

# t a n g e n t w i n e s

## pinot gris OVERVIEW

### VARIETAL ORIGIN

Originating in Burgundy, Pinot Gris is one of the best known mutations of Pinot Noir. It was first grown amongst the Pinot Noir vines and harvested as a field blend. This “white” varietal added a touch of softness and acidity to round out the tannins of the red Pinot Noir. Sometime during the middle ages, Pinot Gris spread to other countries including Switzerland, Hungary, Germany and Turkey. It also was planted in the Alsace region back in France. During its travels, it was given the Hungarian name of Tokay. In 1980, the European Economic Community mandated that it be called by its correct name, bringing the true varietal back to the forefront.

No matter where it’s grown, Pinot Gris berries are colored anywhere from grayish-blue to brownish-pink. And as though it remembers its roots, Pinot Gris leaves are identical to Pinot Noir. Well-loved in Alsace, its depth and richness make it reminiscent of a complex white Burgundy, where it has become a sanctioned blender under the name of Pinot Beurot.

Pinot Gris is known as Malvoisie in both the Loire of France and in Switzerland. It is widely planted in Germany, where it is called Rulander, and also in Italy, where it goes by the widely-adopted California name of Pinot Grigio. It can also be found in Austria, Slovenia, Moravia and Romania.

### CALIFORNIA MODERN DAY

Improved clonal selection seems to be invigorating enthusiasm in New Zealand, but in California, impact of Pinot Gris is limited thus far. Rather than following the

lead of larger producers who are growing and harvesting grapes from the Central Valley and calling the finished wine Pinot Grigio, tangent chooses to stick to the drier Alsatian style. This wine is meant for the table, to be enjoyed at mealtime.

Among the most notable plantings in California are over 1,000 acres in Santa Barbara County and around 130 in San Luis Obispo County.

### TANGENT PINOT GRIS

A block of newer plantings in the Paragon Vineyard of the Edna Valley on the Central Coast of California is the sole source of fruit for the tangent Pinot Gris. Benefiting from the cool influence of the Pacific only four miles to the west, this vineyard is afforded one of the longest growing seasons in the state. Soils here are a mixture of volcanic, clay loam and rocky marine sediment, offering few nutrients. The temperate climate brings extended hang time, and the soils cause the vines to stress and strain as they grow. These two factors ultimately culminate in fully ripe, concentrated fruit that bursts with flavor.

As tangent aims to produce vibrant wines of good acid structure to be naturally enjoyed with a wide range of foods, this wine was made without any oak influence, nor did any portion of it go through malo-lactic fermentation. An evocative aperitif on its own, tangent Pinot Gris also pairs well with most foods, shellfish and some hard cheeses in particular.

“a departure from the ordinary, tangent explores the limitless possibilities of alternative white wines”

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