



FROSTWATCH *Vineyard & Winery*

Frostwatch 2015 Bennett Valley Merlot

Cases produced: 219

Composition: 100% Merlot

Brix at Harvest: House Block-26 degrees Brix

Blend TA: 5.5

Blend Ph: 3.74

Suggested retail: \$35

Harvest dates: 10/23/15

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 a ten day cold soak, temperature controlled fermentation (84 degrees F) and post fermentation extended maceration, with warming to 89 degrees F. The wine was on its skins for a total of 27 days. On October 19th, the wine was drained and gently pressed in a hydraulic basket press and put into a mix of new and used French oak barrels (22% new, 67% once used, 11% neutral) for 19 months. Malolactic fermentation utilizing indigenous malolactic bacteria began shortly after barrel down and finished January, 28, 2016. The wine was stirred and topped on a weekly basis during the three month period it was going through malolactic fermentation. The lees stirring contribute a silky yet full texture to the mid-palate of the wine. After malolactic fermentation was finished, the barrels were topped and stirred and SO₂ adjusted on a monthly basis until April of 2017. On April 5th, the wine was then carefully racked and bottled unfinned and unfiltered on May 4, 2017. The wine was bottle aged until its December 2018 release.

Tasting Notes: This wine exhibits raspberry and spice 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.

Winemaker: Brett Raven

Ratings: 2015 Vintage—90 pts Wine Advocate. 2014 vintage—90+ pts Wine Advocate. 2013 vintage--94 points Wine Advocate, 90 pts Wine Enthusiast. 2012 vintage--91 pts Wine Spectator, Top 100 Sonoma County Wines. 2011 vintage—91 pts Wine Spectator.