



**FROSTWATCH** *Vineyard & Winery*

## **Frostwatch 2013 Bennett Valley Merlot**

**Cases produced:** 267

**Composition:** 100% Merlot

**Brix at Harvest:** House Block-26.3 degrees Brix

**Blend TA:** 5.7

**Blend Ph:** 3.74

**Suggested retail:** \$35

**Harvest dates:** 10/15/13

**Alc:** 15.4%

**Vineyard Source:** The grapes come from Frostwatch Vineyard located in Bennett Valley, a relatively new AVA in Sonoma County. A gap in the surrounding mountains permits cool coastal breezes and fog to pour into the valley on a regular basis throughout the spring and summer. As a result, the appellation is distinguished by its very long growing season, modest yields relative to other areas and full flavored wines with good natural acidity. Frostwatch Vineyard, planted in 1997, is located on a rocky apron beneath Bennett Peak.

**Winemaking:** The wine was fermented utilizing indigenous yeast with an eleven day cold soak, temperature controlled fermentation (84 degrees F) and post fermentation extended maceration, with warming to 90 degrees F. The wine was on its skins for a total of 30 days. The wine was then drained and gently pressed in a hydraulic basket press and put into a mix of new and used French oak barrels for 18 months. Malolactic fermentation utilizing indigenous malolactic bacteria proceeded after the primary fermentation and finished the first week of March, 2014. The wine was stirred and topped on a weekly basis during the four month period it was going through malolactic fermentation. The lees stirring contributes a silky yet full texture to the mid-palate. After malolactic was finished it was topped and stirred on a monthly basis until February of 2015. The wine was then carefully racked and bottled unfinned and unfiltered on April 15, 2015. We have allowed the wine to bottle age until its release this fall.

**Tasting Notes:** This wine exhibits spicy notes on the nose, with dense cherries, plums and blackberry on the palate. Further, the wine has great texture, with a silky mouthfeel that exhibits nicely balanced fruit with just the right amount of acidity for pairing with a variety of foods.

**Ratings:** 94 points, Robert Parker in The Wine Advocate (March 2016).

**Winemaker:** Brett Raven

**Release Date:** 10/1/2016