



2023 MOTLEY PURIST

TASTING NOTES

The Motley Purist is, as you'd expect, full of contradictions. A delicate nose with floral aromas and a mouth of light red, almost pink fruit (think raspberry, cherry blossom, spices) make it seem at first gentle and unassuming, but plenty of tannin means that she'll retain her bold grip on your palate even after she's gone, revealing strength and character that you will not soon forget.

Full bodied, medium acid, medium-plus tannin

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Since the day we opened our tasting room, visitors have been asking us if we have a Merlot. No, we'd say. No way. Never. Everyone else is doing that, and badly. Not our jam. We are purists about not making Merlot. But, like so many varietals, Merlots from Washington just taste better to us than ones from elsewhere (and by elsewhere we mean California). Deeper. More flavorful. More interesting. So when we were looking for an early-ripening red to add to our production, we looked to Merlot, and our purism became motley. Yup, it's merlot (plug that into your anagram generator ;-).

Composition

100% Merlot

Vineyard

Elephant Mountain

Appellation

Rattlesnake Hills, Yakima Valley

Harvest Date

September 7, 2023

Harvest specs

24.6 brix, pH 3.91, TA 3.9 g/l

Crush Pad

Destem and light crush

Saignee

No

Yeast

D254

Fermentation

Small open-top fermentors, punched down by hand

Malolactic Fermentation

Yes

Time on Skins

18 days

Aging

18 months in barrels

Oak

50%

Fining/Filtration

Cross-flow filtration

Alcohol

14.5%

Production

96 cases

Bottled

April 24, 2025



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PAIRINGS

Mushroom risotto, roast lamb, dark chocolate, reading emo stanzas at a poetry slam, aged gouda, roast duck, truffle pasta, gazing into the infinite blackness of the night sky.

VINTAGE DETAILS

The 2023 vintage got off to a late, cool start, but then raced ahead with warm temperatures, making up ground throughout the growing season and even tracking slightly ahead of average by mid-July. A brief heat spike in August caused issues in some varieties but didn't slow down the speeding train of ripening. Harvest started off with a fury, bringing home one variety after another day after day. Yields were widely variable, and things were changing so quickly that yield forecasts sometimes turned out to be significantly higher or lower than expected when the grapes were harvested. This means that we got more of some varieties than expected, and less of others. The good news is that the quality was very good in nearly everything, so we are expecting some great wines from the vintage.

GRAPE VARIETY INFO

Merlot is the second most widely-planted grape variety on the planet, with about 20% less acreage than King Cab and 15% more than 3rd-place Tempranillo. It is perhaps most famously grown on the right bank of the Bordeaux River, where it is often the dominant component of the blend. Like Cabernet, it has small berries and generally small, loose clusters.

FUN FACTS

We don't put the grape variety name on the label in order to stave off the preconceptions of those still suffering from *Sideways* bias (in one scene the character Miles asserts on his way into dinner: "I am NOT drinking any F\$#!G merlot! If anyone orders merlot, I'M LEAVING."). This scene must have tapped into latent merlot hatred among many, because it caused a substantial and decades-long drop in demand for merlot (and a parallel rise in the fortunes of Miles's favorite grape, Pinot Noir).

AWARDS

Yet to be entered into competitions.



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