

PINOT BLANC AT BETHEL HEIGHTS

Four acres of Pinot blanc were planted at Bethel Heights in 1992. Like Pinot gris, Pinot blanc 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

In contrast to the previous five vintages which were all dry and quite warm, 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, and this continued into a cool, damp Fall. Maturation was delayed and disease pressure, 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. 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 was a welcome return to the past, when Oregon wine balanced on the margins of viticulture, our fruit reaching peak maturity just before the season ended.” Ben Casteel

www.bethelheights.com



2019 PINOT BLANC • ÉLEVAGE

Estate Grown, LIVE Certified

Harvest date: October 6, 2019

Grapes at harvest: Brix 21.4, pH 3.16, TA 7.2 gr/liter

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.1%, pH 3.25, TA 6.8 gr/liter

Barrel aged 10 months in French oak, 25% new barrels

90 cases produced

Bottled unfinned on August 10, 2020

VINIFICATION

The grapes were whole cluster pressed at low pressure for four hours then settled at 45 °F for 3 days. The juice was then racked to a stainless steel tank and fermented at low temperature for 30 days. After a month in tank we racked the wine with fine lees to five barrels where it aged ten months without malolactic fermentation prior to bottling.

WINEMAKER NOTES

This special selection of estate grown Pinot blanc receives a prolonged *élevage* (finishing in barrel) following its primary fermentation. This wine was aged ten months on the lees in one new and one neutral 60-gallon oak barrel without malolactic fermentation, producing a broader, richer wine, showcasing more savory characteristics and subtle oak spice without sacrificing the acidity that has long been a hallmark of Bethel Heights.