



SADDLEBACK CELLARS

NAPA VALLEY

Appellation:	Napa Valley
Varietals:	100% Merlot
Cooperage:	20 months in 60% new French oak barrels
Alcohol:	14.5%
Harvested:	10/10/2017
Bottled:	May 30, 2019
Released:	May 1, 2021
Cases Produced:	478

We handpicked 5.5 tons of Merlot in the early morning on October 10, 2017, at our estate. 75% of the fruit originated from the estate vineyard in Oakville, and 25% is from Truchard Vineyard, Carneros. The ideal growing conditions of 2017 marked an excellent harvest.

TECH DETAILS:

- Avg. sugar: 24.8 Brix
- Total acidity: 6.5 g/100ml
- pH: 3.90units

FERMENTATION AND AGING:

After the grapes were put through the crusher/de-stemmer they went to tank for a two day cold soak. The must was inoculated with cultured *Montrachet* yeast, and fermented and pumped over for 12 days at an average of 90 degrees Fahrenheit. The must was pumped over at least three times daily to enhance color, flavor and tannin extraction from the skins. After two rackings, the wine was transferred to 60% new French oak barrels. The wine underwent its own malolactic conversion in the barrel over a 20-month aging period.

CHARACTERISTICS:

A dark ruby red in the glass, on the nose a good swirl elicits generous aromatics of cassis and black cherry. As usual, a Cabernet-lover's Merlot, with a more supple body, and flavors of Morello cherries and clove. The balanced nature of this Merlot keeps it friendly: red fruit, oak and tannin in harmony create a delectable wine suitable for sipping or food pairings. Pair with: hard, yellow cheeses, grilled steaks or lamb, and balances the spices and sauce of a dish such as butter chicken.

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