

Mark Ryan

WINERY

LITTLE SISTER

Merlot | Red Mountain | 2020

Winemaking Notes

The merlot for the 2020 Little Sister is a combination to two premium vineyards: Quintessence on Red Mountain and Red Willow in the upper Yakima Valley. The merlot from Quintessence was planted in 2011, on a south facing slope, in soils predominately consisting of fractured basalt and gravel with a light dusting of fine Loess. The merlot from Red Willow was planted in 1993 on a steep westerly facing slope, in soils that combine 16"-20" of gravel mixed with calcareous clay over volcanic pumice. A small amount of petit verdot from Quintessence vineyard was added to the wine and contributes subtle floral and spice notes to the blend. Bud break and bloom in 2020 were in line with the industry average. The weather was a bit of a mixed bag, with cooler temperatures through much of June, then intense heat from the end of July and into August. The one defining character of the 2020 vintage will be the exceptionally low yields. Berries were remarkably small, and clusters were extremely light. This led to wines with amazing depth and intensity. Each block was hand harvested the third week in September. The wine was fermented in a combination of 1.5, 2 and 5 ton open top fermenters for 7-10 days. Every effort is made to treat the wine as gently as possible. The wine is lightly pressed to barrel, where it finishes primary and malolactic fermentation and is aged for 21 months in 85% new French oak. The wine was racked twice prior to being bottled in June 2022.

Tasting Notes

The 2020 Little Sister is a savory vintage with intense aromatics of oregano, sage, and rosemary layered over notes of pomegranate and cherry. The palate is full of earthy flavors reminiscent of a leafy forest floor with dark fruit flavors of black currants and olives layered over oak notes of leather and tobacco.

BLEND

98% Merlot
2% Petit Verdot

BARREL

85% new French Oak,
15% used French Oak
21 Months in Barrel

PRODUCTION

252 Cases

RELEASE

October 2022

APPELLATION

Red Mountain

MATURITY WINDOW

2022-2040

VINEYARDS

Quintessence
Red Willow

PAST ACCOLADES

2019 – 93 Wine Enthusiast
91 Tanzer
2018 – 94 Wine Enthusiast
93 Wine Advocate
92 Jeb Dunnuck
2017 – 94 Jeb Dunnuck
93 Wine Enthusiast
92+ Wine Advocate
2016 – 94 Jeb Dunnuck



Founded in 1999 by Mark Ryan McNeilly, **MARK RYAN WINERY** produces limited quantities of highly-sought after wines, crafted intentionally for their quality and potential. We partner with vineyards of the highest merit to produce an award-winning lineup that represents our winemaking style and authentic varietal character. Our passion to produce the best wines possible inspires us to make these wines for you.

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