

ILLAHE VINEYARDS GRENACHE, WAHLUKE SLOPE WASHINGTON



100% Grenache. This magnificent example of the classic Rhône variety is velvety soft and a seductively light- to medium-body showcasing beautiful cherry color. The complex nose has aromas of red fruit, citrus, juniper, rosemary and hints of black pepper. The palate is bright with tart red cherries, leather and dried herbs, with notes of black pepper and orange zest.

Made with fruit from Mattawa Vineyards, this wine was fermented with native yeast in concrete and barrel-aged with 20% being whole cluster. Illahe's vineyard is on an 80-acre, south facing slope that experiences slightly earlier bud-break and flowering than most of the Willamette Valley and grapes achieve maturity even in cooler vintages. Excellent drainage. Cooled in the evening by the Van Duzer winds. The majority of the vineyard lies on marine sediments atop ancient siletz rock. Shallow clay soils. Elevation from 250-440 feet. Cover crops throughout the vineyard. As part of Oregon's Deep Roots Coalition, which promotes responsible water management, mature plants are not irrigated. Rainwater is harvested to mitigate dry spells. Extensive green pruning and plant topping done by hand. To reduce reliance on fossil fuels, they have solar panels on the winery and use horses to mow and transport grapes. The gravity-flow winery features three levels, utilizing the natural slope of the site, starting from the crush pad to the fermenters and the press below. A further drop-off from the fermentation room to the press level allows them to load the press baskets by hand. The building's west and north faces are buried in the hill, which stabilizes the temperature. Minimal intervention and historical winemaking techniques.

ILLAHE, pronounced Ill-Uh-Hee, is a local Chinook word meaning "earth" or "place" or "soil." According to the winemakers:
"At Illahe, our goal is to make wine as naturally as possible from soil to bottle. We work by hand on small lots with age-old techniques and materials. Our focus is to grow and make quality Pinot Noir and white wines that express the vintage and their varietal characteristics. We don't use enzymes or additives. Some of our wines are made entirely by hand, with no electricity or modern mechanization. We use a gentle wooden basket press and age our Pinot Noir in French and Oregon oak."

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Tasting Note:

ILLAHE VINEYARDS ESTATE PINOT NOIR, PERCHERON BLOCK

100% Grenache. Velvety soft & seductive; aromas of red fruit, citrus, juniper, rosemary & black pepper; bright with tart red cherries, leather & dried herbs, with notes of black pepper & orange zest.

Shelf Talker:

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