

BRIEF HISTORY OF PINOT BLANC

Pinot blanc, like Pinot gris, is a genetic mutation of Pinot noir that has been cultivated throughout Northern Europe for centuries. Pinot blanc is planted widely in Alsace, as well as Germany (as Weissburgunder), and northern Italy (as Pinot bianco), and in smaller amounts in pockets of Burgundy and Eastern Europe. Pinot blanc was first planted in Oregon in 1967, but there are still fewer than 200 acres in production here.

THE 2019 VINTAGE

2019 presented a significant departure from the previous five vintages, which were all dry and quite warm. By contrast, 2019 started with cool moist weather in the Spring that persisted into early summer. Even after it warmed up somewhat in mid-summer, we had unusually high levels of humidity, conditions we cannot recall ever seeing in the Willamette Valley before, and this continued into a cool damp Fall. Maturation was delayed and disease pressure (mildew, botrytis), amplified by the humid conditions, challenged growers every step of the way.

This was a vintage that required growers and vintners to be at the top of their game to be successful. Compromised fruit had to be removed from the vines before harvest, and damaged clusters that found their way to the sorting line had to be culled rigorously.

In spite of these challenges, 2019 had a happy ending. The crop was small, with small berries and lots of intensity. The cool season also allowed us to outperform on “hangtime” (the time from bloom to harvest). Instead of the normal 100 days, we were able to leave the fruit on the vines for 110 to 120 days without excess sugar accumulation, giving us enhanced intensity and complexity in balanced wines with moderate alcohols.



2019 PINOT BLANC • ESTATE GROWN

LIVE Certified Sustainably Grown and Produced

Harvest date: October 6, 2019

Grapes at harvest: Brix 21.4, pH 3.16, TA 7.5 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 12.7 %, pH 3.22, TA 7.0 gr/liter

No residual sugar

Barrel aged 3 months in stainless steel barrels

Bottled unfiltered February 2020

190 cases produced

VINIFICATION: The fruit was whole cluster pressed and settled 72 hours prior to racking into a jacketed, stainless steel fermentation tank. Fermentation was cool, never exceeding 58 degrees F and lasted for one month. The new wine was then racked to 4 stainless steel drums for aging on lees. After 3 months the wine was racked and bottled without malolactic fermentation.

WINEMAKER NOTES: Four acres planted in 1992 on one of the best slopes on the West side of our estate vineyard, our own rooted Pinot Blanc continues to be a favorite of mine, despite the diminishing amounts we bring through the door. Teeming with freshness and aromatic intensity not typical for the variety.

BETHEL HEIGHTS VINEYARD
6060 BETHEL HEIGHTS RD NW
SALEM, OREGON 97304 U.S.A.
Phone (503) 581-2262
www.bethelheights.com