



# PLUMPJACK

WINERY



## 2018 PLUMPJACK MERLOT, NAPA VALLEY

### VINTAGE

The strategy for the 2018 vintage was patience. The spring was cooler than the last several years. The vines woke up a little later, grew more slowly, bloomed later, and veraison was later. Cooler than normal temperatures persisted throughout the summer and into fall. And the grapes ripened very, very, very slowly. Weeks would pass with little progress. Flavors were slow to develop and the grapes remained firm and the skins thick. Rains threatened the vintage with about 1.5 inches falling on October 1st. More rains were forecast to follow, but they did not develop. Fortunately, the weather warmed in October and we were able to let the grapes hang until they reached maturity. Our last grapes came through the cellar door on November 6th, which was the latest close to the harvest in our history.

### FERMENTATION & AGING

Our Merlot grapes were cold soaked for three to five days before the onset of fermentation. The fermentation was then allowed to reach a maximum temperature of 92 degrees F and pressed off the skins after 8–10 days.

The wine was then moved into oak barrels where they underwent malolactic fermentation. Seventy percent of these barrels were new barrels and the balance were once-filled barrels. Ninety percent of our Merlot barrels were French Oak Bordeaux barrels and 10% were American Oak barrels. The coopers used include Sylvain, Taransaud, Nadalie, and Demptos. A touch of Malbec was added to the blend to add depth and weight to the palate. The Merlot was aged for 18 months before bottling.

### WINEMAKER IMPRESSIONS

Our Merlot vineyard is in the Oak Knoll region of the Napa Valley, and is nestled up to the Mayacamas Mountain Range on the west side of the valley. The mild climate and alluvial soils in this region lend this wine great balance and structure. The mild temperatures allow these grapes to develop bright aromatics and flavors, along with a beautiful natural acidity and elegance. The alluvial soils bring darker fruits to the nose and palate, and give this wine its structure and concentration.

The 2018 vintage has a beautiful and complex nose – black cherry, boysenberry jam, plum, and fresh cut flowers come through first, then cardamom, nutmeg, and a touch of cocoa and vanilla enter giving the nose depth and intrigue. The palate too has great depth and complexity – flavors of red cherries, muddled berries, and dried herbs, with a creamy texture and silky tannin complimented by a fresh, vibrant acidity.

**VARIETALS/BLEND** 94% Merlot  
4% Cabernet Sauvignon  
2% Malbec

**PRODUCTION** 5,930 cases

**ALCOHOL** 15.0%