

ANCIENT PEAKS

2018 | OYSTER RIDGE

PASO ROBLES, CALIFORNIA | SANTA MARGARITA RANCH



OVERVIEW

Each year, we craft the limited-edition Oyster Ridge cuvée to exemplify our finest winemaking efforts. The name Oyster Ridge is a tribute to the large white oyster fossils that predominate in our estate Margarita Vineyard, fostering the type of calcium-rich soils coveted by winemakers worldwide. The 2018 vintage is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (72%), Petit Verdot (10%), Malbec (10%), Cabernet Franc (5%) and Merlot (3%), all from meticulously farmed vineyard blocks cultivated for the Oyster Ridge program.

VINEYARD

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 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. The 2018 vintage is driven by Cabernet Sauvignon from the hilltop of Block 49, which produces small, intensely flavored berries with an elegant red-blue fruit character; and from the upper portion of Block 50, which yields a powerful black-blue fruit spectrum. Equally specific selection was applied to the other varieties that round out this classic Bordeaux-style blend. All vineyard subsections designated for Oyster Ridge 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.

WINEMAKING

A cool start to the 2018 growing season was followed by the "March Miracle"—a drought-ending storm that delivered 10 inches of rain to Margarita Vineyard. This set the tone for a long, steady growing season, with the Malbec in the 2018 Oyster Ridge marking the end of harvest when it was picked on November 20. Ninety percent of this blend was fermented in 10-ton fermenters to generate added thermal energy for enhanced extraction. After fermentation, each lot was aged separately for 24 months in premium French oak barrels, inclusive of 85 percent new oak. The final blend was assembled from only those barrels that exhibited exemplary complexity, structure and aging potential. Cabernet Sauvignon is predominant with broad, polished layers and classic varietal expression. The Petit Verdot contributes color, structure and aromatic nuances of cedar and pencil shavings. Malbec adds undertones of juicy red fruit, while the Cabernet Franc enlivens the aromatic profile with suggestions of violets and savory spice. A touch of Merlot adds lift and silkiness to the palate.

TASTING NOTES

The 2018 Oyster Ridge bursts from the glass with an abundant display of both red and black fruits, all underpinned by notes of violet, graphite, caramel and black olive. An impressively integrated palate reveals seamless flavors of black cherry, plum, red currant and cassis. The mouthfeel is broad and deep, combining approachability with staying power. Hints of toasted oak, tobacco, mocha and spice awaken toward the finish, while sleek, polished tannins and measured acidity carry the experience to a triumphant conclusion.

VINEYARD:

Margarita Vineyard

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

Cabernet Sauvignon 75%
Petit Verdot 9%
Malbec 9%
Cabernet Franc 5%
Merlot 2%

SOIL TYPE:

Ancient Sea Bed

HARVEST DATES:

October 16 (Merlot, Block 7)
November 5 (Cabernet Sauvignon, Block 50 Upper)
November 6 (Cabernet Sauvignon, Block 49 Hilltop)
November 12 (Petit Verdot, Block 35)
November 16 (Cabernet Franc, Block 9)
November 20 (Malbec, Block 45A)

AGING REGIMEN:

24 Months in French (95%) and American (5%) oak barrels
85% new oak

FINAL ANALYSIS:

Alcohol: 14.9%
TA: .59
pH: 3.87

CASES PRODUCED:

946

SRP:

\$60



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OYSTER RIDGE