Brianna and La Crescent: Ten Viticulture Tips

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Photo by Nicholas Howard

Photo by Dave Hansen
Univ. of Minnesota
Brianna

• Bred by Elmer Swenson, 1983
• Named by Ed Swanson, Cuthills Vineyard, NE in 2002
• Kay Gray x ES 2-12-13
Brianna
Site Selection and Vineyard Establishment

- **Vine spacing** of 8' will fill the trellis, except in some low fertility, high pH soils.
- **Vines fight upward growth.** Do not use a VSP trellis system.
Brianna
Training and Pruning

- Long, trailing shoots with stubborn tendrils.
- Long shoot internodes so leaf pulling not as critical as for La Crescent.
Brianna
Training and Pruning

• **Cluster weights** are typically under 1/4 pound.
  – Buds on node position 4 - 12 generally produce larger clusters
  – Very fruitful from secondary buds
Brianna
Training and Pruning

• Long cane renewal pruning with renewal spurs may work well for many areas.
  – Can tie 2 canes together in both directions to improve yields during cordon renewal.

• 5 to 8 buds per foot of trellis retained at pruning works well on healthy, mature vines.
• Clusters are susceptible to Downy Mildew.
  – Vine is highly sensitive to copper and moderately sensitive to sulfur.

Photos by David S. Jones and Patricia McManus, University of Wisconsin
Brianna
Harvest Considerations

• **Berries plump up after veraison**. Compact clusters tend to split some berries inviting wasps and sour rots to take hold.

• **Harvest at around 14-16 Brix** to avoid over-development of unwanted foxy aromas.
  – usually late August to early September in Minnesota.
La Crescent

- Introduced in 2002 by UMN
- St. Pepin x ES 6-8-25
La Crescent
Site Selection and Vineyard Establishment

• Vigorous vine
  – Space vines 6' apart in the row if organic matter < 2.5%.
  – Space vines 8’ apart if O.M. is > 3%.
  – Soils that are too fertile and too wet lead to hardiness issues.

Photo by David L. Hansen, University of Minnesota
La Crescent 
Training and Pruning

- **For VSP**, shoots readily trained upward if catch wires are provided within 7-9" above the fruiting wire, and every 12-14" thereafter.
  - High Cordon or GDC training is recommended for fertile sites to de-vigorate shoot growth.

- **Avoid using the 'bull canes'**, which are less hardy, to build the vine's framework (trunk or cordon).
La Crescent
Training and Pruning

• Cane or Spur Pruning Systems work well.
  – An old cordon can be phased out while a new cordon is phased by tying down a cane in tandem with an aging cordon to ensure fruitfulness.

• Open canopy best achieved by retaining 5 to 7 buds per foot of trellis when ~100% bud survival.
  – Adjust shoot counts before the 12" shoot stage.

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La Crescent Training and Pruning

- Best fruit quality is achieved with > 85-95% of the fruit fully exposed to the sun. Should safely ripen 3 to 5 Tons/A.

- Leaves and laterals need to be pulled from the fruit zone very early (soon after bloom) to achieve best juice chemistry, flavor, and aroma results.

Photo by David L. Hansen, University of Minnesota
La Crescent leaves are very susceptible to Downy Mildew, but the fruit is very resistant.
La Crescent
Harvest Considerations

• Berries have a tendency to shell in some cases before full ripeness is achieved.
  – Harvest in Minnesota occurs in mid to late September.
Thank you!
Brianna
Viticulture, Enology, and Wine tasting

Jim Luby and Murli R Dharmadhikari
NGP meeting Kalamazoo MI
2/24/16
Brianna

• Synonyms: 7-4-76
• Pedigree: ʻKay Grayʼ x E.S. 2-12-13
• Origin: Osceola, Wisconsin. Bred by Elmer Swenson
• Cross/Selection/Test: Cross made in 1983; selected in 1989 as a table grape and 2001 as wine grape
• Named by Ed Swanson, Cuthills Vineyard, Pierce NE, 2002
Styles of Brianna

1. **Crisp light bodied white**: crisp, lively, light in alcohol and not assertive in taste or aroma
   Ex: Sauv. Blanc, Pinot Gris, Pinot Grigio, and Chenin Blanc

2. **Smooth medium bodied white**: medium in body, flavor and acidity with a touch of sweetness in some cases

3. **Aromatic dry or off dry white**: fruity, perfumed, aromatic, floral medium bodied dry or off-dry
   Ex: Riesling, Muscat, Gewurztraminer, Sauv. Blanc
4. Barrel-fermented or partially barrel-fermented style: increased aromatics, richness and mouth-feel
Ex: Chardonnay

5. Sparkling: 100% pure or in a blend, either bulk-carbonated or “Methode Champenoise”: Sparkling wines are becoming more popular every day, low Brix at harvest lends itself to secondary in-the-bottle fermentation
Ex: Successful sparkling wines from L. Mawby (MI) and Illinois Sparkling Wine Co.
Brianna Aroma/Flavor Descriptors

- Wine Quality and Characteristics: ‘Brianna’ can be made into a semi-sweet white wine with pronounced pineapple nose and flavor when fully ripe.
- For light table wines with more grapefruit, tropical, and slight floral characteristics, ‘Brianna’ is best harvested between 3.2-3.4 pH.
- Elmer Swanson noted that the grapes are high in pectin, and need extra enzymes for good juice yield. Whole-cluster pressing can help.

- Acquaviva winery: Sweet, medium body wine. Flavors are predominantly peaches, apricots, lime-candies, grapefruit, and pineapple. Ideal as a dessert wine.

- Miletta Vista: Brianna wine is filled with flavors of tropical fruits like pineapple, mango and kiwi. A great sipping wine for the sweeter palate.
Brianna Vinification

• Harvest early based on pH. Whole-cluster press with rice hulls and pectinase enzyme to boost clarification and juice yield

• Settle well, may use Bentolact-S addition to pre-fine/settle the juice

• Ferment cool with chosen yeast strain, 52F to 58F

• Minimize Oxygen exposure

• Clean racking and proper sulfiting during processing/maturing, aim to inhibit Malo-Lactic (secondary) fermentation

• Clarify, stabilize, filter, and bottle
Whole-Cluster Processing
(...and you won’t need to clean your de-stemmer!)
La Crescent
Viticulture Enology and Wine tasting
La Crescent

- Pedigree: ‘St. Pepin’ x E.S. 6-8-25 (V. riparia x ‘Muscat Hamburg’)

- Origin: University of Minnesota Horticultural Research Center. Developed by Peter Hemstad and James Luby

- Cross/Selection/Test: Cross made in 1988; selected in 1992; tested as MN 1166

- Introduction: 2002
Styles of LaCrescent

1. *Crisp light bodied white*: crisp, lively, light in alcohol and not assertive in taste or aroma with a dry finish
   Ex: Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Chenin Blanc

2. *Smooth medium bodied white*: medium in body, flavor and acidity with a touch of oak
   Ex: Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Gris, Semillon and other blends

3. *Aromatic dry or off dry white*: fruity, perfumed, aromatic, floral medium bodied dry or off-dry
   Ex: Riesling, Muscat, Gewurztraminer, Sauvignon Blanc

4. *Sparkling*: 100% pure or in a blend, either bulk-carbonated or “Methode Champenoise”
   Ex: Successful sparkling wines from L. Mawby (MI) and Illinois Sparkling Wine Co.
LaCrescent Major Acid

- Malic acid

![Bar chart showing Malic (g/L) for different locations. The chart indicates a comparison of Malic acid levels across Vermont, South Dakota, North Dakota, New York-Willsboro, Iowa, and Connecticut-Windsor. North Dakota has the highest Malic acid level, followed by New York-Willsboro. Vermont has a lower level compared to the other locations.](chart_image)
La Crescent Winemaking Tips

- Hand harvest at cool temperatures if possible
- Consider whole-cluster pressing, rice hulls recommended
- Use SO2 to prevent oxidation and to control “bad bugs”
- Add enzyme and Bentolact-S to help settle the juice.
- Rack juice and inoculate with aromatic style yeast (Note: Lalvin C, SVG and 71B can help lower TA via Malic to Ethanol conversion)
- Ferment at cooler temperatures, 52-58F
- Fine/clarify and stabilize wine
- Filter, back-sweeten slightly with “sweet reserve” (unfermented juice) or concentrate, or by stopping fermentation early, sugar
- Sterile Filter using .45 micron membrane/or add sorbate and bottle
Brianna
Fireside, IA

The nose is big and inviting while the palate is full of bright acidity and ends with a clean finish. The color is a light gold.
Brianna
Tucker’s walk, SD

Tucker’s Walk Brianna is a fruity, white wine made from cold hardy Brianna grapes developed by Elmer Swenson. We make it with some sweetness that goes with its light pineapple nose and fruity disposition. Brianna seem to like it at Tucker’s Walk, and we love to work with these wonderful grapes. Pairs well with chicken, fish, salads, and our favorite - bacon, lettuce and garden ripened tomato sandwiches. Serve chilled.
La Crescent
Staller Estate WI

Reserve La Crescent, A dry oak-aged white from hand selected grapes displaying forward notes of apricot & sweet-cream butter followed by ripe pear, a chalk minerality and aged vanilla spice.
LaCrescent is an off-dry wine bursting with fruit aromas. Winner of three medals in competitions including Indy International Wine, Michigan Wine and Spirits and Grand Harvest Awards in Sonoma California.
Take time to enjoy

Thank You