



MADROÑA

2015 Malbec—Signature Collection

Malbec

Serendipity is often the name of the game in wine. We started producing Malbec in 1993 for one reason . . . to blend! It was the fifth Bordeaux in our Quintet adding aromatics and color. But it was obvious from its first harvest that our mountain Malbec was something special.

The cool climate at our 2,800-foot-elevation vineyards produces a wine that is intensely fruity, intensely colored and intensely weighty with surprisingly soft tannins. Dense yet balanced, this playful variety continually intrigues our palates year after year.

The Vineyards

A blend of three different small plantings in our Enyé Vineyards in Pleasant Valley and the home vineyards at Madroña, the vines are vigorous and strong. At the Enyé Vineyards, one vineyard is grafted on to a 30-year old Sauvignon Blanc vineyard and the other on the devigorating rootstock 101-14. With a definite northern exposure at 2,800 feet, the climate is cooler, thus extending this early-ripening variety. Production levels hover around 1.5 tons/acre, due mainly to the smallness of the clusters. At the Madroña Vineyards, the vines are grafted onto Merlot (as rootstock) with the effect of taming the vine slightly. The west-facing slope of this vineyard produces ripe, dense wines with the persistent low yields of the variety. The blend of the two vineyard locations results in a Malbec with balance and an intensity of fruit that other varieties can't match.

The 2015 Vintage

The height of the drought with 2015 has produced wines with density, complexity and approachability. The 2015 Signature Malbec is no different. Showcasing the terroir of our region, the aromas and flavors dance playfully around a foundation of El Dorado earthiness. The nose is classic Malbec filled with dark cherry fruit, ripe plum and mountain blueberry. But it's the black pepper spice and earthen forest floor notes that truly make this wine unique. The palate, with its entry of black cherry and hints of high-tone cranberry, let's one know it's not an overripe, jam bomb. Instead, this Malbec is medium to full-bodied with a smooth texture, softer tannins and a focused fresh fruit character. Add to that the lingering cherry finish sprinkled with a dash of earthy freshness, and the pleasure abounds. From the winemaking point of view, the splash of Cabernet Sauvignon lends a bit more structure and the Petit Verdot gives the wine just a whiff of briary ripeness. Overall, the 2015 Signature Malbec is true to both variety and region!

Suggested Food Pairings

Mushrooms and gamy meats immediately come to mind. And don't be afraid to age this out a hint as well!

Facts

Appellation: El Dorado, Estate Grown

Blend: 79% Malbec, 9% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Petite Verdot, 3% Merlot

Fermentation: 11 days on skins in small fermenters

Aging: 18 months in neutral oak barrels

Bottled: May 24, 2017, Production: 240 cases

Alcohol: 13.8%, pH: 3.76, TA: 0.54g/100ml

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