

SHADES OF GRIS

Katherine Cole
The Oregonian

Pinot gris is a genetic mutation of pinot noir, making it something like a fraternal twin to the ruby-hued darling of Oregon winemaking. So it's well suited to the growing conditions of the Willamette Valley.

But instead of Burgundy (French pinot noir country), the epicenter of pinot gris in France is Alsace, the cool northeastern region where volcanic soils and dry, sunny autumns create powerfully spicy, viscous, sometimes slightly sweet gris.

The cool and mountainous wine regions of northern Italy produce boatloads of crisp, dry, lemony pinot grigio, perfect for washing down delicate seafood dishes and herbaceous pesto. (As you've surely deduced by now, "grigio" and "gris" mean the same thing: gray. This refers to the grayish tint of the ripe grape skins.)

For us, locally grown gris should conjure the aromas and flavors of those sun-kissed fruits that reach their peak in late summer and early autumn. Instead of descriptors like "nuts," "smoke" and "candy," we find ourselves referring to pears, peaches, white flowers and a cornucopia of melons and citrus. The wines we prefer strike a balance between the lightness of an Italian pinot grigio and the richness of an Alsatian pinot gris.



LIVE Certified Sustainable Wine

The LIVE logo on the back label of our 2013 Pinot Gris guarantees that both the agricultural and winemaking practices were certified under rigorous inspection standards by an independent third-party. www.liveinc.org

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD

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Harvest dates: September 23 and October 4, 2013

Fruit source: Bethel Heights Vineyard 30%,
Pheasant Hill Vineyard (Rogue Valley) 70%

Grapes at harvest (average): Brix 22.1, pH 3.25, TA 7.2

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.0%, pH 3.28, TA 6.9

No residual sugar

748 cases produced, bottled unfined on March 19, 2014

Suggested retail \$18

THE 2013 VINTAGE: A PLAY IN TWO ACTS

Act One was the carefree summer. Early budbreak, early bloom, and a warm summer meant that in early September we were actually concerned about sugar accumulation outpacing flavor development. We brought in fully ripe Pinot gris from the Rogue Valley on September 23.

Then came the deluge: five inches of rain in five days in the last week of September. A jarring interruption, filled with drama, distress and anxiety.

Act Two brought the final redemption. A cool dry October followed the rain, allowing us to harvest full flavored, beautifully balanced Pinot gris from our estate vineyard.

VINIFICATION: The fruit was whole cluster pressed at low pressure for 3-4 hours, and the juice was transferred to a settling tank for 72 hours. Once sufficient clarity was obtained, the juice was racked to stainless steel tanks and fermented at 55° F for one month. 80% of the wine was aged in stainless steel, while the other 20% was moved into neutral 500 L barrels for three months before being blended back for bottling.

TASTING NOTES: Aromas of orange zest, lemon blossom, ginger and lychee. The flavor profile showcases tangerine and hibiscus over a balanced core of acidity and lush texture.