

MARTIN WOODS

‘Top 50 U.S. Wines’

- Decanter 2024 (about Syrah Rocks District)

‘Winemaker Evan Martin creates an inspiring portfolio.

The wines somehow seem to match Martin’s personality: complex, lively and seemingly deep beyond their years.’ -Vinous



Year Founded: 2009

Region: Willamette, Oregon

Founder: Evan Martin

Known for: Terroir-driven wines that Martin says are meant to be as refreshing as they are representative of where they come from.

-Organic, Sustainable-

Martin Woods is hidden in the oak-forested foothills of Oregon's Coast Range, within the cool-climate McMinnville AVA, Willamette Valley. Martin Woods is both the home and winery for winemaker/vigneron Evan Martin, who has been driven by a passion since 2009 for discovering the most compelling terroir in Oregon. Elegant Pinot Noir and Chardonnay are the focus of the portfolio, but Riesling, Grüner, Gamay, Cabernet Franc and Syrah are proving exciting for exploration. Evan's small team farms according to sustainable, holistic principles and the growers he partners with are of the same mindset. The winemaking methods are delicate and natural, but of greatest importance is that a Martin Woods wine promotes the classic qualities of purity, balance, complexity and fine structure that can only result from great terroir combined with wholehearted dedication to art and craft. Above all, it is the hope that the wines evoke a consistent and inspiring sense-of-place, an authentic Oregon voice.

Martin Woods is known for using Oregon oak barrels to age wines. Martin points out that he is not the first winemaker to embrace *Quercus Garryana*. “Rick DeFerrari has been making Oregon oak barrels since the 1990s, and a handful of local wineries supported his efforts early on,” Martin said. Martin builds on those earlier efforts by working to determine which grape varieties work best in Oregon oak, how the barrels should be toasted and how long the wood staves should be aged. His work points toward Chardonnay and Syrah being excellent candidates for Oregon oak aging. As for their impact on the wines, Martin described Oregon oak as being “more reductive than French oak. It doesn’t breathe as much and evaporates less water. It’s just a slower evolution for the wine and there’s a tautness, an energy that’s maintained.”

2021/2022 Chardonnay Koosah Vineyard, Eola-Amity Hills



The Eola-Amity Hills is situated to the immediate east of the Van Duzer Corridor, the "air-conditioning" pathway through the Coast Range where marine air enters from the west and cools the Willamette Valley. At the very top elevation of the ava sits Koosah Vineyard—in the Coast Salish dialect the name "koosah" means "beautiful ceiling of the sky". This "magnum opus" project of grower Kevin Chambers is without question one of the most thoughtfully planted (and riskiest) vineyards in the Willamette's history. Ripening here is patiently late and Fall rains will almost always threaten the harvest... yet that risk also offers rewards. The high elevation makes for strong diurnal shifts between cold nights and warm daytime temps with extra uv intensity. This alternation gives ripe fruit expression matched to bright acidity, with aromatics that are lifted and fresh. The Parrett soil (rocky volcanic basalt with shallow topsoil) provides balanced stress to the plants, resulting in sparse canopies and loose clusters, good wind and sun exposure, and ultimately small berries with thick skins—all of which combines to give the wines structure, framing and definition. Martin Woods is one of the very few producers who have the privilege to work with these vines and we are quite thankful.

Picked Oct. 13, 15 & 16, 2022. Whole cluster pressed (oxidative juice handling, no sulfur), overnight settling. Primary fermentation in tank, then stirred and moved (with lees) to barrel. Aged 12 months in 228L & 400L French & Oregon cooperage (5% new), then additional 6 months in tank (on lees for 18 months total). Bottled without fining on May 7, 2024.

95 Points – '22 Decanter – *"A bolder Chardonnay choice in the Martin Woods portfolio. The floral quality of its aromas balances the somewhat rich mouthfeel of its medium-to full-body palate. With that said, it maintains a vibrant energy and nice overall structure - balanced acidity - featuring notes of stone fruits, crispy apples, lemon peel, and herbs. There is a phenolic structure and a rich texture."*

2023 Pinot Noir Hyland Vineyard, McMinnville



Hyland vineyard is one of the Willamette Valley's historic vineyards, planted in the early 1970s with clonal selections of Riesling, Gewurztraminer and Pinot noir that originated in Alsace. These vines are now referred to as "Coury" selections—named for Charles Coury who sourced the cuttings. These blocks of Dijon 115 and Coury Pinot noir were both planted self-rooted in 1989 in iron-rich volcanic soil. The vines have thus far (after more than 30 years) resisted phylloxera and instead show signs of health and longevity. The vineyard is farmed organically and without irrigation. Hyland is situated on the shoulder of the van duzer gap, the "air-conditioning" pathway through the Coast Range where marine air enters from the west and cools the Willamette Valley. Persistent wind spills over this neighborhood, moderating temperatures and allowing for patient ripening and retention of fresh acidity. I find there is always a distinct textural elegance and freshness to this wine, coupled with lifted aromatics, that delights me year after year.

Picked Oct. 18 & 21, 2022. 10% whole clusters layered in small open top fermenters. 24 days total on skins. Once daily punchdowns starting on day 10. Peak fermentation temps 80-82F. Aged without sulfur for 6 months. Aged 18 months total on lees (no stirring) in 228L barrels, average age 4-5 years (only 8% new oak). Racked carefully and bottled without fining on May 8, 2024.

99 Points - #4 - Top 50 Wines of 2025 – '23 Decanter - *"A dazzling Pinot Noir. Brilliantly floral, with spice, a beautiful elegance to the aromatics and a reductive earthiness. Sweet florals, red fruits and wonderful berries on the nose. Mint leaves, earth and savory notes of lavender and lilac. Depth and breadth, finishing with brine that lingers long on the tip of the tongue. The elegance and completeness floor me. Stunning."*

93 Points – '22 Vinous - *"The 2022 Pinot Noir Hyland Vineyard is decidedly savory with a blend of dusty sage, flowery undergrowth, cedar shavings and woodland berries. This is juicy and round with cooling acidity and ripe red and blue fruits, taking on an air of sweet lavender toward the close. The 2022 finishes long and staining, also remarkably balanced, with a pleasantly bitter tinge and a subtle layer of fine-grained tannins that hang around on the close."*

2022 Pinot Noir Koosah Vineyard, Eola-Amity Hills



Vineyard Info: see Chardonnay Koosah Vineyard

Picked October 20th, 2022. 10% whole clusters layered in small open top fermenters. 25 days total on skins. Once daily punchdowns starting on day 10. Peak fermentation temp 80F. Aged without sulfur for 6 months. Aged without sulfur for 6 months total on lees (no stirring) in 228L French oak barrels (10% new).

96 Points – '22 Decanter - *“One of the most spice-driven among the Martin Woods releases, with green aromatic notes of mint, rose hip oil and sassafras. This wine has an alpine-like freshness. features bold aromatics yet impressive freshness on the palate, with notes of mint, pine, and green spices on the finish. It is a medium-bodied wine with soft, grippy tannins.”*

2022/2023 Pinot Noir Jessie James Vineyard, Eola-Amity Hills



The Eola-Amity Hills is situated to the immediate east of the Van Duzer Corridor, the "air-conditioning" pathway through the Coast Range where marine air enters from the west and cools the Willamette Valley. The high-density (2,400 vines/acre), four acre planting of vines at Jessie James is east-facing at high elevation—ripening here is patient and harvest is usually the first week of October. Furthermore, the vineyard is in a rain shadow, allowing the grapes to reach peak maturity with less risk of botrytis rot. The Nekia soil (shallow, rocky volcanic basalt) provides appropriate stress to the plants, resulting in sparse canopies and loose clusters with small berries and thick skins. The wines display exceptional depth and complexity of structure and fruit, with freshness and compact intensity. We lease the vineyard from Jessica and James Lee, from whom the vineyard takes its name, and we farm according to organic principles.

Picked Oct. 19, 2022. 10% whole bunches (middle layer) in 1.5 ton open top fermenters. 25 days total on skins. Once daily punchdowns starting on day 10. Peak fermentation temps low 80s F. Aged without sulfur for 6 months through ML. 18 months total on lees in 228L French oak (10% new). bottled without fining on May 6 + 8, 2024.

97 Points – '23 Decanter - *“This is one of the lightest Pinots in the portfolio, with a chalky texture and minerality. It's giving a ton of energy. The palate shows refinement and freshness, with mouthfuls of spiced blood orange, smoky clove, and a white peppered spice to the finish.”*

2023 Gamay Tualatin Estate Vineyard, Tualatin Hills



Tualatin Estate is situated in the far northwestern corner of the Willamette Valley, with the coast range mountains to the immediate west creating a strong diurnal shift from warm days to cool nights, preserving mouthwatering acidity. The fine-textured, well-drained Laurelwood soil provides balanced stress to the vines, reducing vine vigor and crop yield. This produces concentrated red fruit, floral aromatics and ripe skin and stem maturity, giving fine structure and rich color. The Willamette Valley is truly a home-away-from-home for Gamay, which is beautifully matched to the cool climate terroir.

Picked Sept. 18, 2023. 40% whole clusters layered in small open top fermenters. 23 days total on skins. Once daily punchdowns starting on day 12. Peak fermentation temps 80-82F. Aged 6 months total on lees (no stirring) in 228L barrels, average age 10+ years (0% new oak). Racked carefully and bottled without fining on May 9, 2024.

93 Points – '23 Jeb Dunnuck – *“Highly expressive and pours a jeweled ruby/magenta color. A wine that Evan wants to be drinkable at all times, it’s hitting that mark right now, with a fruity aromatic profile in its notes of mixed berries, wildflowers, white pepper, and dusty earth. Ripe and effusive in the glass, it’s medium-bodied, with fine, chalky tannins, and while it’s lovely and refined, it’s still playful. It will drink well over the next 6-8 years.”*

2023 Syrah, The Rocks District of Milton-Freewater



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Tightly demarcated by virtue of a single soil series (Freewater Series) and a single land form (alluvial fan), the Rocks District exists entirely within Oregon, just outside of the town of Milton-Freewater. The soils are composed of cobblestone-size gravels (of volcanic origin) deposited by the Walla Walla River as it exits the nearby Blue Mountains. The extremely well-drained soils encourage vine roots to grow very deep in search of water, allowing interaction with an abundance of mineral-derived nutrients. The cobblestones also absorb solar energy and radiate that heat to both the root and fruit zones, leading to earlier phenological ripening and wines with refined structure. The inland continental climate and northern latitude (46 degrees N) translate to strong diurnal shifts of day/night temperatures, giving the Syrah a wonderful balance of fruit and freshness. We believe this to be one of the few locales in the world where the delightfully sensual floral/savory attributes of Syrah can be captured with distinction, making for complexly-perfumed and textured wines that remind us of the very best from the Northern Rhone.

50% whole clusters sandwiched in small open top 1.5 ton fermenters. 35-40 days total on skins. Once daily punchdowns started at Day 14. Peak temps, 80F-85F. Aged 12 months on lees (7 months without sulfur) in 228L and 400L barrels, 6% new oak, then an additional 6 months in tank. Racked carefully and bottled without fining nor filtration.

98 Points - Decanter - *“One of the most exciting domestic Syrahs, this wine beautifully showcases a well-crafted expression of the ‘classic’ funk of The Rocks. The deep umami notes come from the concentration of flavors in the berries due to the vines’ low yields. Notable aromas of green olives and peppers, violets, and meats complement those flavors.”*

96 Points - International Wine Report - *“Deep ruby-purple core with a medium purple rim, showcasing its bold and structured personality. With high stem inclusion during fermentation, this Syrah boasts incredible structure and an earthy depth that adds layers of complexity. Aromas of green olive, violet flowers, and boysenberries meld seamlessly with hints of black pepper, delivering a captivating nose that invites you in. The finish is long, with a lingering richness that makes this a Syrah you’ll want to return to, glass after glass. Though approachable now, patience will be rewarded—this wine will only get better.”*

2023 Call & Response Red Wine



This Oregon red blend is a collaboration between Martin Woods and renowned chef and pizzaiolo Chris Bianco. Using our local Oregon grapes, we blended a wine that calls to mind the beauty of fine Sangiovese from Chianti. Call & Response was intentionally crafted to be paired with good food and shared at a table amid conversation, inspiring meaningful connection. In music, "Call & Response" is not only a collaborative style, but a cultural practice connecting the artists as well as the audience. The interaction and dialogue creates rhythm and build energy. When the audience is called, all can participate, regardless of musical skill, becoming part of something bigger than themselves. This wine is a "Call & Response" between a winemaker and a chef. Fresh black cherry and savory spices—sweet fruited, lithe and long—with beautifully integrated fine tannin. Seriously delicious. Enjoy right now, or cellar 10 years+.