



The Argyle Story

In 1987, Argyle was founded by pioneering vintner Rollin Soles, with a belief that the cool-climate of Oregon’s Willamette Valley was ideal for producing sparkling wines that could stand alongside the great wines of Champagne. To make exceptional sparkling wines, Rollin understood that first he had to grow exceptional Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. To achieve this, he embraced a visionary grower-first philosophy that was unique at the time in Oregon. This approach involved establishing one of the region’s most renowned estate programs. It also included developing methods that allow the Argyle team to respond to the character of each vintage by proactively tailoring farming on a block-by-block level to either still or sparkling wine—a pioneering approach for an American winery, and one of the keys to Argyle’s enduring success.

In the years since, Argyle has played a pivotal in establishing Willamette Valley as one of the greatest places in the world for making sparkling wine. At the same time, Argyle’s focus on growing the finest grapes for its sparkling wines has evolved into a winemaking program that includes renowned Chardonnays, Pinot Noirs and Rieslings. Though the viticultural and winemaking techniques used to make Argyle’s sparkling and still wines are very different, both have earned acclaim for their elegance, vineyard-driven character and uncommon ageability.

While Argyle has quietly established a reputation as an Oregon icon, it has remained deeply rooted in the Willamette Valley community, and true to the grower-first ideals that inspired its founding. Today, the Argyle estate program includes more than 400 acres of vines, spread across four estate properties, including three renowned vineyards in the Dundee Hills and Eola-Amity Hills AVAs, and a more recently planted vineyard in the Willamette Valley. From the high-elevation slopes of the famed Knudsen and Spirit Hill vineyards to the warmer climate of Lone Star Vineyard, and the youthful plantings of the new Giving Tree Vineyard, the Argyle estate program offers a remarkably diverse tapestry of microclimates, clonal and rootstock selections, elevations, exposures and soil types.

In the winery, this diversity is preserved by Winemaker Nate Klostermann, who spent eight years being mentored by Rollin before being named his hand-picked successor in 2013. Building on the foundation established by Rollin—who continues to play an important role at Argyle as Winemaker Emeritus—Nate has emerged as one of Oregon’s most gifted winemakers. Continuing in the stylistic tradition that Argyle has remained true to for decades, Nate is recognized for making graceful and complex sparkling wines, along with vibrant and impeccably balanced Pinot Noirs, Chardonnays and Rieslings.

To achieve the highest levels of quality, Nate and the winemaking team work in extremely small lots to preserve the nuance and complexity of Argyle’s estate fruit. Nate is also a firm believer in the importance of experimentation. “We are a winery that is always striving to evolve, refine and improve our approach and techniques,” says Nate. “When Rollin founded Argyle to make

sparkling wine in the Willamette Valley, he was a pioneer. His commitment to trying new things is in our DNA.” Nate’s focus on innovation includes doing more skin soaking to tease out the character and spice of Argyle’s Rieslings, and experimenting with small amounts of whole clusters to accentuate the depth and nuance of the winery’s Pinot Noirs. Additional areas of experimentation include harvesting at various ripeness levels to enhance the cool-climate energy and layered complexity of the wines, as well as fine-tuning the dosage program to create evermore dynamic and terroir-driven sparkling wines.

Perhaps the greatest area of innovation and experimentation at Argyle can be found in the winery’s renowned Extended Tirage program. Inspired by a friendship established in the 1980s between Rollin and legendary Bollinger Vintner Christian Bizot, the genesis of the Extended Tirage program began when Bizot—who was deeply impressed by the remarkable quality of Argyle’s sparkling program—suggested that Rollin hold back a portion of Argyle’s Willamette Valley Vintage Brut each vintage. This wine would then be aged on the lees under crown cap for seven additional years before being disgorged to make a special “Extended Tirage” bottling similar to Bollinger’s own revered Grande Année. In the years since, Argyle’s Extended Tirage Program has continually set the standard for New World sparkling wine, earning the highest scores for any sparkling wines made outside of Champagne. As a testament to its commitment to this unique program, Argyle still possesses more than a dozen cases of its 1989 Vintage Brut under crown cap, where it has been patiently aging for almost 30 years!

At its heart, Argyle’s history is a quintessential Oregon tale, complete with the promise of staking claim to new spaces, taking risks, and embracing opportunities and possibilities. It is also a story of a deep and meaningful relationship with the land, with the Oregon winemaking community, and with the wine lovers who have long championed the regions beautiful and distinctive wines. What Rollin and the Argyle team have created is unique and special, but it is also an extension of the vision and dedication of early pioneers like Dick Erath and Dick Ponzi, who helped to lay the foundation that has ushered in a golden age of Oregon winemaking.

Today, Argyle remains at the forefront viticultural and winemaking practices that find harmony between the traditional and the innovative. At the same time, the Argyle team never loses sight of the simply stated, yet challenging to achieve, goal of making wines that meaningfully embody the sophistication and purity of the Willamette Valley. From its acclaimed estate-grown Pinot Noirs, Chardonnays and Rieslings to its globally renowned sparkling wines, Argyle has helped to establish the Willamette Valley as one of the world’s great wine regions.