

IDLEWILD

2020 Flora & Fauna White Wine, Mendocino

Vineyard

Flora and Fauna loosely means the collection of plant and animal life of a certain epoch. In my version, it is the collection of varietals from the cellar that make up the blend for the year. For 2020, the blend compromises of roughly 40% Arneis, 40% Muscat Canelli (a.k.a Muscat Blanc, Moscato Bianco), 10% Cortese, 10% Erbaluce, and 10% Favorita (a.k.a. Piedmontese biotype of Vermentino). The fruit comes from Fox Hill Vineyard and Lost Hills Ranch. Fox Hill lends aromatic richness while Lost Hills balances with vibrancy and brighter aromatics.

Vintage

There are so many things that can be said about 2020. Covid, fires, politics, etc all come to mind in an instant for me. But, the further I think on it, the more I find myself feeling grateful for the luck we had. The season itself was moderate, smooth, and beautiful. We somehow escaped the intensity of the smokey skies or were able to pick before there was an issue. From a viewpoint on the year captured in these bottles, it's a shame that 2020 will always draw remarks of the hardships of the year, because hidden within the bottle (and we are lucky to get to say this) is a really beautiful vintage.

Winemaking

Winemaking starts in the vineyard, and my preference is to work with sites that require minimal to no work. In other words, the basics done right and well timed are all a great site needs. When that is the case, the winemaking becomes a simple game of guiding the fruit to be what it already is. I time picking for this blend to when the core of the wine's pieces overlay into a balance of bright acidity with emerging tones of aromatic depth. From there, the grapes were whole cluster pressed, fermented via native yeasts, left on all the lees and solids, aged in neutral oak, and underwent native secondary fermentation. Complexity and texture are gained from allowing secondary fermentation and aging on lees in neutral oak for four months, while the structure and acidity from picking plenty early allow for great vibrancy and energy through the wine.

Wine

The 2020 shows depth of flavor while retaining a very moderate weight and a lithe finish. The Flora & Fauna White is always a balance of florals (orange blossoms), minerals (wet stones), and spice (ginger and honey). Just when the wine starts to feel intense in its phenolics and aromatics, the palate turns to this near rain water like lightness with a crisp and clean finish.

11.4% alc by vol.