



2017 Petit Verdot

Damir Ranch, Stanislaus County

Petit Verdot along with Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Malbec is one of the five major red grape varieties grown in Bordeaux. Although Petit Verdot is highly valued for its color, structure, and lovely violet scent the French don't grow very much of it. The 'Right Bank' of appellations of Pomerol and St-Emilion grow virtually no Petit Verdot. Chateau Margaux and Chateau Angelus are among the leaders in Petit Verdot cultivation and neither has more than ten percent of its vineyards planted to this variety.

Given this, one might think there must be some disqualifying characteristic to Petit Verdot. There is. At least in Bordeaux there is. Petit Verdot is the last of the Bordeaux varieties to ripen, so even though French winemakers wax poetic about the qualities of this grape the climate in Bordeaux isn't warm enough for Petit Verdot to thrive. There just isn't enough sunshine to ripen this variety. In the post war years, Petit Verdot fully ripened in only one out of five vintages. In the 1980s, with improved growing techniques, every third year Petit Verdot would ripen. Perhaps with climate change Bordeaux might raise its batting average on this variety to .500. Either way Petit Verdot is just not that popular.

In California getting Petit Verdot to ripen is not an issue, especially not at the Damir Ranch in Stanislaus County; the source of the grapes we use to produce this wine. Petit Verdot thrives in the California sunshine where it produces deeply pigmented grapes and wines with mature, integrated tannins along with aromas of cassis and blackberry. Historically used as blending variety, we have decided to showcase Petit Verdot as a single varietal.

The 2017 Petit Verdot has a deep dark purple/black color with carmine/magenta hues. Pomegranate, cassis, and blackberry along with notes of violets and a sweet floral perfume jump from the glass. Careful management of the barrels used to age this wine has contributed a bouquet that delivers a scent of buttered toast and caramel. On the palate, succulent savory flavors of blackberry, plum and black currant are delivered by a smooth elegant wine with a creamy silky texture. The tannins are mature and well integrated providing viscosity and body without drying astringency. The finish is long and the flavors of toasted oak linger well after the wine is gone.

Varietal Composition: 100% Petit Verdot 13.8% Alc. 0.65 g/100ml TA 3.67 pH
Oak Regime: 49% French Oak 37% American Oak 14% Neutral Oak
Released: May 1, 2019 1,123 Cases Produced Suggested Retail Price: \$26