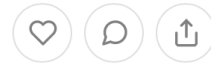
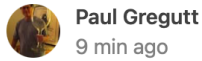


Paul Gregutt's Northwest Wine Guide

New Releases from Abeja

These three wines are now available. Get 'em while you can!



Last week I had the opportunity to visit with Dan Wampfler and Amy Alvarez-Wampfler, the wife & husband team who make the wines and oversee the property management at Abeja. For a longer account of the visit, and a little bit of history, please see the 'Deep Dive' entry on www.paulgwine.com.



Just released are these three wines. Find them [here](#). For access to the estate's more limited releases you must join the [List](#).

Abeja 2021 Chardonnay

The generic Washington AVA is no reflection on the quality of the wine – it's simply that the grapes were sourced from Celilo (Columbia Gorge), Conner Lee (White Bluffs?) and the estate (Walla Walla). These three exceptional Chardonnay vineyards are scattered around the state and Celilo is that rare site not within the Columbia Valley AVA, hence the Washington designation. This rich, mouth-coating wine takes full advantage of all three, loading the palate with buttery apple fruit, toasted almonds, vanilla cream and enough acidity to keep it lively all through the finish. 1073 cases; 14.1%; \$48 (Washington) 95/100

Abeja 2020 Merlot

This is a soft, even gentle Merlot, smooth as it enters, yet with a peppery bite as it exits the palate. Its tangy, slightly jammy strawberry and raspberry fruit is accented with blood orange, and a parade of savory herbs adorns the trailing finish. Decant it in order to plump it up a bit. Best drinking window should be 2025 to 2030. 820 cases; 14.5%; \$55 (Columbia Valley) 92/100

Abeja 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon

This Bordeaux-style blend bolsters the Cabernet with 14% Merlot, 4.5% Cabernet Franc and 2.5% Petit Verdot. Sourced from an all-star selection of Sagemoor vineyards, estate vineyards and a splash from Ciel du Cheval, it has been given some extra bottle age following 21 months in 40% new French oak, yet still feels somewhat constrained. It definitely needs decanting to open up. It's compact and layered with black cherry, cassis, tobacco, peat and graphite components. With lovely balance and texture throughout, it warrants comparisons to second growth Bordeaux but remains more restrained in its use of new barrels, and more open with its primary fruit flavors. 14.3%; \$68 (Columbia Valley) 93/100