

2010 Pinot Blanc



Viticultural Data:

Vine Age: 8-18 years
Yield: 2.5 tons/acre
Harvest Sugars: 21.5 Brix

Enological Data:

pH: 3.14
Bottled: May 2011
Cases Produced: 1,230

The Willamette Valley has a suitable climate for this delicate grape variety—enough sunlight and warmth for ripening and cooler night temperatures to retain varietal character. To preserve the freshness, it is whole-cluster pressed, and then fermented at very cool temperatures in small stainless steel tanks, which accentuates aromatics and enhances the richness and viscosity. The fruit is hand-harvested from select hillside vineyards in the northern Willamette Valley.

Vintage 2010 brings to mind some catchy phrases. *The year of the birds – Hitchcock style, let ‘em hang* and our favorite, and slogan for the vintage – “*Hang ‘10!*” Yes, harvest was later than normal. An exceptional cold, wet spring followed by what many seasoned producers recall as one of the shortest summers. However, 2010 was not the worst of years. The ‘attack of our feathered friends,’ whose almost unprecedented assault on valley fruit, also indicated nature’s signal that the fruit was ripe and grapes good indeed. Winemaker, Adam Campbell, comments in response to vintage nervousness, “you know, we have been doing this for almost 40 years, and it’s not the first time we’ve had slow ripening. We’re optimistic about it and we know exactly what to do.” Even science agrees. Climatologists show similarities to the great 2008 vintage; reporting lower yields, small berries and full flavor development at lower brix levels – all signs pointing to high quality wines with lower alcohols.

Completing the third leg of our trilogy, Pinot Blanc is true to our style of white wines; clean, crisp and focused on the fruit. While great ripeness is apparent in this wine, we strive to express the lean and racy characteristics of Pinot Blanc. This fruit is sourced from, not only, Elk Cove Vineyards’ Estate, Mount Richmond and Five Mountain vineyards but also one other select site in the Willamette Valley, Tukwilla near Dundee. We hope you enjoy this wine selection from Elk Cove Vineyards.

Reviews

“America’s Best Undiscovered Wines” ~ Food & Wine ~ Feb. 2012

“Why Pinot Blanc is hardly known and Pinot Gris is practically inescapable is a mystery beyond the scope of this column. In fact, it’s even more mysterious when you consider how good this juicy, full-bodied white is.” — R.I.