

# Pellet Estate®



## 2018 MERLOT

<b>HARVESTED</b>	September 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2018	<b>WINEMAKER</b>	Tom Rinaldi
<b>AGING</b>	21 months, 100% new French Oak	<b>VINEYARD</b>	Pellet Vineyard®
<b>BOTTLED</b>	August 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2020	<b>APPELLATION</b>	St. Helena
<b>ALCOHOL</b>	14.7%	<b>RELEASE PRICE</b>	\$85
<b>COMPOSITION</b>	90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon	<b>PRODUCTION</b>	36 cases 750 ml

### ESTATE NOTES

Pellet Estate produces Chardonnay from the Sunchase Vineyard, and Cabernet Sauvignon from grapes grown exclusively in our historic Pellet Vineyard®, a site that has been producing grapes for over 150 years. The Pellet Vineyard's origin begins in 1859, when pioneer winemaker Henry Alphonse Pellet was hired by John Patchett to make wine from his grapes near the city of Napa. Charles Krug had also begun to make wine in 1858, and Henry Pellet became the second commercial wine maker in Napa County. Formally established in 1863, the Pellet Vineyard was among the first vineyards in Napa Valley intended for producing grapes for wine for consumers at large, rather than family & friends. In 1863, Pellet purchased 45 acres of land south of the town of St. Helena next to his neighbor, Dr. G.B. Crane, and planted 38 acres in vineyards. Our label depicts the dawn of the age of electrification, the era when Pellet illuminated the path towards modern viticultural and winemaking methodology, and with it, the high quality and age-worthy wines that define Napa Valley.

### VINTAGE NOTES

2018 was another near-perfect vintage, surpassing 2016, yielding a crop of concentrated fruit that produced a intense wine, and should stand out for decades to come. Compared to last year, 2018 produced smaller than average berries, which means a higher ratio of skins to juice, leading to higher levels of color and tannin. We had a few heat spikes in late July, and the weather was generally dry, warm even and consistent throughout the season. We picked the Merlot fairly early, yet still under the most ideal conditions in mid September, and expect 2018 will turn out to be yet another new pinnacle for our Estate Merlot following the double back to back stellar vintages for 2014 and 2015 in our opinion, with 2018 having a bit of an edge at the moment. This is only the third bottling of Merlot ever in our history - rare indeed.

### WINEMAKING NOTES

We hand sorted our grapes both prior to and after de-stemming, and following a four day whole berry maceration and cold soak, we began primary fermentation. After nearly three weeks, the wine was gently pressed-off and racked to 100% new Darnajou and Ermitage 36 month-aged tight grain French Oak barrels to complete a slow secondary fermentation for another few months. This year's second vintage of Merlot is fantastic, and yielded just over one barrel.