

chateau TUMBLEWEED

2019 Sierra Bonita Vineyard Frank Blank

Background:

Frank Blank might be one of our stranger creations to-date. We never planned on co-fermenting red and white grapes in 2019, but sometimes life throws you a curveball and you have to adjust quickly. We were excitedly hoping to get a half-ton from Sierra Bonita's tiny block of Picpoul Blanc – it would be our first time working with the varietal from a vineyard other than Cimarron. That half-ton (75 gallons) was the minimum amount we needed to properly ferment the juice in a chilled stainless steel tank. When we only came up with 1/3 of a ton on harvest day, we needed a Plan B. Being out of neutral white wine barrels already and not really wanting to fire up the press for a measly 50 gallons of juice, we decided to co-ferment with a red varietal. It just so happened that we picked a bumper crop of Cab Franc at Sierra Bonita that same day. It's an unlikely combination, but not the strangest one we could come up with... and it turned out better than expected. It's definitely a lighter-bodied, more focused wine, but there's something pretty and almost Beaujolais-like about it. This may not be the last time you hear from Frank Blank! Only two barrels produced.

Varietal Composition and Appellation/Fruit Sourcing:

Willcox AVA – Graham County

55% Cabernet Franc from Sierra Bonita Vineyard.

Graham County, AZ. 4,400 ft. elevation. Harvested Oct. 2nd

45% Picpoul Blanc from Sierra Bonita Vineyard.

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Sugar at harvest: 23.2 Brix.

Cellar Notes:

Destemmed but not crushed to an open-top, $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton bin.

Inoculated with specially selected yeasts (D254). Hand punched 3-4 times daily.

Inoculated with Malolactic bacteria (Omega) around 11 Brix.

Pressed at dryness after 9 days skin contact. Settled 1 day before barreling.

Aging:

Aged 7 months in 50% 3-year-old French (Damy Cooperage) and 50% neutral oak barrels. Aged another 4 months in stainless steel.

Thrice racked. Filtered, but unfinned.

Stats:

pH: 3.80

TA: 5.7 g/L

RS: <0.10%

Alcohol: 12.9%

Production: 49 cases

Drink now or cellar 3+ years

Winemaker: Joe Bechard

