

# ELEGANT & EXPRESSIVE

## 2019 CANNONBALL CALIFORNIA MERLOT

**Raise your glass** The foundation of our blend is sourced from the gentle slopes of Mendocino county where the varietal shows great structure and focus. These characteristics are complemented by components from neighboring Lake County where a bit more heat leads to richer fruit expression and rounds out the palate. A smaller but significant impact is contributed from our Santa Clara Valley source where the sunny warmth and chilly evenings bring out the more robust character of this luscious grape.

**Winemaking** Merlot is an abundant producer, so we prefer to thin the crop early in the season to concentrate flavors and encourage distinction. Harvest is conducted in the early morning hours while the fruit is cool and transported to the winery where it is partially crushed and sent to stainless steel tanks where it undergoes a three-to-four day cold soak where color is extracted and fruit flavors are enhanced. After cold soak we encourage a short (5 day) fermentation through the addition of proprietary yeast strains, and our pump-over regime is gentle and sparing so as not to oxidize the fragile fruit. At the end of fermentation the young wine is drained of skins, settled, and put to French oak aging incorporating a range of new and seasoned oak.

**Aromas** Bright, black cherry fruit dominates and is laced with toasty mocha and caramel notes that ground the fruit and lend complexity.

**Taste and Flavors** Cherry follows through on the palate and expands to reveal plum, raspberry, and an attractive classic vein of minerality that contributes dimension to the tannin structure. Bold yet supple, this take on Merlot celebrates the vibrant fruit, signature earth/spice elements, soft but present tannins, and easy sipping approachability of this cheery varietal

### **Technically:**

AVA: California • Alc: 13.5% • pH: 3.54 • TA: 6.4 g/100mL RS: 0.20%

