



CLOS PEGASE  
NAPA VALLEY

## 2015 MERLOT

MITSUKO'S VINEYARD | CARNEROS, NAPA VALLEY

**G**rowing Merlot in Mitsuko's Vineyard for over a decade has taught us how to express the depth and elegance of this varietal. The vineyard is comprised of five different Merlot clones which reveal slightly different dimensions of the variety. The micro-climate and soil type of each parcel, along with the varied spacing and rootstocks, provide the grapes with greater complexity of flavor.

### HARVEST NOTES

The mild winter combined with substantial rains in February and March gave the vines a vigorous start. The late falling spring rains along with cool temperatures in May, meant that fruit-set was reduced, naturally lowering the yield of fruit each vine produced. The weather started to warm up as spring moved into summer, providing our vineyards with the optimal climate to undergo veraison, where upon the grapes skins softened, natural grape acid declined, sugar was generated and the grape skins started to color. As harvest approached, the combination of warm days and cool nights ensured full physiological ripeness of the fruit both in terms of fruit flavor development and tannin maturity together with acidity retention so crucial for fine wine balance; however, because the peak daytime temperatures exceeded those in 2014, this vintage was one of the earliest in over a decade.

### WINEMAKER NOTES

The Merlot was hand-harvested during the cool morning hours, followed by prolonged pre-fermentation macerations, 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. The 2015 wine lots were racked in early Spring 2016, following the completion of Malolactic fermentation in barrel, then again in early February, 2017, just prior to bottling. Overall, the wine received a total élevage of 16 months in our caves before bottling in April.

### TASTING NOTES

Our 2015 Mitsuko's Vineyard Merlot is a rich and complex wine with expressive blackberry, Cassis, crushed red fruits and plum aromas, underlain by more earthy tones of fresh pipe tobacco, anise, cinnamon spice and plums. On the palate the wine is powerful and complex, displaying layer upon layer of flavors, that start with dark fruits such as plum, black currants and ripe cherries and move into more subtle notes, of herbes de Provence, spice box and fresh cut tobacco leaf. The tannins are generous for a Merlot and drive the finish with substantial mid-palate volume and a persistent and intensely pleasurable flavor.

## TECHNICAL INFO

### VARIETAL COMPOSITION

90% Merlot  
5% Petite Sirah  
5% Cabernet Sauvignon

### VINEYARD

95% Mitsuko's Vineyard, Carneros, Napa Valley  
5% Dunawael Vineyard, Calistoga, Napa Valley

### SOIL

Haire Clay-Loam and Haire Gravelly Clay-Loam

### CLONES

Merlot - Clones 181; Pomerol massale selections  
Petite Sirah - Madrigal Clone 470  
Cabernet Sauvignon - Clone UCD 07

### HARVEST DATES

October 1st - October 12th

### AGING

16 Months in 32% new French oak

### BOTTLING DATE

April 2017

### ALCOHOL

14.7%

### PRODUCTION

2,477 cases (12 x 750ml)

### OPTIMUM DRINKING

Now - 2025

