

# Austin Hope

## 2021 RHÔNE BLEND

In the words of Austin Hope, “Experimentation is how we chase perfection”—a mantra that is embodied by our Cellar Select wines. These ultra-limited releases are born of Austin’s longtime relationships with top local growers, providing us with access to the finest blocks at preferred vineyards across Paso Robles. Many of these wines originate from small experimental batches that yield some of our most creative, compelling and luxurious offerings, all collected under the banner of Austin Hope Cellar Select.

### VINEYARD NOTES

The grapes for our Rhône Blend come from the Templeton Gap District AVA and York Mountain AVA on the western border of Paso Robles—two adjoining areas marked by a pronounced marine influence. The Templeton Gap District provides perfect conditions for Rhône varieties, with a blend of warm days, cool nights and afternoon maritime breezes that flow through the Templeton Gap, a notch in the coastal mountains. Here, the well-drained clay soils are riddled with water-worn limestone deposits that foster excellent flavor concentration. Further west, York Mountain AVA is located just seven miles from the Pacific Ocean at elevations reaching 1,500 feet. This cool-climate AVA—even colder than Burgundy—receives twice the annual rainfall as Paso Robles proper. The conditions here are distinguished by foggy mornings, brisk breezes and weathered sandstone soils reminiscent of beach sand.

The 2021 growing season culminated in a banner vintage across Paso Robles. The tone was set with normal weather patterns into early spring. Periodic heat spells in summer and fall were buffered by prevailing mild weather. The harvest came slightly later than normal, and our patience was rewarded with beautiful mature fruit and inherently balanced wines.

### WINEMAKING NOTES

The fruit was harvested in mid September, and clusters were hand sorted in the vineyard to ensure the highest quality and integrity. The individual lots were destemmed and fermented separately in open-top stainless steel tanks for a period of 20 days, with daily pumpovers for a balanced extraction of color, flavor and tannin. Each tank was tasted and analyzed for phenolic composition to determine the length of extended maceration. The lots were aged separately for 23 months in French oak barrels (38% new, 33% twice used and 29% neutral). After final blending, the wine was racked to 40 percent new French oak barrels for an additional five months of maturation and integration before bottling.

### TASTING NOTES

The 2021 Rhône Blend delivers warm aromas of lavender, plum and blackberry with suggestions of bacon fat and Provençale herbs. The mouthfeel is plush and integrated, displaying flavors of blueberry, boysenberry and black cherry with suggestions of vanilla cream, cocoa, white pepper and savory game. A juicy, supple finish persists with tannic length, demonstrating excellent aging potential.

### TECHNICAL NOTES

VARIETAL(S): Grenache (48%), Syrah (20%), Mourvèdre (15%), Petite Sirah (9%), Viognier (8%)

AVA: Paso Robles

HARVEST DATES: September 12 & 20, 2021

TIME IN OAK: 28 months in French oak

TOTAL ACIDITY: 0.57 g tartaric/100mL

pH: 3.64

ALCOHOL: 14.50%

TASTING WINDOW: 2024 - 2030

**CELLAR SELECT SERIES**

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