

PINOT GRIS AT BETHEL HEIGHTS

Pinot Gris was planted at Bethel Heights in 1993, in a small 3.3-acre block in the coolest section of our vineyard, where it always holds on to its bright vivacity even in the warmest vintages.

In previous vintages we have blended our estate Pinot gris with fruit from southern Oregon. We will miss the beautiful fruit we received from our wonderful vineyard partners in the past, but we are very excited to present this first vintage of 100% estate grown Pinot gris.

This is a rich, textured wine – dry, but with ample fruit – a perfectly balanced tension.

THE 2016 VINTAGE

From start to finish 2016 was the earliest vintage we have ever seen in the Willamette Valley. At Bethel Heights we were almost a month ahead of “normal” at every turning point in the growing season.

Warm winter weather for the second consecutive year, followed by a wet March, brought on bud break in the first week of April, followed by the earliest bloom we have ever seen in late May/early June. Bloom occurred during a stretch of unusually high temperatures, causing fruit set to be irregular and in many cases smaller than usual.

The growing season was warm and wetter than usual, leading to veraison in our young vines in early August (again the earliest we have seen) with the rest of the vineyard quickly following suit due to hot August temperatures. Harvest started on August 27, the first time we ever harvested fruit in August, and our last fruit was harvested on September 24, the first time we ever finished harvest before the end of September.

The wines of 2016 are not the uniformly opulent offerings one would expect from a year defined by its precociousness. Ripeness came early, but not at the expense of purity and elegance.



2016 PINOT GRIS ♦ ESTATE GROWN

Harvest date: September 20, 2016

Grapes at harvest: Brix 22.4, pH 3.24, TA 6.3 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.9 %, pH 3.34, TA 5.7 gr/liter

No residual sugar

186 cases produced

Bottled unfinned on February 21, 2017

VINIFICATION: The fruit was picked at first light to ensure it was received at the winery at 50 degrees. The fruit was sorted and whole cluster pressed for four hours at low pressure and under a constant blanket of carbon dioxide. The juice was settled for 72 hours, then racked to a mix of stainless steel drums and neutral 500 L puncheons prior to fermentation. The juice fermented cold for one month and was finished without malolactic fermentation to retain freshness and acidity. The new wine aged on the lees for 3 months, then racked to tank one month prior to bottling.

TASTING NOTES: Aromas of nectarine, apricots, and peach, with hints of breadfruit and cardamom. The palate shows the full, supple fruits of a warm vintage without losing the purity and elegance characteristic of our estate. The languid and expansive texture of the wine is pitched against a bright core of acidity, building tension and energy, promising a wine that is delicious now, but also with a bright future ahead.