

chateau TUMBLEWEED

2022 Le Blend

Background:

LeBlend began in 2014 as a one-off, kitchen-sink blend of components that remained after assembling our other wines. There was some thought that went into it. We were aiming to balance our lighter, fruitier, leftover Italian varietals with the darker characters of varietals like Syrah, Tempranillo and Petite Sirah to make a soft, easy-drinking wine with a broad range of fruit characters. Because of the surprising popularity of that first vintage, we added LeBlend to our regular portfolio and started sourcing fruit more specifically for it. The composition still changes every year, but LeBlend has a definite theme and identity now. It has also quite accidentally become one of our best sellers! This year's vintage is food-friendly as always with fresh acidity; bright, red fruit and a surprising grip to the finish. Only 16 barrels produced.

Varietal Composition and Appellation/Fruit Sourcing:

Willcox AVA – Cochise County, AZ

57% Sangiovese from Cimarron Vineyard.

Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation. Harvested Sept. 17th

15% Graciano from Dos Amigos Vineyard.

Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation. Harvested Sept 11th

10% Graciano from Rhumb Line Vineyard.

Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation. Harvested Sept. 13th

9% Grenache from Rhumb Line Vineyard.

Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation. Harvested Sept. 8th

4% Aglianico from Cimarron Vineyard.

Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation. Harvested Sept. 30th

3% Montepulciano from Cimarron Vineyard.

Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation. Harvested Sept. 29th

2% Syrah from Dos Amigos Vineyard.

Cochise County, AZ. 4,300 ft. elevation. Harvested Sept. 11th

Sugar at harvest: 24.8 Brix average

Cellar Notes:

Destemmed but not crushed to open-top, ¾- and 1.5-ton bins.

Lots were left an average of ~20% whole-cluster. Inoculated with specially selected yeasts (BRL97, BM45, Rhone2226, T73, Clos, MT, RC212, D254, CVRP, Tango, D80, UV43 & V1116). Hand-punched 3-4 times daily. Inoculated with malolactic bacteria (Omega) around 3 Brix average. Pressed at dryness after 11 days average skin contact. Settled 3 days average before barreling.

Aging:

Aged 5 months in 6% 1-year-old French (Alain Fouquet Cooperage) and 92% neutral oak barrels. Aged another 6 months in 19% new French staves, 13% 1-year-old French (Alain Fouquet & Billon cooperages) and 68% neutral oak barrels. Twice racked. Filtered, but unfined.

Stats:

pH: 3.77

RS: <0.10%

Production: 397 cases

TA: 5.6 g/L

Alcohol: 14.8%

Drink now or cellar 5+ years

Winemaker: Joe Bechard

