



Benchmark 2020

43% Malbec, 35% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc
2% Cabernet Sauvignon
Alcohol Level: 14.6%
Levels: pH 3.66 TA 6.4 g/l
Sugar: 0.44 g/l
Harvest date: October 15th - November 8th, 2020
CSPC +449419

Tasting Notes

Medium to deep ruby in colour with a dense core. The nose presents layered aromas of dark cherry and blackberry framed by hints of tobacco and cedar. The palate is rich and well structured with ripe dark fruit, subtle baking spice, and supple tannins that add depth and complexity. A long, polished finish lingers with warmth and balance, suggesting excellent aging potential.

Harvest Notes

2020 began with a rapid winter cold snap that saw temperatures drop from 3 °C to -18 °C in a matter of 8 hours. Cross sections of the dormant buds confirmed no vine damage. Due to COVID-19 lockdown protocols, the beginning of the harvest was a family affair with the Holler family pruning over 60 acres as a team. Full vineyard budbreak in Osoyoos happened April 15, Skaha Bench on April 20, and Penticton April 29 – a little later than average. Early June was cool and wet in the Okanagan Valley. The weather started improving June 18th with the real Okanagan heat arriving the second week of July and staying until mid-September. The Mount Christie wildfire was a big scare for Penticton and Okanagan Falls. The fire came 500 meters from our Skaha Bench Vineyards but luckily the smoke from the wildfire did not settle in the vineyard. Autumn was beautiful with temperatures between 20-25 °C through to early October. Green leaves on the vines until October 22 helped the red grapes to ripen beautifully. A surprise snowfall late October saw 8 cm of snow fall and the race was on to get the grapes into the winery. As is tradition, the last bunch was picked mid-day on November 9, in our Munson Mountain Cabernet Franc vineyard. 2020 provided its challenges but with the summer heat and extended autumn it was another great vintage in the Okanagan Valley.

Winemaking Notes

Our Benchmark red blend is crafted from a selection of established vineyards exclusively on the Naramata Bench. The ripe clusters were carefully handpicked and sorted in the vineyard before being transported to the winery. After destemming, the berries were meticulously hand-sorted again to ensure only the highest-quality fruit was used for fermentation. Each of the three varietals underwent a four-day cold soak before being fermented separately. The wine was then aged for 21 months in a mix of new and seasoned French oak barrels, followed by an additional 12 months of cellar aging prior to release.

Cellaring Notes

Drink now to 2032.

