

2019 Division-Villages “l’Avoiron”

Rosé of Gamay Noir

Columbia Valley

One of the fastest growing and diverse American wine growing regions of the past 40 years is the Columbia Valley, a wide swath of land that reaches from the northern border of Oregon to well into the northeastern parts of Washington State. Within this region is a is the Yakima Valley, which is home to our nearly 6- acre block of Gamay Noir at the newly renamed Carousel Vineyard (formally part of Willard Farms), which we farm exclusively to make our Gamay Rosé and Gamay Nouveau wines. We began to transition this vineyard to organic principle farming in 2019 and hope to have the process complete by the 2021 growing season, We love this particular site for its mineral intense soils formed from volcanic Miocene uplift against basalt bedrock that is layered with a primary topsoil being made up of quartz and lime- silica, overlaid with the mixed glacial runoff of Missoula floods that makes the region so dynamic, unique, and in this case, perfect for making crisp and focused rosé!

We believe the best rosé wines will be made by picking before overly ripe characteristics can dominate the balance and finesse of the wine. Therefore, we seek a more white wine-like vibrancy than red wine-like richness or intensity, and we typically pick this site relatively early with more acid driven grapes and lighter red fruit. However, the 2019 vintage was a unique, almost throwback vintage, and held acidity and lower sugars longer, resulting in more intensity in the wine, without sacrificing energy. The season was cool by Columbia Valley standards and we beat picking the Gamay grapes by just a few days before a early hard frost, which caused havoc in the region (for our Chenin Blanc included).

We continue to destem all 100% of the grapes and quickly pressed them into juice. For the fermentations, we separated the juice into four stainless fermentations, made at different temperatures and with both pied du cuve build up and spontaneous yeasts. Three of the four ferments worked very well, however, our fourth and largest ferment was perhaps a bit too cool and was sluggish finishing, which delayed our bottling by a few weeks. We always strive with best efforts to not intervene in the wines any more than absolutely necessary and typically that means no fining and or adjuncts, but in 2019 our slow ferment was showing early oxidation that we felt reduced the overall quality of the wine. The choice of more sulfur or fining was the one to make—more so₂ would seriously stunt the wine and it’s liveliness, so we decided to fine with a low dose of inactive carbon (organic and non-animal based), which ultimately made this a better wine.

The 2019 l’Avoiron is really beautiful in the glass, a rose-tinged, pale but just ripe strawberry hue. The primary aromatics scream warm days outside, with watermelon flesh close to the rind and just ripe strawberry notes. The wine has excellent energy, with more density than we usually get from this wine, while remaining light on it’s feet. This vintage is easily our first bottling of this wine that will likely age well for a few years—the complete aromatics, chalky minerality and fleshy weight means drink up now or wait for the honey-ed notes that will come with time.

Alc 13%, 950 cases produced

