

Brittan Vineyards

2018 “BLOCK R” RED BLEND

Winemaker Robert Brittan developed a love for Rhône varieties during his first visit to the Northern Rhône Valley in the early 1980s. Captivated by the cool climate Syrahs from Cornas and Côte-Rôtie and intrigued by the cool, windy climate in McMinnville, Robert was encouraged to explore how Syrah would express itself on his rugged, exposed hillside.

BLOCK NOTES

Block 23 (nicknamed “Block R” for Robert and Rhône) is a one-third acre parcel on the west side of Cygnus hill. This block, following a suggestion by Robert’s daughter Chelsea and inspired by a block Robert revived at Stags’ Leap Winery, is head trained and spur pruned and is planted in a 7-by-7 foot grid. This type of gobelet training provides small clusters and small berries, benefitting not just the Syrah but also the massale planted Grenache, Carignan, Viognier and Durif (Petite Sirah).

VINTAGE NOTES

The 2018 vintage started cool and wet in February and March, which led to a more “normal” budbreak in April. The season quickly accelerated and was warm and dry beginning in May. Summer brought very warm, dry weather through August, which put pressure on the vines and produced fruit of great depth and concentration. September was dry but more moderate and allowed the fruit to reach full maturity by the end of the month.

TASTING NOTES

The 2018 “Block R” Red Blend opens with aromas of blood orange, orange zest, white pepper, cacao nibs and fennel fronds. Brambly notes bring to mind the thickets of wild blackberries that dot our hillside. Briny black olive, lavender and tarragon accent the rustic and structured palate. Drink from 2025 through 2044, decant if opening now.

AVA: McMinnville

VINEYARD: Brittan Estate Vineyard

CASES PRODUCED: 35 cases

VARIETIES: Syrah, Viognier, Durif, Grenache, Carignan

ELEVAGE: 15 months in once-filled French oak

DATE BOTTLED: March 16, 2020

ALCOHOL: 12.1%

SRP: \$75/ 750 mL

