

2016 Hock & Deuce Applegate Valley

In a nod to the traditions of Côte Rôtie, the wine is a co-ferment of Syrah and Viognier. But in a New World sense of style, the proportion of Viognier is elevated, in this case to 15% of the blend. The amped up presence of Viognier serves to temper the otherwise savage character of the Syrah, leaving us with a Côte Rôtie that went to charm school. No hard edges to be found, even at this young age, as it shows aromas of black cherry, blackberry, dried violets, and a hint of new leather. The medium-bodied palate is tightly wound at first but eventually folds out into robes of sleek tannins framing cool blue fruits and white pepper. Not to be forgotten, the Viognier contributes a lush plum character to the mid-palate, as well as a blooming floral undertone. It's quite the marriage of brawn and beauty.

Technical Information

Grape Varietals: Syrah (85%); Viognier (15%)

Vineyard: Mae's Vineyard

Final pH: 3.74

Final TA: 5.9 g/L

Alc. By Vol.: 12.75%

Winemaking: The Syrah and Viognier arrive at the crush pad at the same time, and are processed simultaneously. This integrates the blend from inception. Thirty percent of the grapes go into the fermenters as whole-clusters; the balance is destemmed. No sulfur used during processing or prior to fermentation, which is entirely native-yeast driven. Cap management is primarily via pigeage and punchdowns, for greater extraction. Three weeks on skins until dry, then pressed off into neutral French oak barrels. Allowed to age for 22 months prior to bottling, unfinned and unfiltered.

Recent Review

92 points—"The [2016 Hock and Deuce] delivers fine aromatic complexity in its youthful blend of cassis, dark berries, smoked meats, pepper, lovely spice tones, a solid foundation of dark soil and just a touch of cedar. On the palate the wine is deep, fullish and complex, with a fine core, superb soil signature, ripe, well-integrated tannins and a long, classy and intensely flavored finish. This is a low octane beauty of 12.75 percent that recalls some of the old school Côte-Rôtie producers from the 1970s and 1980s. The 2016 Hock and Deuce is already very tasty, but it will only get better with further bottle age. 2020-2045+." (VFTC, Gilman, Jan/Feb 2020)

