



2022 MALBEC “THE OUTLAW”

TASTING NOTES

The Outlaw has perhaps gone a bit Downtown? Compared to the dark, edgy 2021 vintage, the 2022 is softer and more colorful, and maybe even more complex? Civilization has been good for this character. The initial impression hasn't changed much: it's still dark ruby-purple and doesn't give away a lot on the nose, but in the mouth it's relatively gentle, and shows a broader palette on the palate, with mysterious fruits (that prefer not to be named to protect their families) ranging from red to purple to black, with distinct spice notes instead of leather and earth. Has the Outlaw cleaned up and been hanging out in the kitchen? An unsavory character turned savory? Whatever the case, he's still seductive, and will knock your socks off. Dry, full-bodied, medium-minus tannin, medium-minus acid.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The Outlaw has an interesting origin story, as most dark characters do. It was born in the smoky haze of 2021, when the Schneider Springs fire blew smoke into the western Yakima valley day after day for a month. The biggest impact of this was that the Mourvedre and Petit Verdot that we typically harvest from that end of the valley smelled like ashtray – and that was freshly crushed fruit samples, which are less smoky than the wine they produce. These two varieties are especially sensitive to smoke impacts, so this was a tough vintage for them; they got left in the vineyard. One of the wines we make from Mourvedre is The Deputy, and there was none produced from 2021. In order to fill the gap left behind in our production, we picked up some additional fruit from Red Mountain, where the smoke was much less intense. This included some Malbec. We loved the wine from this fruit, so instead of blending all of it into another batch, we decided to bottle it separately. But what to name it? Well, naturally, when the law (i.e. The Deputy) is not around, who shows up? The Outlaw, of course.

Composition

100% Malbec

Vineyard

Sunset Bench Vineyard

Appellation

Red Mountain

Harvest Date

October 4, 2022

Harvest specs

24.1 brix, pH 3.65, TA 4.1 g/l

Crush Pad

Destem and light crush

Saignee

15%

Yeast

D254

Fermentation

Small open-top fermentors, punched down by hand

Malolactic Fermentation

Yes

Time on Skins

16 days

Aging

18 months in barrels

Oak

25%

Fining/Filtration

Cross-flow filtration

Alcohol

14.2%

Production

96 cases

Bottled

April 25, 2024



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PAIRINGS

Pairs with simmered beans with sausage, lamb, cedar-planked salmon – sensing a theme? Earthy, smoky, meaty, these are Malbec’s metier.

VINTAGE DETAILS

2022 was a very unusual vintage in Washington state. Conditions started to warm relatively early in the spring, leading to fears of frost damage, but then it cooled off a bit...and stayed cooled off through May and into a chilly Juneuary. Flowering (which is the event that really kicks off the grape timing) was 2-3 weeks behind average, which meant that harvest would be too. Summer temps were relatively even, with a short heat spike in August. It has been quite a while since we didn’t harvest any grapes until September, and this year we didn’t pick until the end of the first week, on September 7, and our next grapes were not until the 12th. Not only did harvest start late, ripening progressed slowly. The whole vintage was saved by unusually warm and dry conditions through September into October that facilitated beautiful ripening. In terms of the effects on the grapes, the vintage was terrific for our style of moderate alcohol, firm acidity, and just-ripe flavors. Acids were a little higher than usual in some of the whites, which is a delight.

GRAPE VARIETY INFO

Malbec, known as “the black grape” for its dark color, was once widely planted in its native France. Finickyness and susceptibility to rain have led to its decline there, but it’s become a favorite in drier climates like Argentina and eastern Washington.

FUN FACTS

The vineyard that this fruit is from is named Sunset Bench Vineyard. If you read the back label carefully, you’ll find subtle references to the vineyard name there.



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