



## EARLY MOUNTAIN

### 2019 Shenandoah Valley Cabernet Franc

*At the foot of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains, nature is at once graceful and fierce. Early Mountain wines are made here through a combination of ingenuity and true grit. We gently tend to every vine so the wine that emerges from the cellar is a clear descendant of the fruit at harvest — a unique wine that respects its heritage while embracing evolution and adventure. Virginian through and through.*

**Variety:** 100% Cabernet Franc

**Winemaker Note:** In 2019, we build on the strategy we started in 2017 of delineating our Cabernet Francs by the multiple places they are grown, adding a third vineyard specific wine, in addition to the two regional blends. Both the Madison County and Shenandoah Valley bottlings reflect the ping pong character of the last three vintages, moving back to the intensity and power of a hot dry vintage, not unlike 2017, after the delicate, rain-influenced 2018s. Though we talk about the regional bottlings as being lighter in style in our "normal vintages", we stand by our commitment to not only embrace place, but also vintage; this is Virginia after all, and we have different conditions every year. We want to celebrate this, instead of forcing the wines to act the same every year. In 2019, we had the luxury of picking when we wanted, and that meant the grapes achieved a level of ripeness that is normally not attainable. The Shenandoah Valley, in particular, had a long dry season and this wine became a counterpoint to the 2018. In particular the north valley vineyard near Woodstock is bringing serious depth and concentration, while the Timberville vineyard balances and contributes aromatically. We are excited to offer the 2019 Shenandoah Valley Cabernet Franc as an expression of this vintage and region.

**Wine description:** We like to say our approach to Cabernet Franc is more Burgundy than Bordeaux, meaning we look for silky rather than tannic structure and favor the aromatic potential of the grape over the flavor of the barrel. In 2019, this still stands. We could have pushed it closer to Bordeaux, but we believe this grape does best as a varietal wine when it is unencumbered by new oak and long aging. The result is a wine that is both impressive in stature and compelling in detail, walking a fine line between raw power and complexity. The aromas are a mingling of ripe, black fruits with rosemary, forest mushrooms and black pepper. The fruit/savory play continues on the palate, which is rich with persistent, ripe tannins and subtle acidity. This wine demands that you both engage its aromatic offering and pour yourself another glass.

**Food pairing:** Works beautifully with traditional Cab Franc pairings of roast lamb and fuller flavor meats, but with its silken texture and savory notes it also bridges to lighter dishes with umami notes.

**Cellaring:** This wine has already entered its drinking window and should continue to develop over the next two to five years.

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**In the Vineyard:** *2019 was an excellent vintage with balanced whites and reds with ripe intensity and richness. The season began early, with picking for sparkling at the very beginning of August, resulting from a moderately early budbreak. While this notably early start to the vintage was psychologically challenging, the fruit was well-balanced and we're excited to see how it develops in the cellar.*

*It is understandable to compare 2019 to 2017, however yields were more typical and balanced in 2019, compared to high yielding 2017. We were able to apply the learnings from the very ripe 2017 vintage to our farming and picking decisions in*

*2019, which often led us to pick blocks earlier; and rather than simply pursuing sugar ripeness, we have been able to farm and pick based on phenological ripeness and aromatic complexity.*

**Vineyard Block:** Shenandoah Springs Vineyard, Baer Ridge Vineyard

**Clone/Rootstock:** Cab Franc 214, 3309

<b>Technical:</b>	Cases produced: 370	Bottled: 7/13/20	
	Yeast: Ambient	Alcohol: 13.6%	
	pH: 3.85	TA: 4.2 g/L	RS: Dry, 0.18 g/L