

2018 PETER FRANUS BRANDLIN VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON



Vineyard: Brandlin Vineyard
100% Mount Veeder

Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Harvest Date: October 18, 2018

Fermentation: 8 days, peak temperature 86°

Maceration: 27 days total before pressing

Oak aging: 18 months
100% French Oak 65% new

Bottling Date: May 4, 2020

Production: 396 cases 6 x 750ml

TA 0.59 g/100 ml

pH 3.79

Alc. 14.6%

RS 0.80 g/L

CALIFORNIA RETAIL PRICE \$75

As a “young man,” I encountered Mount Veeder for the first time nearly forty years ago. So different I thought from the rest of Napa Valley. It was the home of my first job, working in the vineyards on the slopes of the Mayacamas Mountains. Every year since, my wine career has been entwined with this very special appellation—winemaker at Mount Veeder Winery, and of course more than 25 years of producing Zinfandel from those magnificent old vines of Brandlin Vineyard. Arguably it became our flagship and most sought after wine.

The last Cabernet Sauvignon I produced from Mount Veeder was in 1992. In 2016 I returned to my earliest winemaking roots, with our first Cabernet Sauvignon from Brandlin Vineyard. To say it was an exciting and emotional experience would be an understatement. Equally exciting were the accolades the wine received as well as the subsequent vintage, and both quickly sold out.

Over the last several decades I have observed the cycles of winemaking styles. As I enter my “twilight years,” the goal remains even more so, to produce wines that are fresh, balanced, complex, and palatable. As I’ve mentioned many times, “delicious” is the word we like to hear. Mountain fruit can easily result in ponderous and over the top wines, but that doesn’t have to be the case.

2018 was a marvelous growing season. Beautiful spring conditions followed abundant rainfall in the winter, resulting in even fruit set. We couldn’t have asked for more ideal summer and fall weather—moderate temperatures throughout. Neither heat spikes nor rain interfered at harvest, resulting in long hang time and beautiful and balanced fruit that we could pick at our leisure. Perhaps the vintage of the decade.

Because our block of Cabernet rests on the hilltop ridge, grapes ripen evenly, sometimes a challenge in the mountains. Curiously enough, it sits adjacent to those 90-year-old Zinfandel vines, surely capturing some of the magic and energy of those vines.

Youthful dark ruby in color, our 2018 presents a complex and exotic nose of cassis, cardamom, allspice and bay. Expansive black cherry flavors continue to evolve with a precise tannin and acid structure that announce this wine will age beautifully for years. Wonderful weight and balance for a “mountain” Cabernet.

As one highly renowned wine writer recently said, “this is one of the best wines I have tasted from Peter Franus, going back to 1998.” We will let you decide!