



EST. 1980

2018 Napa Valley LE MEILLEUR DU CHAI

LE MEILLEUR DU CHAI, FRENCH FOR “BEST OF THE CELLAR,” IS A BORDEAUX BLEND REPRESENTING THE FINEST BARRELS OF EACH VINTAGE. THIS WINE WAS FIRST PRODUCED IN 1983 WHEN KOERNER ROMBAUER AND HIS WINEMAKER SAT DOWN TO BLEND THEIR THIRD VINTAGE OF WINE. AS THEY TASTED THROUGH THE LOTS, THEY REALIZED CERTAIN BARRELS HAD A DISTINCTIVE POWER AND ELEGANCE FROM THE REST. THEY CAREFULLY CHOSE THOSE LOTS TO BLEND AND BOTTLE SEPERATELY, DEEMING THEM LE MEILLEUR DU CHAI.

VINEYARDS

All the fruit in this wine comes from our Estate Vineyards. The Cabernet is grown at our vineyard on Atlas Peak and our vineyard in southern St. Helena on Stice Lane.

WINEGROWING

Heavy rains in February led to a warm summer which turned cool in August, resulting in a later harvest than the last few years. What followed was a long, warm fall with near perfect growing conditions and extended hang time. Ultimately, it was one of the longest harvests on record which also produced an above average crop size. Sustainable farming practices throughout the season were tailored to each block with the assistance of aerial photos produced using NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) technology.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were carefully destemmed and optically sorted to ensure only perfect fruit made it into the wine. A portion of the wine was barrel-fermented to provide a more textured palate and silky tannins. The wine was gently basket-pressed before being racked to French oak barrels for malolactic fermentation and aging. Each barrel was hand-selected for this wine.

TASTING NOTES

Intense black cherry and cassis aromas with notes of subtle green olive and seamless oak all mingle in the glass. The palate is poised, concentrated, and complex with continued flavors of bright cherry and cassis with hints of spice, and vanilla bean. Very finely structured tannins frame the wine and bright acidity give it freshness, creating a long and balanced, classically structured, modern Cabernet Sauvignon.

FOOD PAIRINGS

Our favorite *Joy of Cooking*® pairings* for this wine include Boeuf Bourguignon, Braised Short Ribs, and Steak au Poivre. *Recipes for pairing may be found in the *Joy of Cooking*.

RELEASE DATE	March 2023	HARVESTED	Oct. 20 - Oct. 22, 2018
APPELLATION	Napa Valley	AVG BRIX AT HARVEST	25.6
VARIETAL COMPOSITION	94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Petit Verdot	COOPERAGE	17 months in French Oak (100% new)
ALCOHOL	14.5%		

