



## EARLY MOUNTAIN

### 2018 Foothills

*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.***

**Blend:** 42% Cabernet Franc, 31% Merlot, 16% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot, 3% Petit Manseng, 2% Tannat

**Winemaker Note:** We always have fun making the multiple variety blends like Five Forks and Foothills. Both wines are made from vineyard blocks that produce fruit that stands in contrast to how we are told red wine or white wine should be, and that's refreshing. As someone who does not have unlimited resources, these wines are closest to the price range where I normally drink wine; self interest makes the stakes higher. 2018 marks a return to a fresh and snappy style after the more weighty 2017 Foothills. Cabernet Franc takes the lead for the first time, and Syrah no longer figures as the block at Quaker Run was pulled to make room for Tannat and Petit Verdot. It marks the third year we splash in Petit Manseng to play with the aromatics and texture of the wine. 2018 was a vintage that brought in full focus the need to be nimble in both the vineyard and cellar in Virginia. This wine proves that if you embrace the character of the vintage (fresh, energetic), rather than forcing it down a path, you can successfully make delicious wines year in and year out.

**Description:** In some ways 2018 was a Foothills vintage, as much of the material was picked earlier, before major rains as a strategy to preserve the acidity and freshness. The result is a wine that is lively in both aromatics and texture, with snappy red fruits, herbs, and subtle floral aromas that ask you to lean in. On the palate, the wine is light on its feet, graceful, and thirst quenching. This is the antidote for tannic bruisers and palate fatigue; it cleanses and energizes, drawing you back for another sip.

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**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 lighter style reds were harvested in late August, with freshness and a good level of quality.

**Vineyard Block:** Early Mountain: Block 10 Merlot, Block 1 West Cab Franc; Quaker Run: Block 2 Cab Sauv, Block 5 Merlot, Block 1 & 2 Tannat, Block 1&2 Petit Verdot, Block 1 Cabernet Franc; Glenn Anne Petit Verdot; Sycamore Springs Petit Manseng

**Technical:**

Bottled: July 10, 2019

Cases produced: 894    Yeast: Ambient

Alcohol: 13,5%

pH: 3,78

TA: 4,91 g/L

RS: 0,22 g/L, Dry