

2019 Division-Villages “La Frontière”

Sauvignon Blanc

Oregon AVA

Redford-Wetle Vineyard (49%) Allegre Vineyard (51%)

The great state of Oregon, and specifically the Willamette Valley, has become one of the world’s most well known cool climate growing regions for Pinot Noir grapes. It is definitely not an area very well known for growing Sauvignon Blanc. Well, we’ve been working on that for four years now and believe we can make a solid case for the well known Loire varietal being delicious when grown in both the Willamette Valley and the rapidly expanding Columbia Gorge grape regions.

Myron Redford is a legend in Oregon’s wine industry. Always experimenting, sometimes successfully and sometimes not, with grapes like Gamay Noir, Albano and yes, Sauvignon Blanc. He and his partner Vikki Wetle planted a small 7.5 acre certified organic vineyard on Jory, Yamhill & Woodburn soils at their home property in the Eola-Amity Hills in 2006, which includes the Sauvignon Blanc that makes up about half of our 2019 “La Frontière.”

The certified organically farmed Allegre Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc from Friulian clones, our first vineyard in the Columbia Gorge, makes up the remaining half of this cuvée. Jen Kroner and Pat Allegre are some of the Hood River area’s finest growers of not only grapes, but premium quality cherries and orchard fruit, all nestled between Mt Hood and Mt Adams, our biggest volcanoes in the region.

We are usually some of the first to make picking decisions with the majority of our vineyards each year as we seek to make wines that are lighter, more finessed, vibrant, but still with intensity and complexity. Sauvignon Blanc was a bit of a conundrum for us as it is notorious for demonstrating very green, tropical, and ammonia “cat pee” like aromatics when not completely ripe. Ultimately, this meant we’d need to harvest a bit riper than is typical for most of our other grape varieties we work with. The 2019 vintage of this wine brought back some nostalgia with a growing season much more akin to the classic European growing years, meaning long hang times with vibrant acidity and lower sugars, which all leads to greater complexity for the wine!

We created a pied de cuve (early native ferment) with a small amount of grapes to build a strong yeast population from the native flora for both sites. The wines were fermented “sur lie” in two puncheons (500L), one new Harlequin oak barrel (half acacia and French oak), several older white French oak Burgundy barrels and several stainless steel barrels. The ferments were slower to start with the cool temperatures, but quickly caught, and most completed within two to three months, however, one barrel didn’t fully complete their sugar fermentation, so there’s about 2-3 grams p/liter of residual sugar in this year’s wine. With the very low pH (racy acids!), we needed it!

Our fourth “La Frontière” demonstrates clear Sauvignon Blanc characteristics ranging from ripe honeydew to lemongrass and some grapefruit citrus notes. Honestly, we are very happy! The aromatics are led by a mélange of melons, with some light tarragon, passion flower and grapefruit peel. This wine is medium bodied, while being simultaneously racy, ripe, succulent, with the kind of soaring acidity that allows a full spectrum of flavors to dance across the palate. We make this wine to be enjoyed young and feel it’s ready to drink now, but as always, the acids will better integrate with time and the wine will become more layered and complex with time.

Alc 13.6%, 320 cases produced

