

Harvest date: October 21, 2009

Grapes at harvest:

Brix: 23.2, pH: 3.2, TA: 6.15 gr/liter

Finished wine:

Alcohol 13.7%, pH: 3.25 TA: 5.7gr/liter

Residual Sugar: 0.78 %

235 Cases produced, bottled April 15, 2010

Suggested retail \$18

THE 2009 VINTAGE:

In the Rogue Valley of Southern Oregon where these grapes were grown, the 2009 growing season was slightly warmer than average, punctuated by a very hot spell at harvest. It was a bit of a scramble to get the fruit in ahead of the heat wave, but at Foris Vineyard they worked around the clock to bring in a crop of fully ripe, yet very fresh and lively tasting fruit.

VINIFICATION:

This fruit was whole cluster pressed, settled for 72 hours, and then fermented cool in stainless steel and neutral 500 liter barrels for one month. The wine was then racked, filtered, and bottled without malolactic fermentation to preserve acidity. It is bottled with a Stelvin closure.

TASTING NOTES:

Floral aromas featuring orange blossom and roses with an underlying current of citrus zest, geranium, and wet stone. Full yet crisp on the palate, developing stone fruit and asian pear flavors, while retaining firm acidity and excellent length.

THE JOYS OF GEWÜRZTRAMINER

Gewürztraminer is probably the world's most distinctive white table wine. The prefix, "Gewürz" is the German word for "spicy." Whether made in a sweet or dry style (we always make it dry at Bethel Heights), it is one of the most pungent wine varieties, easy for even the beginning taster to recognize by its heady, aromatic scent - a flamboyant, exotic bouquet of lychees, cinnamon, cloves, and rose petals.

For some wine drinkers, Gewürztraminer's prominent spicy flavors can be too extreme. Others would say the joy of Gewürztraminer all depends on the food you pair with it. As one of the premier grapes of Alsace, it is much appreciated with the unabashedly flavorful gastronomic specialties of the region, such as choucroute garnie (a heady combination of sauerkraut, sausages, smoked ham, bacon, onions, white wine and juniper berries), cabbage in all its forms, onion tarts, and foie gras.

Gewürztraminer also famously pairs well with spicy food: Asian dishes that include capsaicin (hot pepper) spices, oriental five spice, or even curry, or zesty-flavored fare like BBQ or spicy Mexican dishes. According to Gary Vaynerchuk, "Gewürztraminer makes the most exciting and interesting white wines for Thai food on the planet." (Gewürztraminer Wines in the Hizzy – Episode #258, tv.winelibrary.com/2007)

GROWING GEWÜRZTRAMINER

Gewürztraminer is a cool climate grape. Its roots are in the Alto Adige region of Northern Italy, but it is best known today as an Alsatian specialty. It is very well suited to Oregon's climate, where Alsatian varieties flourish. However, it is notoriously troublesome in the vineyard, which probably explains why today there are only 215 acres of Gewürztraminer planted in the whole state.

We had six acres of Gewürztraminer in our vineyard at Bethel Heights from 1977 to 1995. We loved the wine, but it drove us crazy in the vineyard, and we finally replaced it with Pinot gris. Ten years later, a family trip to Alsace rekindled the old love affair, so in 2006 we arranged to purchase some fruit from Foris Vineyard in the Rogue Valley of Southern Oregon. Thus was launched the return of Gewürztraminer to Bethel Heights, where it is once again a great favorite with the whole family.