



# Marginalia

## 2020 Amber Wine

**100% Semillon from Les Collines Vineyard**  
**Fully destemmed; 2 weeks skin contact**  
**Walla Walla Valley AVA**  
**912 bottles produced**

**20.8° Brix at harvest**  
**pH 3.15 (harvest)/3.45 (bottling)**  
**TA 7.1 g/L at harvest**  
**12.4% abv after fermentation**

The 2020 Amber Wine is made from 100% Semillon grown on the eastern edge of Les Collines Vineyard, nestled against the foothills of the Blue Mountains. Semillon at Les Collines accumulates a lot of acid, but also starts to lose its acid rapidly after veraison. It was important to pick in the narrow window after flavor begins to peak, but before acid has started to crash. We got lucky in 2020 that this window opened before the wildfire smoke hit in the middle of September.

The stems weren't tasting good by the time we harvested—very bitter and artichokey—so I opted to fully destem the fruit for fermentation. Because of the relatively long maceration compared to the 2019 Amber Wine, this wine has a pronounced tannic structure. Indeed, it is more tannic and had longer skin contact than the 2020 Red Wine. The initial tartaric acid level was actually beyond the accredited range for the lab that does my juice analysis, but the long maceration extracted potassium that tamed the acidity to a much more reasonable level by the end of fermentation.

Semillon at Les Collines has moderately thick skins, and in 2020 we had relatively small berries with lots of seeds, which meant for a lot of tannic potential in the must. I opted to press just as the two week fermentation came to a close so that the wine would have the maximum tannic extraction possible without any risk of developing the vinegary notes common to many longer macerated amber/orange wines. The wine went through malolactic conversion and aged on lees in neutral French oak barrels with occasional stirring until a few weeks before bottling; total time in barrel was about seven months, which softened the wine appreciably, but didn't lead to any significant flavor extraction from the wood.

The reductive environment we created for the aging period emphasized some peachy fruit notes in addition to the earthy and grassy range of flavors Semillon is known for. In terms of process and tannic extraction, with this wine I've found the template I hope to apply for future Marginalia amber wines. The acidity, tannic grip, and moderate palate weight make this a versatile wine that especially compliments cheeses and other fatty/heavy foods, oilier fish, and all sorts of rustic stews. It is ready to drink on release and is not intended for extended cellaring. Especially to appreciate the unusual color of the wine, I recommend decanting the wine off the sediment. Best served slightly cool, but not fridge cold.

The 2020 Amber Wine is available in the Marginalia webstore.