

Black Riesling

(Pinot Meunier) (*pee-noh-moo-ny-ay*)

OVERVIEW

This smoky dry red wine is un-oaked with notes of earthiness, ripe purple plums, a hint of anise, leather or tobacco and earthy flavors with a long lingering finish. This wine is truly very different and delicious despite its decidedly light red Germanic coloring.

HISTORY

The Black Riesling grape, first mentioned in the 16th century, is also known as Pinot Meunier or Meunier. It is a variety of black wine grape thought to be a mutation of Pinot Noir. It is widely grown in the Champagne region of France for the production of Champagne. It is most often used with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes in making Champagne because of its aromatic and fruity flavors and its higher acidity which adds richness and body to the Champagne that the other two do not have. The word Meunier in French and Müller in German both mean “miller”. The Meunier grape is so named because the underside of the leaves are dusty white and said to look like sifted flour. Black Riesling is also known as Schwarzriesling or Müllerrebe in Germany. Winzerwald introduced its Black Riesling in 2007 as a lighter dry red offering on its wine list that is truly Germanic in its history.

GRAPES AND SOURCES

The Pinot Meunier grapes are able to withstand cooler temperatures and provide higher yields in large, thick clusters. They are late budding and mature earlier than Pinot Noir. Winzerwald grapes are grown in the Yakima Valley region of Washington where they are grown and harvested to our specifications for brix ph, acids and flavor. They are then cold freighted in the form of whole grapes to us. We then crush & de-stem them and a slightly cooler than normal stainless steel fermentation is begun to maintain fruitiness in this often high alcohol wine.

WINE DESCRIPTION & DATA

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| Color: | Light red color |
| Sugar: | Residual sugar can be between 0.0% and 1.0% |
| Style: | Very dry, German lighter style red wine |
| Aroma/Bouquet: | Ripe plum, currant, leather & anise |
| Taste: | Ripe plum, earthiness, hints of anise and long finish with notes of leather and wood on the back side even though no oak is used |
| Alcohol: | 13.0% |
| Ferment/Aging: | Stainless Steel – no oak induction |
| Storage: | Store in cool place away from sun light. Can be aged for up to 24 months. |
| Serving: | 52-57° |
| Food Pairings: | Lighter, earthy foods & meats like bison steaks, grass fed meats and wild mushrooms |

WILD MUSHROOMS WITH THYME

Rich, flavorful and perfect for the winter dinner table or as an appetizer. Great for the cook, too, as it can be made one day ahead.

1 cup whipping cream

2 large shallots, chopped

1 1/2 pounds assorted wild mushrooms (stemmed shiitake, crimini, and portobellini, dark gills removed), cut into 3/4-inch pieces

1/2 cup dry Pinot Meunier or Blaufrankisch or unoaked red wine

1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme plus fresh thyme sprigs

Boil cream and shallots in heavy large pot over medium-high heat 2 minutes. Add mushrooms and 1/4 cup red wine. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until mushrooms are evenly coated, stirring occasionally, about 2 minutes. Add remaining 1/4 cup red wine to mushrooms. Simmer until mushrooms are tender and sauce thickens enough to coat back of spoon, stirring occasionally, about 6 minutes. Stir in chopped thyme. Simmer until flavors blend, about 1 minute. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cool, cover and refrigerate. Re-warm over low heat. Transfer to serving bowl. Garnish with thyme sprigs.

Makes 6 servings.

Adapted from Bon Appétit, Nov. 2001