



EARLY MOUNTAIN

2021 Young Wine Chambourcin

The idea of this project is to use hybrid grapes, made in a natural way, to make a delicious, fun, accessible wine that can be enjoyed ... always. Much like our wines bottled in screwcap, this bottle is telling you it's okay to open now, and in fact you should. In a broader sense, we are also engaging in a conversation of sustainability and challenging some of the bias that lingers around hybrid grapes. In fact when they are grown in good places and made in a way that embraces their inherent nature, they can be so good as to be surprising.

Grape Variety: 96% Chambourcin, 4% Vidal Blanc

Winemaker Note: While the goal of this project is wine that is joyous/casual/chill, the minimalist approach is actually one of the more challenging ways to make clean and delicious wines. Because of that, we source the grapes from the Shenandoah Valley, where cooler temps give us higher acidity that protects the grapes through fermentation and the wine during aging. This time, instead of co-fermenting Vidal blanc, we made orange wine with it, and then blended it into the Chambourcin, at a lower %. The effect is to blend a bit more structure into the tannin-light, but acid-ample Chambourcin. This was not fined or filtered, and other than a small dose of sulfur dioxide at bottling, nothing was added but the grapes.

Wine Description: Chambourcin is a grape that, if you try to make it act like vinifera, is a bit like jogging with a cat on a leash. You can do it, but it's going to be weird, plenty of folks will disapprove, and it will get its revenge while you sleep (the cat will). Chambourcin's spirit animal is not a cat, but rather some theoretical "forever puppy": soft, playful, endlessly charming, won't stop chewing the cat's leash. It is a red wine that carries a tannin load closer to that of most white wines, and like whites, is freshest and juiciest when there is plenty of acidity. For that reason it is perfect with a chill, and the soft tannins and bright fruit are reminiscent of the grape Gamay. That's why, in the early days of this wine, Early Mountain veteran, Patt Eagan, coined the term "Chambojolais". He should put that on a T-shirt.

Vineyard Block: Barren Ridge, Bluestone Vineyard, Sherman's Ridge

Technical: Bottled, unfiltered: May 17, 2022 Cases produced: 475 Yeast: Ambient

Alcohol: 11.5%

pH: 3.51

TA: 6.8 g/L

RS: 0.2 g/L (dry)