

PINOT GRIS & PINOT GRIGIO

Food & Wine

Though the spelling is different and the bottles are usually in different sections of the wine store, Pinot Gris and Pinot Grigio are the same grape. Translate either one and the result is “gray Pinot,” which makes perfect sense: the skins of this grape have a hue ranging from gray-blue to coppery orange, and the grape itself is a mutation of Pinot Noir.

Pinot Gris from Alsace, France, tends to be full-bodied and unctuous, full of spice notes and peach and apricot flavors; Northern Italian Pinot Grigios are bright, light and zippy, with white peach or nectarine flavors and tingy acidity. New World versions are essentially divided into these two styles, and the wines tend to be labeled Gris or Grigio accordingly.

FOOD RECOMMENDATIONS: This Pinot Gris is dry, with a strong citrus backbone. Food choices abound! Seafood is a natural choice. See our website recipe collection for suggestions, including hazelnut crusted salmon with pesto, or scallops with fennel marmalade. While we think of Pinot Gris slightly chilled as perfect for warm weather, it is truly a wine for all seasons. For cooler weather, think of lightly spiced Thai dishes, featuring shrimp or pork. Also, many Asian preparations featuring coconut milk as a base for chicken or vegetable curries are enhanced by the fruit forward citrus aromas and flavors of Pinot gris.

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD

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2011 PINOT GRIS

Harvest date: October 24 – November 2, 2011

Fruit source:

Vista Hills Vineyard 44%, Bethel Heights Vineyard 30%, Buttonfield
Vineyard 16%, Lewman Vineyard 10%

Grapes at harvest (average): Brix 21.3, pH 3.01

Finished wine: Alcohol 12.3%, pH 3.05, TA 9.8 gr/liter

No Residual Sugar

1264 cases produced, bottled March 12, 2012

Suggested retail \$16

THE 2011 VINTAGE: In a nutshell, 2011 was the latest vintage on record in the Willamette Valley. All of the principal phenological benchmarks were much later than normal: budbreak in early May, bloom at 50% on the 9th of July, *veraison* just beginning in early September. Harvest began on the 24th of October, the latest ever experienced at Bethel Heights, breaking the record set in 1991, when we started on October 19th. Underlying the lateness of everything were very cool temperatures, which had their grip on the Pacific Northwest through 2010 and 2011. Except for one hot spell in early September, temperatures rarely found their way into the '90s in 2011. But in the end, the long, relatively dry Fall and very extended hang time led to wines of great concentration and intensity with moderate alcohol.

VINIFICATION: The grapes were whole cluster pressed and the juice settled for 3-4 days before fermentation. The fermentation in stainless steel tanks was cool and stretched out for over a month. The wine was fermented completely dry and did not go through malolactic fermentation.

TASTING NOTES: Aromas of Meyer lemons, mandarin, and lime blossom. The palate showcases a refreshing focused core of citrus fruits over bright acidity, carrying the wine to a long finish. This wine exhibits the grace and transparency of a cool year, hallmarks of a great vintage.