

“The 2018 Creston Vineyard Merlot is loaded with red fruit aromas of pomegranate and raspberry sorbet with notes of graphite, black tea, and toasted pastry from the French oak aging. Juicy and energetic on the palate with a dried cranberry finish.”

2018 J. LOHR CRESTON VINEYARD MERLOT Paso Robles

J. LOHR VINEYARD SERIES

- Brenden Wood
RED WINEMAKER

VINEYARD

Local winemakers have long considered the cooler El Pomar District within the Paso Robles AVA to be an ideal region for Merlot. This limited release was sourced from Block 5 of our Creston Vineyard there. The planting material was an Italian selection of Merlot propagated from cuttings of the Rauscedo 3 clone donated by the Vivai Cooperativi Rauscedo in Northern Italy to Foundation Plant Services at the University of California, Davis. This 5-acre hillside block features calcareous outcroppings and consistently produces the most remarkable Merlot in the J. Lohr portfolio.

VINTAGE

Thanks to a “Miracle March,” the 2018 Paso Robles growing season reached normal rainfall levels with over 70% of the precipitation accumulated in a 3-week period. This kicked off a vintage of exceptional quality and yield. A stretch of warm weather in May assured a good fruit set in the vineyard. This was followed by an unprecedented 46-day heat spell, which began after the 4th of July holiday. This effectively delayed ripening as the vines ‘shuttered’ in lieu of opening up to photosynthesize. We harvested in the early morning hours of November 2nd, which is the latest harvest date on record for this block. Made in our small-lot winery in Paso Robles, the fruit was destemmed and fermented as whole berries in an open-top tank before aging in French oak barrels for 18 months.



HARVEST

DATES
November 2, 2018

PROCESS
Hand picked to half-ton bins

CHEMISTRIES
Brix 26.6° Brix
TA 0.39 g/100ml
pH 3.61

COMPOSITION

88% Merlot, 11% Malbec,
1% Cabernet Sauvignon

VINIFICATION

YEAST
Uvaferm 43

FERMENTATION
20% saignée in a 10-ton open-top fermenter

TEMPERATURE
Peak fermentation temperature of 90°F.

MACERATION
6 days on skins

MALOLACTIC

100% ml

MATURATION

TIME IN BARREL
18 months

BARREL TYPE
French oak barriques,
26% new

COOPERS
Saury Classic Lumière,
Demptos Napa Cooperage
medium toast

BOTTLING

ACIDITY
pH 3.60
TA 0.63 g/100ml

ALCOHOL
15.1% by volume

PRODUCTION
252 cases

CELLARING

Will develop in the bottle over the next three years and should hold for eight to ten.

FOOD PAIRINGS

Delicious with seared steak or a mushroom risotto.

