



EARLY
MOUNTAIN

2018 Chardonnay

*At the foot of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains, nature is at once graceful and fierce. Early Mountain wines are made here through a combination of ingenuity and true grit. We gently tend to every vine so the wine that emerges from the cellar is a clear descendant of the fruit at harvest — a unique wine that respects its heritage while embracing evolution and adventure. **Virginian through and through.***

Grape Variety: 95% Chardonnay, 5% Pinot Gris

SRP: \$32

Winemaker Note: We approach this Chardonnay with an eye on freshness, precision and texture. This is a fine line to walk, as it is easier to embrace a distinct style, such as tank-fermented and fresh, or oaky and textured. The wine was barrel fermented and aged, with primarily older French oak - and a bit of new (less than 20%) northern European oak, coopered in Austria. It was bottled in late July with partial malolactic fermentation; a technique we are able to employ for texture and mouthfeel, as we modify our farming approach to favor acidity and freshness. The result is a wine with the roundness and flavors of aging in barrel, on the lees, but also one that retains freshness and the energy of the vintage.

Wine Description: A return to a more classical style, after the riper 2017 vintage, this wine presents as floral and pure in the aromatics. The flavors lean toward the citrus side of the fruit spectrum with tart apple and pear in the background. As a result the mineralic character of the wine shows through, acting as bridge between the fruit and more savory components of the lees aging. The wine is medium bodied with acidity cleansing the finish.

Barrel Regimen: Fermented and aged in barrel, a mix of 500L and 228L, 18% new. Older wood is French and northern European and the new wood is northern European.

Food Pairing: This wine is balanced enough to be a refreshing complement to briny shellfish and all manner of seafood, as well as a nice contrasting note to the richness of soft and mild cheeses, and light cream preparations and pasta dishes like carbonara.

In the Vineyard: The 2018 vintage was an eventful one! Early springtime warmth resulted in no major frost event. Rainfall during bloom created lighter and looser clusters, which became helpful later in the season. On a whole, fruit-set was light, both from bloom-time weather and vines naturally balancing themselves from higher yields in 2017, a factor that assisted ripening through the summer. Spring and summer of 2018 were the wettest on record though the rains tended to drive in short bursts and vineyards with well-drained soils were able to respond well through the deluge. Heat events in July and August drove ripeness and the lighter sets that were a concern in the spring helped drive earlier ripening and healthy clusters, a benefit given the harvest rain. Our white wines were harvested from mid-to-late August, with a high level of quality in good vineyard sites.

Vineyard Block: Early Mountain Vineyards blocks 78 and 3, Quaker Run Vineyards block 4

Clone/Rootstock: Chardonnay 96, SO4; Chardonnay 76 & 96, 101-14; Chardonnay 4, 3309; Chardonnay 72, 3309; Chardonnay 76, 101-14; Chardonnay 76, 3309; FPS15, RG and 101-14; FPS72, RG; SMA108, RG, 548, RG; 809, RG and 101-14; Pinot Gris 152, 101-14.

Technical: Bottled: 7.15.19 Cases produced: 484 Yeast: Ambient

Alcohol: 12.5% pH: 3.41 TA: 5.1 g/L RS: 1.54 g/L (0.16%) Dry