



HILL FAMILY
E S T A T E



2022 “Briarstone” Vineyard Merlot

Production: 275 cases

Composition: 100% Merlot

Vineyards: Briarstone

Elevations: Atlas Peak 1,200 ft.

Cooperage: 18 months in 40% new French oak (Remond, Alliers and Darnajou)

Alcohol: 15.4%, TA 5.8, pH 3.7

Bottling date: April 3, 2024

Release date: Spring 2025

Release price: \$80.00

Doug Hill was one of the first to plant vineyards on Atlas Peak, and his faith in the potential of Merlot led him to plant the Briarstone Vineyard in 2000, using Clone 3 for the Merlot. 2022 was a roller-coaster year with a few late rains, a few random frosts, and six major hot spells starting in early June. Bud break and bloom were early and since it was the fifth year of less than normal rainfall, irrigations had to be very carefully monitored if they were allowed at all. In the middle of September, we decided to bring the Merlot in, and in 3 days the Brix went from 26 to 30, with almost no shrivel. It was crushed with Egide, a placeholder yeast, and inoculated with Clos yeast after a 4-day cold soak. We could tell right away we had a winner – big berry fruity nose with sage and deep briary notes. Drained and pressed after the classic 14 days, it settled and went right off to barrel.

Winemaker Alison Doran’s tasting notes:

The 2022 Briarstone opens with aromas of black and blue fruits, sage, mountain scrub and cocoa powder. Flavors include vanilla oak spices, milk chocolate and black cherry. The textures are rich and creamy up front, complemented by bold, mountain tannins giving it plenty of structure.