Two Pack – Burgundy v. Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
$79 for the pair – regularly $42 & $65 respectively

The Willamette Valley in Oregon has gained a name for itself as "New World Burgundy" – particularly amongst winemakers in the Valley and those who have become acolytes of the region. Being the empiricists that we are here at Arroyo Vino, we decided to put this claim to the test; having to drink delicious examples of Pinot was a hardship (wink wink), but we undertook the task with gusto.
Burgundy has always been in the minds of Oregonian winemakers. David Lett, one of the founders of Oregon Wine, studied in Burgundy prior to beginning his venture in the Willamette; many other influential names in the Valley have followed in his wake and a fair number of Burgundians have made their way to the region as well. Though on paper these two regions have more differences than similarities, there is no question that they produce some of the best Pinot Noir on the Planet. Let's take a quick overview:

Climate
Oregon: Maritime – warm dry summers; cool wet winters
Burgundy: Continental – hot summers; cold winters; HAIL

Soil
Oregon: a mix of volcanic and ancient marine sediment
Burgundy: marl, limestone & marine sediment

History
Oregon: relatively new; the wine scene in Oregon began in the 1980s
Burgundy: ancient! Originated by the Romans, finetuned by monks, consistently redefining perfect Pinot Noir.

Flavor Profile
Oregon: ripe fruit, lush, juicy
Burgundy: tart fruit, tight, earthy

Where these two regions come together is in elegance and elan. And, thanks to modern technique, warmer climates, and changing taste, the overlap and swapping of "classic" flavor profiles and styles continue to increase. For this iteration of our two-pack we have selected two producers that represent their respective regions and share a similar ethos.

Domaine Michel Magnien Bourgogne Côte d'Or 2022 *(regularly $42)*
Born in 1946, Michel was the fourth generation of Magnien farmers on their land in Morey Saint Denis. He continued the family tradition of selling grapes to local cooperatives until, in 1993, his son Frédéric convinced him to begin making and bottling the estate's wine. The family has always eschewed pesticides and interventionist winemaking. Their preference became official in 2015 when they received biodynamic certification; Frédéric, the fifth generation, took the helm that same year. The entirety of the Domaine's output utilizes neutral oak, clay, or concrete in the aging process; new oak has not been used on the Pinots since 2015. Their wines are bottled without fining or filtration. The 2022 Côte d'Or is sourced from 50-year-old vines, vinified with roughly 20% whole-cluster in a mix of concrete and Burgundian pièce. The resulting wine is fresh and ethereal with notes of cranberry, strawberry and just a whiff of the earth and forest that foretell the wine's future.

Soter Estates Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Oregon 2023 *(regularly $65)*
After years in the wine business, Tony and Michelle Soter founded Soter Vineyards in 1997. Tony spent more than two decades working with some of the best wineries in Napa – Spottswoode and Shafer to name a couple. When the couple purchased their estate at Mineral Springs in Oregon, it was with the shared dream of creating exceptional wines with respect for the natural environment; their 250-acre estate was certified Biodynamic in 2016 – almost concurrent with the Magniens. Though Tony, at 70, is still involved, Chris Fladwood took over the day-to-day management and winemaking responsibilities; a native of Oregon, Chris brings the love of his home terroir into every bottle produced at Soter. The 2023 Estates Pinot is sourced from four of their single vineyards. It is vinified with 25% whole cluster inclusion and aged in French oak – 35% new – for ten months. The wine is elegant with integrated, fine tannins and displays elements of ripe strawberries, a touch of ferrous minerality and a silky finish.