

BRIEF HISTORY OF PINOT BLANC

Pinot blanc, like Pinot gris, is a genetic mutation of Pinot noir that has been cultivated throughout Northern Europe for centuries. Pinot blanc is planted widely in Alsace, as well as Germany (as Weissburgunder), and northern Italy (as Pinot bianco), and in smaller amounts in pockets of Burgundy and Eastern Europe. Pinot blanc was first planted in Oregon in 1967, but there are still fewer than 200 acres in production here.

Pinot blanc is widely appreciated wherever it is grown for its great versatility with food. Its special balance of bright freshness and depth of flavor let it pair well with a surprisingly wide range of flavors and preparations.

THE 2018 VINTAGE

2018 was the fifth in a string of easy warm vintages at Bethel Heights. Rainfall was within an inch or two of normal for the farm year (November through October), but much of the moisture came in the late fall and early winter so the vintage was defined by a very dry summer. This made for small clusters and therefore a relatively small crop. July was hot, leading to the first signs of *veraison* in early August, but our reliable Aeolian winds kept night time temperatures cool throughout July and August, preserving acidity in the fruit as it ripened. September finally brought a couple of welcome rain events that refreshed the vines and kept them active through the final ripening period. Harvest began in the last week of September and was over by the 10th of October. The fruit came in with the natural concentration of flavor and acidity that one would expect from a hot dry season, but sugar levels were happily moderate.



2018 PINOT BLANC • ESTATE GROWN

LIVE Certified Sustainably Grown and Produced

Harvest date: October 7, 2018

Grapes at harvest: Brix 21.8, pH 3.02, TA 8.8 gr/liter
Finished wine: Alcohol 13.1 %, pH 3.15, TA 8.1 gr/liter

Barrel aged 5 months in French oak. No new barrels.

Bottled unfiltered March 2019

150 cases produced

VINIFICATION: The fruit was whole cluster pressed and settled 72 hours prior to racking into a jacketed, stainless steel fermentation tank. Fermentation was cool, never exceeding 58 degrees F and lasted for one month. The new wine was then racked to 2 neutral 500 L puncheons and 2 stainless steel drums for aging on lees. After 5 months the wine was racked and bottled without malolactic fermentation.

WINEMAKER NOTES: Four acres planted in 1992 on one of the best pieces on the West side of our estate vineyard, our own rooted Pinot Blanc continues to be a favorite of mine, despite the diminishing amounts we bring through the door. Teeming with freshness and aromatic intensity not common for the variety, 2018 marks one of its best showings to date.

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