

À Bloc

2017 | COLUMBIA VALLEY



72% Champoux Vineyard Malbec
22% Olsen Ranch Vineyard Malbec
6% Summit View Vineyard Malbec

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

pH: 3.7

Titrateable Acidity: 5.41 g/l

Residual Sugar: < 0.1 g/l

Alcohol 14.3%

Volatile Acidity: 0.59 g/l

383 cases produced



Harvest and Winemaking

2017 was a return to a “normal” vintage from the extremely warm years of 2013-2016. The Summer and Fall were very pleasant in Washington with typical warm days and cool nights. Most of our vineyards were harvested two weeks later in 2017 versus 2016. Washington’s climate is remarkable for the excellent vintages.

Champoux Vineyard Malbec was harvested on September 15. Olsen Ranch and Summit View Malbec was picked on October 4. All the grapes were hand-picked, hand-sorted, and fermented by yeasts native to the vineyards. The Malbec was pressed off at dryness and finished the malo-lactic fermentation in barrel.

Champoux Vineyard is one of Washington crown jewels and produces a very dense Malbec. Olsen Ranch and Summit View Malbec’s help to lighten the texture and freshen the aromas.

The Malbec’s were kept separate until blending in June 2018. The À Bloc was aged 100% French Oak barrels (27% new light plus toasted barrels) for 22 months prior to bottling. Isenhower is moving to lighter toasted French Oak barrels to keep the wine closer to the vineyard and decrease toasty character in the resulting wine.

Tasting

Dark red/purple hue. The À Bloc has perfume aromas of wild rose and blackberry with hints of black pepper, vanilla, leather, and dried tobacco.

The À Bloc has flavors of blackberries, minerals, cardamom, roasted meat, and pepper. The Malbec is very fresh and lively with acidity. The tannins are “present” on the finish but in a refreshing way that makes the À Bloc perfect with sauce-driven cuisines.

Thoughts on Malbec

Argentina is the world leader of Malbec but Cahors in Southwestern France is its ancestral home. Cahors tends to be less rich and more tannic than Argentina’s fruity and powerful Malbec’s. The À Bloc runs a line between Cahors and Argentina.

À Bloc is a cycling term that means “to go all out, even beyond the point of recovery” (do not forget the diacritical mark above the À, it sounds like “ahhh”). It is also a metaphor for the winemaking at Isenhower Cellars.

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