



2019 CABERNET SAUVIGNON
FS 81
Rutherford AVA

- Release Date:** January, 2024
- Production:** 6 Barrels
- Varietal:** 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
- Vineyards:** Star Vineyard,
Rutherford AVA, Napa Valley
- Team:** Justin and Seana Stephens, Proprietors
Kirk Venge, Winemaker
Andrew Bohi, Director of Operations
- Cooperage:** Aged for 28 months in French oak, 80% new.
- Vintage Notes:** 2019 as a vintage was full of unique and unexpected character. A cool spring and late rains well into May had us on edge as we nervously kept vigil against frost and shatter in the vineyards, fearing a repeat of the unseasonably cool 2011 vintage. Thankfully, summer arrived with its desired warmth, but with the harshest heat held at bay, allowing for a long, warm, and even ripening season. With the weather as calm as it was, harvest was as long or as short as the grapes demanded, allowing for optimum ripeness and steady fermentations. No drama equaled superb wines.
- Vineyard Notes:** Situated in the heart of the Rutherford Bench, about a quarter mile east of the Rutherford Grill, our portion of Star Vineyard. The entire 55-acre vineyard was originally a prune orchard, but a small vineyard was planted there in 1974 to Chardonnay and that original block still thrives to this day. Reg Oliver, who was a close friend of Justin's dad, purchased the land in 1984 and began converting the vineyard to Cabernet Sauvignon. Reg sadly passed in 2005, however his son Jack quickly stepped in and has expertly managed the vineyard under the guidance of Pina Vineyard Management ever since. Jack and Justin have been friends since 1981, hence the name, FS 81 (friends since '81).
- Our block on Star Vineyard was planted in 2007 in the alluvial soils which give Rutherford its dusty reputation and is a 50/50 split of Martha's Clone and Clone 7.
- Tasting Notes:** Delectable scents of black plum, strawberry and macerated blackberry emerge provocatively from the glass followed by the tell-tale Rutherford notes of wild mint, cocoa powder and black olive. The palate is dark, weighty and plush with brooding black and red fruits surrounding the ultra-fine tannins weaving through the finish.
- Aging Advice:** With the purity of fruit on display in youth, it is certainly tempting to dive right in, and we certainly will enjoy this wine early and often. That said, there is strong aging potential for this, and all of our 2019 vintage wines, as the ample fruit and balanced structural cues will allow for steady evolution over the next 7-10 years.