

KERLOO CELLARS

Review by Jeb Dunnuck – Wine Advocate

An up and coming producer to watch, these beauties are made by Ryan Crane (of Va Piano Vineyards) and feature incredibly fresh, pure profiles that have juicy acidity and solid ripeness. As a whole, I think his 2011s are step up over the 2010s, with better fruit and texture. Nevertheless, both vintages are solid and well worth checking out!

2011 Grenache Upland - (89-92)

Looking at Ryan's 2011 reds that were still in barrel, his 2011 Grenache Upland Vineyard has outstanding potential and then some. A 100% Grenache that was aged all in neutral French oak, it will be in bottle by the time you read this. Completely destemmed and aged on lees, it offers knockout aromatics (blackberry, pepper, crushed stone and hints of background meatiness and spice) as well as a medium-bodied, elegant and focused palate that fleshes out nicely on the palate. More ripe and supple than his Alder Ridge Grenache, it still leans heavily towards to fresh, elegant end of the Grenache spectrum. It should shine on release and evolve gracefully for 7-8 years, possibly longer. Drink now-2021.

2011 Malbec - (90-92)

Also a serious 2011 and one of the better Malbecs I was able to taste during my trip through Washington, the 2011 Malbec, which was tasted as a final blend out of tank, is comprised of 100% Malbec and aged in 30% new wood. It offers a delicious, mouth full of fruit as well as loads of black and blue fruit, bramble, exotic spice, violet and crisp minerality. Medium to full-bodied, concentrated and rich, with notable freshness and a chewy, broad finish that highlights ripe tannin, it has the fruit to drink nicely on release (slated to be bottled in June), yet will evolve gracefully on its balance and harmony. Well done and all of these wines are well worth the effort to track down! Drink now-2021.

2011 Syrah Les Collines - (91-93)

The most impressive of the barrel samples was the 2011 Syrah Les Collines. A 100% Syrah that was stainless steel fermented and aged all in concrete, its opaque purple color is followed by a meaty, mineral-laced profile of black and blue fruit, white pepper, crushed flowers and violet. A medium to full-bodied 2011, it's a beautiful, focused wine that has superb purity of fruit, excellent, integrated acidity and enough structure to evolve for a decade. Drink now-2021.

2011 Tempranillo - (90-92)

The 2011 Tempranillo also looks to be outstanding (and a smoking value) and checks in as a 100% Tempranillo that's aged in a combination of 30% new French and American oak and the balance in neutral barrel. Where the 2010 bordered on being lean with its acid profile, this appears to have more depth and richness, with brilliant black cherry, raspberry, violets, underbrush and loads of spice-like qualities giving way to a medium-

bodied, elegantly styled mouthfeel. Classy, supple and rounded on the palate, with solid mid-palate richness and high quality tannin, it should benefit from short-term cellaring and shine for upwards of a decade. Drink now-2021.