

ANCIENT PEAKS WINERY

2009 OYSTER RIDGE PASO ROBLES, CALIFORNIA



OVERVIEW

Visitors to our estate Margarita Vineyard are always astonished when we take them to a block that we call Oyster Ridge. Here, large white oyster fossils are literally spilling out of the soil, testifying to the vineyard's origins as an uplifted sea bed. The Oyster Ridge cuvée honors the dramatic soils and distinctive qualities of this remarkable place. The 2009 vintage is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (69%), Petite Sirah (15%), Petit Verdot (8%) and Malbec (8%), and was ultimately crafted to exemplify our finest winemaking efforts.

VINEYARDS

Margarita Vineyard is the southernmost vineyard in the Paso Robles AVA. It is situated along the top of the Cuesta Grade, approximately 22 miles south of the city of Paso Robles and just 14 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Here, the vines unfold along the ripples of ancient seismic turmoil, cradled by towering peaks. The proliferation of sea fossils at Oyster Ridge is the most vivid example of the complex geology found at Margarita Vineyard, which spans five distinct soil types that bring natural dimension to the wines. Meanwhile, the surrounding Santa Lucia Mountain Range acts as a gateway between the ocean-cooled environs below the grade and the warmer climes above the grade. This orientation creates one of the coolest growing environments in the Paso Robles region, resulting in fruit of uncommon depth and structure. Wittstrom Vineyard resides in warmer climes amid rolling foothills northwest of the city of Paso Robles. The inclusion of Petite Sirah from Wittstrom Vineyard brings a core of black fruit and fresh tannin to the 2009 Oyster Ridge.

WINEMAKING

After hand harvesting, the individual varietal lots were fermented in small open-top fermenters, with manual punchdowns employed three times daily for balanced extraction. Approximately 20 percent of the Cabernet Sauvignon was fermented with native yeasts to foster enhanced textural dimension. After fermentation, each varietal lot was aged separately in premium French oak barrels, with a portion of the Petite Sirah aged in one American oak barrel for added aromatic nuance. The Cabernet Sauvignon was aged in 100-percent new French oak, and all of the varietal lots were matured for a total of 24 months. Throughout the aging period, the lots were minimally handled, with just one racking prior to bottling, in order to preserve aromatic intensity. The final blend was assembled from only those barrels that exhibited exemplary complexity, structure and aging potential. This blend was created without preconceptions or preconditions regarding varietal percentages, with the focus being solely on bottling the finest possible expression of the vintage.

TASTING NOTES

The 2009 Oyster Ridge is distinguished by deep aromas of black cherry, blueberry and leather with notes of smoky vanilla and crème de cassis. The palate is luxuriously weighted, offering velvety layers of black currant, blackberry and plum with accents of cedar, mint and spicy cocoa. Supple tannins unfold along a smooth, structured finish.

VINEYARD:

*Margarita Vineyard (Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot, Malbec)
Wittstrom Vineyard (Petite Sirah)*

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

*Cabernet Sauvignon 69%
Petite Sirah 15%
Petit Verdot 8%
Malbec 8%*

HARVEST DATES:

*October 30 (Cabernet Sauvignon)
October 3 (Petite Sirah)
October 28 (Malbec)
October 24 (Petit Verdot)*

AGING REGIMEN:

*24 Months in French (92%)
and American (8%) oak barrels
80% new oak*

FINAL ANALYSIS:

*Alcohol: 14.1%
TA: .68
pH: 3.52*

CASES PRODUCED:

307

