

2017 Ravines Wine Cellars Cabernet Franc

The 2017 Cabernet Franc was aged for nine months in new and large oak casks (half French, half Austrian-Slavonian). It comes in at 12.9% alcohol. This is the first vintage of the Cab Franc made in the large oak casks—meant to reduce the oak impact. It's beautiful, fresh, structured and classic. There are olive nuances around the edges, black fruits and plenty of power. The structure is superb. It handles the wood beautifully—the new regimen seems like a big success. It could use another year or two of cellaring, although it is approachable now, and it will age well. This is another super value from Ravines. There were about 1,800 cases made. It's terrific, reasonably priced, available and able to age. What's not to like?

- Mark Squires (June, 2019)

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2017 Ravines Wine Cellars Dry Riesling White Springs

The 2017 Dry Riesling White Springs comes in with just four grams of sugar, 8.3 of total acidity and 12.5% alcohol. At least in perception, this seems fruitier and a little sweeter, relatively speaking, than the regular Dry Riesling, although the statistics are almost identical. Not quite as focused, but more voluptuous in perception and far more expressive of its fruit, this also has ample acidity underneath to support it while it ages. That was my initial impression, but I would add that, as they both aired and warmed, they came much closer together, the Dry Riesling opening up and seeming a little more like this. This, however, seemed just a touch better in its own style. I suspect this will age very well, but it also tastes great now.

- Mark Squires (June, 2019)

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2017 Ravines Wine Cellars Dry Riesling

The 2017 Dry Riesling is a blend of 16 Falls Vineyard on shale and White Springs Vineyard on limestone. It's dry (four grams of sugar, 8.2 of total acidity) and comes in at 12.6% alcohol. This is another example of how fine the Dry Riesling category is in the Finger Lakes. The prices are reasonable, the quality is high and the wines are available (there are more than 6,000 cases of this, out of the winery's 26,000 or so for 2017). Intense, focused and able to age, this is a classic expression of Riesling. As it aired and warmed, it became a bit friendlier and more expressive, seeming more like the White Springs this issue. It didn't quite start out that way. Store this well and there will be no rush approaching it for more than a decade. It might do 20 years from the vintage date. I've said this a few times in this report, but this is certainly another time to trot this out given the quality, aging ability, price and availability: You...

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2016 Ravines Wine Cellars Dry Riesling

The 2016 Dry Riesling is a blend of 16 Falls Vineyard on shale and White Springs Vineyard on limestone, unoaked, dry (just four grams of sugar) and coming in at 12.6% alcohol. Owner-winemaker Morton Hallgren called this "an unusually ripe vintage," allowing more time with skin contact. Although the statistics don't look very different than on its sibling this issue, this is a little friendlier, showing a bit more up-front fruit and less austerity as it airs and warms. I liked them both a lot, but I'd pick this if I had to choose today, a minor preference, which makes this an even better value than the White Springs single-vineyard wine this issue. Perhaps not quite as concentrated and not quite as age-worthy, this is still pretty close. It does everything beautifully, and then adds that extra touch of fruit. I won't be surprised if the answer is different in a few years in comparing the two—in fact, I suspect it will...

- Mark Squires (April, 2018)

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2016 Ravines Wine Cellars Chardonnay

The 2016 Chardonnay was aged for ten months in 20% new French oak. It comes in at 13.2% alcohol. Not so typically, the winery used Passito dehydration techniques on 15% of the grapes for six weeks. This is solid. The wood does show a little, but it hardly is drenched in wood. There's not a hint of vanilla, in particular. Meanwhile, it's dense and relatively powerful, with a fine and lingering finish. This was from a very warm vintage, but it seems very fresh. Young, concentrated and vibrant, this should age beautifully—Morton Hallgren says that he still is drinking his Chardonnays back to 2002. Let's start here and see where this goes in time. For the price, it's another remarkable value and a no-brainer purchase.

- Mark Squires (June, 2019)

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2016 Ravines Wine Cellars Pinot Noir

The 2016 Pinot Noir was aged for ten months in 90% used French oak and comes in at 13.2% alcohol. This was mostly sourced from 16 Falls Vineyard, with about one-fifth of the grapes from White Springs Vineyard. This is a dense, concentrated and powerful Pinot Noir that comes from a warm vintage. Despite that, it also shows good balance and some freshness to go along with the darker fruits, more black cherries than raspberries. Beautifully structured as well, this has a real tannic backbone to support the fine mid-palate depth. It should age very well—owner Morton Hallgren says he still drinks his Pinots back to the beginning (2002). This could really use a couple of years of cellaring. Let's take the aging curve in stages, but it will be interesting to see how this develops. It may yet be entitled to an uptick. And the price is very nice for this quality.

- Mark Squires (June, 2019)

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2015 Ravines Wine Cellars Dry Riesling "Argetsinger Vineyard"

The 2015 Dry Riesling "Argetsinger Vineyard" has just three grams of sugar versus 8.1 of total acidity. It comes in at 12.6% alcohol. The driest and most austere of the Rieslings, this has those stony and metallic nuances of a sterner wine. This, unlike its siblings, is strictly a food wine. It broods a little too much to be a porch-sipper. That said, it is beautifully constructed and capable of aging well. Owner Morton Hallgren said this would "easily" last 20 years. He is probably right. Sourced from 34-year-old vines, there were 408 cases produced.

- Mark Squires (June, 2019)

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