

2014 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY ALBARIÑO



Vineyard:	Stewart Vineyard, Carneros
Composition:	100% Albariño
Harvest Date:	August 29, 2014
Fermentation:	21 days at 49°, VL3 Yeast
Aging:	Stainless steel exclusively
Bottling Date:	February 17, 2015
Production:	267 cases

TA 0.75 g/100 ml pH 3.29 Alc. 14.1% RS 0.96 g/L CALIFORNIA RETAIL PRICE \$26

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.

Three challenging vintages yielded to three superb vintages—2012, 2013, and 2014. If I had to give the nod to one, it might be 2014. . Sunshine and a warm dry spring gave way to mild and ideal growing conditions throughout the summer. Uneventful and no extremes for me typically announce a wonderful vintage. A common theme of 2014 delightfully fruit forward wines with impeccable balance Harvest began early, August 29, and finished early, October 2, avoiding the potentially cool and rainy autumn conditions.

Our 2014 Albariño is light straw in color with aromas consistent with previous vintages—honeysuckle, citrus blossom, toasted almond, ginger, and stone fruit. Flavors are bright, lively, and persistent. Always great acidity with Albariño, but what elevates the 2014 for me is how it seamlessly integrates with the structure of the wine. That translates to a bit more richness than previous vintages.

We are happy to report that the interest in Albariño continues to grow, and we are pleased that our domestic version of this Spanish variety continues to intrigue both here in the US and around the world.

As you know, I tend to avoid such pronouncements, but I do believe our 2014 could be our best expression from this vineyard yet!