

Beaux Frères

VINTAGE 2020 | THE SMALL MIRACLE

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THE EARLY BIRD

First, the good news.

Over the years we have become so familiar and strategic with each block in our Estate and sourced vineyards, that harvest picking schedules are typically spaced neatly over several weeks. A healthy handful of sections are ready the first week of September, while plenty of others linger on the vine awaiting a few more weeks of ripening or longer, in some cases.

There are always variables, but the 2020 growing season mostly delivered a well-appreciated respite from our universe of worries; a warm, sunny summer led to harvest commencing promptly on September 5th. We began picking swiftly at Star Mooring and Doration (our Chehalem Mountains sites), and Guadalupe in the Dundee Hills.

With the decision to pull the trigger mostly on Chardonnay at first, we also chose to bring in a couple blocks of ripe Pinot Noir from those sites (in addition to a precious—and precocious—little block called “6 Rows” from our Beaux Frères Vineyard estate). **This fortunate decision would later prove to be a small miracle.**

The 2020 Beaux Frères *Early Bird* Pinot Noir is comprised from the most approachable lots among those first picks of Star Mooring, Doration, and Guadalupe vineyards. It is a mouthwatering, rich, yet balanced wine with ample verve and silky tannins.

2020 BEAUX FRÈRES *EARLY BIRD* PINOT NOIR* - 556 cases made from pristine selections picked in the first few days of harvest.



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VINTAGE 2020

"Every hour of the light and dark is a miracle."
Walt Whitman

The story of the 2020 vintage could fill a volume of books, even setting the pandemic aside.

For the vineyards, bud break and bloom phases went off like clockwork that spring. In an interesting twist, June rains affected enough of the primordial clusters being formed that final crop levels would be among the lowest since 2004, given that early rain events wash away some flowers that would otherwise have later become grapes.

Despite the lower yields that would follow, we knew we had something special and worthy thanks to this exact scenario: low disease pressure due to the resulting loosely spaced clusters, highly pigmented wines with increased concentration (thanks to lower overall crop load) and small berries with more surface area of skin, often without seeds. **This type of quality, always over quantity, is preferred.**

The summer continued on with breezy, warm days and cool nights through August.

Until a psychedelic haze began on September 13th, we were very pleased with the power and structure of the nearly 29 tons of fruit that we had already processed. The tiny but mighty lots harvested before wildfire smoke settled in are the subject of much excitement. They represent a perfectly captivating vintage.

There were 72 barrels (not the usual 400+); however, the resulting wines are remarkable in texture, tone, and energy.

And with that, we will be releasing a truly special set of very limited production wines from 2020 in the coming year, beginning with this pre-release offer that includes: 2020 Beaux Frères *Early Bird* Pinot Noir*, 2020 Beaux Frères *Light from Dark* White Pinot Noir, and a very small number of 2020 Beaux Frères Vineyard Pinot Noir magnums.

Thank you for including our wines in your collection,

Michael G. Etzel

MICHAEL G. ETZEL
FOUNDER | PRESIDENT | THE DAD

Mike D. Etzel

MIKE D. ETZEL
WINEMAKER | VITICULTURIST

**Wine Club members will receive a guaranteed allocation of Early Bird in the Spring shipment and may also reserve additional bottles during this offer.*

ALL HANDS ON DECK



As the second week of September arrived, the sky turned purple high above us, and chatter began among our colleagues about what could be considered an impending smoke crisis. Our winery team, including several admin and office types, clamored to pick a couple perfectly ripe blocks of Beaux Frères Vineyard... **It ended up being just enough to fill two barrels.**



Fires as far away as Central Valley California, propelled by a windstorm that wowed meteorologists around the country, soon brought air quality worse than anywhere in the world. A good chunk of the Ribbon Ridge AVA, including our small winery, lost power in the middle of the chaos.

In total we were off the grid for four long days, but only out of power for 18 hours, thanks to a genius electrician who rigged hundreds of feet of bologna cord to connect our processing equipment to a good old gas-guzzling generator that we rented. And we pressed on.

2020 BEAUX FRÈRES VINEYARD PINOT NOIR - 240 bottles available in 1.5 Liter format only, sourced from two small blocks picked by our staff on September 9th. The first 240 wine club members to reserve online may purchase one magnum.

LIGHT FROM DARK

The second half of September was dramatic and heart-wrenching as a dense smoke settled low in the valley. Once the destiny of the vintage revealed itself as being significantly at risk, we leaned into a creative plan developed through consultation with our brightest colleagues worldwide.

We intentionally chose the best blocks of our most promising terroirs and harvested at the right temperature; not too cold, not too warm, and pressed the juice off the skins as soon as it hit our crush pad. After a long, cool slumber in our finest barrels for more than a year, we're thrilled to uncover a bracingly precise and clean, juicy profile on the apple side of the fruit spectrum. **Not only is the wine unscathed, it is a jubilant, albeit one-hit wonder (we hope) that shows promise for collectors to enjoy now through 2025.**

2020 BEAUX FRÈRES *LIGHT FROM DARK* WHITE PINOT NOIR - 140 cases produced from Beaux Frères Vineyard and Stardance, a fascinating, transparent expression of this cool climate varietal pressed from the skins before color or tannin extraction.

