



2023 LEM

TASTING NOTES

This vintage of LEM has a big personality, starting with his huge nose – it's super fruity, with loads of cherries and berries. He's got a big mouth too, packed with black raspberries and hints of cherry, nice and bright, with some subtle earthy notes too. This is a great food wine; the extra brightness helps it pair well with tomato sauces and lots of foods that are challenges for big soft tannin bombs.

Smooth/medium-bodied; medium-plus acid, medium tannin.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Eleven first made LEM (its full name is Lemberger, but we don't like to say it out loud ;-) in 2008, after a deep winter freeze killed off our Malbec supply; to fill the gap we brought in some Lemberger (for more of this story, see also our "Lemma" wine). When the wine sold out faster than anything we had previously produced, I knew we had to make more. I also knew the wine needed to have a name that didn't make people think of stinky cheese. Lemberger is a delight to work with because even when fully ripe it retains plenty of acidity, unlike many red wine varieties.

Composition

100% Lemberger

Appellation

Red Mountain

Vineyard

Kiona Vineyard

Harvest Date

September 19, 2023

Harvest specs

24 brix, pH 3.72, TA 4.5 g/l

Crush Pad

Destem and light crush

Saignee

13%

Yeast

D254

Fermentation

Small open-top fermentors, punched down by hand

Malolactic Fermentation

Yes

Time on Skins

11 days

Aging

18 months in barrels

Oak

25%

Fining/Filtration

Cross-flow filtration

Alcohol

14.5%

Production

235 cases

Bottled

April 24, 2025



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PAIRINGS

It sounds like a joke but it's true: what goes with LEM? Burgers. With some sweet potato or garlic fries on the side, please! Also great with Bolognese or marinara sauces. Or a nice Fall day. Its wide-ranging food pairing skills make it a great pick for Thanksgiving dinner, too. When you're at the winery, try it with...well, anything!

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

Lemberger originally hails from Austria or Germany and was thought to be a good fit for Washington because it is more cold hardy than some varieties. It makes bright, fruity wine with delightful cherry flavors that is 100% absolutely not reminiscent in any way of Limburger cheese. Recent vintages have had some unusual weather, and you can really taste that in the LEM; it is expressive of the vintage, more so perhaps than some other varieties.

FUN FACTS

Lemberger was first planted in Washington State in 1941, despite suffering from a severe name appeal deficiency (though at least it's not Rotburger, the grape also known as Zwiegelt). Some of the oldest commercial plantings are located on Red Mountain at Kiona Vineyard, where we get ours; they were the first vineyard to plant it in Washington, and some of ours comes from some of their oldest vines. Known as blaufrankisch ("blue franc") in Europe.

AWARDS

Not entered into competitions



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