



## EARLY MOUNTAIN

### 2020 Eluvium

*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:** 75% Merlot, 25% Petit Verdot

**Winemaker Note:** Quaker Run Merlot has been the star of Eluvium, grown on the East Block on the slope. From some of our oldest vines, this Merlot contributes the most unique and exciting aromatic density, with notable textural presence and persistence of fine grain tannin. Beginning in 2019 we gained access to two additional mountain vineyards, Russ Mountain and Capstone, and both bring diversity of Merlot to the table, with Russ Mountain contributing depth and heft, and Capstone bringing a freshness that displays the purity of Merlot. Considering the added power, depth and flavor density brought by their fruit, we are excited about how we have been able to further approach blending Eluvium.

Eluvium very much represents power, but with nuance. On the surface, the Eluvium blend appears very straightforward, based on varietal, however it is the exciting diversity in sites and resulting wines that make this one of the most complex to blend. We complement the Merlot with Petit Verdot, and while Petit Verdot can often present as big and monolithic, our approach with it highlights its inherent aromatic characteristics. We primarily source our Petit Verdot from mountain side sites (much like the merlot), and pick not just based on high alcohol potential, but rather the overall flavour profile and balance. Petit Verdot can bring such ethereal and floral attributes, in addition to its brooding dense fruit. We utilize whole cluster inclusion during fermentation to highlight the range of aromas the Petit Verdot presents.

**Description:** On the nose the 2020 Eluvium is brighter than other vintages displaying dark stone fruits and berries, accentuated by confectionery and baking spices, forest floor attributes and a unique dried citrus component that brightens the savoury character of this vintage. 2020 also brings a freshness to the Eluvium palate, with a lively and welcoming palate that brings moderate, but lengthy tannins.

**Aging / Cellaring:** Aged 18 months in French barrique, 40% new.

Aeration recommended. Should develop and drink well for eight or more years if properly cellared.

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#### **In the Vineyard:**

*The growing season in Virginia was dynamic to say the least, adding to the chaotic nature of the year as a whole. Despite an early budbreak followed by frost risk in late April and early May, Early Mountain was*

*lucky to avoid the worst of it with only a Petit Manseng block and some lower areas of Chardonnay impacted.*

*The first half of the growing season was relatively dry and quite hot in June and July. Late July and early August brought a lot of moisture that was very challenging, but things dried out a bit heading into harvest. We ended up in a dance with the Atlantic, as tropical systems waltzed through every ten days for two months. Once again, we were lucky to be spared the worst of the weather, and we emerged at the end of harvest with a cellar full of high quality 2020 wines. In the spirit of every vintage being different than every other in our state, 2020 was unique in that the first half produced lighter wines with high acid and the second half brought riper, more classic wines.*

**Vineyard Blocks:** Quaker Run Vineyard Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc., Russ Mountain Merlot, Capstone Vineyard Merlot; Shenandoah Springs Petit Verdot.

**Technical:** Cases produced: 860 Bottled: March 28, 2022

Yeast: Ambient Alcohol: 14.1% pH: 3.83 TA: 5.5 g/L RS: Dry