

2011 Pinot Gris



In the Alsace region of France, Pinot Gris grapes are used to produce some of the most exquisitely luscious wines in the world. It is this style of wine that Kumeu River strives to emulate. While “gris” means “gray” in French, the skin of a Pinot Gris grape may appear anywhere from a dappled blue-gray to a pinkish brown, depending on where it is grown. The skins of the Kumeu River Pinot Gris grapes are amazingly bright red. When pressed, the juice has a slight pink color that disappears during the fermentation process to eventually reveal a wine with a lovely pale golden hue.

Vineyard Region

Kumeu is a sub-region of the Auckland wine district. Despite being situated well north of New Zealand’s other viticultural regions, Kumeu’s climate is kept cool due to its close proximity to the Tasman Sea, just 20 kilometers (nearly 12.5 miles) to the west, and the Pacific Ocean 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) to the east. These two large bodies of water generate clouds, keeping peak summer temperatures below 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit).

Vintage Notes

2011 was a challenging vintage with cooler-than-usual conditions leading up to harvest. The grapes struggled to attain high sugar levels, but a very moderate cropping level still allowed the development of ripe-fruit aroma and flavor intensity. Following near-perfect conditions in 2010, Kumeu River had to work harder in 2011 in the vineyards due to pockets of botrytis. This vintage really showed the value of hand-harvesting and strict field triage because the fruit arriving at the winery was in perfect condition.

Technical Information

Varietal Composition: 100% Pinot Gris

Vinification: Wild yeast fermentation took place in tanks over an extended period of time. The winery stopped fermentation at 8.3g/L of residual sugar.

Alcohol: 13.5%

TA: 5.8g/L

Tasting Notes

The aromas have typical peach and stone fruit notes tinged with the floral perfume expected from Pinot Gris. On the palate, the wine is rich and complex with an oily texture that coats the tongue and lingers on the palate with a lovely length of flavor. Pinot Gris is one of the few wine styles that can handle the spiciness of chili, so together with the sweet succulence of prawns, a nicely chilled bottle of Kumeu River Pinot Gris makes a spectacular combination.