

# CHEHALEM

## CHEHALEM RESERVE PINOT NOIR 2012

Appellation: Ribbon Ridge, Willamette Valley; Oregon; USA

**Winemaker:** Harry  
Peterson-Nedry  
**Closure:** Screwcap  
**Alcohol:** 14.0%  
**Certified Sustainably Grown**

### Vineyard

Our Reserve historically uses 80%+ fruit from Ridgecrest Vineyards, our oldest estate vineyard, a 55-acre vineyard on a 176-acre property. Beginning in 1980, this site pioneered grapegrowing on Ribbon Ridge, a small ridge on the western end of the Chehalem Mountains and now an AVA. Soils are a Willakenzie soil called Wellsdale, a transition soil series exhibiting characteristics of both volcanic and ocean sedimentary underlying structures. The rich, supple red cherry, black cherry and blackberry fruits are characteristic of Ridgecrest Vineyards and the Willakenzie soil type. Excellent acidity, silky texture, and a long finish are hallmarks of the vineyard, being relatively high in elevation, mature in vine age, and deeply rooted.

### Tasting Notes

This wine will blow your socks off. Not only was it a fabulous vintage to begin with, a bit of hail in the Spring on Ribbon Ridge clipped this crop short and helped to concentrate this wine even more. Red-to-black velour in color, so deep you can barely see through it, with a bounty of dark fruit (think huckleberries and tiny soft blackberries), so concentrated and filled with sweet fruit you can hardly stand it. The flavors and aromas keep changing in the glass, but the complexity reaches out with vanilla, crème de cassis, rose hips, tamarind, tobacco, blackberry seed, warm oak, and bing cherry. Tremendous depth and density, serious tannin, juiciness, a big, lingering finish, but it's still lively and vibrant, and it's got ageability for the ages. Phew.

### Reviews

A smoky, peppery, tight style that lets the blueberry and plum flavors peek through the veil of tannins and gain speed on the long, vivid finish. Features racy intensity. Best from 2017 through 2022. **92 points, Wine Spectator, Feb 28, 2015.**

### The Wine:

We look for this wine to embody the essence of Pinot Noir. Select barrels and fermentation lots are chosen from Ridgecrest Vineyards before any blending is done in the cellar. We choose components to make a wine that epitomizes finesse, elegance, complexity, textural silkiness, and palate breadth and length for the vintage. We think these elements are what Pinot Noir is all about — not as big and macho as we can make it, but as beautiful and feminine as we can make it. Its balance makes it optimally ageable. This wine was once called the Rion Reserve, in thanks to friend and former advisor Patrice Rion.

### Vintage

This was a uniformly excellent vintage in the Willamette Valley, moreso than the past few years where some winemakers read it well and others may not have. The weather was storybook, almost entirely positive, with the Grinch of hail in one or two localized sites proving we're as vulnerable as Burgundy. The heat accumulations are the 5th highest in the last 16 years, putting ripeness in the league with 2004 and 1998. The perfectly warm and completely dry growing and ripening seasons kept disease away and pushed full ripeness without sacrificing acid structure.



Chehalem, © Shawn Linehan

