

## Cabernet Merlot 2018

### Technical Information:

Appellation	VQA Niagara Peninsula
Vineyard(s)	Lakeshore Farm and Select Niagara Peninsula
Grape Variety(ies)	67% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot
Brix at Harvest	20.6°
Alcohol Content	12.5%
Residual Sugar	5 grams per litre (dry)
Total Production	790 cases



### TASTING & FOOD NOTES

Ruby red in the glass, the nose is intense with notes of red raspberries, liquorice, sage and rosemary. Ripe on the palate with firm, youthful tannins from the Cabernet Sauvignon and spiced cassis and cedar notes in the juicy mid-palate. Light oak ageing adds a pleasant toasted character. Although suitable for medium-term cellaring, it will also pair nicely now with grilled and roasted meats such as duck, lamb, beef and wild game. Enjoy this wine at 18-20 degrees in large Bordeaux-style glasses which will encourage the release of its multitude of flavours and aromas.

### WINEMAKING NOTES

Both varieties were handpicked from our Lakeshore Farm vineyard in the Creek Shores as well as select vineyard in the Niagara Peninsula starting in early-October and ending in the first week of November. Both varieties were handled separately and after manual sorting, were crushed and destemmed, then fermented in stainless steel tanks with cold soak and post-fermentation skin contact totalling two weeks. The Cabernet Sauvignon was moved to 500 and 600 litre seasoned oak casks as well as second and third use French barriques. Approximately ½ the Merlot was also aged in 600 litre seasoned oak casks and second and third use barriques. Both varieties underwent malolactic fermentation and were left on fine lees with regular rack and return over 9 months before bottling in July 2019 after light fining and filtration.

### VINTAGE NOTES

The winter of 2017/2018 was again mild, with an especially warm February, but a cool April with some snow and ice pushed bud-burst back for an average start to the growing season. Once the summer finally started it was hot and humid, with prolonged periods of extreme heat. Luckily rain started in September, perfect to refresh grapes destined for early picking such as Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Gamay for sparkling and Pinot Gris and Chardonnay for whites. Unfortunately, the rain did not stop and there was some pressure to pick late ripening whites and early ripening reds before disease set in. Gamay, Pinot Noir, Riesling and Merlot had to be sorted in the vineyard and again on sorting tables in the winery to ensure only pristine bunches were kept. The rain finally subsided in late October so late-ripening varieties such as Cabernet Franc and Sauvignon were harvested in pristine condition. Overall yields were low with intense ripeness in most varieties. Early picked whites are crisp and full of flavour while later picked reds are full-bodied with ripe tannins. Wines will be drinking well on release or can cellar for the medium term.