



EARLY MOUNTAIN

2019 Capstone Vineyard Cabernet Franc

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.

Variety: 100% Cabernet Franc

SRP: \$42

Winemaker Note: This is our inaugural vintage of Capstone Cabernet Franc, making for a total of five Franc bottlings for the 2019 vintage! We started working with Andrea Baer and Dave Adams on their steep, mountainside vineyard in 2019, and immediately the vineyard has become important to our wines, from the Sauvignon blanc for Five Forks to the Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot for our high end red blends and this varietal bottling. Perched on the side of the Blue Ridge, rocky and south facing, in the town of Linden, Capstone fits nicely into our strategy of sourcing our best reds from mountain vineyards. The wine shows the power of the site and the vintage, a Cabernet Franc that is the closest to the Bordeaux paradigm in both structure and flavor profile. The winemaking is the same as Quaker Run and Shenandoah Springs, but just as those two wines are distinctly different, Capstone shows that site trumps winemaking, and the wine cuts its own path. We are excited to share the wines of this vineyard with you, and this wine is the perfect introduction for what is to come.

Wine description: While we always say our Cabernet Franc approach is more Burgundy than Bordeaux, this wine challenges that assertion. Immediately the aromatics bring dark fruits, and there is more than a hint of the graphite that we associate with Bordeaux. The dry heat of the vintage amplifies the structure of the wine, bringing a tannic presence that we usually associate with our red blends. The density and length are less about supple, soft textures and more about persistence and length. That said, returning to the aromatics, it is striking now "grape driven" they are; this is *Cabernet Franc*. The flavors echo this approach and pull us away from the style that emphasizes the character of the barrel and long aging. This wine has just begun its journey, and in the first months of 2021, it needs patience and aeration to show us what it has to offer, and what it has in store.

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.

Vineyard Block:

Clone/Rootstock: Cab Franc 327, Riparia Gloire; Cab Franc 214, Riparia Gloire

Technical: Cases produced: 180 Bottled: 1/6/21

Yeast: Ambient

Alcohol: 14.4%

pH: 3.87

TA: 4.51 g/L

RS: 0.2 g/L