



EARLY MOUNTAIN

2020 Shenandoah Springs 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: 95% Cabernet Franc, 4% Merlot

Winemaker Note: In the 2020 vintage, this bottling is one of five expressions of Cabernet Franc that we produced. We believe this grape is reflective of place and transparent of site when handled appropriately, and we are offering both regional and vineyard specific bottlings to highlight these expressions. In general we look to the valley for finesse, aromatic density and silken texture, but the wines tend to deepen as we move north, as it is slightly lower elevation and one of the driest parts of the East Coast. In 2020 all of our reds were more elegant, with a greater emphasis on aromatics than usual.

Wine description: While cliché, we like to say our approach to Cabernet Franc is more Burgundy than Bordeaux, meaning we look for silky mouthfeel rather than tannic structure; and favor the aromatic potential of the grape over the flavor of the barrel. The 2020 vintage very much embodies our approach, and the result is a wine that brings purity to the subtle fruit of the vintage with plenty of ripe red cherry, forest floor and graphite. While textural and aromatic, the wine is also wound elegantly around the tannic structure, making it generous showing its true character.

Cellaring: This wine should continue to develop over the next five to seven years.

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 Block: Shenandoah Springs Vineyard **Clone/Rootstock:** Cab Franc 214 and 327

Technical:	Cases produced: 154	Bottled: 14 December 2021
	Yeast: Ambient	Alcohol: 13.9% pH: 3.85
	TA: 4.8 g/L	RS: Dry, 0.28 g/L Filtration: Unfiltered