

## 2025 Spring Release Technical Info & Notes

### 2022 Vintage

2022 was a strange growing season. We had a long, cold, and wet Spring capped off with some surprise April snow! A scary event but the temperatures weren't too cold and we escaped without any damage to our vineyards or bud growth. Summer didn't seem to start until mid-June when all of a sudden it was 100 degrees every and we finally got some heat to move things along. We got a much later start to harvest and were a little nervous about ripening since we were so far behind. Luckily we had one of the sunniest September and Octobers we can ever remember. Day after day it was 75° - 80° during the day and 45° at night. We couldn't have asked for better final ripening weather.

As a result, we were able to let our fruit hang and take our time sampling and tasting every day and picking our blocks at a nice easy pace. These wines are concentrated, delicious, have wonderful ripe fruit flavors, and are very well balanced. They're showing great in their youth but should get even better after a few years in the cellar.

Cheers and thank you for being a member!

- Will Hoppes

### 2023 Red Mountain Optu White

- Blend: 58% Sauvignon Blanc, 42% Semillon
- Vineyards: 79% Artz, 21% Klipsun
- Aging: 25% New French Oak, 11 months
- Production: 576 cases

We've made this traditional *Bordeaux Blanc* reserve blend since 2007.

Our Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon are hand-picked, pressed, and cold-settled for 48 hours, and then racked into mostly neutral barrels and a small amount in New French oak barrels. We do "low and slow" fermentation at cold temperatures to bring out more aromatics. The juice spends 11 months on lees, occasionally stirred based on taste and smell.

Both Artz and Klipsun vineyards were planted in the 1980's at the base of Red Mountain near the Yakima River. Here the cooling effects of the body of water are a little stronger making for cooler nights and extra natural acidity in the fruit. We get tropical fruit tones from the warm weather Sauvignon Blanc, honeysuckle aromatics and a heavier midpalate from the Semillon, balanced by wonderful mouthwatering acidity.

## 2022 Heart of the Hill Malbec

- Aging: 22% New American Oak, 22% New French Oak, 22 months
- Oak Fermentation: 66% Oak Tank
- Production: 441 cases

Heart of the Hill was planted in the early 1990's and is owned and managed by the Williams family of Kiona, founders of Red Mountain and now third generation farmers.

Outside of Kiona, we are the only other winery who makes Malbec from the critically acclaimed Heart of the Hill vineyard.

This Malbec has a wonderful silky texture and loads of dark fruit tones. It's a wine that tends to show well right away but can be cellared especially the 2022 vintage. Perfect food pairing wine with all sorts of BBQ and dishes with fun and interesting spices.

## 2022 Heart of the Hill Cabernet Sauvignon

- Aging: 53% New French Oak, 22 months
- Oak Fermentation: 66% Oak Tank
- Production: 367 cases

Outside of Ciel du Cheval some of the most critically acclaimed and highly sought after fruit on Red Mountain. We were lucky enough to get an allocation of Cabernet Sauvignon from here in 2018 and have made a single vineyard bottling ever since.

Not quite as powerful and tannic as our Quintessence or Blackwood Cabernets, but not as elegant and old world in style as our Ciel du Cheval Cabernet, our Heart of the Hill Cabernet is wonderfully balanced – new world fruit, concentration, and plush structure with old world complexity and wonderful tertiary Cabernet aromas and flavors.

The past couple of vintages has been one of our most critically acclaimed wines and a new favorite amongst our winemaking team and members.

## 2022 Optu Red Mountain

- Blend: 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 18% Merlot, 6% Petit Verdot, 5% Cabernet Franc
- Vineyards: 61% Quintessence Vineyard, 20% Fidélitas Estate Vineyard, 10% Blackwood Canyon Vineyard, 6% Kiona Estate Vineyard, 3% Dalee Vineyard
- Aging: 82% New French Oak, 6% New American Oak, 22 months
- Oak Fermentation: 41% Roller Barrels, 35% Oak Tank, 18% Upright Barrels
- Production: 416 cases

The wine that started Fidélitas – we’ve made this classic Left Bank Bordeaux blend since 2000.

A true reserve style blend: we pick out individual barrels and vineyard blocks that are especially tasty during our long blending process to put together this wine that represents the whole hill-side of Red Mountain and the style of that vintage.

We work with more individual vineyard blocks on Red Mountain than any other winery and this blend gives us as winemakers the chance to showcase the art of the blend from our 40+ growing sites and styles of wine that we made that vintage.

## 2021 Blackwood Canyon Cabernet Sauvignon

- Aging: 50% New French Oak, 24% New American Oak, 34 months
- Oak Fermentation: 53% Oak Tank, 47% Roller Barrels
- Production: 416 cases

Our Blackwood Canyon Cabernet is the only 2021 wine in the new release. We do extended barrel and bottle aging on this wine since it can be such a beast when it’s first released. The extra time allows it to settle down a little before first pouring for our members.

Sourced from a 1984 planting at the historic Blackwood Canyon property. It had been left to grow wild for 10 years before being purchased by the Corliss family. They brought the vineyard back to life over the course of a couple vintages and we took some fruit in 2014 as an experiment since it was so close to our Estate at the recommendation of our winemaker, Mitch, who had previously worked at Blackwood Canyon right out of the WSU winemaking program. Immediately we knew it was special and have made a single vineyard bottling from this wine ever since.

Charlie calls it “Old School Washington Cabernet” – it’s extremely concentrated with nice chewy tannins but polished and has all sorts of dense red and black fruit tones.

# Ciel du Cheval Vineyard

Ciel du Cheval, roughly translated from French meaning “Horse Heaven”, is one of Red Mountain’s founding vineyards first put in the ground by Jim Holmes and Scott Williams in 1975. It’s considered one of Washington’s Grand Cru vineyards. Dozens of our state’s top winemakers have partnered with them to make some amazing wines over the years.

We’ve worked with this vineyard since 2006 making our first Red Mountain vineyard designated Cabernet from this growing site. As more fruit became available from this fully allocated 100-acre vineyard, we were able to grow our lineup to 5 individual bottlings.

Our wines from Ciel du Cheval show lovely *Old-World* elegance, finesses, and complexity that can only come from a vineyard with older vines. It’s a perfect balance of old-world structure meets new world fruit.

The Cabernet and Merlot have some of the original 1975 plantings in the blends. The Red Wine is our only Merlot dominant blend that we make matching the more elegant Right Bank Bordeaux style. The Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot are done in limited quantities picking barrels that are complex and delicious enough to stand on their own which is only possible from an outstanding vineyard like Ciel du Cheval.

## 2022 Ciel du Cheval Merlot

- Aging: 38% New French Oak, 13% New American Oak, 28 months
- Oak Fermentation: 56% Roller Barrels
- Production: 392 cases

## 2022 Ciel du Cheval Cabernet Franc

- Aging: 40% New French Oak, 28 months
- Production: 122 cases

## 2022 Ciel du Cheval Petit Verdot

- Aging: 50% New American Oak, 28 months
- Oak Fermentation: 100% Roller Barrels
- Production: 98 cases

## **2022 Ciel du Cheval Red Wine**

Limited production, will likely sell out to our members.

- Blend: 47% Merlot, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Cabernet Franc, 7% Petit Verdot
- Aging: 47% New French Oak, 28 months
- Oak Fermentation: 27% Roller Barrels, 13% Oak Tank
- Production: 367 cases

## **2022 Ciel du Cheval Cabernet Sauvignon**

- Aging: 70% New French Oak, 28 months
- Oak Fermentation: 40% Oak Tank, 20% Roller Barrels
- Production: 490 cases