



EARLY MOUNTAIN

2017 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: 31% Merlot, 28% Cabernet Franc, 17% Syrah, 11% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Petit Verdot, 3% Petit Manseng, 1% Tannat

SRP: \$27

Winemaker Note: When I am asked to name my favorite wine we make, I always dodge that question and talk about the wines I most enjoy making. These days I have the most fun making the multiple variety blends like Five Forks and Foothills. Part of the reason is that 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. Also, 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. In general we fashion this wine to be fresh and nimble, and while that was important to our blending of the 2017, we also realized that vintage was going to speak its mind no matter what. And it did. The vintage almost overtakes the style here, with deep ripeness, but the verve-y, fresh fruit stands its ground and maintains its Foothills-ness. 2017 walks with a different gait than we are used to, but that's why we love making wine in Virginia.

Description: In 2017 Merlot, Cabernet Franc, and Syrah work as a trio in the Foothills. Across all grape varieties we had higher ripeness in 2017, and the result is darker fruit, more structure, and richness cloaking the inherent charm of the fruit from these blocks. Once again we use a small addition of Petit Manseng to bring juiciness and cohesiveness to the aromas. While we don't generally make a cellaring recommendation with Foothills, we bottle it in screwcap to encourage you to open it, but the concentration of the vintage makes this one of those wines that we can surprise ourselves with in five or so years.

In the Vineyard: 2017 was a welcome and accommodating growing season. We saw warm temperatures in March, but after one close call, were lucky to avoid any significant frost events in the spring. Early rainfall throughout the beginning of the season gave way to a dry summer, unlike many we have seen in Virginia. Our warm days and cool nights created a diurnal shift that allowed for ideal ripening conditions, gaining high sugars, while also preserving vibrant acidity in the fruit. Unlike many Virginia harvests, we had the luxury of "waiting" to pick because the customary rains held off.

Vineyard Block: EMV Block 10 Merlot, Quaker Run Block 3 Syrah, EMV Block 1 West Cab Franc, Quaker Run Block 2 Cab Sauv, Baer Ridge Cab Franc, Glenn Anne Petit Verdot, EMV Block 11 Petit Manseng, Malick Vineyard Tannat, Quaker Run Block 5 West Merlot, Quaker Run Block 6 East Merlot, Quaker Run Block 1 Cab Franc, Shenandoah Springs Cab Franc, Malick Vineyard Tannat

Clone/Rootstock: Merlot 3, 101-14; Merlot 181, 101-14; Syrah 470, 101-14; Petit Verdot 2, 101-14; Cab Sauv 412, 169, 338, FPS04, Riparia Gloire, Petit Manseng, Tannat

Technical:

Bottled: 27 June 2018

Cases produced: 1053

Yeast: Cultured and Ambient

Alcohol: 13,5%

pH: 3,66

TA: 5,6 g/L

RS: 0,30g/L, Dry