

‘Clinton’



John Marshall

Synonyms: ‘Plant des Carmes’, ‘Plant Pouzin’ and ‘Worthington’ (4).

Pedigree: Unknown

Origin: Whitesboro, New York. Bred by Hugh White (a professor at New York State University) in 1819 (2).

Introduction: According to Hedrick et al. (2), ‘Clinton’ was introduced *circa* 1835 in Rochester, New York, and placed on the grape list of the American Pomological Society Fruit Catalog in 1862.

Type: Interspecific hybrid (including *V. riparia* and *V. labrusca*) (1, 4). Usually considered a *V. riparia*, however occasional canes with continuous tendrils are characteristic of *V. labrusca* (2).

Color: Black (4).

Berry: According to Hedrick et al. (2), berries are small to medium, roundish to slightly oval with a thin but tough skin. They describe the flesh as darkish green and very juicy but almost pulp free and somewhat astringent with large seeds. They added that fruit colors early to a purplish-black, but not edible until after mid-season.

Cluster: Small to medium in size; slender and cylindrical; usually single shouldered and compact (2, 3).

Viticultural Characteristics: Hedrick et al. (2) reported ‘Clinton’ as vigorous and productive with a procumbent growth habit. They note that early bloom makes it vulnerable to frost and also caution that it is sensitive to lime soils.

Disease/Pests: Very disease resistant even without a regular spray schedule (3). Anthracnose and phylloxera are quite uncommon (1, 3).

Wine Quality and Characteristics: Makes a very colored, somewhat foxy, low quality wine (1). The berries tend to ripen with high acid (3).

Season: Late (although colors early in season) (2).

Cold Hardiness: Very hardy (below -20° F) (3).

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Use: Hedrick et al. (2) informed that 'Clinton' has often been used in grape breeding as the offspring are usually very hardy, making it a good starting point for breeding grapes for Northern latitudes. They noted that it is unsuitable as a table grape because it has a *V. riparia* flavor, too spicy and tart for dessert use.

Notes: Hedrick et al. (2) noted that 'Clinton' played an important part in the beginning of American viticulture.

Literature Cited

1. Galet, P. 2000. *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique des Cépages*. Hachette Pratique Publishing, France.
2. Hedrick, U.P., N.O. Booth, O.M. Taylor, R. Wellington and M.J. Dorsey. 1908. Grapes of New York: report of the New York agricultural experiment station for the year 1907. J.B. Lyon Company, Albany, New York. pp. 213-216.
3. Marshall, J., Great River Vineyard and Nursery. Lake City, MN. *Personal communication* (2008).
4. National Grape Registry (NGR) website: <http://ngr.ucdavis.edu/>. Supported by University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, Foundation Plant Services and National Clonal Germplasm Repository of the USDA Agricultural Research Service.