

TOR

N A P A V A L L E Y

MELANSON VINEYARD
CABERNET SAUVIGNON
2018

VINEYARD We put Pritchard Hill in parentheses because it is not an official appellation, but many great wines claim and champion the name. It's neighbor on this legendary hill is Colgin. Greg Melanson's vineyard is very steep with rows running up and down the hill. Its rocky face looks down at Napa Valley's floor. Higher elevation and afternoon breezes coming from the Pacific cool the vineyard in the warm afternoons. Ideal real estate for world class Cabernet. The mountain site is rugged, its Sobrante loam soil studded with volcanic rock. At an average elevation of 1,200 feet, the vineyard sits above the fog line and benefits from maximum sun exposure all day.

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WINEMAKING Melanson is a plusher, richer softer expression of a mountain Napa Valley Cabernet than our others. A very steep and rocky hillside vineyard this vintage proves to show minerality and intense dark fruits. We selected 100% Taran-saud barrels for Melanson. The drinking window for this wine will be very long.

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WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES As has been the case every year since 2013 when we started in this amazing site on Pritchard Hill, there is no mistaking Melanson in the line up of TOR Cabernets. There is always a more red fruited/brite side to Melanson as opposed to our West side Oakville Cabernets that are mostly black fruits. The dark fruit profile of 2018 makes this one of the darker Melansons we have ever made yet it still retains the intense mountain driven character that have made this a marquee site on Pritchard Hill.

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VINTAGE 2018 was a very long and overall cool vintage which aided its longevity and hang time. The grape set was under ideal conditions in the Spring, and the clusters on average were larger than normal, full, and picture perfect. Hollywood clusters, show offs; a beautiful and large set. We thinned (dropped fruit) more radically than we did in 2017 and 2016, one cluster per shoot in To Kalon. Still, by harvest it was on average a good 10 to 15% more than we had initially anticipated. Long, long hang time, picture perfect clusters, no real heat spikes, and an even and long picking season.

98 Points – *Antonio Galloni, Vinous*

97 points – *James Suckling*

