

2019 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY SAUVIGNON BLANC



Vineyards:	Stewart Vineyard
Composition:	100% Sauvignon Blanc Musque Clone 100% Carneros
Harvest Date:	September 6, 2019
Fermentation:	22 days at 50° VIN 13 Yeast
Aging:	50% Stainless Steel 50% Neutral French Oak
Bottling Date:	April 9, 2020
Production:	912 cases

TA 0.57 g/100 ml

pH 3.30

Alc. 14.1%

RS 0.10 g/L

As you enter Napa Valley from the south, you are in Carneros, driving on the highway that runs right through the old Stewart Dairy property. To your left on the hill, are the famous “Oreo” cows munching grass, and to your right are the 20-year-old Sauvignon Blanc vines that are frankly becoming pretty famous. All those variables—wind, restrictive soil, clone, temperature, as well as the unknowns—have an effect on the grapes, resulting in wines with tropical, mineral, and elusive notes most reminiscent of France’s Loire Valley.

Growers Jim Fore and Doug Hill planted the vineyard for me, and it produced its first crop in 1999. I have worked with it ever since. Although of course there is vintage variation, every year has delivered a delicious wine, always a testament for me of the right grape variety growing in the right area.

As I write these notes under drought conditions, hard to believe that 2019 began with ample winter rainfall resulting in happy vines! Spring conditions allowed excellent fruit set producing an abundant crop. Summer saw few extremes with moderate temperatures throughout the growing season. Harvest began in a more normal timeframe, and without extreme weather conditions we were able to harvest at our leisure when grapes were precisely ripe.

Production: Grapes arrive early in the morning and go directly to press. The resulting juice ferments at a cool temperature in stainless steel for two to three weeks with a yeast strain known to accentuate aromatics, freshness, and fruitiness. After fermentation the wine remains in stainless steel and older, neutral French oak. The wines that ages sur-lie in older cooperage provides just the right amount of texture to the mouth.

As for the wine. Brilliant, pale straw color. Floral, citrus, ginger, and stone fruit aromas are delicate and integrate with an unanticipated mineral component. The 2019 offers a complex and structured array of flavors often absent from Sauvignon Blanc. As always, the wine is fresh, vibrant and lively. One sip invites another one—my criterion for the wines that I savor and enjoy!

The debate is on: 2018 and 2019 are both amazing vintages—perhaps some of the finest wines I have produced in my several decades of winemaking. Time for you to start making your own comparisons!