

The Cinderella grape

Pinot blanc gets little respect, but to know it is to love it


By Bill Daley, *Chicago Tribune*
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Oz Clarke, the British wine writer, once famously compared pinot blanc to Cinderella because the grape variety always seems overshadowed by other grapes. Offering a reason why is Bill Newton, special projects manager for Binny's Beverage Depot stores:

"Part of the problem is that there is not a great deal of demand for pinot blanc so not much is planted. **The best domestic pinot blancs I have tasted have been when I visited Oregon. St. Innocent, Witness Tree, Bethel Heights all have pinot blanc, but often they are only available through the winery due to small production.**"

Sounds like what he's saying is for us to get more pinot blanc we all need to drink more pinot blanc. That shouldn't be too hard. Pinot blanc goes with many foods. Wine writer Natalie MacLean posts numerous pairing possibilities on her Web site, nataliemaclean.com: corned beef, brie, chicken Caesar salad, Asian-style noodles, sashimi, leek and onion dishes, even gefilte fish.

Oregon Certified Sustainable Wine

 Bethel Heights 2008 Pinot Blanc is one of the first wines certified under a new program launched by the Oregon Wine Board in 2008. The OCSW logo on our back label guarantees that the wine was made using responsible agriculture and winemaking practices, and that both of those processes were certified by an independent third-party. Bethel Heights' estate vineyard has been certified sustainable by both LIVE and Salmon Safe since 1999. For more about OCSW, visit www.ocsw.org.

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2008 PINOT BLANC • ESTATE GROWN

Certified Sustainably Grown

Harvest date: October 25th, 2008

Grapes at harvest: Brix: 23.5, pH: 3.33, TA: 6.8 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.89%, pH: 3.37, TA: 6.6 gr/liter

Residual sugar 0.5%

626 cases bottled March 2009

Suggested Retail \$16

Vinification: Our Pinot blanc is whole-cluster pressed and fermented cold, 80% in stainless steel and 20% in 500L barrels. It is finished without malolactic fermentation to preserve and enhance its fresh fruit character, and bottled with a screwcap closure to protect its freshness.

Tasting notes: Primary aromas of deep mineral, wet stone, citrus, white peach, and faint grass seed. The palate is a dense concentration of peach, golden delicious apples, and flint, framed by firm acidity.

THE 2008 VINTAGE: 2008 was a cool, classic vintage that kept us on our toes from beginning to end. A very cool spring led to a late budbreak as the vines struggled their way out of dormancy. Then, a very unusual heat event in May really got the vines rolling. Bloom came late in June, when a 102 degree day pushed all of the vines into full bloom, seemingly on the same day. Realizing that we were in for a cliff-hanger because of the late bloom, we ruthlessly thinned our vines in August. The rest of the vintage was magical, with an endless stream of sunny days stretching into late October.

(Note: you can re-live this cliffhanger vintage in our journal "2008 Harvest, Block by Block," at bhvblog.wordpress.com.)