

SAM HARROP & GERD STEPP

GRAND AMATEUR 2023 MERCHANT PFALZ CABERNET FRANC

Grand Amateur is a nod to brave and curious souls, past and present, who pursue their own beliefs, fund their own discoveries and pave their own paths. Handmade with autonomy and devotion, these wines are a fresh take on varietals, styles, and processes. Crafted for the love of wine, and the people who enjoy it.

TASTING NOTES

The 2023 Grand Amateur Merchant is a collaboration between Sam and his long-suffering friend and winemaker *par excellence* - Gerd Stepp. The wine is made from two exceptional vineyards. The vineyard near Herxheim am Berg is one of the oldest Cabernet Franc vineyards in the Pfalz region of Southern Germany. The other is situated near the town of Bad Dürkheim which has sandy soils providing more refined tannins and elegance to the blend. As with past Grand Amateur Cabernet Francs, this stunning wine is made in the tradition of the finest barrel-aged Loire Cabernet Francs.

The 2023 vintage was exceptional. The growing season was a little cooler and damper than 2022, resulting in a more balanced and fragrant harvest. The wine shows raspberry, plum and a hint of yellow pepper. It is medium-bodied. Nuanced cedar, blueberry, and a hint of violet come through on the palate. The wine has wonderful, refined tannins, balance and palate length. While it is still showing the exuberance of youth, it will develop more layers and complexity as it ages toward its apex 2029.



HARVESTING

The fruit was hand-harvested at 22.7°Brix in near perfect condition on the 7th of October.

DESTEMMING

The fruit was de-stemmed, but not crushed, into open top, stainless-steel fermenters. The berries and juice were kept at <10°C for 4 days to gently extract the colour from the skins (cold maceration).

FERMENTATION

Alcoholic fermentation started spontaneously, but selected yeasts were then added not long after, to provide purity and site expression in the finished wine. Gentle pidgeage was carried out two to three times a day to keep the grape's skins submerged.

PRESSING

Not long after fermentation was complete, the wine was gently separated from the skins. The pressings were then blended back after assessment.

MATURATION

After pressing, 100% of the wine was racked to 2nd and 3rd fill French oak (Jupille, 228L) barrels. Malolactic fermentation was carried out in barrel during the winter months. In total the wine matured 22 months in barrels. To retain the wine's vibrancy, fruit and body, it was not fined and had only one gentle filtration for its long journey in bottle. The wine is suitable for vegans.

Alcohol. 13.2%

To enquire about allocation, contact info@samharropwine.com