

STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS

2013 NAPA VALLEY MERLOT

Our Napa Valley collection of wines are crafted with the same approach to winemaking as our limited-production estate wines, using great care in harvesting and handling the grapes, and a measured hand in the cellar, to produce wines of supple power, elegance and age-worthiness. In addition to some estate-grown grapes, we source high-quality fruit from independent growers who farm their vines to our precise specifications.

VINEYARDS AND WINEMAKING

With 77% Merlot and 23% Cabernet Sauvignon, this is a fruit-driven Merlot in a richer style with nice minerality. 73% of the grapes are from the S.L.V. estate vineyard. After fermentation, this wine was aged for 20 months in French oak barrels, 50% of them new.

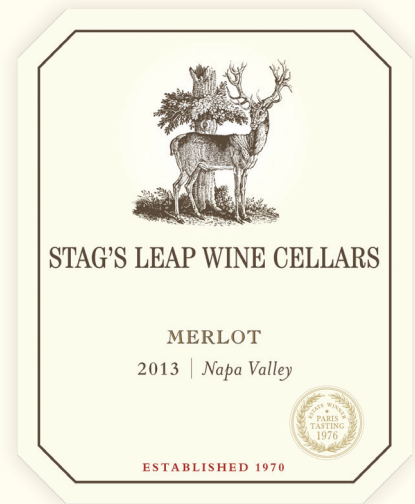
VINTAGE

The 2013 harvest was Winemaker Marcus Notaro's first in Napa Valley at Stag's Leap Wine Cellars. He describes the vintage as a winemaker's dream. "I couldn't have picked a better vintage to start with, he said. "This was one of the most even vintages I've ever experienced, giving ultimate quality and uniform ripeness."

A dry winter and spring were followed by warm weather in May/June that turned to moderate, if not cool, temperatures in July/August. The grapes colored up quickly and evenly; a nice sign that the grapes would finish off ripening in a uniform manner. A four-day heat spike in early September hastened ripening of some grapes, but there was an immediate return to moderate conditions and near perfect weather for the rest of September and early October. The varietals ripened one after another and the blocks ripened evenly so there was never really a "crunch" period. This allowed the fruit to be picked at the right time for each block and gave ample time in the winery to bring out the best characters for each lot. Tannins are ripe and soft and the wines are full of fruit.

WINE

This Merlot is made in a richer style, which is characteristic of the 2013 vintage in Napa Valley. Aromas of cocoa, boysenberry, tobacco and spice can be found on the nose. The wine has a broad mouthfeel and finish with flavors of cherry and hints of barrel spice. Enjoy with roasted chicken with sautéed wild mushrooms or herb-crusted fish or pork loin served alongside parmesan risotto.



HARVEST DATES:	<i>Sept. 17 – Oct. 3, 2013</i>
ALCOHOL:	<i>14.5%</i>
pH:	<i>3.66</i>
TITRATABLE ACIDITY:	<i>0.49 g/100ml</i>
FERMENTATION:	<i>100% stainless steel tank</i>
MALOLACTIC FERMENTATION:	<i>100%</i>
BARREL AGING:	<i>20 months 50% new French oak</i>
BLEND:	<i>77% Merlot 23% Cabernet Sauvignon</i>
APPELLATION:	<i>Napa Valley</i>
CASES PRODUCED:	<i>593</i>
SUGGESTED RETAIL:	<i>\$45 per bottle</i>

Marcus Notaro
WINEMAKER