

OREGON PINOT GRIS

Pinot gris is Oregon's most widely planted white winegrape variety. Gris (or grigio) means gray, though the grapes are actually a dusky maroon color when ripe. Pinot gris, like Pinot blanc, is a genetic offshoot of Pinot noir. All three pinots have their roots in northern Europe and thrive in Oregon's cool climate.

In Oregon, Pinot Gris Takes On a New Identity

Winemakers in the Willamette Valley of Oregon have adopted this grape over the last decade. Not only have they all agreed to use its French name, Pinot gris, but they have achieved a stylistic consensus as well, carving out a middle ground between Italy and France. Oregon Pinot gris is dry, light-bodied and lightly fruity, with an occasional toasty quality and sometimes even a hint of fizz to it.

Pinot gris from Oregon rarely costs more than \$15 a bottle, and in a heartening display of enlightenment, winemakers are emphasizing the qualities that make the wine likable, rather than trying to turn it into something big and expensive... These wines are fresh and attractive, all good spring and summer choices."

Eric Asimov in *The New York Times*,
March 22, 2000



2001 PINOT GRIS

Harvest dates: September 29, October 6 & 14, 2001
Source: 19% Bethel Heights, 11% Lewman, 31% Freedom Hill,
39% Griffin Creek Vineyards

Grapes at harvest (avg): Brix : 23.0, pH: 3.31, TA: 6.5 gr/liter
Finished wine: Alcohol 13.5 %, pH: 3.25, TA: 7.2 gr/Liter 0.6%
Residual sugar

1900 Cases produced, bottled February 2002
Suggested Retail \$12

The 2001 vintage: 2001 followed the typical pattern for a good Oregon vintage, very similar to 2000. Bloom in mid-June under sunny skies set a large crop that had to be thinned aggressively. Sunny dry weather persisted through the summer. A shot of rain in early September kept the vines healthy through a long slow ripening period. Harvest in early October with no rain. In spite of repeated crop thinning this turned out to be our largest vintage since 1987.

Winemaker notes: 2001 was the first vintage in which we included Pinot gris from Griffin Creek Vineyard in Oregon's southernmost appellation, the Rogue Valley. It blended well with the Willamette Valley fruit, adding complexity and softening the acidity. Winemaking choices were made to preserve and emphasize the distinctive juicy fruit character of the wine, reminiscent of pears and ripe apples. The wine was fermented cold, exclusively in stainless steel, and was finished without malolactic fermentation.

Food recommendations: With more body than Pinot grigio from Italy, and less ponderous weight than Pinot gris from Alsace, Bethel Heights' style of Pinot gris is a food-friendly alternative to Chardonnay. A perennial favorite with grilled salmon, it is also a perfect foil for the heat of Thai and Indian cuisine. In warm weather try it slightly chilled with a shellfish salad.

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