

# Devil Proof

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## 2021 DEVIL PROOF FARROW RANCH

100% MALBEC | ALEXANDER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**99 POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It has kaleidoscopic, singularly purple scents of boysenberry, soaring lilac and violet, sweet fennel and cast iron unfurling continuously as it spends time in the glass. The full-bodied palate is heavenly! It has an effortless balance of vibrant acidity and loads of clay-textured tannins. There's wave after wave of perfumed fruit. Finessed and expressive, it's a gorgeous version of Farrow Ranch Malbec that trades density and power for elegance and detail."



## 2021 DEVIL PROOF ROCKPILE RIDGE VINEYARD

100% MALBEC | ROCKPILE, CALIFORNIA

**97+ POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It's youthfully coiled on the nose and takes plenty of time to reveal scents of blueberry compote, pure violet and cast iron. Full-bodied and alluring, it floods the mouth with dark blue, mineral-driven fruit. It has powerful, grainy tannins, and its seamless oak integration really allows all that floral perfume to shine through. This is developing much more slowly than the Farrow Ranch Malbec and deserves several years in bottle to continue to unwind."



## 2021 DEVIL PROOF CIMA LADERA

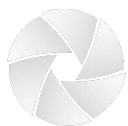
65% MALBEC, 35% CABERNET SAUVIGNON | ROCKPILE, CALIFORNIA

**98 POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It has ringing scents of maraschino cherries and blueberries with accents of bitter chocolate, spearmint, vanilla, lilac and aniseed, offering up new nuances with each return to the glass. The full-bodied palate is lovely! It balances tremendously concentrated flavors with bright acidity and velvety tannins, and it has a very long finish with a fan of spicy accents."





# Aperture

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## 2021 APERTURE ESTATE FARROW RANCH CABERNET SAUVIGNON

100% CABERNET SAUVIGNON  
ALEXANDER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**98+ POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It has ringing aromas that are incredibly pure: blueberries, peppermint patty, black licorice and violet unfurl to singular tones of Wagyu beef, truffle, coffee beans and mossy bark. The full-bodied palate features concentrated fruit supported by velvety tannins and a seamless spine of freshness that drives the wine. It gains intensity and detail as it spends time in the glass and will be long lived in the cellar."



## 2021 APERTURE ESTATE 1912 BLEND

CO-FERMENTED FIELD BLEND  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**92 POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"...it opens with some rubbery reduction over ripe red and black cherries, charcuterie, aniseed and woodsmoke on the nose. The full-bodied palate offers intense, spicy flavors and soft new oak character. It's loaded with velvety tannins, driven by focused acidity, and it has a long, spicy finish."



## 2021 APERTURE NOMAD BLEND

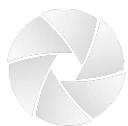
75% CABERNET FRANC, 25% MERLOT  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**96+ POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"...has pretty aromas of blackcurrant, blueberry, wild fennel, thyme, bitter chocolate and violet with botanical undertones—alluringly herbal without verging into greenness. The full-bodied palate is lovely! It has concentrated, spicy blue fruit, a harmonious frame of vibrant acidity and velvety tannins and a long finish laced with spicy accents."





# Aperture

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## 2021 APERTURE OLIVER RANCH CABERNET SAUVIGNON

100% CABERNET SAUVIGNON | ALEXANDER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**97+ POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It takes some patience on the nose as it unfurls its aromas of blackcurrant, blueberry, cast iron, lilac, fennel and gingerbread spices. Its classy oak tones are nestled into a concentrated core of detailed fruit on the palate, and it has a weightless frame of velvety tannins. It's noticeably energetic with bright acidity and has a very long, latent finish. In place of its typical density, this 2021 vintage of Oliver Ranch offers tremendous purity and elegance."



## 2021 APERTURE SJ RANCH CABERNET SAUVIGNON

100% CABERNET SAUVIGNON | ALEXANDER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**98 POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It takes a fair amount of time to open on the nose, and then it reveals singular aromas of boysenberry, blueberry compote, lavender and Galliano liqueur. The full-bodied palate has a balanced frame of chocolate-textured tannins and seamless acidity, and its core of spicy fruit is still youthfully coiled—its latent finish gives the impression that this SJ Ranch will blossom dramatically after several years in bottle."



## 2021 APERTURE DEL RIO VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

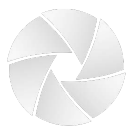
100% CABERNET SAUVIGNON | ALEXANDER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**97+ POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It has pure, layered scents of cassis, blueberries, milk chocolate, lilac, aniseed and conifer. The medium-bodied palate boasts a deep well of spicy fruit underpinned by iron-like tones. It has a seamless structure, offering an ideal balance of fresh acidity and cashmere-textured tannins, and a very long finish with a flourish of spice and floral perfume. This will be long lived in bottle!"





# Aperture

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## 2022 APERTURE CHENIN BLANC

100% CHENIN BLANC | CLARKSBURG, CALIFORNIA

**93 POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"...matured mostly in stainless steel, with smaller portions in neutral French oak and cement. It's bursting with alluring scents of kumquat, kiwi, white peaches and gravel dust. It's a pretty expression with Goldilocks ripeness. The palate features a focused spine of acidity that drives its concentrated, expansive flavors, and it has a long finish that seems to gain in intensity with each sip."



## 2022 APERTURE SAUVIGNON BLANC

84% SAUVIGNON BLANC, 16% SÉMILLON | SONOMA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

**95 POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It's the first vintage where so much Sémillon has been included—since acquiring Farrow Ranch in 2021, winemaker Jesse Katz has been able to add some of that site's fruit into his Aperture wines. It has alluring tones of white peach, kumquat, meringue and crème brûlée on the nose, plus wafts of floral perfume. The medium-bodied palate offers expansive flavors that segue from candied citrus to guava and vanilla pots de crème. It has a luxuriously satiny texture balanced by focused acidity and a very long, flavorful finish."





# Aperture

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## 2021 APERTURE CABERNET SAUVIGNON

85% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 6% PETIT VERDOT, 5% MERLOT, 3% MALBEC, 1% CABERNET FRANC

ALEXANDER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**96 POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"It has vibrant, layered aromas of blueberry compote, lavender, aniseed, milk chocolate and nutmeg with undertones of cast iron and tobacco leaves. The medium-bodied palate is elegantly styled, pairing deep flavors with a weightless feel due to its bright acidity and velvety tannins. It has a long, latent finish and deserves 3-5 years in bottle."



## 2021 APERTURE BORDEAUX RED BLEND

44% MERLOT, 27% MALBEC, 10% CABERNET SAUVIGNON, 10% PETIT VERDOT, 9% CABERNET FRANC

ALEXANDER VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

**95+ POINTS**

Erin Brooks, Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate - December 2023

"The first iteration to include a significant amount of fruit from Farrow Ranch, Aperture's latest vineyard acquisition...It has slowly unfurling scents of red and black currants, chocolate-covered cherries, integrated new oak spices, tobacco and tapenade. The palate is particularly elegant, balancing concentrated, nuanced flavors with a frame of velvety tannins and vibrant acidity that calls you back to the glass."



# USA, California, Sonoma County: Winter Releases




By ERIN BROOKS (/AUTHOR/ODMXQH3DKBNONZMF7)  Dec 14, 2023



This small report features recent and upcoming releases from Sonoma County, mostly from the 2021 vintage. The growing season was defined by cooler, relatively even temperatures and continued drought, which resulted in lower yields due to smaller berry size. “It was a Goldilocks vintage,” Catherine Kistler of Occidental Wines recalls. “It was the best quality and quantity, especially sandwiched between 2020 and 2022,” two seasons afflicted by historic wildfires and heat waves, respectively.

Stylistically, the 2021s are reminiscent of the 2019s, with notable aromatic detail and concentrated flavors at lower alcohols. It’s difficult to make generalizations across such a large county with so many microclimates, grape varieties and styles, but after tasting hundreds of wines, my impression is that the 2021s are particularly chiseled, with loads of ripe tannins and focused acidity. As a result, the wines are perhaps technically elite, but at this early stage, they offer a touch less expression and personality than the wines from 2019—readers will notice a fair number of plus marks attached to these scores. I suspect it will take several years for many of these wines to unfold to their full potential, but it’s an ideal vintage for moderate to long-term cellaring.

“The wines in 2021 are like a perfect mashup of 2018 and 2019,” Kistler explains. “There is fruit and that immediate appeal of the 2019s, but they are finer and finessed, chiseled and salty, like in  **Support**



*Winemaker Jesse Katz with Associate Winemaker Hillary Sjolund at Aperture Cellars in Healdsburg*

This report also includes a number of new wines and a couple of new projects, and regardless of preference for variety or style, readers will find plenty here to love. Cheers!



**ERIN BROOKS (/AUTHOR/ODMXQH3DKBNONZMF7)**

Erin Brooks is a Certified Sommelier and wine journalist. Born in North Carolina, she moved to New Mexico to attend the College of Santa Fe where she graduated with a B.A. in Creative Writing and Politics. During her time in New Mexico, she became involved in the service industry and fell in love with wine. She worked the floor of restaurants for a decade, accruing experience as restaurant manager, sommelier and wine director.