

2015 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY SAUVIGNON BLANC



Vineyard:	Stewart Vineyard
Composition:	100% Sauvignon Blanc, Musque Clone 100% Carneros
Harvest Date:	August 25, 2015
Fermentation:	12 days at 50°, VIN 13 Yeast
Oak aging:	80% Stainless Steel 20% Neutral French Oak
Bottling Date:	May 4, 2016
Production:	324 cases

TA 0.58 g/100 ml

pH 3.42

Alc. 14.2%

RS 0.85 g/L

CALIFORNIA RETAIL PRICE \$24

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 18-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.

The drought continued in 2015. Dry weather combined with unseasonably warm temperatures in late winter and early spring to give us early bud break and bloom. As vines were in full bloom in May, we encountered cold weather that resulted in uneven fruit set and much smaller crops. Sauvignon Blanc was hit especially hard.

It was one of the earliest and quickest harvests on record. And in fact, the earliest harvest ever for Sauvignon Blanc. Nevertheless, as is often the case with short vintages, we were very pleased with quality.

Our winemaking strategy has remained consistent for quite a few years now. Grapes arrive early in the day and proceed directly to the press without any crushing. The resulting juice ferments at a cool temperature in stainless steel for two to three weeks. We select a yeast strain known to accentuate aromatics, freshness, and fruitiness. After fermentation the majority of the wine remains in stainless steel, while the remainder ages sur-lie in older cooperage. That sur-lie aged component seems to provide just the right amount of texture to the wine.

As for the wine. Light straw in color, our 2015 offers exuberant tropical notes of mango, cantaloupe, pineapple and ginger with restrained citrus and herbaceous notes in the background. The mouth sustains the aromas with a luxurious feel of richness, tempered as always with a firm structure and acidity. The wine remains lively, refreshing, and long on the palate with a hint of toasted almond on the finish!

We presented this wine for the first time in late July at one of our great annual trade shows, and the refrain heard over and over which is music to our ears, “delicious.”