

2011 ESTATE GROWN PINOT BLANC



- Varietal: 100% Pinot Blanc
- Appellation: Yamhill-Carlton
- Release Date: May 2012
- Suggested Retail: \$21

WILLAKENZIE ESTATE

TASTING NOTES:

Fresh straw color. Dominant notes of fresh squeezed lemon and tropical fruits give way to fragrant wisteria, jasmine, and rose petal on the nose. This bright and racy wine delivers lemon curd, granny smith apples, kiwi, and juicy blood oranges to the palate. A long finish brings the whole experience together with just a touch of stone fruit and minerals. Our 2011 Pinot Blanc will age well for 4-6 years. Serve slightly chilled. Try this acid driven wine with delicious white fish tacos, clam steamers, grilled prawns, or a green papaya salad.

VINEYARDS:

Willakenzie Estate has seven acres of Pinot Blanc, planted in 1992, 1993, and 1995. The vines are planted at 1200 vines/acre, running north to south to allow for maximum sun exposure. All the vineyards are planted on Willakenzie soil, known for its excellent drainage. The clones used are true Pinot Blanc clones from the Alsace region of France. The plants are grafted onto phylloxera-resistant rootstock and trained into an upright, double guyot trellising system. Pinot Blanc requires a leaf removal around the fruit zone on both sides of the canopy to allow for good air circulation and exposure of the fruit to sunlight.

Yield: 3.9 tons/acre -- Brix: 22.1° -- pH: 3.2 -- TA: 8.5

WINEMAKING:

We timed our harvest based on taste and physiological maturity. Our goal is to let the vines fully express the fruit qualities that are characteristic of this varietal. In our gravity-fed winery, we made the 2011 Pinot Blanc in a rich and complex Alsatian style. We pressed whole clusters, and after cold settling of the juice, inoculated with yeast from the Alsace region, chosen to enhance the fruit's aromatics. We fermented in stainless steel tanks slowly and at low temperatures to retain the freshness and subtlety of the fruit.

Alcohol: 13.5 % -- Residual sugar: 0.2% -- pH: 3.25 -- TA: 7.9

VINTAGE:

The spring of 2011 was wet and cool, which resulted in a very late bud-break on May 5th and a subsequent late bloom on July 4th. The fruit set was very fast due to a warm spell and completed in mid-July with an abundant number of clusters and minimum shattering of berries. We dropped a significant amount of fruit to adjust the crop to our target yields. The summer continued on to be cooler than normal (the coolest of the past 30 years) and veraison did not complete until mid-September, which is extremely late. Temperatures remained below normal for the rest of the season, so we pulled all the leaves in the fruit zone to minimize the risk of disease and maximize sun exposure. We started harvest on October 25th in Terres Basses vineyard and finished on November 22nd, the latest in our 18-year history, but we did it before Thanksgiving! Like in other cool years, our strategy has been to let the fruit hang as long as possible to ripen the tannins and to use our cold storage facility to further refine them. Our 2011 wines show great color, concentration, refined tannins and lower alcohol levels hovering around 13.5% alc. The 2011 wines have all the hallmarks of a very balanced, elegant and age-worthy vintage.

