

TOR

N A P A V A L L E Y

MELANSON VINEYARD
CABERNET SAUVIGNON
2015

VINEYARD Pritchard Hill is one of Napa Valley's great sites for big boned, dense, very complex Cabernet Sauvignons. Greg Melanson's vineyard is very steep with rows running up and down the hill directly across from Colgin Winery and Estate vineyard. Beyond Colgin its rocky face looks down at Napa Valley's floor. Like many of the best sites on Pritchard Hill, its higher elevation and afternoon breezes coming from the Pacific cools the vineyard in the warm afternoons. Ideal real estate for world class Cabernet.

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WINEMAKING The 2015 Melanson Vineyard Cabernet was on skins for only about 13 days and pulled off soon after since it tasted so amazing. This was one of the wines in 2015 that from the day it started fermenting we knew we had something special and it has never disappointed. This was put down in new Darnajou barrels.

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WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES If you liked the 2013 Melanson, you'll love the 2015. It is sort of like the 2013 Melanson on steroids. This shows the similar density and richness on the palate as the 2013 but with a more floral element to the wine and perhaps a bit more silky palate impression and an additional layer of richness and seamlessness. You will find loads of blackberries, currants, smoked meats. It is good now, but will benefit from a few years in the cellar. With the stuffing and density of the wine it should easily go 15 years+ and only get better and better. The hallmark of a great Cabernet.

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VINTAGE Over my decades as a Napa vintner I have gained great respect for "drought years." They are yin and yang years, where a farmer has to pay very close attention to each vine. In years like 2015, every vine was pushed to the limit – its access to water, its survival. The survivors make up small crops - that is the "yin." The "yang" is - the quality can be off the charts.

In 2015, we suffered up to 45% losses in several blocks. It was an early start, but cool weather during flowering in May contributed to a less than normal fruit set. The berries that did set were generally much smaller than usual. Once the set was complete, we had warm to very warm conditions up to and through harvest. There was no rush to judgement on when to pick, we had plenty of space at the winery for the short crop, and all the fruit was in before the winter storms started to line up off the coast. Initially, I did not pass judgement on this vintage; but now having tasted all the wines in bottle – it is a great one in all respects.

CASES PRODUCED: 200

