavy lamb and beef dishes. The finish will lengthen as the alcohol, higher this vintage than usual, integrates with time.