

VINTAGE 2018



PULIDO~WALKER

Cabernet Sauvignon

MELANSON VINEYARD

Growing conditions were ideal across Napa Valley in 2018. Ample spring rains gave way to sunny and mild summer days with no major heat spikes, allowing fruit to hang on the vine for one of the longest stretches in recent memory. After the challenges of 2017, with its brutal Labor Day heat wave and October wildfires, 2018 will likely go down as one of those highly memorable Napa Valley vintages born of an entirely unmemorable growing season.

2018 was a prolific year in the Melanson Vineyard, with yield comparable to the lauded 2012 vintage but even higher quality, producing more concentrated, complex, and structured wine. Vineyard Manager Josh Clark's vine-by-vine approach to farming this site since his 2016 arrival has fully optimized vineyard health, and the vigor of the vines is especially apparent in a banner year like this one. The abundance of quality fruit gave us the luxury of being even more selective than usual when it came to blending the 2018 Pulido~Walker Cabernet Sauvignon.

The old vine clones continue to set the standard for the blend, with clone 7 leading the way. Extended hang time on the vine translated to excellent extraction in the tank; a couple of days into fermentation, the wine was almost black. Our biggest challenge in the winery was choosing the best from so many superb lots.

Winemaking & Tasting Notes

Thanks to an excellent set, early fruit stability, and true ripeness, the 2018 Pulido~Walker Melanson Vineyard Cabernet is an exemplary wine. It is intensely colored, with framing acidity and tons of structure. This vineyard does best with a long hang time—the longer we get to ripen the tannin, the better the result. 2018 is a prime example of what we're aiming for with well-integrated tannins, including a somewhat expansive mid palate and no clipping of the finish.

All the flavor hallmarks of the vineyard are on display here, from deeply saturated black fruits to crushed rock to even more of the high-toned white flower component we've come to expect in Napa Valley wines from top-tier mountain sites. We're pleased to follow the tiny 2017 vintage with a more generous offering of what is bound to be a benchmark vintage of this wine. Enjoy it any time over the next three decades.

THOMAS RIVERS BROWN
Winemaker

Data

Estate Grown

Appellation: St. Helena, Napa Valley

Varietal: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon

Clones: 7 and 337

Aging: 20 months in 100% French oak (85% new barrels)

Barrel Coopers: Darnajou, Ermitage, and Taransaud

Alcohol: 14.5% by vol.

Titrateable Acidity: 6.2 g/L

pH: 3.82

Bottling Date: June 2020

Production: 398 Cases

