



## EARLY MOUNTAIN

### 2019 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:** 34% Merlot, 21% Petit Verdot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Cabernet Franc, 4% 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. After a fresh and snappy 2018, we embraced the plentiful warmth and sunshine of 2019 to make a more concentrated Foothills. Though an argument could be made that it is confusing to the "market" when the style changes from vintage to vintage, I would counter that we are simply communicating that Virginia has vintage variation, and when you try to hide the true character of a wine, it is almost always inferior to an honest presentation. Merlot again takes the lead, and Foothills continues to be a Bordeaux-*ish* blend with a small amount of Tannat. It is now four years running that we splash in Petit Manseng to play with the aromatics and texture of the wine.

**Description:** The aromas of the 2019 Foothills are heady and rich, with dark fruits and subtle dried herbs. It is a substantial wine that is ripe and mouth filling with soft tannins, bringing more to the table than would be expected of its price tag. The flavors are layered and long, allowing for more contemplative complexity than we are used to with Foothills.

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**In the Vineyard:** *2019 was an excellent vintage with balanced whites and reds with ripe intensity and richness. The season began early, with picking for sparkling at the very beginning of August, resulting from a moderately early budbreak. While this notably early start to the vintage was psychologically challenging, the fruit was well-balanced and we're excited to see how it develops in the cellar.*

*It is understandable to compare 2019 to 2017, however yields were more typical and balanced in 2019, compared to high yielding 2017. We were able to apply the learnings from the very ripe 2017 vintage to our farming and picking decisions in 2019, which often led us to pick blocks earlier; and rather than simply pursuing sugar ripeness, we have been able to farm and pick based on phenological ripeness and aromatic complexity.*

**Technical:**

Bottled: July 13th, 2020      Cases produced: 1,430      Yeast: Ambient

Alcohol: 13.4%      pH: 3.75      TA: 5.3 g/L      RS: 0.29 g/L (Dry)