

PINOT GRIS AT BETHEL HEIGHTS

Pinot Gris was planted at Bethel Heights in 1993, in a small 3.3-acre block between two blocks of Pinot noir that make up the heart of our Casteel Pinot Noir – one of the most favored slopes in our vineyard.

THE 2019 VINTAGE

In contrast to our previous five vintages, which were all dry and quite warm, 2019 started with cool, moist weather that persisted well into summer. Even after it warmed up somewhat in mid-summer, we had unusually high levels of humidity due to low cloud cover, 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.

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 “hang time” (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 depth and complexity.

“2019 allowed us to slip into the past, into vintages where the Oregon wine industry balanced on the margins of viticulture, striving to get grapes as ripe as we were able to get them as opposed to as ripe as we wanted to get them. As with any dichotomy, there is plenty of room in the middle, but if we think about vintages being defined by the sun versus vintages defined by the soil, 2019 was a welcome return to the soil.” Ben Casteel



2019 PINOT GRIS • ESTATE GROWN

LIVE Certified

Harvest date: October 6, 2019

Grapes at harvest: Brix 22.3, pH 3.24, TA 6.5 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.2 %, pH 3.27, TA 6.2 gr/liter

No residual sugar

160 cases produced

Bottled unfiltered August 10, 2020

VINIFICATION: The grapes were sorted and whole cluster pressed for four hours at low pressure under a constant blanket of carbon dioxide. The juice was settled for 72 hours, then racked to a jacketed stainless steel tank. 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 8 months in a neutral oak barrels, then racked to tank one month prior to bottling.

WINEMAKER NOTES: Our Pinot gris style continues to shift despite the dwindling amounts we produce year to year. We've been picking later and later, counting on our cooling winds to retain acidity while extended hang time provides a deeper range of flavor and a rounder, more opulent mouth feel.