



RdV VINEYARDS

By Rutger de Vink

DEPLANE - VIRGINIA

Remarkable... World Class... A Revelation... 
WINE ADVOCATE



FRIENDS AND FAMILY 2016

54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 43% Merlot, 3% Petit Verdot

The Friends & Family is the second label from RdV. This is a blend of 42% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, 16% Cabernet Franc and a dollop of Petit Verdot, aged for 18 months in 20% new French oak. It comes in at 14.5% alcohol. Softer and not as obviously concentrated as the big boys, despite that big alcohol number, this still has RdV's fine expression of fruit. It is closer to the Rendezvous in style, but it's sourced from mostly young vines for the past few vintages, said Jasher Grainer, winemaker and technical director (and another Linden apprentice). However, he said, "No difference in vinification from the Rendezvous or Lost Mountain....The main difference in the cellar is the shorter aging period and lower percentage of new oak." Lots of wineries in Virginia would be happy to have this as their top guy. Unlike the higher-priced wines, this is ready to drink right now and probably not going anywhere, but I found myself wanting a glass to drink, not just taste. Fruit: A-, because it's RdV and the winery just can't help itself from producing beautiful fruit.

The texture is lovely too. As wine geeks, we tend to underestimate texture. Many talk all the time about flavors, often using analogies and words that are hard to grasp. Yet texture is part of what defines them and makes you remember them, along with structure (that's what I personally like most to talk about). Structure, since that's where we are now, is not as impressive, nor, I suppose, intended to be. This is a supple "drink-me-now" wine. If it is without the fine structure that usually distinguishes the top end at RdV (the 2015 Rendezvous and Lost Mountain are certainly not this approachable), it is still very hard to resist. The longer it was open, the more I appreciated it.


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