

# SWANSON

## VINEYARDS

### 2018 MERLOT NAPA VALLEY

#### VINTAGE

After the dramatic end to the 2017 vintage, the 2018 vintage was a return to normal; although a normal we have not seen in years. Mild conditions throughout flowering meant fruit set was extended and successful, ultimately leading to high yields slowing down ripening. The hot temperatures in July and August relented from September onwards. There were no late season heat spikes or serious harvest rain events which meant the hang time of the grapes could be extended. The result was naturally balanced wines, lower in alcohol that retained good amounts of natural acidity. This was one of the longest harvests we've seen since 2011, starting on the 31st of August and ending on the 5th of November and can be summed up as a "Classic" Napa Valley vintage. Definitely one to follow closely.

#### VINEYARD

Situated on fluvial soils deposited from the ever changing course of the Napa River, this vineyard benefits from good drainage, perfect exposure and readily available nutrients. The farming uses the quad trellising to protect the grapes from too much sun exposure allowing for a long hang time with plenty of time for the grapes to ripen to their full potential.

#### WINEMAKING

Cool hand-harvested Merlot, brought in at night was followed by prolonged pre-fermentation cold maceration, which allowed easy extraction of color and flavor compounds from the grape skins during fermentation. Extraction was individually tailored by wine lot, with the wines receiving on average one month on the skins to optimize aromatics and charm yet fully extract and develop tannins. The 2018 wine lots were racked in early spring 2019, following the completion of malolactic fermentation in barrel, then again in April of 2020 prior to bottling. Overall, the wine received a total élevage of 17 months.

#### WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Dark opaque red. Vibrant aromas of fresh red fruits, crushed strawberries with a touch of dried herbs, mocha and roasted coffee beans. On the palate the initial approach is silky smooth with the tannins building in a long lasting finish. The flavor profile brings in dark cherries, dried fruit a touch of bay leaf. The slight menthol notes compliment the crisp acidity and nicely placed warmth on the finish.

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#### COMPOSITION

90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon

#### BARREL REGIME

17 months in 15% new French oak and 15% new American oak

#### BOTTLING DATE

May 5, 2020

#### CASE PRODUCTION

6,500 cases (12 x 750mL)

