

Pinot Grigio Is More Popular Than Ever

The grape can't help it – Pinot Grigio is more popular than ever

As summer approaches Pinot Grigio looks set to establish itself as Britain's favourite grape variety once and for all, having overtaken long-standing favourite Chardonnay in recent months.

Though many wine critics still find it hard to love Pinot Grigio (some still persist in calling it utterly tasteless and a drink for those who don't like wine!), the majority of wine lovers have been won over by its versatility and downright drinkability!

Part of the appeal is you don't have to try too hard with this wine – just chill a bottle, crack open and enjoy. The majority of Pinot Grigio wine you find in Britain is made in the traditional Italian style – bone dry with hints of grapefruit and melon. It can be drunk anytime with virtually any fish or white meat.

Although northern Italy is the traditional home of Pinot Grigio, specifically the region north of Venice, it has also been grown in France and Germany for centuries where it goes by the name of Pinot Gris. However, Pinot Gris tends to be made in a more fuller style than its Italian counterpart, often with a touch of sweetness, that is at odds with the British taste for light, dry white wines.

The Italians have not been slow to capitalise on Pinot Grigio's popularity and prices have virtually doubled since last year. But you don't have to pay over the odds for good Pinot Grigio. Look out for a trustworthy wine merchant who will knock down the prices of over-ambitious Italian winemakers to a more reasonable amount. And if you don't mind leaving Italy for your Pinot Grigio fix – there are many excellent versions being made across the globe. Australian examples are characterised by extra fruitiness courtesy of the blazing heat, while New Zealand and Argentina are fast-becoming hotspots for the variety where the cooler conditions give it an irresistibly zesty character.

Laithwaites – Decanter Independent Wine Merchant of the Year 2007 – offers a range of Italian Pinot Grigio as well as interesting varieties from less well-trodden corners of the wine world. A quick browse of their website [laithwaites\(dot\)co\(dot\)uk](http://www.laithwaites.co.uk) reveals a bestselling Pinot Grigio from deepest, darkest Transylvania. Called Campanula, meaning –Bluebell–, it is made in the Italian style without the hefty Italian price-tag.

So if you haven't joined the Pinot Grigio fan club – you will shortly be finding yourself in the minority. Love it or loathe it (and you'll be hard-pressed to loath it!) – Pinot Grigio is definitely here to stay.

About the Author

Mark Hooson is a professional writer for the wine trade. [Laithwaites](http://www.laithwaites.co.uk) privates real and direct come from the vineyard top-quality wines. More information about Laithwaites visit us - www.laithwaites.co.uk

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