

ANCIENT PEAKS WINERY

2012 OYSTER RIDGE

PASO ROBLES, CALIFORNIA

OVERVIEW

Each year, we craft the limited-edition Oyster Ridge cuvée to exemplify our finest winemaking efforts. The name Oyster Ridge honors an outcropping that always astonishes visitors to our estate Margarita Vineyard. Here, large white oyster fossils are literally spilling out of the ground, fostering the type of calcium-rich soil that is coveted by winemakers worldwide. The 2012 vintage is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (68%), Petite Sirah (25%), Petit Verdot (5%) and Malbec (2%), all from meticulously farmed vineyard blocks cultivated for the Oyster Ridge program.

VINEYARD

Margarita Vineyard is the southernmost vineyard in the Paso Robles AVA. The vineyard is tucked along the Santa Lucia mountain range on the top of the Cuesta Grade just 14 miles from the Pacific Ocean, resulting in one of the Paso Robles region's coolest growing environments. The proliferation of sea fossils at Oyster Ridge is the most vivid example of the complex geology found at Margarita Vineyard, which spans a rare array of five soil types that bring natural dimension to our wines. The Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot and Malbec all come from specific spots at Margarita Vineyard that have proven to produce superior fruit. These include the rows of Cabernet Sauvignon atop a hill in Block 49, and along the crown of Block 50. These subsections are isolated at the start of the growing season, and they are fastidiously farmed to maximize the fruit's potential and meet the standards of the Oyster Ridge program. Meanwhile, the Petite Sirah comes from our Wittstrom Vineyard, where the varietal excels amid the warmer climes of northern Paso Robles.

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 30 percent of the Cabernet Sauvignon from Block 49 was fermented with wild yeasts to foster enhanced textural depth. After fermentation, each varietal lot was aged separately for 22 months in premium French oak barrels, with a portion of the Petite Sirah aged in American oak barrels for added dimension. The final blend was assembled from only those barrels that exhibited exemplary complexity, structure and aging potential—and without preconceptions or traditional strictures. The Cabernet Sauvignon sets the tone with broad, polished layers and classic varietal expression. The Petite Sirah brings a balance of bold intensity and rich mouthfeel. The Petit Verdot weaves in nuances of cedar and graphite, while the Malbec adds juiciness to the mid-palate.

TASTING NOTES

The 2012 Oyster Ridge offers a brooding bouquet of dark fruits with suggestions of tobacco leaf, cigar box, pine and graphite. A sumptuous palate is densely packed with layers of cherry, cassis, blueberry and black olive. Hints of toasty oak, cola and spice anticipate a juicy finish that is loaded with fine, plump tannins. This wine will generously evolve in the bottle for years to come.



VINEYARD:

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

VARIETAL COMPOSITION:

Cabernet Sauvignon 68%
Petite Sirah 25%
Petit Verdot 5%
Malbec 2%

Harvest Dates:

October 31 (Cabernet Sauvignon)
November 8 (Cabernet Sauvignon)
October 10 (Petite Sirah)
November 8 (Petit Verdot, Malbec)

AGING REGIMEN:

22 Months in French (90%) and American (10%) oak barrels
80% new oak

FINAL ANALYSIS:

Alcohol: 14.5%
TA: .72
pH: 3.530

CASES PRODUCED:

866



Oyster Ridge