

FREEMARK ABBEY



NAPA VALLEY

Wine Type: Stage Coach Merlot

Vintage: 2018

Winemaker: Kristy Melton

Winemaker Emeritus: Ted Edwards

Percentage of each grape variety used: 100 % Merlot

Stage Coach Vineyard—Atlas Peak (100%) These grapes were sorted from the Atlas Peak area of the Stage Coach Vineyard, located north east of Napa at approximately 1500 ft elevation. Composed of ancient volcanic soils, the vineyard is carved out of rocky terrain, sage brush and chaparral. The grape vines struggle in this environment, creating grapes that are small and very concentrated. The Merlot grapes ripen very evenly, yielding great dark cherry depth with an incredible distinctiveness that can only be derived from the terroir of Stage Coach.

Growing Season Notes: Abundant winter rains helped refresh the groundwater and our reservoirs. Bud break was a little late, the vines responded to the water and moderate spring weather with plenty of growth. Good weather prevailed during bloom giving us an even fruit set. The summer was fairly moderate, with plenty of sun during the day and marine influences during the night. The harvest was near ideal with average timing and crop size. The wines have great elements of fruit and earth with a well-integrated tannin structure that will help them age well for decades.

Harvest Dates and Sugar: Harvest was on 9/25 and 9/29 at an average of 26.5 degrees brix.

Age of Vines and Soil Type: The vines were planted in 2000, the soils are volcanic, craggy and rocky (see vineyard description)

Fermentation: After a five day cold soak, the fermentation was in stainless steel fermenters at 75-86 deg for 26 days skin contact

Alcohol: 14.9 **pH:** 3.76 **Acid:** .54

Aging: Barrels: French **Cooperage:** World Cooperage % of new wood: 35% **Aged in Barrel:** 15 months

Number of Cases Produced: 532 Bottled March 2020

Life span in a proper cellar: 15 years +

Vintage and Winemaker's Notes: The Stagecoach Vineyard is located at 1800 elevation on the eastern side of the Napa Valley in the Atlas Peak AVA. The rugged topography and warm climate create a wine that is dark garnet in color and complex in its features. It exudes aromas of dry fig, red raspberry, black currant, blueberry and mountain scrub. Flavors are reminiscent of pomegranate, plums, wild herbs, dried sage, black pepper and espresso. The fruit and spice expression combine with a supple texture and well-integrated tannins that is luxurious from start to finish.