

BARNETT VINEYARDS
Spring Mountain District
NAPA VALLEY

Merlot
Spring Mountain District
2018

Harvest Date:	October 17 th and November 2 nd , 2018
Grape Source:	Spring Mountain District, Estate
Blend:	88% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, 3.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 3.5% Petit Verdot
Aging:	22 months in French Oak Barrels 65% new and 35% a range of 2-4 year old
Alcohol:	14.9%
Total Production:	57 Barrels
Release Date:	October 2020
Winemaker:	David Tate

Vintage Notes: Our Merlot struggles to grow up on the top of Spring Mountain in the solid rock. The small yields produce concentrated, complex wine. After the challenging year that 2017 was, 2018 was a welcome reprieve. For the 2016 vintage a remark was made that it was a near perfect vintage. If 2016 was near perfect than 2018 was perfect. The vintage was a great balance of impeccable quality with an above average quantity. It was a hot but milder summer than in 2017. Fall was a winemaker's dream of consistent warm weather without heat spikes or rain spells.

Winemaker Notes: This Merlot comes from higher elevations on Spring Mountain. It is picked in the dark hours of the morning to ensure it arrives cool and undamaged. The Merlot spent an average of 20 days on its skins, much longer than average due to the extended hang time loosening the skins. The wine spent 22 months in French cooperage of which 65% was new. Different amounts of Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc were trialed, and for the first time a small amount of Petit Verdot was added to give further structure to the wine.

Tasting Notes: The 2018 Spring Mountain Merlot is a very bright and fruit driven wine. The nose is bursting with black cherries and blueberry pie as well as cinnamon toast and caramel. There is some pleasant underpinning eucalyptus and gravel minerality. As always with this wine the mouth is full and rich. The tannins are present but soft as the lush viscosity coats them. The acidity is present but softer than previous years. There is a wonderful chocolate and cherry finish. This big fruit driven wine is drinking nicely in its youth but will develop some bottle bouquet over the next 8-9 years (2028-2029).