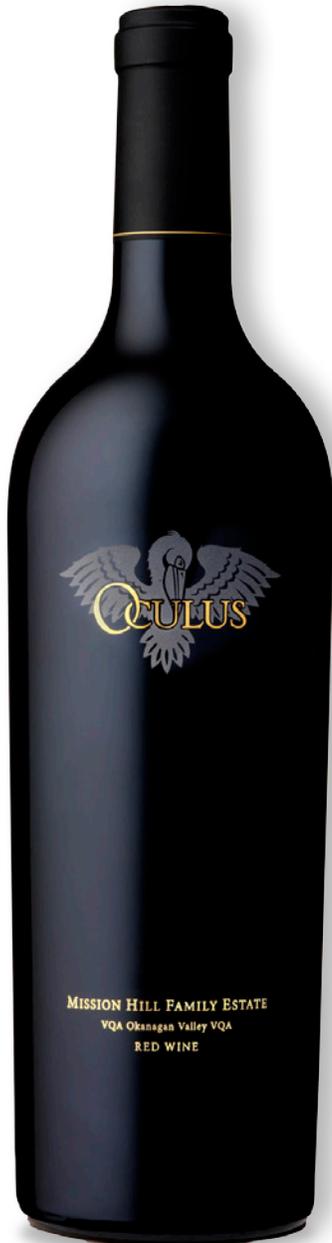


OCULUS

MISSION HILL FAMILY ESTATE, OKANAGAN VALLEY



VINEYARDS

The Oculus estate vineyards are located in the south Okanagan, a region that features a dry growing season with hot summer days tempered by cool nights. The high day-night temperature differential average of 15°C (59°F) in the weeks before harvest trigger a high concentration of polyphenols (anthocyanins), creating wines with great flavour and colour intensity.

The Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc lots selected for this vintage were sourced from both the Osoyoos Lake Bench vineyard (64% of the blend), which was planted in 1997, and the Oliver Black Sage Bench vineyard (36% of the blend), which was planted in 1998. Both vineyards are planted on south and south-west facing slopes on the east-side of the Valley.

The soils of the Osoyoos estate consist of fine sand and loam, similar to those found on the Black Sage Bench, which are mildly weathered, porous and composed of loamy coarse sand. These deep soil profiles were laid down by successive glacial activity, ensuring excellent drainage, which is expressed in the low to medium vigour of the vines, with an excellent balance between vegetative growth and crop load.

The vines are trellised in a vertical shoot position and are spur or cane pruned depending on the variety and the site. Canopy management seeks to ensure excellent fruit exposure, creating a microclimate in the fruit zone and the low yields (from 2.5 to 3.5 tons/acre) that result in ripe tannins and ripe fruit flavours. The Oculus fruit is hand-picked from the same established and familiar vineyard blocks every year. While the ultimate blend may change based on taste, we generally select from very similar areas year after year.

ALTITUDE:

OSOYOOS: (350-410meters/
approx. 1,150 ft. above sea level)

OLIVER: (320 meters/
approx. 1,000 ft. above sea level)

CLIMATE:

Cool Continental climate with four pronounced seasons, hot summers, extremely low rainfall and cold winters.

HISTORIC AVERAGES:

Heat Summation (Apr-Oct): 1,555 degree days

Mean Temperature (Apr-Oct): 17.3°C

Rainfall (year round): 317 mm/12.5 inches

OCULUS 2010

Appellation: Okanagan Valley

Vineyards: Osoyoos (64%)
Oliver (36%)

Composition: 51% Merlot
26% Cabernet Sauvignon
23% Cabernet Franc

Alcohol: 14% by vol.

pH: 3.59

Total Acidity: 6.1g/l (tartaric acid)

Picking Date: Last two weeks of October
into early November

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2010 VINTAGE REPORT

While the 2010 growing season presented some significant challenges, our best reds still shine as our estate vineyards on the east-side of Osoyoos Lake and Black Sage Bench overcame the late bud break, cool conditions during flowering, and an unusually cool summer, eventually yielding some exceptional fruit, albeit at moderately reduced yields. But there were patches of good weather at critical times, allowing for some excellent wines to be made. A dry, warm August led to small berries with thick skins, resulting in reds with noticeably firm and abundant tannins, but ample colour and bright aromas. Moreover, tight pruning regimes and careful vine and irrigation management all came to the fore in allowing the relatively low-yielding “Oculus blocks” to reach desired maturation levels with optimal phenolic ripeness. Ultimately, the quality of the 2010 Oculus reflects the unique conditions of this growing season, with excellent concentration and flavours.

Our 2010 Oculus is very Bordeaux-like in its make-up and structure, offering good acidity and complex flavours of black currant, fig paste, bay leaf and tobacco flavours, with considerable length. With medium body and intensity, but without being weighty, this wine finishes with a great complexity and persistence. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. 1,500 cases made.

WINEMAKER'S COMMENTS

Our 2010 Oculus has a bright, deep ruby red colour and ripe, intense fruit on the nose, with notes of dark berries and violet. The 2010 blend already shows exemplary polish and integration throughout, especially due to the subtle use of French oak that respects the fruit and delivers complexity and character. The early palate is pure, sleek and refined but grows in volume and textural richness with an earth-driven finish.

The ripe, juicy character of the Merlot carries the wine while the Cabernet Sauvignon and the Cabernet Franc support the Merlot with their tannic structure while adding aroma and spice. Decanting is suggested.

WINEMAKING

With a wealth of quality grapes at our fingertips, select fruit from designated vineyard blocks within estate-owned vineyards in Oliver and Osoyoos are nurtured through every step of the winemaking process in the Oculus Cellar, a dedicated winemaking studio devoted to producing this flagship wine. This is a self-contained space with its own equipment separate from the winery's main production area, where grapes are selected or rejected according to rigorous criteria. First bunches, then grapes are carefully selected on sorting tables. All kinds of plant material, leaves and stems are removed in order to promote the fruit character in the final blend.

The various grape lots are then gravity-fed into temperature-controlled, 65-hl oak fermenters and vinified separately. During fermentation, pump overs and/or punch downs were carried out daily, depending on the desired extraction level. Maceration lasted 22 to 26 days, depending on the development of each lot, in order to extract maximum flavour and colour, but always careful not to over-extract. All lots were aged for 14 months in new (50%) and 2nd fill (50%) French oak barrels, during which time our winemaking and viticultural teams meet every 3-4 months to select the best lots for Oculus. The team samples endless lots of wine and gradually decide which lots will go into the final blend, making sure that each new vintage of Oculus is both high in quality and true to the established style, the Oculus signature. Fining occurred naturally as the wine settled during this period of time.



missionhillwinery.com

1730 Mission Hill Road • West Kelowna, BC, Okanagan Valley • Canada • V4T 2E4 • Toll Free: 1.800.957.9911