



## 2005 WILLAMETTE VALLEY PINOT GRIS – *Media Reviews*

### ***The Mercury News, June 28, 2006***

For Oregon white wines, gris is the word

Oregon's Willamette Valley has built its reputation on pinot noir. But when it comes to white wine, the situation hasn't been quite so clear-cut.

Some vintners push the virtues of chardonnay. A few have dedicated themselves to pinot blanc. But in recent years, pinot gris has become the region's most important white grape. (Statewide, it surpassed chardonnay as the most-planted white variety in 2000.)

The Willamette Valley has a long history with pinot gris. When David Lett founded Eyrie Vineyards in 1966, he planted the first pinot gris in the United States. It's also not surprising that pinot noir and pinot gris would grow well in similar surroundings, because pinot gris is actually a genetic mutation of pinot noir.

Oregon's climate is important to the success of pinot noir, and it's also critical for pinot gris. The summer months are sunny, clear and warm, but as harvest time nears, the weather gets much cooler because of the area's northern latitude. Those factors combine to produce a pinot gris with intense flavors of white fruits like white peach and pear, a wonderful perfume and crisp acidity that gives the wine a lovely freshness. It's light years from the light, inoffensive, even watery pinot grigios that seem to be multiplying like rabbits on store shelves. (Pinot gris and pinot grigio are the same grape; Oregon labeling laws require that it be called pinot gris.)

So it's tempting to describe Willamette Valley pinot gris as Alsatian in style, because it has more weight and flavor than most Italian pinot grigio. But Willamette Valley pinot gris really is unlike any other. Such comparisons are a disservice to all three of us, says David Adelsheim, who has grown pinot gris at Adelsheim Vineyard since 1975. "We've grown beyond that."

The Willamette Valley is a large appellation, stretching roughly from Portland south to Eugene. In a recent pinot gris tasting, most of the bottles were from the northern end of the appellation, but the vintners I've talked to say the grape does well throughout the region. "I have had luscious, very proper pinot gris throughout the Willamette Valley," says Harry Peterson-Nedry, founder and winemaker of Chehalem. However, he notes that pinot gris also is grown outside the valley, where he thinks the heat tends to bake it out a bit.

As with pinot noir, Adelsheim adds, "I'm not sure there's a consensus of what is best."

More typical of Willamette Valley pinot gris is Adelsheim's. His 2005 is fresh and fragrant, with flavors of white peach and peach blossom. It's delicate yet flavorful.

All these wines are sufficiently lively and refreshing...and will pair well with all but the most robust fish or shellfish dishes.  
-Laurie Daniel, Special to the Mercury News

### ***The Oregonian, May 14, 2006***

The range of styles and quality of Oregon pinot gris is considerable. Many Oregon pinot gris are unfortunately bland and sweetish.

A good Oregon pinot gris, in the lighter, crisper Italian style, should be all clean and fresh, with no residual sugar and have a scent and taste of melon and citrus. A noticeably mouth-filling texture should be present as well. This is precisely what this brand-new 2005 pinot gris from Adelsheim Vineyard is all about.

Adelsheim Vineyard "Willamette Valley" Pinot Gris 2005 delivers the flavor definition, depth, texture and dryness that sets apart really good Oregon-grown pinot gris from the commercial versions.

This is a benchmark example of what pinot gris can and should be. -Matt Kramer

***Wine Press Northwest, June 15, 2006***

Pinot Gris: Oregon's king of whites rules in the Northwest

Excellent. Only two wineries outside of Europe have been producing Pinot Gris longer than David Adelsheim, whose experience with this variety dates to 1984. It shows with a complex nose of apricots, apples, citrus, oak spice and starfruit. On the attack, flavors are focused on orchard fruit, primarily pears, with a nice oily mouthfeel and some dryness that adds to its length and approachability. One judge marveled at the pairing of this wine with Copper River salmon, poached in the wine, then served with lemon and salt. 9,000 cases. - Eric Degerman

***Smart Money, May 2007***

Smart Spending, On Wine. Tastes of the Old World.

One of our longtime favorites. Intense tastes of minerals, ripe peaches and melon. Weighty, but with a nice splash of lemon. Juicy and pure and not at all simple. Very satisfying. -Dorothy J. Gaiter and John Brecher