



## EARLY MOUNTAIN

### 2020 Young Wine White (Vidal Blanc)

*The young wine project started as a conversation between Ben and Nicolas Mestre of Williams Corner, our distributor partner, even before they worked together with Early Mountain wines. The idea was 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:** 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. In 2020, we fermented in a mixture of neutral barrel and stainless steel, adding to the textural layering of this wine. A long fermentation brought savory components to compliment the inherent fruit character of the grape.

**Wine Description:** It would be silly to over-describe a wine with a questionable owl on the label, but we should point out that this wine has texture and volume while retaining acidic structure, a result of full malo and long contact with active yeast. The aromatics are savory and preview the umami character that we find on the palate, with fresh stone fruit peaking through on the back end. The layers and depth of this Vidal are a subtle reflection of the natural technique in the cellar. But let's not take ourselves too seriously here ... the owl just won't have it.

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**In the Vineyard:** *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. Hybrid grapes like Chambourcin and Vidal handle these Virginia vintages well in that they are generally able to hang on the vine through wet weather longer than the average vinifera grape, and they are more adapted to the warmth and humidity.*

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

**Technical:** Bottled, unfiltered: May 24, 2021    Cases produced: 497    Yeast: Ambient

Alcohol: 11.5%

pH: 3.41

TA: 5.9 g/L

RS: 1.25 g/L (dry)