

LONE BIRCH

2011 | Red Blend | Yakima Valley

VARIETAL COMPOSITION

28% Mourvèdre, 22% Pinot Noir, 13% Sangiovese, 11% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Syrah, 6% Malbec, 4% Barbera, 4% Zinfandel, 4% Grenache

VINEYARD

Our family farm dates back to the 1940s when it was founded by H. Lloyd Miller. He had an immense love for trees and planted them strategically around the farm. Over the years most of the original trees disappeared, with the exception of one Lone Birch. This Lone Birch has become a cherished landmark on our family's farm. Today, this tree stands guard over the vineyards, which lie beneath its limbs.

The fruit for this blend was sourced from a variety of our estate vineyard blocks. The elevation ranges from 890 to 1020 ft. above sea level. The soil is well drained Warden Silty loam layered over Basalt rock. Fruit health and flavors are influenced by our canopy management techniques that include leaf removal, shoot positioning, and crop thinning.

VINTAGE

The 2011 vintage was quite challenging. A defining event of this vintage actually occurred in 2010 when a late-November freeze resulted in bud damage leading to crop loss and low yields for certain varieties (especially many of our red varieties). We also experienced an exceptionally cool vintage. Low spring temperatures suppressed bud break into the last week of April (approximately 3 weeks later than normal). This late bud break limited exposure to spring frost damage. Precipitation in the spring to early summer was higher than normal. The mild weather continued through the month of August. Veraison (the point when the berries began to soften and color) was observed about 2 weeks later than normal. At this point, the 2011 summer appeared to be the coldest on record. In early September, we began to experience some warm weather and we saw 100 degrees for the first time in 2011. This late summer and early fall heat was too late to pick up much of the time lost throughout the summer. Harvest began in late September. Most of our fruit was harvested in October, and we finished harvest in early November. The vintage was positively influenced by the warm September temperatures as we watched the acidity quickly drop, but our sugar levels stayed relatively low. The net result of the vintage is that our 2011 wines have lower alcohol levels than normal and moderate acidity resulting in smooth wines with early drink ability.

WINEMAKING

Our winemaking begins with a pre-sort of the fruit to make sure only ideal clusters get vinified. After being destemmed, a gentle peristaltic pump is used to transfer the must to the fermentation vessel. The wine is fermented in 6 ton stainless steel tanks and 1 ton stainless steel fermentors. Pump-overs, Rack and Returns, and Punch-downs are used to extract tannin and color from the skin. Ideal peak ferment temperatures are 80-84 degrees. After the wine has finished fermenting it is pressed and settled for 48 hours before going to barrel. Barrels are typically 25%-35% new, and are composed of 60% French, 30% American, and 10% Eastern European. The wine goes through malolactic fermentation in barrel and then is racked. Blending occurs during the 2nd racking, usually in April. Racking continues every 3 months until the wine is finally bottled in September after 11 months in barrel. Prior to bottling, the wine is pad filtered and bottled using screw cap closures.

WINE ANALYSIS

13.0% Alcohol
3.56 pH
7.35 TA

BOTTLING DATE

September 4, 2012

CASE PRODUCTION

601 cases



Hand-Crafted By Winemaker:

Marion J. Miller

COLOR Red Garnet

NOSE An integrated bouquet of dark cherry, spice, & toasted oak.

PALATE This smooth, medium-bodied wine has soft tannins, good acidity, and flavors of berries and spice.

PEAK DRINKING Now through 2018.