



VINTAGE FACTS

2020 was a relatively warm year for Washington with a significantly smaller crop than average.

Bud break began in mid-April, well aligned with historical averages. Bloom was slightly advanced, beginning in the third week of May. Wind and rain contributed to some shatter at that time. Overall, the summer was fairly moderate and even, despite some heat spikes in late July and early August.

Harvest began the third week of August, about a week ahead of long-term averages but well aligned with many recent years. This was followed by a hot beginning of September, which led to feverish picking of early ripening varieties.

Significant wildfire smoke came in from Oregon during the second week of September, pausing harvest for nearly 10 days. The layer of smoke also stalled sugar accumulation and pushed harvest for some varieties into cooler parts of September and October. Early reports indicate limited negative impacts from the smoke.

October temperatures were above average before a freeze event. October 25th brought the growing season to a close in many regions. The warmth in October made overall heat units look higher than their impact, as much of the fruit had already been picked in warmer locations.

Generally, yields were substantially lower in 2020. Growers attributed this to a large crop in 2019, a series of October 2019 freezes, and mixed weather at bloom that led to a poor set. This all contributed to significantly smaller cluster weights and berry sizes across varieties.

While the crop was smaller, the combination of smaller berries and extended hang time is traditionally a recipe for high quality wines in Washington. Many growers and winemakers were excited with the result, noting the dark color of the reds.

"Overall, the vintage is spectacular," said one. "They're just beautiful wines, aromatic, and dense but with levity to them."

Courtesy of the Washington State Wine Commission.

WINEMAKING NOTES

All of the fruit was gently destemmed and sorted into open top fermenters with 60% whole berries. A four-day cold maceration under controlled temperatures took place, after which the individual lots were inoculated with various Rhône and Bordeaux yeast selections. Fermentations were punched down twice daily, with temperatures never reaching above 82° F. After 14 days of maceration, each lot was pressed and allowed to settle in tank before going to barrel. The wine was aged in 228-liter French oak barrels for 20 months; 10% of these barrels were new. Racking occurred twice before bottling.

FOOD & SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Enjoy with grilled meat dishes, including peppercorn-rubbed hanger steak, prime rib and brisket, as well as grilled flatbread with wild mushrooms and dark chocolate desserts.

TASTING NOTES

Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Merlot fruits deliver deep purple tones in the glass. The wine offers aromas of dark plum, blackberry, toasted oak and cardamom. Time in French oak and the grapes' natural flavors create a savory palate of rich fruit and sweet spice, including chai tea, blackberry and sweet tobacco.

Peak drinkability 2020 - 2027.

TECHNICAL DATA

Grape Type:

57% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Syrah, 10% Malbec, 10% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot

Appellation:

Walla Walla Valley

Vineyard:

Pambrun, Maison Bleue, Stone Valley

Harvest Date:

October 10, 2020

Harvest Statistics

Brix:

25.3°

Titrateable acidity:

5.73 g/L

pH:

3.71

Finished Wine Statistics

Alcohol:

13.8%

Titrateable acidity:

6.04 g/L

pH:

3.57

Fermentation:

Small bins

Barrel Regimen:

20 months in French oak

10% new oak

Bottling Date:

July 2022

Cases Bottled:

480

MÉTIS

WALLA WALLA VALLEY