

2008 Late Harvest Pinot Gris

- Varietal: 100% Pinot Gris
- Appellation: Yamhill-Carlton
- Release Date: February 2011
- Suggested Retail: \$28



WILLAKENZIE ESTATE

TASTING NOTES:

Conditions must be just right to make this rare wine, giving us leeway until early November to pick pinot gris grapes with elevated sugar levels and intense flavors. As a result, 2008 represents only our 8th release. This bright, golden wine carries an intriguing bouquet of wisteria, honeysuckle, and ripe stone fruits such as apricot and peach, along with tropical notes of lychee and starfruit. The palate is sweet, rich, and very fresh with pear, apricot jam, pineapple, and honey and the finish is long and brimming with spice. Serve with tarte tatin or dark chocolate mousse. Our late-harvest pinot gris is also a divine pairing for blue cheese such as Stilton.

VINYARDS:

Willakenzie Estate has eighteen acres of Pinot Gris, planted in 1992, 1993, and 1995. The vines are densely planted at 1200/acre, running north to south, allowing for maximum sun exposure. All the vineyards are planted on Willakenzie soil, known for its excellent drainage. The clones used are true Pinot Gris from the Alsace region of France grafted onto phylloxera-resistant rootstock 5C and 3309 trained into an upright, double guyot trellising system. The Pinot Gris plants have now established a great balance, carrying a consistent crop around 2.5 to 3 tons/acre.

Brix: 35.0° pH: 3.4 TA: 7.5

WINEMAKING:

In our gravity-fed winery, the 2008 Late Harvest Pinot Gris was handcrafted to achieve a fully extracted and complex style. After 2 weeks in our unique Cold Storage Facility, frozen whole clusters were slowly pressed in our basket press. After cold settling of the juice, the fermentation took place in small French oak barrels to retain the freshness and subtlety of the fruit. The primary fermentation was achieved at low temperature and inoculated with selected yeasts to preserve the most intense fruit components. This wine, which was aged for 15 months in French oak barrels, 50% of which were new, will be released only to our direct sales customers.

Alcohol: 13.0 % R.S.: 16% pH: 3.5 TA: 7.6

VINTAGE:

The 2008 vintage was a classic Oregon nail-biting, nerve-racking exercise with a win on the finish line. Beginning with a cold late winter, 2008 continued into a very cool spring with March and April temperatures about 3 degrees below average. The 50% budbreak mark was not reached until the 2nd of May, and 50% veraison, when roughly half of the berries have changed color, did not occur until September 5th. For a while it looked like we would have a disaster on our hands, but Mother Nature took mercy on us by delivering less than 1.5" of rain in September and 2.4" in October, with sunny days and cool nights in both months. The result is excellent ripeness due to prolonged hang time, good acidity, and lower levels of alcohol. A winemaker's dream! We started harvest on October 1st, with the Terres Basses vineyard as usual, finishing on October 30th just before the downpour began. We are extremely pleased with our 2008 wines, which show finesse, concentration, and great balance.

