

PINOT BLANC AT BETHEL HEIGHTS

Pinot blanc (also known as pinot bianco), like Pinot gris, is a genetic mutation of Pinot noir that has been cultivated throughout Northern Europe for centuries. Pinot blanc was first planted in Oregon in 1967, but there are still fewer than 200 acres in production here, of which four acres are at Bethel Heights, planted in 1992.

THE 2016 VINTAGE

From start to finish 2016 was the earliest vintage we have ever seen in the Willamette Valley. At Bethel Heights we were almost a month ahead of “normal” at every turning point in the growing season.

Warm winter weather for the second consecutive year, followed by a wet March, brought on bud break in the first week of April, followed by the earliest bloom we have ever seen in late May/early June. Bloom occurred during a stretch of unusually high temperatures, causing fruit set to be irregular and in many cases smaller than usual.

The growing season was warm and wetter than usual, leading to veraison in our young vines in early August (again the earliest we have seen) with the rest of the vineyard quickly following suit due to hot August temperatures. Harvest started on August 27, the first time we ever harvested fruit in August, and our last fruit was harvested on September 24, the first time we ever finished harvest before the end of September.

The wines of 2016 are not the uniformly opulent offerings one would expect from a year defined by its precociousness. Ripeness came early, but not at the expense of purity and elegance.



2016 PINOT BLANC • ESTATE GROWN

LIVE Certified Sustainable

Harvest date: September 19, 2016

Grapes at harvest: Brix 22.6, pH 3.25, TA 6.3 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.9 %, pH 3.28, TA 5.9 gr/liter

No residual sugar

Bottled February 21, 2017

70 cases produced

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*Bright and vivacious,
but also elusive and subtle*

WINEMAKER NOTES: This perfectly dry Pinot blanc offers aromas of ocean air, preserved lemon, and the summer-sweet fragrance of tuber rose. The palate is nicely framed by balanced acidity that runs the length of the wine, but doesn't diminish the plush texture. The young wine holds both the finesse of the variety and the ripe boisterous nature of the vintage in harmonious balance, and should cellar well for the next 5-7 years.

VINIFICATION: The 2016 Pinot blanc was whole-cluster pressed and fermented cold in a jacketed, stainless steel tank, then racked to neutral 500 L puncheons for ageing. It was finished without malolactic fermentation to preserve its fresh fruit character.