the PICKS

FEATURE WINE

Alexandria Nicole 2022 Jet Black Syrah

This week's feature is a new offering from Alexandria Nicole Cellars in Horse Heaven Hills, Washington, the Alexandria Nicole 2022 Jet Black Syrah for $29.99. We've talked about the Alexandria Nicole story before, so you may remember this. It rests on a cliff overlooking the Columbia River in the Columbia Valley, which the founder saw before there were even grapes planted there and knew it was the perfect place to make his perfect wine. He tracked down the owner of the land, bought and planted it in 1998, and here we are. This bottle is around 85% Syrah with 15% or so of Malbec to tame the power of the Syrah grapes. "Aromas of warm cherry bonbon, blackberry, mocha, anise, pistachio toffee, and delicate herbal bark follow through on a silky entry to a dry-yet-fruity medium body with a soft, even balance. Finishes with a cedar, white pepper, and vanilla" and a "natural acidity that keeps the wine's power in balance. Powerful in the glass with a perfect amount of finesse."

WINE PICK

Bogle Phantom Proprietary Red & Chardonnay

Of course it's Halloween tradition to go with Phantom, but this year we have two options: Bogle 2022 Phantom Proprietary Red and Bogle 2023 Phantom Chardonnay. The Red is a blend of 60% Petite Sirah and 40% Zinfandel, and the Chardonnay is 100% Chardonnay, both from Clarksburg, CA and $18.99 a pop. The Red "opens with aromas of blackberries and cherry cobbler. On the palate, tantalizing flavors of marionberry jam appear first, with hints of white pepper, juniper berry and baking spices coming out. The finish lingers, as plush, velvety tannins possess the palate, softened by 24 months spent aging in American oak." As for the Chard, "the nose is layered, opening with baked apples, buttered corn pastry and lifted with a hint of cream soda. Caramelized pear adds depth, while subtle notes of waffle cone and tropical guava emerge with air. The palate is full and weighty, offering a creamy, luxurious mouthfeel balanced by Clarksburg's hallmark freshness." But more importantly this week... "Phantom Wines takes its name from the ancient legend of the 'Bogle' – a mysterious spirit said to haunt the twilight. Inspired by both folklore and decades of unexplained sightings at the winery, Phantom embraces the space between science and art, precision and intuition, capturing a sense of mystery in every bottle..."