

# Cakebread Cellars



## 2013 Merlot Napa Valley

### Vineyards

The fruit that serves as the backbone for our 2013 Napa Valley Merlot comes from an exciting estate vineyard at the southern end of the Napa Valley that we call the Suscol Springs Vineyard. It is here that our vines struggle in rocky Hambright outcrop soils planted on steep hillsides with a southern exposure. The challenge of growing here, however, pays dividends in fruit quality. These blocks produce grapes with distinctive, true-to-varietal flavors, bright acidity, and a muscular structure that is ideal for aging.

### Vintage 2013

In 2013, a warm, dry spring initiated early budbreak, ensured trouble-free vine flowering and grape set, and led to a consistently mild summer fostering steady, even ripening and grapes with wonderful flavor concentration. Our hand-harvested merlot grapes were picked between September 4<sup>th</sup> and October 4<sup>th</sup> with an optimum balance of sugar and acidity.

### Winemaking

In 2013, we fermented our various vineyard lots of merlot in a mix of small closed and open-top stainless steel tanks, pumping the fermenting juice over the 'cap' of skins and other solids that form at the top of the tank in order to fully extract color, flavor and tannin from the skins. Once fermentation completed, we transferred the new wines to carefully selected French oak barrels, 36% new, where they aged for six months before being blended. The blended wine then spent an additional nine months in barrel, just long enough to impart further complexity to the wine, prior to bottling in April, 2015.

### Tasting Notes

Fragrant ripe black cherry, red plum and blackberry aromas, complemented by whiffs of black tea, oak and chocolate, introduce this bold, beautifully structured merlot. Rich and plump on the palate with lush cherry, plum and red currant flavors framed by firm, yet fine-grained tannins, it culminates in a long finish accented by zesty tea-leaf spice tones. Delicious now, this youthful merlot will benefit from another 5-7 years' aging.

**Composition:** 95% merlot, 5% cabernet sauvignon

**Vineyards:** Napa Valley, 58% estate

**Harvest dates:** September 4<sup>th</sup> – October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013

**Fermentation:** 100% small stainless steel tanks

**Barrel aging:** 15 months in French oak barrels, 36% new

**Alcohol:** 14.5%

**Total acidity:** 0.64 g/100 ml

**pH:** 3.54

**Bottled:** April, 2015

**Winemaker:** Julianne Laks