

## 1975-2022

**2022:** March 2022 began with intensity but ended on a milder note. A beautiful early spring in April spurred bud break in the vines. Suddenly, an unexpected blast of cold Arctic air brought freezing temperatures for nearly 7 days, causing an unprecedented late frost event in the valley. Despite losing many primary buds, Mother Nature’s resilience and forethought became evident as protected secondary (and sometimes tertiary) buds emerged weeks later. Despite the late start and spring anxiety, a strong summer and historically warm October allowed the fruit to ripen perfectly. The resulting wines are remarkable for their lively and energetic nature, bright acidity, and fruit-forward aromas—a celebration of overcoming challenges earlier in the year.

**2020:** Heading into the 2020 vintage, we expected challenges due to COVID restrictions, but the reality was more daunting. On September 10th, just after harvesting Pinot Noir from Avellana Vineyard, the Chehalem Mountains fire erupted, filling the Willamette Valley with smoke for over a week. This forced winemakers to adapt quickly, sharing information to mitigate the unprecedented season. Despite the initial promise of a spectacular vintage, we decided to forgo most remaining Pinot Noir due to smoke, based on in-depth experiments. Thankfully, the white wines flourished, benefiting from the ability to press off the skins and preserve the beautiful fruit. The 2020 vintage, defined by experimentation and collaboration, brought a fitting end to an already unusual year.

**2018:** The 2018 Willamette Valley vintage was exceptional, rendering winemakers almost irrelevant due to ideal weather conditions. The growing season progressed seamlessly with milestones met on schedule (bud break in mid-April, flowering by mid-June, and fruit set in mid-July). A warm summer initially hinted at an early harvest, but September rains and cooler nights slowed ripening, ensuring perfectly timed fruit picking. The result: white wines boasting aromatic freshness and intense fruit, and reds displaying deep color, balanced tannins, and spicy dark fruit flavors. While the vines were expected to be impressive upon release, they have also proven themselves to possess perfect structure for aging.

**2016:** 2013 – 2016 vintages required winemakers in the Willamette Valley to redefine the norm in the region. In 2016, bud break surprised us, occurring a full three weeks earlier than usual. A heat spell condensed flowering, and a warm early summer persisted until August. Harvested, which began later that month, was in full swing by early September, concluding in early October. The fruit quality was exceptional, free from any disease pressure, with small fruit set and berry size, resulting in lower yields but intensely flavorful fruit. Comparable to the 2006 vintage, 2016 delivered lush and elegant wines with a surprising touch of acidity, though in limited supply. Undoubtedly, a standout vintage for Oregon.

**2014:** Described as a Goldilocks vintage in Oregon—neither too hot nor too cold, with just the right amount of rain—2014 stands out as the warmest season on record in the Willamette Valley. Surprisingly, this warmth was attributed to higher-than-normal minimum temperatures rather than exceptionally high maximum temperatures. With a warm spring and some rain, early bud break occurred, and the season maintained consistently warm temperatures. Unusually elevated nighttime temperatures accelerated ripening despite substantial crop loads, leading to an early September harvest. The dry conditions minimized disease pressure, resulting in a bountiful, clean, and fully ripe vintage.

**2012:** Following the late and cool vintages of 2010 and 2011, the arrival of 2012 was a much-welcomed change. Despite a wet and prolonged spring, the summer brought about dry and warm conditions. From July through mid-October, precipitation remained minimal. Warm days and cool nights provided ideal conditions for achieving beautiful ripeness and sugar levels while preserving bright acidity. The impact of the wet spring resulted in lower crops, intensifying the flavor profile. Widely recognized as an “epic” vintage in Oregon wine history, 2012 has lived up to its acclaim as the wines continue to showcase the exceptional quality of this harvest.

**2010:** Early April budbreak was followed by a month of cool weather stalling growth throughout a wet spring and the wettest June on record resulting in small yields. The summer continued to be the coolest in 17 years and as we approached the fall the anxiety was palpable in the Willamette Valley. As the birds arrived in Hitchcock numbers, we were well into the late part of October when Mother Nature blessed us with two straight weeks of dry, clear, warm days nudging the fruit into perfect ripeness.

**2008:** Winemakers consider themselves fortunate to encounter a few truly magical vintages in their career, and 2008 undoubtedly falls into that category. In the Willamette Valley, the season kicked off two weeks behind schedule due to a cool spring, causing a delay in budbreak. The consistently cool weather through June and into July prompted us to further reduce already low crop levels, ensuring ripening for what appeared to be a notably cool vintage. Unexpectedly, August brought out the sun, which continued into September and October, providing a stunning Indian summer. Daytime temperatures remained high, while nighttime temperatures dropped into the 40s, resulting in ripe and beautiful fruit with preserved natural acidity. Harvest commenced in October and concluded in early November, offering the vines an extended hang time. The flexibility to pick when desired contributed to making this vintage truly exceptional.

**2006:** In 2006, Oregon’s orchards and vineyards achieved record yields, with extraordinarily high crop tons per acre throughout the Willamette Valley. Above-average winter rainfall saturated the soil, providing abundant water that allowed vines to flourish during the subsequent dry summer. Harvest, generally hot and rapid, resulted in a larger average cluster size, potentially attributed to soil water levels. However, this factor also ensured high-quality and clean fruit from contented vines.

**2004:** A deep winter freeze and spring rains led to low-yielding vines with uneven berry size. The dry and mild summer persisted until mid-September, when Oregon experienced stormy weather with hail and rain. Fortunately, the end of September brought warm, dry weather with light winds, allowing the vines to dry up and complete ripening at a relaxed pace. These events contributed to beautiful freshness and Oregon’s signature intense fruit flavors.

**2002:** Spring provided a successful flowering and a good fruit set. Mid-summer temperatures were warm and dry, while the arrival of fall brought just enough moisture to provide the vines a drink and bring the fruit to perfect ripeness. The result was good, clean, and sound fruit, with yields reaching 2 tons per acre.

**2000:** The fruit for our Reserve blend, harvested from Ponzi’s Madrona and Abetina Vineyards, along with Linda Vista Vineyard, experienced a mild summer and dry fall, resulting in perfect ripeness, cleanliness, and optimal yields of 2 tons per acre. Comprising Pommard clones, these vines, aged between 15 and 30 years in that particular year, contribute to the distinctive character of the vintage. Notably, this release marks the 30th anniversary of Ponzi vineyards, celebrating the legacy and quality associated with our longstanding commitment to winemaking excellence.

**1998:** Glorious wines, though not much of them. The cultivation of vines recovering from a large 1997 crop and damp, cool weather at bloom, doomed this vintage to short crops. The harvest resulted, however, with a normal ripening season and no early rains, deeply extracted and highly structured wines. Crop loads were even smaller than 1994; the wines are big but require time in the bottle to regain their lushness and finesse. Possibly one of the best vintages to date.

**1996:** The summer of 1996 provided a warm and fairly long ripening period for Oregon Pinot Noir, although three were intermittent harvest rains. Fruit in this year was close to fully ripe when a few days of rain arrived, resulting in almost normal size and richness in Pinot Noir. The vintage yields were slightly below normal levels, but not financially threatened as with the 1994 and 1998. A fat, rich vintage considered the “best of the rain years” by critics.

**1994:** Spring rains knocked off some of the flowering, which resulted in low yields, combined with a very warm summer and fall. The result was intense, rich fruit. The yields in some of our vineyards were as low as .8T/acre; most vineyards were at 1.5 - 2T/acre.

**1992:** This was the hottest year in Oregon’s brief modern viticultural history. Fortunately, the heat moderated somewhat at the end of maturity, allowing many producers to make wines of outstanding quality. The experience of 1987 may have aided producers in making their cultural and picking decisions. Crop was good. Thinning was required to be successful.

**1990:** Very cold conditions in December of 1989 caused bud damage which led to the third straight year of short crops in Oregon. A long, cool year and a dry fall resulted in quality very good to excellent. Harvest was October 8-15th.

**1988:** Excellent, small vintage. Crop seriously reduced by winter drought-induced boron deficiency and poor weather bloom. Bud break early, but growth slowed by cool, damp weather in April, May and June. July and August extremely dry and warm; cool weather arrived at end of September. Harvest began in last week of September and continued through first week in October in dry and moderate weather.

**1986:** Very good vintage with normal crop levels. April brought a mix of showers and sun. May was warm and dry at end. A dry June followed by slightly cooler than usual July. August was hot and dry; September temperatures were lower than normal with 1.68 inches of rain in the last two weeks. October was warm and dry, perfect for final fruit maturation. Some winemakers harvested during the September rains. Those who waited were rewarded.

**1984:** Rainy vintage. Cool, damp April followed by twice the normal rain in May and June. Set was not completed until well into a warm and dry July. August and September cooler than usual. October damp and cool. Harvest lasted into November - 30 days behind schedule.

**1982:** This year was a very good vintage with large crop. Wet and cool April, perfect May and ideal bloom conditions in June. July and August were warm with average rain. September was warm with precipitation. Harvest took place during the first two weeks of October under dry conditions.

**1980:** Excellent vintage with small crop due to rainfall and cool temperatures during bloom. May 25th eruption of Mount Saint Helens left vines undamaged. Poor weather in June, followed by warm, dry weather in July and August. September drier than usual. October remained warm and dry.

**1978:** Very warm vintage with early bloom and relatively dry summer. During a period when cool climate viticulture was being touted as Oregon’s strength, there was strong concern for overripe fruit. As it turned out, the acid structure supported the development for the wine.

**2021:** This vintage brought relief and smiles to grape growers and winemakers in the valley. Following the challenges of the smoke-filled 2020 vintage and the “heat dome” events in the summer of 2021, there were concerns about what this year would hold. Fortunately, the heat events had minimal impact, even potentially eliminating mildew issues. September rains refreshed the vines, and the fruit came in mid-September, clean, ripe, and flavorful. Similar to 2012, cool nights resulted in wines with balanced acidity, aromatic richness, and delicious full flavors. Despite smaller yields than expected, the wines showcase intensified color and structure. After challenging years, the Valley was filled with happy and energized individuals, eager to harvest and create beautiful wines once again, and this joy is likely reflected in the wines themselves.

**2019:** This is the ‘Throwback Vintage,’ reminiscent of classic Oregon vintages and the inspiration for our founders. Dick and Nancy, to move to the Willamette Valley over 50 years ago. A mild summer led into a dry September, allowing a dance between sunny and rainy days during the fall harvest. Chardonnay and Pinot Noir were picked gradually, maintaining beautiful acidity and freshness. The pace was relaxed, providing time to appreciate our global crew and the autumn season. Vintage concluded in late October, revealing elegant, low-alcohol wines that fully showcase the Willamette Valley’s potential in a cooler climate. In this vintage, winemakers drew on past harvests and applied valuable lessons, highlighting the significance of experience.

**2017:** The 2017 vintage, reminiscent of classic Oregon vintages after five warm years, had an unusually cold and snowy winter. A cool spring delayed bud break in April and extended bloom into late June. September summer being dry and warm, grey skies from distant fires in the north and east had little impact on the Willamette Valley. Fruit thinning was necessary due to a large set, ensuring quality and volume control. Harvest started in late September with long, mild days and cool nights, resulting in bright acids and ideal conditions for ripe, clean fruit with mature skin and seed tannin.

**2015:** The cooperative spirit of 2015 in Oregon left a lasting impression. Marked as our earliest vintage since 1992, it unfolded with a warm and mild winter, showcasing early bud break in late March, and exceptional conditions throughout bloom, flower, and fruit set. The dry and warm summer encouraged early picks of white varieties and rosé sites, maintaining fresh acidity. September, one of the coolest on record, allowed pristine fruit to be harvested at perfect ripeness with slightly higher yields than normal. Wrapping up the harvest in early October provided vineyard workers and winemakers with the unusual opportunity to enjoy the remaining fall season. The resulting vintage reflects these favorable conditions through intense fruit flavor, while maintaining nuanced elegance and balance due to the retained acidity. Undoubtedly, a truly gorgeous year for the Willamette Valley.

**2013:** The 2013 season began with a warm spring, prompting an early bud break. Despite anticipating an early and smooth harvest due to the warm and dry growing season, a challenge arose in the last week of September. The tail end of a Japanese typhoon brought nearly 6 inches of rain, saturating the vineyards. Leveraging our experience with wet vintages in Oregon, we employed various strategies: using helicopters to dry the vines, multiple picking passes, extensive sorting before destemming, and meticulous winemaking. Fortunately, October brought three weeks of dry, breezy days, allowing the remaining fruit on the vines to achieve optimal flavor without rain dilution. While the white wines, mostly harvested before the rains, exhibit the characteristics of a warmer vintage with lush fruit, they also maintain vibrant acidity.

**2011:** The season commenced with a delayed start and wet conditions, with budbreak finally emerging in early May. A heavier-than-normal crop was thinned to manage the late season, yet even by late August, there wasn’t significant heat to assure complete ripening. Another thinning occurred at veraison (color change), and as we entered September, the weather remained cool and wet. As we were on the verge of losing hope in early October, the sun finally decided to shine. A beautiful Indian summer rescued this “Miracle Vintage,” and despite picking continuing into mid-November, the fruit was ripe and sound. This vintage, the latest on record to date, mirrors the structure, fruit intensity, and color of the beautiful 1999 vintage.

**2009:** In retrospect, the year 2009 produced some exceptional wines, yet my enduring impression is of its unpredictable nature. The lack of clarity regarding whether it was a cool or warm vintage persisted until the harvest concluded. Following a colder-than-normal winter, we experienced a delayed budbreak. Transitioning into the summer, moderate temperatures led us to anticipate a late and cool year. However, July and August brought sudden and intense heat spikes, hastening ripeness and drawing our attention. Harvest commenced in late September with ripe young vineyards and white varieties. October then brought a cooldown, affording us the luxury of allowing the majority of the fruit to gain flavor without accumulating excess sugar. The cool nights during this period helped maintain acidity. In its characteristics, 2009 closely resembled the 2002 or 2006 vintage.

**2007:** The string of warm and dry vintages concluded with 2007. The spring started promisingly, with ground moisture and dry weather during flowering leading to an above-average fruit set. However, the summer brought mild weather and high humidity, requiring careful attention to combat mildew pressure. Surprisingly, the usually hot August was not as expected, and as September approached, rain became a looming threat. The initial fruit picked arrived quite late, during the last week of September, initiating a delicate dance between harvest and rainy periods. By the end of October, relief set in as careful vineyard management and patient, skilled picking successfully averted any threat of rot. The fruit achieved optimal ripeness, resulting in the production of beautiful, if not outstanding, wines. This vintage underscored the significance of our accumulated years of experience, where flawless vineyard management and judicious picking decisions in the cellar revealed the true quality of the harvest.

**2005:** 2005 was one of the coolest growing seasons in the last 10-15 years. A winter drought and early, warm spring led to bud break in mid-March. The fairly wet spring and moderate summer resulted in later ripening, with substantial October rainfall just as the fruit reached maturity. Harvest, marked by intermittent rainfall and bursts of sun, required careful timing. This vintage demanded meticulous vineyard management and seasoned winemaking. The reward for winemakers was an extended growing season, yielding intense fruit complemented by the freshness of acidity and structure that defines Oregon’s reputation. 2005 is recognized as a “Classic Oregon Vintage.”

**2003:** This vintage presented unusual and challenging conditions, marked by extreme temperatures during harvest. The typically 4-6 week harvest was condensed to just two weeks due to rapid ripening caused by the heat.

**2001:** A dry spring and warm summer yielded a bountiful harvest. Despite our usual fruit thinning, the yields surpassed our target of 2 tons per acre. The warm and dry fall further facilitated optimal ripening, resulting in exceptionally high-quality fruit. The Reserve blend showcases our standout vineyards—Madrona, Abetina, and Linda Vista—alongside newcomers Gemini Vineyard and Winter’s Hill Vineyard. aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

**1999:** Excellent vintage. Fairly dry spring resulted in a good set. The summer months were cool and in September fruit had not reached maturity. A late thinning brought yields to 1.5-2T/acre. October arrived with an Indian Summer. Thirty warm, dry days and cool nights brought the fruit to full ripeness and maintained balanced acidity. And extremely intense year in terms of flavor and aroma.

**1997:** The last of the rainy vintage of the century, the year showed great promise until the skies opened. Crop loads promised the largest harvest, yet they were almost ripe with rains came. Unlike the prior two vintages, when the rains stopped for post-rain ripening, 1997 remained wet. Botrytis pressure was high. The earlier picked vineyards as well as those winemakers who sorted and crop-thinned, fared most successfully. Very good structures bordering on tannic, plus slow to evolve fruit has made this vintage unpopular with critics, although excellent producers made excellent wines that are now showing off.

**1995:** A vintage with rain at harvest ending a good growing season. A moderate to good yield and heavy rains for a week or more in the middle of harvest meant many wines lack the depth of fruit and color of others. That notwithstanding, the vintage made exceptionally rich, elegantly styled wines. Harvest was the first week of October.

**1993:** This may become another classic Oregon vintage. Bloom was in late June. Harvest was relatively late, but the autumn weather was warm and relatively dry. The crop was average. Thinning generally enhanced wine quality. Some raining in October.

**1991:** A long, cool spring pushed back bloom into late June and early July. The rest of the season was good, ideal with an extraordinarily long, warm fall. The crop was good. Due to the late harvest, quality was enhanced by severe thinning. Quality ranged from average to very good, depending on cultural practices. Harvest was mid to late October.

**1989:** In the late winter of 1989, Oregon suffered a severe freeze with temperatures at below -5 degrees. The consequence was moderate to serious vine damage and bud damage in the Spring of 1989. Crops were significantly reduced. The vintage was characterized by a late bud break, but a hot summer and fall harvest occurred in September. Quality was good to very good and the quantity was short.

**1987:** Quantity and quality vintage generally very high. Moderate, relative dry April; warm and dry May and June. Very cooler than normal, but satisfactory; August about the same until the end, when temperatures rose to the 90’s. September offered perfect ripening temperatures and below average precipitation. Most Pinot Noir was picked by mid-September - one of the earliest harvests on record.

**1985:** Exceptional vintage with normal crop load. Less than normal April rainfall and cool temperatures until late May. Rain in early June, then warm and dry. Warmer July than usual; August cooler than usual and drier. September and October warm and dry, permitting perfect grape maturity. Harvest was completed by mid-October, just before rains.

**1983:** Vintage of perfect growing conditions with moderately large crop. April temperatures were in the high 60’s; May mixed temperatures and rainfall. June was warm; July was cooler than usual and August warm and dry except for 1.6” of rain in the last four days. September and October were of perfect for maturation conditions with potential for overripening. Harvest largely completed by mid-October.

**1981:** A vintage of low crop because of wet June during bloom. Very cool April, May and June with twice the normal precipitation. July began and remained warm and dry. August was hot. September was warm for three weeks then cool and damp. October was also cool and damp. Harvest in early October between the rains. A year in which many Oregon winemakers only produced White Pinot Noir.

**1979:** Very good vintage with large crop due to ideal weather for set. Cool April with May and June warmer and drier than usual. July and August were very warm. Early September saw three inches of rain, then dry and warm weather. Most Pinot was picked by the second week in October. It was our first vintage with great evenness from producer to producer.

**1975:** Picked on one nice, dry sunny day with friends and family. Very few notes kept.