



## EARLY MOUNTAIN

### 2021 Virginia 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:** 99% Chardonnay, 1% Pinot Gris

**Winemaker Note:** We approach this Chardonnay with focus on freshness, precision and texture. This is a delicate 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 northern European oak, coopered in Austria. It was bottled in July after ten months of lees aging; a technique employ for texture and mouthfeel, as we modify our farming for flavor, acidity and freshness. The result is a wine with the roundness and flavors of barrel aging, but also one that retains freshness and the energy of the vintage.

The 2021 vintage of Madison County Chardonnay displays the unique dynamic of season, clone and site. In 2015 we planted five different clones at Early Mountain, all of which play an important role in this wine. Three of clones contribute freshness and acid, while the remaining two, along with the Quaker run portion provide aromatic depth and texture. We also included Chardonnay from Capstone vineyard, which complements our Quaker Run and Early Mountain sites, providing even greater complexity, and elevating the fresh fruit aromas.

**Aging:** Fermented and aged in barrel, a mix of 1000L, 500L and 228L, 25% new. Older wood is French and northern European and new wood is northern European.

**Wine Description:** This vintage displays the freshness and versatility of Chardonnay. This wine is generous in its fresh and vibrant aromatics, displaying Meyer lemon, green apple and clover, leading to dense stone fruits of ripe apricot and white peach, rounded out by a gentle flintiness and a hint of bergamot. The savoury character of the wine is highlighted by herbal notes of thyme and bay, and allspice, influenced by barrel and lees aging. This wine presents medium bodied with lively acidity and a gentle pithiness on the finish.

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**In the Vineyard:** *In the lively spirit of Virginia, 2021 was an exciting vintage for Early Mountain. It very much reflects the impact of site, with regions throughout the state experiencing highly varying climatic events, greatly influencing the dynamic range in fruit attributes.*

*Early spring, we gratefully saw few frost events, escaping significant fruit damage. Despite some early season rains, bloom-time in the vineyard was quite dry, allowing for a good fruit set. With warm daytime temperatures throughout most of the growing season, we saw high and even ripening throughout both Quaker Run and Early Mountain vineyards. The late season rains, leading to harvest were also accompanied by notable drying (this was doubly obvious when tending to our new plantings, which need water!). Overall, despite harvest-time rainfall, we could not have asked for a better result.*

**Vineyard Block:** Early Mountain Vineyard, Quaker Run Vineyard, Capstone Vineyard

**Technical:** Bottled: 7 July 2022      Cases produced: 546    Yeast: Ambient

Alcohol: 12.3%      pH: 3.37      TA: 5.0g/L      RS: 1.3g/L (dry)