

2012 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY ALBARIÑO



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NAPA VALLEY ALBARIÑO
2012

Vineyard:	Stewart Vineyard, Carneros
Composition:	100% Albariño
Harvest Date:	September 14, 2012
Fermentation:	25 days at 49°, VIN 13 Yeast
Aging:	Stainless steel exclusively
Bottling Date:	March 5, 2013
Production:	202 cases

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 is the vineyard. The unique terroir of this site has provided me with stunning Sauvignon Blanc since 1999, wonderful Merlot more recently, and for the first time in 2009, Albariño.

One of my favorite American authors, Kurt Vonnegut, once said that life is a series of accidents. As a result of unanticipated developments at harvest in 2009, there was no home for the Albariño grown on the property, and suddenly it was being offered to me. Did I have to think about it? Of course not! Considering that aromatic whites are among my most favorite wines, I could hardly say no. Although not the first Albariño planting in the United States, Stewart was the source of the first commercial release of the variety in 1999.

Albariño has grown on the northwest coast of Spain and Portugal for centuries, resulting in wonderful food-friendly wines known for their enticing aromatics, vivacious crispness, and intriguing complexity. If ever a wine begs for food, this is it. It has gained in popularity in the States in the last few years, and for us to have one of the few domestic versions produced in this country is both exciting and noteworthy.

After three challenging vintages, we were rewarded in 2012. Sunshine and a warm dry spring gave way to mild and ideal growing conditions through the summer. Not only did this result in high quality grapes, but an abundant supply as well. It was a welcome relief to this veteran winemaker who has experienced more than 30 harvests in Napa Valley.

Let's see how those ideal growing conditions translated into the wine. Our 2012 Albariño is light straw in color. Its aromas are intriguing and elusive with a unique character unlike any other aromatic white wine. Citrus peel, orange blossom or marmalade, toasted almond, and ginger come to mind. Great natural acidity awakens the palate while mineral/stone-fruit flavors expand the aromas. Personally, I think the balance and texture of our 2012 is a notch above its predecessors.

Once again we produced only a handful of cases. The international response has been very gratifying, placing the wine in some exciting venues around the world.

I am on a continuous mission to do something off the beaten path. Here it is!