

Our Grapes

Cabernet Franc

Chardonnay

Gewurztraminer

Lemberger

Pinot Gris

Riesling

Cabernet Franc

Recent DNA studies have shown that Cabernet Franc is one of the parents of Cabernet Sauvignon; the other parent being Sauvignon Blanc. Cab Franc is often used for blending in Bordeaux-style red wine blends. Because of our vineyards' southern exposure and our very warm site we are proud to bottle Cabernet Franc as a stand alone varietal. We are careful not to overcrop this variety as that kind of stress on this delicate varietal could draw out more vegetative characteristics in the finished wine. Our Cabernet Franc is carefully thinned to gain more light exposure which accentuates the fruity aromatics of plum, raspberry, and cherry in the finished wine. Stay tuned for our first bottled release of our 2007 Estate Cabernet Franc to be released towards summer of 2009!!

Chardonnay

The popularity of this grape throughout the years has called it to be perhaps the most well known white grape varietal. One is hard-pressed to find a white wine grape with more recognition than Chardonnay. It's quite likely that the popularity of this grape stemmed from its ability to take on so many unique characteristics of site specificity and winemaking styles. Chardonnay is an open book variety that can be tailored to a wide variety of winemaking styles. This smaller, thin-skinned grape is one of the more difficult white wine varieties to handle throughout the winemaking process mainly because of its high susceptibility to oxygenation, though, with delicate handling and attentive winery practices this variety leads to a highly enjoyable finished wine. Unlike most, our Chardonnay sees no oak in its aging process as our goal is to produce a naturally fruity, aromatic white wine representative of our warm Washington site.

Gewürztraminer

Pronounced (guh-VURTS-trah-MEE-ner), this varietal leads to an action packed, fragrant white wine. 'Gewürz' is German for spicy, and Traminer refers to the Traminer variety which was grown until the 16th century in the town of Tramin in Italy. Gewürztraminer is the red-skinned form of the Traminer variety. This grape has a reputation for being very difficult to grow as it is picky about soil and climate. If grown in too hot a climate, it won't get the acid needed to balance its high natural sugars. It blooms early so growing in too cold a climate can lead to frost damage. When matched with the right site, Gewürztraminer can be grown beautifully - producing a characteristically perfumed wine with an inviting lychee, rose scent.

Lemberger

With such a name, this variety has long struggled to stand out in the US wine market. It has recently been approved by the TTB that one of this varieties' alternate names, Blaufrankisch can now be used on American wine labels. Blaufrankisch is German for blue frankish. During Germany's middle ages, it was common practice for grapes to be divided into two groups; Frankish and Hunnic. The Frankish class was the higher quality and Hunnic lesser quality. Hence, Blaufrankisch is considered a noble grape. It can be made as a stand alone, high quality red wine. The first Lemberger labeled on a Washington wine bottle was produced by Kiona Vineyards Winery in 1980. In Washington State, this variety produces a fruit forward, medium bodied red wine with very soft tannins. This is a great option for beginning red wine drinkers or experienced red wine drinkers desiring to contemplate its complexity.

Pinot Gris

Recent DNA testing at UC Davis shows that Pinot Gris is a mutation of Pinot Noir. The leaves and vines of Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir are so similar that often the only visible difference is the color of the fruit. 'Gris', French for grey, describes the color of this varieties' fruit. At Bella Terrazza Vineyards, our fully ripened Pinot Gris grapes are very dark in color, just a few shades away from black, or 'Noir' in French. Many North American wines made in an Italian style from Pinot Gris grapes are called Pinot Grigio - Our 2007 Estate Pinot Grigio is one of them. Dry in style, our Pinot Grigio is a fruit-forward medium bodied white wine.

Riesling

Riesling originates from the Rhine river region in Germany where it dates back to the mid 1400's. This ancient variety is known for its brilliant aromas and crisp, pleasant acidity. It is also referred to as a terroir-expressive variety in that it can be extremely expressive of site, soil, climate, and growing region. Young Riesling wines are very friendly to wine drinkers as its flavors are easier to single out and identify. Unlike many white wine varieties, Riesling has great potential for aging. Aged Rieslings tend to have more blended flavors making them a bit more difficult to distinguish single aromas and flavors. Recommended aging for a dry Riesling is 5-15 years. Our Riesling is a great example of our vineyards' unique terroir. Made in a dry style, its crisp fruit flavors give a brilliant sweetness to the palate without needing residual sugar for it to taste sweet.

