

**Summerhill Pyramid Winery****1999 Cipes Blanc de Noir  
(Okanagan Valley)**

Summerhill ages its wines in a scale replica of the Great Pyramid, hence the winery's name. Owner Stephen Cipes holds views somewhat inclined to Oriental mysticism, including a belief in the restorative power of pyramid energy. He says he has staged many blind tastings over the years matching pyramid aged wines with similar wines not so aged – and most tasters choose the former as best.

Cipes also holds strong environmental values. He moved his family 20 years ago from New York to the Okanagan Valley because he perceived the valley as comparatively pristine. Consequently, he was alarmed to find that pesticides and herbicides were being used on the valley's orchards and vineyards. Cipes banned chemicals from Summerhill's vineyards, adopted organic practices and converted most of the winery's growers to organic viticulture.

This wine is made from grapes grown in Summerhill's organic vineyard. The juice was fermented without skin contact to achieve a clear wine. The wine spent six years en triage. To balance the Krug-like over-yeastiness, winemaker Eric von Krosigk dosaged the wine with Summerhill's Zweigelt Icewine sweet reserve (unfermented icewine juice). The result is a light gold wine with a vigorous play of bubbles and a toasty aroma. It tastes of green apples over the nutty notes from its long lees contact. The wine's acidity gives it a crisp, almost austere finish of a classic lean bubbly. 86 points.

Reviewed December 20, 2007 by [John Schreiner](#).

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**THE WINE**

**Winery:** [Summerhill Pyramid Winery](#)

**Vintage:** 1999

**Wine:** Cipes Blanc de Noir

**Appellation:** [Okanagan Valley](#)

**Grape:** [Pinot Noir](#)

**Price:** \$35.00

**THE REVIEWER****John Schreiner**

John Schreiner has been covering the wines of British Columbia for the past 30 years and has written 10 books on the wines of Canada and BC. He has judged at major competitions and is currently a panel member for the Lieutenant Governor's Awards of Excellence in Wine. Both as a judge and as a wine critic, he approaches each wine not to find fault, but to find excellence. That he now finds the latter more often than the former testifies to the dramatic improvement shown by BC winemaking in the past decade.