

2010 PETER FRANUS NAPA VALLEY MERLOT



Vineyards:	Stewart Vineyard Carneros
Composition:	100% Merlot
Harvest Dates:	Oct 4, 2010
Fermentation:	8 days, up to 82°
Maceration:	14 days total before pressing
Oak aging:	21 months French 55% new
Bottling Date:	September 10, 2012
Production:	239 cases

TA 0.60 g/100 ml

pH 3.51

Alc. 14.8%

RS 0.19 g/L

CALIFORNIA RETAIL PRICE \$32

Our mission continues—to restore Merlot to its rightful stature as one of the world’s great varieties. 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. When it realizes its potential, it offers one of the most pleasurable of all red wine experiences.

Thirty 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.

Stewart Vineyard has provided me with outstanding Sauvignon Blanc since 1999, and more recently Albariño and Chardonnay. This unique site in Carneros suppresses vigor so berries are typically small and shoot growth modest, producing wines with excellent concentration and wonderfully ripe flavors. In a world of so many wines that taste alike, it is a pleasure to work with grapes that express genuine personality.

2010 was one of the most intriguing and unusual vintages in my 30-year career in Napa Valley. The coolest summer in decades was followed by scorching heat in August. As a result, some clusters shriveled and yields were down 10 to 15%. On the positive side, a cool, long growing season allowed great flavor development at lower sugars and wines that tend toward more elegance.

Our 2010 Merlot is a youthful dark ruby in color and nearly opaque. A lush, vibrant deep nose offers black cherry, cocoa, espresso, thyme, and black olive. It’s reminiscent of the very successful 2007 but with a bit more restraint. The rich mouth impression is quickly tempered by a firm structure with appropriate ripe tannins and refreshing acidity. The finish is lively and restates the earlier espresso and cocoa notes.

This is a beautiful, inviting wine with expansive aromas and flavors that happens to be 100% Merlot. It’s refreshing to see a new group of enlightened wine drinkers who are recognizing and indulging in the pleasure that this wonderful varietal has to offer.