



Michael Shaps

2022
MERLOT
MONTICELLO

Varieties

100% Merlot

AVA

Monticello

Vineyard

100% Honah Lee

Harvest Date

September 4, 2022

Fermentation & Aging

Stainless steel fermenters
and barrel aged 22 months:

67% New French oak
33% in neutral French oak

Technical Data

Brix at Harvest: 22

pH: 3.65

TA: 6.75 grams/L

Alc: 13.7%

RS: 0.04%

Bottled: July 18, 2024

Cases Produced: 148

VINEYARD NOTES

All the fruit for this varietal merlot is sourced from Honah Lee vineyard which was planted in 1998 and is located in the Monticello AVA. The vineyard is planted on Davidson Clay soil with southeastern exposure. The remainder comes from our Shenandoah vineyards which benefits from the rain shadow effect from the nearby Blue Ridge mountains which blocks rain clouds from forming, resulting in drier than usual summers.

WINEMAKING NOTES

All of our Merlot is hand harvested and transferred to the winery for cooling prior to de-stemming and partial crushing. The grapes are cold soaked for 48 hours. We do not use any commercial yeast strains, but rather create a starter from its own juice during the cold maceration process. During the fermentation, we conduct pump-overs twice daily until the end of fermentation and continue to extend the maceration for several weeks with daily pump-overs.

After pressing and settling, the wine is transferred to French oak barrels of which 67% are new, and 33% are neutral oak. After malolactic fermentation is completed during the barrel aging process, the wine is raked and aged for a total of 20 months before bottling. This wine goes into bottle unfiltered and in most years, un-fined as well.

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

The 2022 Merlot is not blended with any other grape, and is instead a 100% varietal wine this year. It is balanced enough by itself, and showcases a wonderful medium-bodied yet rich wine. Notes of dark cherry, plum, and cassis are present on the nose, and complemented with some spice notes on the palate. Elevated acidity with soft, medium tannins make this wine very approachable and perfect for all sorts of pairings. This would be a great bottle to pair with leaner cuts of beef like sirloin, filet, or flank steak. Enjoyable now, but can be cellared for about 4-6 years.