

## 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*, 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 one unconstrained expert, "Gewürztraminer makes the most exciting and interesting white wines for Thai food on the planet."

## 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.

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## 2010 GEWÜRZTRAMINER

ROGUE VALLEY

Harvest date: October 28, 2010

Grapes at harvest: Brix 22.5, pH 3.28, TA 6.8 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 12.8%, pH 3.33, TA 7.05 gr/liter

Residual Sugar: 0.5%

180 Cases produced, bottled May 3, 2011

Suggested retail \$18

**THE 2010 VINTAGE** was cool throughout the Northwest. In the Rogue Valley of Southern Oregon where these grapes were grown, growers called it "the latest vintage in 35 years." Spring was cool and rainy, followed by a cool summer and showery September. But then the skies cleared and a perfect Indian Summer carried a small crop to ideal maturity late in October.

**VINIFICATION:** This fruit was whole cluster pressed, the juice was settled for 72 hours, and then fermented cool in a small stainless steel tank and one neutral 500 liter barrel for one month. The wine was then racked, filtered, and bottled without malolactic fermentation to preserve acidity.

**TASTING NOTES:** Aromas of nectarine, orange zest, and bergamot with underlying aromas of grapefruit, vanilla, and flint. The palate is unctuous with supple texture intermingling with bright acidity and just a touch of effervescence. Flavors of preserved lemon, tangerine, and just a hint of kumquat develop as the wine warms in the mouth.

**FOOD RECOMMENDATION:** Favorite matches for this 2010 dry Gewürztraminer are Marilyn's "Pork Tenderloin with Rhubarb Sauce" and the "Wild Mushroom Terrine," a rich and earthy dish that complements the spiciness of the wine. Both recipes are on our website.