



BLEND: 100% Chenin blanc
VINEYARDS: Rothrock, Upland and Roza Hills
AGING: 5 months in old French oak barrels and stainless steel drums
ALCOHOL: 12.0%
RESIDUAL SUGAR: 0.1 g/100mL
WINERY RETAIL: \$25
CASE PRODUCTION: 385 cases

2017 is the fifth vintage of my old vine chenin – it is a blend of three different heritage vineyards from Washington’s Columbia Valley. I wanted to make a dry minerally white wine to drink with the seafood and shellfish of the Pacific Northwest.

Rothrock vineyard in Prosser is a south facing site, 855 feet above sea level with a 15% slope. The shallow topsoil is very fine sand and silt loam on top of basalt bedrock. This vineyard in the Yakima Valley was planted with chenin blanc in the 1970s. I’ve been making wine from Rothrock since I first started this old vine Chenin project in 2013.

Upland vineyard on Snipes Mountain in Sunnyside is farmed by the Newhouse family. Their parcel of chenin blanc was planted in 1979 on a 25% slope, 1,000 ft elevation, facing southwest with a stunning view of Mt. Adams.

The chenin blanc block at Roza Hills vineyard in Zillah was planted in 1982. It’s on a south facing slope of the Rattlesnake Hills, 1200 feet at the highest point on Moxee series soils which is fine silt loam with chunks of decomposed basalt on top a hard layer of calcium carbonate called caliche. This is the first vintage I’ve harvested chenin from this site.

My chenin blanc is always hand picked and whole cluster pressed. The nuanced dynamics of slow native yeast fermentations add complexity. In the spring, the wines from the three vineyard lots are blended together, lightly fined with bentonite clay and sterile filtered before bottling. This year I use natural corks, each one screened for TCA and other off-aromas with Portocork ICON process. My bottle is domestically produced from a Seattle glass factory.

Stephen Tanzer 89 points

2017 Orr Old Vine Columbia Valley Chenin blanc. (a blend of vineyards): Palish bright yellow. Quince, lime, minerals and a hint of leesy complexity on the inviting nose. Broad, savory and bone-dry, and less fruity than the nose suggests, hinting at lemon zest and mineral dust. Some phenolic fruit skin notes, well-integrated acidity and a touch of salinity give this intriguing wine a distinctly European attitude. Finishes tactile and fresh, with sneaky salty length. This very serious, adamantly dry Chenin Blanc needs to be served with food.

Tasting notes: Very fresh aromas of green fruits like kiwi and honeydew melon. Bright, focused and very dry, a tiny bit saline in the mouth with a hint of cucumber peel and wet sidewalk in the finish.

ericaorr@gmail.com www.orrwines.com Instagram: @ericaorrwines 6/5/2019