

ANCIENT PEAKS

2020 | 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 2020 vintage is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (75%), Cabernet Franc (12%), Petit Verdot (7%), Merlot (3%) and Malbec (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. 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. The 2020 vintage is driven by Cabernet Sauvignon from blocks 31, 49, 51, 52 and 53. Block 31 unfolds along a shale-riddled slope that delivers deep, concentrated varietal flavors, while Block 49 is notable for its elegant red-blue fruit character. Blocks 51, 52 and 53 comprise a newer Cabernet Sauvignon planting that produces an abundance of blue fruit flavors with purity and structure. Similarly specific selection was applied to the other varieties that round out this classic Bordeaux-style blend.

WINEMAKING

After hand harvesting, each lot was cold soaked for two to three days. More than 90 percent of the blend was fermented in small 10-ton fermenters to generate added thermal energy for enhanced extraction, with attentive phenolic monitoring to dial in an ideal mouthfeel. After fermentation, only the free-run juice was selected. Each lot was aged separately for 23 months in premium French oak barrels, inclusive of 75 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. Cabernet Franc enlivens the aromatic profile with suggestions of violets and savory spice, while Petit Verdot contributes color, structure and aromatic nuances of cedar and pencil shavings. Merlot adds lift and silkiness to the palate, and Malbec completes the experience with undertones of juicy red fruit.

TASTING NOTES

The 2020 Oyster Ridge opens with a captivating nose of plum, boysenberry, leather, cocoa powder and toasted oak. The mouthfeel is dense, layered and seamless, displaying flavors of black cherry, cassis, blueberry and pomegranate with trailing notes of cola, caramel and earthen soil. Long, plush tannins bring firmness and staying power to a flawlessly integrated finish. A wine destined to evolve beautifully in the bottle for years to come.

VINEYARD:

Margarita Vineyard

SOIL TYPE:

Ancient Sea Bed

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

Cabernet Sauvignon 75%

Cabernet Franc 12%

Petit Verdot 7%

Merlot 3%

Malbec 3%

HARVEST DATES:

September 26 (Merlot, Block 7)

October 13 (Block 31, Blocks 51-53)

October 21 (Cabernet Sauvignon,
Block 49B Hilltop)

October 24 (Cabernet Franc, Block 9)

October 26 (Petit Verdot, Block 35)

October 27 (Malbec, Block 45A)

AGING REGIMEN:

23 Months in French oak barrels

75% new oak

FINAL ANALYSIS:

Alcohol: 14.1%

TA: .64

pH: 3.74

CASES

PRODUCED:

1,488



OUR ULTIMATE CUVÉE FROM MARGARITA VINEYARD

BORN OF THE SOIL SHAPED BY THE PACIFIC, PERFECTED BY HAND.