

PINOT BLANC AT BETHEL HEIGHTS

Four acres of Pinot blanc were planted at Bethel Heights in 1992. Like Pinot gris, Pinot blanc 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.

THE 2018 VINTAGE

2018 was the sixth vintage in a row defined by heat in the Willamette Valley. Following a wet winter, the spring and summer were very dry and warm, leading to the first signs of veraison in early August. Fortunately our reliable marine winds kept night-time temperatures cool, preserving acidity in the fruit as it ripened, and welcome rain events in September carried the vines through the final ripening period. The very dry hot summer made for small clusters with very small berries that in many ways defined our 2018 wines.

“Not since 2008 have we seen wines with the early exuberance of fruit that one expects from a warm vintage, combined with such a lean muscular structure promising significant ageability.” Ben Casteel

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD
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2018 PINOT BLANC • ÉLEVAGE

LIVE Certified

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 3.26, TA 7.6 gr/liter

Barrel aged 15 months in French oak, 20% new barrels

110 cases produced

Bottled unfinned February 11, 2020

VINIFICATION

The grapes were whole cluster pressed at low pressure for four hours then settled at 45 °F for 3 days. The juice was then racked to a stainless steel tank and fermented at low temperature for 30 days. After a month in tank we racked the wine with fine lees to 5 barrels where it aged 15 months prior to bottling without malolactic fermentation.

WINEMAKER NOTES

This special selection of estate grown Pinot blanc receives a prolonged *élevage* (finishing in barrel) following its primary fermentation. This wine was aged 14 months on the lees in in one new and four neutral 60-gallon oak barrels without malolactic fermentation, producing a broader, richer wine showcasing more savory characteristics and subtle oak spice without sacrificing the acidity that has long been a hallmark of Bethel Heights.