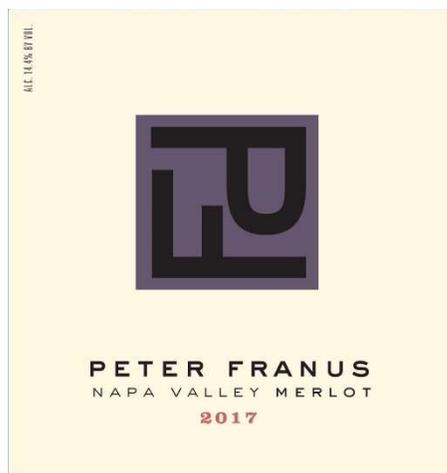


2017 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY MERLOT



Vineyards:	Stewart Vineyard Carneros
Composition:	100% Merlot
Harvest Date:	September 8, 2017
Fermentation:	7 days, up to 85°
Maceration:	18 days total before pressing
Oak aging:	19 months French 50% new
Bottling Date:	May 1, 2019
Production:	347 cases

TA 0.66 g/100 ml

pH 3.38

Alc. 14.4%

RS 0.21 g/L

CALIFORNIA RETAIL PRICE \$40

Guess what? Merlot is on the rebound! Suddenly it's becoming hip again to like a wine that has been out of fashion in recent years. When it realizes its potential, Merlot offers one of the most pleasurable of all red wine experiences, and 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.

Our crusade has been made easier with the magnificent grapes coming off the Stewart Vineyard in Carneros. Thirty-five 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.

What a growing season! Torrential rains and flooding in the winter gave way to periodic blasts of heat. Labor Day weekend was the most extreme, with temperature in San Francisco 105+ – unheard of! The winter rains definitely helped all the varieties at Stewart as they began the growing season much less stressed than the last couple of vintages. Despite the heat, our Merlot hung on the vine for another week, and arrived with the numbers and flavors we were aiming for.

Deep ruby, bordering on opaque, our 2017 Merlot offers a captivating and complex nose of black cherry, plum, thyme, and sweet oak notes. The wine continues to open revealing ripe plum and darker notes. The flavors reflect the nose with a perfect harmony of tannin, acid and fruit. Although offering plenty of pleasure now, the wine is clearly destined to age and develop for many years.

Our 2017 Merlot is a paragon of balance and is in the forefront for the title of "deliciousness!"