

2017 Division Rosé of Pinot Noir

Methven Family Vineyard & Bethany Heights Vineyard

Willamette Valley AVA

This is the wine that started Division Winemaking Co. a mere 50 cases of the 2010 Rosé of Pinot Noir, which we have always made from the mineral intense Eola-Amity Hills in the Willamette and continue the tradition year after year. Methven Family Vineyards is set in Amity section of this AVA and has provided a significant portion of the Pinot rosé since 2011. The vines were planted in 2001 on soils formed from volcanic remnants, a clay and broken rock soil locally called Nekia, and marine sedimentary overlay against basalt bedrock. Not too far away on the western slope of the Eola Hills, is the old vines at Bethany Heights Vineyard. Bethany Heights is a bit cooler and wetter than the rest of the region due to the Van Duzer coastal gap corridor and its proximity to the coast, and the site features similar volcanic soils that more in the deeper Jory clay based series, most well known in the Dundee Hills.

We believe the best wines are made by picking before overly ripe characteristics dominate the wine and balance and finesse suffer. Therefore, especially with rosé, which we seek more white wine-like vibrancy than red wine-like richness or intensity, we pick this site relatively early with more acid driven grapes and lighter red fruit. To achieve this profile, we crop and keep the canopy managed in a way to provide a lot of shading to slow sugar production, while keeping acidity high. Due to the early start of the season and the late heat wave, Methven was harvested around a normal time this year, one September 22nd, as we finally had a “cool” year after several warm to hot ones in a row. Bethany was picked about a week earlier on September 16th, with fruit quality that was very healthy, vibrant and perfectly ripe for making rosé. While in the past few years, most was direct pressed, we did most of the Methven pressing by foot into neutral French oak this year and the entire Bethany by the press into a stainless tank. The foot pressed portion, now per our annual tradition, was about 30% of the total wine and adds considerable depth and complexity the rosé.

For the fermentation, we created a pied de cuve (early native ferment) with a small amount of the Bethany grapes to build a strong yeast population from the native flora, which was added after settling into one stainless 1900L temperature controlled tank. The stainless tank began fermenting very quickly and we kept it on the cooling jacket at 17 C, with the ferment lasting until mid December. The French oak barrel portion of Methven rosé fermented considerably slower in the cool barrel room and finished in mid-January. We allowed the tank and barrels to fully finish the malolactic fermentation, as the wines had enough acidity not to warrant halting the malolactic transition.

Last year, we said the Rosé of Pinot Noir was our best since 2013, and while it truly was, the 2017 Rosé of Pinot Noir is our best since our first vintage in 2010. It's truly complex, delicate and delicious. The wine is quite soave and polished with a distinct honeysuckle and strawberry character. The palate is crisp with floral white peach, sweet strawberries and pretty feminine Pinot notes. The wine has a deep core, not typical of crisp and dry rose, and a delicate light pink hue. This rosé is quite complex and will be a wine to both drink now and even hold for the next few years.



Alc 12.3%, 135 cases