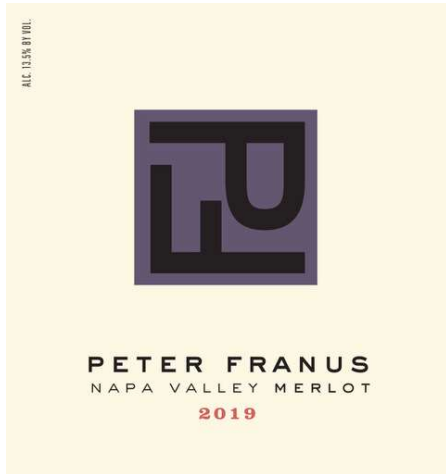


2019 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY MERLOT



Vineyards:	Stewart Vineyard Carneros
Composition:	100% Merlot
Harvest Date:	September 23, 2019
Fermentation:	6 days, up to 84°
Maceration:	15 days total before pressing
Oak aging:	19 months French 50% new
Bottling Date:	May 5, 2021
Production:	455 cases

TA 0.62 g/100 ml

pH 3.42

Alc. 13.5%

RS 0.10 g/L

It's okay to love Merlot! 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.

We are on a mission to restore Merlot to its rightful stature as one of the truly great varieties. Our mission has been made easier with the magnificent grapes coming off the Stewart Vineyard in Carneros. I am a firm believer that Merlot needs the cooler climate such as Carneros to realize its potential and express its true personality. 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.

As drought conditions continue in 2022, it's hard to believe that 2019 began with ample winter rainfall resulting in happy vines! Spring conditions allowed excellent fruit set producing an abundant crop. Summer saw few extremes with moderate temperatures throughout the growing season. Harvest began in a more normal timeframe, and without extreme weather we were able to harvest at our leisure when grapes were precisely ripe. As its predecessor, the 2019 is one of the finest vintages of the decade.

The 2019 visually greets you with a dark ruby vibrant youthful hue. As for the nose: graphite, blueberries and cream, roasted plum, dried herbs, and a rose petal note. The flavors reflect the nose in a refreshing style often absent in Napa Merlot. The balance of fruit/tannin/acidity is perfect, always a hallmark of this wine! By the way, the alcohol is under 14%, another rarity in the world of Napa Valley red wines. You can hold on to this beauty for many years if you like, but there is plenty of pleasure in the present.

As I often say when presenting this wine, "if you don't like this, you don't like wine!" From a recent review: "It's not too often that a wine so clearly distinguishes itself from its peers. This is a very serious Merlot. Don't miss it!" I couldn't agree more.