



## A Little Bit About Seven of Hearts and Luminous Hills

Seven of Hearts and Luminous Hills were conceived at the same time, but implemented in stages. Each has a different focus. There's no qualitative difference between the two labels – the winemaking approach is the same using traditional methods: native yeast fermentation, whole cluster fermentation (where appropriate on select lots), minimal handling and additions, and largely unfiltered and unfined. Luminous Hills wines are from 100% estate fruit. It's about a particular place with diverse soils and topology within the Yamhill-Carlton AVA. Seven of Hearts is about exploring other vineyards, other AVAs (American Viticultural Areas), and other varietals.

Our goal is to make accessible (meaning both affordable and approachable) wines that are genuine expressions of different varietals, where they are from, and the conditions under which they were grown; wines with complexity, purity and elegance. It's not limited to the Willamette Valley, but includes the other nearby regions we explore, currently the Columbia Valley (both Oregon and Washington). We strive to capture the unique expression of a time and place – the vintage and vineyards (or blends of vineyards) they are from. For us, great wines are ones that keep your interest over time: ten years or more, three months, or over the course of an evening – it should show more layers, more texture, more nuance as the wine opens up with air and with each course of a meal.

## Seven of Hearts

As important as Pinot Noir is to us – after all, that's what drew us here to the Willamette Valley, and our own vineyard Luminous Hills is all planted to Pinot noir – one can't live by Pinot noir alone: Grenache, Cabernet Franc, Nebbiolo, and many other varietals, all have a place on the table with a variety of foods. And as diverse as Luminous Hills Vineyard is, the many different expressions of Pinot noir can't be captured in one place. And that's where Seven of Hearts comes in: to venture beyond Luminous Hills.

The portfolio of Seven of Hearts wines includes several vineyards in the Willamette Valley from which we purchase Pinot noir. These vineyards currently include select sites in the Yamhill-Carlton, Eola-Amity Hills, Dundee Hills, Ribbon Ridge, and Chahalem Mountains. In each case, the relationships with the growers are as important as the careful selections based on the soils, sites, farming practices (mostly LIVE certified), and clonal selections. Contracts define specific rows with agreements for farming practices that will produce maximum quality (e.g., managing ground cover and vine canopy, dry farming, proper yield, and the timing of harvest).

Since Luminous Hills is planted only with Pinot noir, all other varietals produced under the Seven of Hearts label come from other sites, both within the Willamette Valley (for cooler climate grapes such as Chardonnay, but also the Columbia Valley, where we source varietals that require different conditions, such as warmer weather. Our preference is for locations along the Columbia River for the moderating influences of the water, the wind that is so beneficial to the health of the vines, and the well-draining gravelly/sandy soils that impart so much character to the wine. This, for example, is where our Rhone varietals are grown, such as Viognier, Roussanne, Grenache, Syrah, and Mouvedre.

While Luminous Hills will always be limited by the physical size of the vineyard at that site (11.2 acre), Seven of Hearts will continue to grow (but only to the extent that the highest levels of quality can be maintained), as we explore additional varietals and types of wine. Our newest releases include an Ice wine style Viognier sweet wine and a robust Alsatian style Pinot Gris. Future releases in the works include a Grenache Syrah Mouvedre blend, and a Loire Valley influenced Cabernet Franc.

## Luminous Hills

When looking for a site for our Pinot noir plantings, a primary consideration was finding soil diversity on a cooler site to set things up for more complex, structured, elegant, and highly expressive wines. Most of the places we looked at initially were limited in their soil types or clones, or awkwardly matched. That site that would become Luminous Hills Vineyard was appealing for the two very well delineated soil areas as well as the intriguing slopes and aspects (steep and diverse, but well-oriented). The goal was to find a place that would produce fruit with a broad array of fruit expressions, in proportion and well intermingled with other dimensions of minerality, spice, and texture.

The different blocks are divisions of the soil types and clones of Pinot noir. The lower part of the vineyard between 600 and 700 feet is sedimentary Willakenzie-like soils. The upper elevation, between 700 and 800 feet, is volcanic Jory. We've planted clones of Pinot noir (in combination with rootstocks) appropriate for each. Pommard (at 38%) on sedimentary soil is the foundation for the vineyard, providing a darker fruit dimension. Lighter, red fruit character is driven by the upper elevation volcanic soils. There, we've focused on Dijon clones, which benefit from the longer ripening time at that elevation (countering their tendency to ripen too quickly in warmer situations).

With the different Luminous Hills blends, the idea is to create distinct wines that highlight some of the differences available through the variations in soil, elevation, aspect, and clone. The regular bottling, what has become known as the "silver label", uses the broadest selections from the vineyard, generally all four clones and both soil types. It provides the big picture story of the vineyard, capturing the elegant red fruit from the 667 and 777 clones on the upper elevation volcanic soil, dense spicy notes 115 on sedimentary, and the darker, fleshier notes of the Pommard on sedimentary.

LUX is a smaller production, special selection with a foundation comprised of two thirds Pommard grown on sedimentary soil, providing the bass notes, or the bottom end to the wine, but with enough 777 from the upper elevation volcanic soil for balancing elegant red fruit to make the wine complete.

The ASTRA is a blend that is made in vintages where the yields from the vineyard will support a third wine. In contrast to the LUX, which highlights the lower elevation expression, the ASTRA is built primarily from the 667 clone on the upper elevation volcanic soil, providing structure and elegance, but still with enough 115 on the sedimentary to deliver balancing underpinnings of dark spicy fruit. The LUX and the ASTRA are made to be equals, just with very different personalities: the LUX more voluptuous, the ASTRA more radiant.

Some years we will also make a Rosé that is from 100% estate grown fruit. We call that Rosé AURA. When made, it using both direct to press and saignée methods of extraction for richness and layers, a combination of neutral and stainless steel for fermentation and aging, and is made dry. The wine is refreshing, food friendly, and ageable.