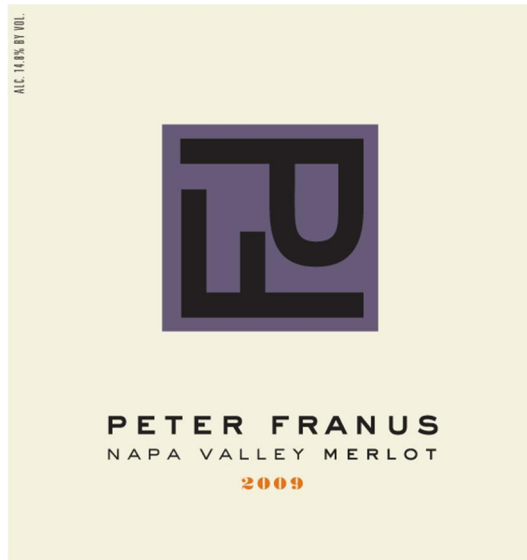


## 2009 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY MERLOT



Vineyards:	Stewart Vineyard Carneros
Composition:	100% Merlot
Harvest Dates:	Oct 9, 2009
Fermentation:	8 days, up to 80°
Maceration:	16 days total before pressing
Oak aging:	18 months French 50% new
Bottling Date:	June 22, 2011
Production:	310 cases

Our mission continues—to restore Merlot to its rightful stature as one of the world’s great varieties. So many seem to forget that some of the most highly regarded and sought after wines in the world come from Pomerol and Saint-Émilion, the land of Merlot. When it realizes its potential, it offers one of the most pleasurable of all red wine experiences.

Thirty years of winemaking experience has provided me with this insight: you know you are growing the right grape in the right location when it performs year after year. I can say this unequivocally about Stewart Vineyard Merlot. Even in the most difficult vintages it has consistently delivered, and it is typically the “go-to” wine in the barrel room because it tastes so good right from the start.

Stewart has provided me with outstanding Sauvignon Blanc since 1999, and more recently Albarino and Chardonnay. This unique site in Carneros suppresses vigor so berries are typically small and shoot growth modest, producing wines with excellent concentration and wonderfully ripe flavors. In a world of so many wines that taste alike, it is a pleasure to work with grapes that express genuine personality.

2009 will be discussed and evaluated in two ways—before and after the rains. It was a beautiful, mild, long growing season with great flavor development in the grapes. Everything before the rains arguably is equal to anything of this decade, and fortunately, we harvested our Merlot several days before the October 13 downpour.

The wine is medium dark ruby in color, still very fresh and vibrant. It offers distinctive and enticing aromas of plum and black cherry, made more intriguing by hints of tea and sage. The wine’s structure and gentle entry blossom into expansive flavors that are harmonious, balanced, and complex, and invite you back for another taste. I predict excellent longevity for our 2009.

This wine keeps on drawing me in—seamless and pure are words that pop into mind. Its impeccable structure and harmony allow me to say that I think it’s one of the finest wines I’ve made over the years. Even though this is a fun wine to drink and enjoy, this is definitely serious stuff!