

IDLEWILD

2021 Flora & Fauna Red Wine, North Coast

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. The 2021 is based in Barbera that is blended with Dolcetto, Freisa, Nebbiolo, and Grignolino to achieve the balance desired from this Piedmontese inspired blend. The fruit comes from Fox Hill Vineyard, Lost Hills Ranch, and our new (yet to be named) site in Russian River Valley. Fox Hill lends depth, Lost Hills balances with vibrancy and bright aromatics, and the Russian River site gives a core of fresh fruit and spice. In the end, Mendocino is on display with high and low tones and a very pleasant rusticity while Russian River Valley fills in the gaps to make the wine cohesive.

Vintage

2021 was a year that had us worried with drought and low yields, yet that is often the recipe for amazing fruit. We were lucky to have done a lot of work in the last few years to train our vines to less water while also increasing organic matter in the soils, which translates to higher water holding capacity. In other words, we cruised right on through these tough growing conditions and were able to see amazing fruit across the board.

Winemaking

All of these varieties have structure and at the same time a joyous side. The focus in fermentation was to build enough structure for a very versatile food wine but also to emphasize the exuberant and delicious elements of each grape. To do this, the wines were left largely whole cluster and all fermentations started with carbonic maceration. That being said, none of them were pushed to be fully carbonic wines. Instead, the initial lift in aromatics and push on frothy fresh fruits was achieved, and then I fully treaded the wines to allow fermentation to switch to a more standard flow. This gave a backbone and savory qualities to act as bass notes to the carbonic high tones. All of the wines were pressed a touch early to ensure that the tannic structure was appropriate for a shorter time in barrel, just four months in neutral oak.

Wine

In Italy, the house wine is often light, fresh, and firmly structured so as to pair beautifully next to a wide range of foods, and that is the inspiration for this blend. The 2021 is both deep and savory while also being light and fresh. Dark cherry, iron and sanguine notes, warm spices, dried herbs, violets, and graphite are highlights of the aromas. The mouth feel is a joyful interplay of brightness with chewy bass notes before the seriousness kicks in with a firm acid and tannin balance on the finish.

12.9% alc by vol.