

TEXTBOOK

NAPA VALLEY

2018 MERLOT

NAPA VALLEY

HIGHLIGHTS

- Renowned Napa Valley AVA sites are the highlight of this world-class pedigree release
- Classic Bordelaise winemaking (handwork in Napa Valley vineyard, modest use of new French oak barrels, egg-white fining) partnered with a touch of Cabernet Sauvignon provides a richly textured and balanced result.

VINTAGE

Vintage 2018 was a superb vintage with outstanding weather all season. Yes there was abundant rain in February, but overall the season was excellent for premium viticulture. Wildfires in October again posed challenges to late-season grapes such as Syrah and Zinfandel but all our Merlot grapes had already been picked. Our 2018 Napa Valley Merlot yields were about average and the tiny berries were deeply colored, richly textured and showed great promise.

VINEYARDS

Our Merlot comes from two blocks located within the famed Napa Valley AVA. Each site brings unique attributes (both gravelly soils and loamy soils) that add complexity. The Oak Knoll lot brings backbone, sweet red fruit and tannins. The Yountville district Merlot lot showcases color and subtle, high-quality tannins. The Cabernet Sauvignon fraction adds power and “grip”. Together, they all complete a wonderful package. Exemplary sustainable farming practices are employed in these sites and after veraison unevenly ripened bunches were hand-culled which reduced yield to about 6 pounds per vine (@ 3.1 tons/acre).

FERMENTATION & MATURATION

Our goal is to craft a delicious, balanced Merlot. As such we do not seek late harvest dates as they can muddle flavors and increase alcohol. The hand-picked clusters were field sorted, and then hand-sorted at an average of 24 Brix. Cold soaking for three days in open-top temperature-controlled fermenters developed color and flavor in the absence of alcohol. Fermentation began spontaneously with prevailing yeasts and a daily punch down kept the cap immersed in must, extracting superb flavor and structure. After we added cultured yeasts, fermentation completed and was followed by eighteen days on the skins. The must was gently pressed into French oak barriques where it slowly completed ML fermentation. The press fraction was not used. Barrels were of the highest quality; 100% French, 35% new, two-year air-dried, medium-plus toast and handbent by Cadus and Francois Freres in central France. Twelve months barrel maturation with two rackings and one egg white fining integrated flavors and developed a silky mouth-feel. Our Merlot is handmade and may throw a harmless deposit.

REGION: 100% Napa Valley, (80% Oak Knoll District,
20% Yountville District)

GRAPES: 80% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon

OAK: 100% French, 35% new

AGING: 12 months

PH: 3.67 ABV: 13.6%



Intensely perfumed, structured and filled with a refined richness to the cherry, plum tart and dried raspberry flavors that glide across the palate. A balanced finish filled with subtle notes of sandalwood and allspice.