

## **Exploring an Oregon Biodynamic Treasure: The Johan Vineyard**

### **6 bottles, 4 grapes, 3 wineries, 1 Special Site \$150 (36 available)**

The Johan vineyard was planted in 2005, and from the very beginning its 85 acres under vine have been Biodynamically farmed with the goal of creating and nurturing an ecosystem above, below, and in between the vines. It is a very special place for Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and a host of other grape varieties planted there. It is located in Oregon's newest sub AVA (American viticultural Area) of the Willamette Valley, The Van Duzer Corridor AVA. There are many factors that differentiate this area from those surrounding it. The primary factor is that the vineyards are directly affected by powerful and cooling winds from the Pacific Ocean that are funneled through a break in the mountains of the Coast Range. This cooling influence delays ripening and helps balance alcohol levels. Simultaneously the strong winds cause the grapes to develop thicker protective skins which impart flavor and structure into the finished wines. The unique soils at Johan help to balance the wines. There is a large amount of calcareous material found throughout the vineyard which helps keep acidities high and the wines bright. We wanted to explore this unique site through the different lenses of a few producers who make wine from it. Hopefully you will geek out as much as we did!

### **Pét-Nat Rosé (of Pinot Noir) Johan Vineyards, 2019**

The Johan team specifically farms one block of their vineyard to make this sparkling wine, they value it for its fruitiness and high acidity levels. The wine is allowed to ferment on its skins for 24 hours then it is pressed off when it is still very pale in color. A short time later it goes to bottle before the alcoholic fermentation is finished. The wine finishes up fermenting in bottle and the resulting CO<sub>2</sub> gets trapped inside. (That is the simple definition for what a Pét-Nat is. Essentially the bubbles are the trapped gas of the primary fermentation, as opposed to the "Champagne" method where the bubbles are formed through a secondary fermentation). The result is a very pleasant fizz perfect for sipping with or without food.

### **Melon de Bourgogne, Johan, 2018**

Melon de Bourgogne is the grape of the Loire Valley's Muscadet appellation and wines. For this wine, the Johan team applies some of that region's methods, but certainly puts their own spin on it. After primary fermentation, the Melon is aged "sur lie" (on its dead yeast cells) for 10 months...this is commonplace for Muscadet as it imparts more texture and some aromatics. However, before primary fermentation even began the fruit is given 36 hours of skin contact which adds even more weight and grip to the light Melon grape. This wine will pair well with some oysters or shellfish, the traditionally paired foods, but it can hang on the table for the rest of the meal with a roast chicken, or other heartier fair too.

### **Melon de Bourgogne, Bow & Arrow, 2019**

Bow & Arrow is an urban winery located about a mile away from Le Pigeon/Canard. It was founded by Scott Frank and draws heavy inspiration from the wines of the Loire Valley. This Melon is an homage to the mineral-driven, vibrant, and crisp wines of Muscadet in the Western Loire Valley. It spends about 8 months aging in tank before bottling. It smells of yellow apples, white flowers, and wet rocks. This wine harkens to the cool winds of the vineyard it comes from, and shows a real kinship to the region that inspires it. A great contrast in style to the Melon from Johan.

**Gamay/Pinot Noir, Rhinestones, Bow & Arrow 2019**

As mentioned above Scott Frank of Bow& Arrow draws much inspiration from the Loire valley. For this wine, the inspiration is Cheverny, an area in the Eastern Loire Valley. Cheverny reds are made from a combination of Pinot Noir and Gamay, and that is the same blend that makes up Rhinestones. This wine is fruity, funky, and bright. It smells of wild berries, black cherries and sweet herbs...it is currently our favorite wine to pair with a juicy hamburger.

**Pinot Noir/Chardonnay, Tulips, Division Wines, 2018**

Division Wines is another urban winery located in Southeast Portland, it was founded by Tom Monroe and Kate Norris after learning to make wine in Beaujolais and Burgundy. This inspired wine is a co-ferment of 75% Pinot Noir and 25% Chardonnay. The Pinot is not de-stemmed which results in some carbonic fermentation. This accentuates the fruitiness of the grapes but is balanced by the intense mineral character of the Chardonnay. It is a complex and unique wine that smells of strawberries, flint, herbs, and spices. They only produced 2 barrels of this special cuvee. In case you were wondering it is a RED, not a Rosé.

**Chardonnay, Trois, Division Wines, 2018**

This Chardonnay is a great example of why we love Oregon Chardonnay and why the rest of the world is beginning to take notice. The unique soil composition of the Johan vineyard, combined with the cool climate, and ideal growing season of 2018 provided Division with the means to produce a truly captivating wine. The Chardonnay juice was fermented in a combination neutral 228 Liter and 500 Liter French oak barrels which don't impart any of the "oaky" flavor associated with most domestic Chardonnay. It smells of tart apples, spiced pears, and has lots of saline notes, it will really develop and become more complex as it sits in your glass. Open it a little early so it can breathe a bit.