

ANCIENT PEAKS

2013 | OYSTER RIDGE

PASO ROBLES, CALIFORNIA | SANTA MARGARITA RANCH



OYSTER RIDGE

OVERVIEW

Each year, we craft the limited-edition Oyster Ridge cuvée to exemplify our finest winemaking efforts. The name Oyster Ridge honors an outcropping that always astonishes visitors to our estate Margarita Vineyard. Here, large white oyster fossils are literally spilling out of the ground, fostering the type of calcium-rich soil that is coveted by winemakers worldwide. The 2013 vintage is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (75%), Syrah (15%), Malbec (5%) and Petite Sirah (5%), all from meticulously farmed vineyard blocks cultivated for the Oyster Ridge program.

VINEYARD

The proliferation of sea fossils at Oyster Ridge is the most vivid example of the complex geology found at Margarita Vineyard. This namesake Oyster Ridge blend comes from specific spots at Margarita Vineyard that have proven to produce remarkable fruit. These include the rows of Cabernet Sauvignon along the uniformly exposed slopes of Block 49, and along the southwest-facing crown of Block 50. These subsections are isolated at the start of the growing season, and they are fastidiously tended to maximize the fruit's potential and meet the standards of the Oyster Ridge program. Margarita Vineyard stands alone as the southernmost vineyard in the Paso Robles region, nestled into the rugged Santa Lucia Mountain range just 14 miles from the Pacific Ocean in the new Santa Margarita Ranch AVA. The mountain peaks act as a gateway for cool marine air, resulting in an extended growing season that yields fruit with uncommon depth and structure. The peaks are also testaments to the tectonic forces that created Margarita Vineyard's rare diversity of soils, ultimately fostering natural complexity in our wines.

WINEMAKING

The 2013 growing season was deemed "perfect" by the winemaking team, resulting in rich fruit flavors with fully developed tannins. The Cabernet Sauvignon was partially fermented with wild yeasts to foster enhanced textural depth. Fermentation of the Cabernet Sauvignon took place in 10-ton fermenters to generate added thermal energy for enhanced extraction. The other varieties were fermented in small open-top fermenters. After fermentation, each varietal lot was aged separately for 23 months in premium French oak barrels, with a portion of the Petite Sirah aged in American oak barrels for added nuance. The final blend was assembled from only those barrels that exhibited exemplary complexity, structure and aging potential—and without preconceptions regarding traditional varietal pairings. The Cabernet Sauvignon sets the tone with broad, polished layers and classic varietal expression. The Syrah brings a dimension of rich black fruit with meaty accents. The Petite Sirah contributes a dash of bold intensity, while the Malbec adds juiciness to the mid-palate.

TASTING NOTES

The 2013 Oyster Ridge bursts out of the glass with aromas of plum, blackberry, lavender, black olive and sarsaparilla. The mouthfeel is broad and viscous, cascading across the palate with layers of boysenberry, black cherry, vanilla cream and polished oak. Trailing notes of caramel, graphite and spice emerge on a long, pure finish. Through the end, the wine is impeccably balanced, with ample juiciness and intensity harnessed by elegant structure. This wine will generously evolve in the bottle for years to come.

VINEYARD:

Margarita Vineyard (Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Malbec)
Wittstrom Vineyard (Petite Sirah)

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

Cabernet Sauvignon 75%
Syrah 15%
Malbec 5%
Petite Sirah 5%

SOIL TYPE

Ancient Sea Bed

HARVEST DATES:

October 16 (Cabernet Sauvignon Block 50)
October 21 (Cabernet Sauvignon Block 49)
October 8 (Petite Sirah)
October 18 (Syrah)
October 29 (Malbec)

AGING REGIMEN:

23 Months in French (97%) and American (3%) oak barrels
80% new oak

FINAL ANALYSIS:

Alcohol: 14.8%
TA: .68
pH: 3.62

CASES PRODUCED:

996

SRP:

\$60

