

ELK COVE VINEYARDS

2016 Pinot Gris



VINTAGE 2016 was a year of unusual weather that led to beautiful fruit at lower than average yields. In spring, an early heat spike meant a very condensed time frame for bloom. This gave us smaller than average berries and clusters and set us on the path for our third early harvest in a row. Thankfully, summer weather was cooler than average, which slowed down ripening and allowed flavor development to catch up to sugar accumulation. Due to our small initial crop estimates, we held off thinning until the last minute to delay ripening and add “hang-time”, an important factor in the development of complex flavors.

We were a little stunned when our first fruit hit the crush-pad in the last days of August, setting a record for our earliest harvest in 40 years. September and October brought relief from the heat with mild evenings and cool nights that allowed for slow, even ripening. We picked fruit that was absolutely pristine and perfectly ripe, at a gradual pace that allowed us to give our full attention to each block and work shorter hours than in a typical harvest season.

We are optimistic that 2016 will be an outstanding vintage, reminiscent of 2012 and 2014, with wines that show great balance and concentration.

VINEYARD: Our Pinot Gris is hand-harvested from select hillside vineyards in the northern Willamette Valley. Pinot Gris has long been a focus at Elk Cove - our Estate Vineyard boasts some of the oldest Pinot Gris vines in Oregon, dating back to 1985. Three of our other estate vineyard sites are also planted with Pinot Gris, including 50 acres on steep sloped Mount Richmond Vineyard in the Yamhill-Carlton AVA. Planted in a high-density format, all our Pinot Gris undergoes shoot and crop thinning for low yields to maximize quality and concentration.

WINEMAKING: The Willamette Valley has the perfect climate for this delicate cool weather white wine. We have enough sunlight and warmth for ripening, but our cool evenings help retain varietal character and prevent over-ripening. We whole-cluster press our pinot gris grapes, then ferment the juice at very cool temperatures in small stainless steel tanks. This gentle treatment protects the aromatic qualities and enhances the natural richness of the Pinot Gris grapes, creating our most popular white wine.

TASTING NOTES: Golden straw in color, this fresh white wine approaches with aromas of Asian pear, honeydew melon and hints of lemon thyme and ginger. The palate bursts with star fruit, tangerine and apple pie mingling with notes of pithy lemon-peel and white tea.

VITICULTURE & ENOLOGY:

Vine Age: 4-31 years

Harvest Sugars: 23 brix

Vatting: Whole-cluster pressed and cold fermented in small stainless steel tanks.

pH: 3.21

TA: 6.3

Alc: 13 % v/v

Bottled: Feb 2017

Cases Produced: 16,841

REVIEWS:

90 Points - *Wine Enthusiast (October, 2017)*

“Fragrant and nicely detailed, this sends up clover and apple blossom scents. Apple-infused flavors follow, with touches of peach and spice.”-P.G.

Gold Medal - *Great Northwest Wine Invitational Competition (October 2017)*