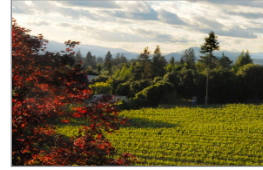


# 2018 ROBERT CRAIG WINERY

## HOWELL MOUNTAIN MERLOT



**WINEMAKER:** Jason Price  
**REGION:** Napa Valley, California  
**VARIETALS:** Merlot (97%), Malbec (3%)  
**MATURATION:** 18 months in 100% new French oak  
**ANALYSIS:** 14.8% alc/vol | TA: 5.5 g/L | pH: 3.27

**VINTAGE:** February saw abundant rains, followed by lots of filtered light in spring and early summer. Both bud break and flowering occurred a bit late, but under ideal weather conditions, creating plentiful and even fruit set. Summer brought generous sun during the day and cooler marine influences, virtually uninterrupted by major heat spikes. The relatively mild summer followed by extended fall sunshine and moderate heat created near-ideal conditions for winemakers to allow their fruit to accumulate flavor complexity with gradual increases in sugar levels.

**TERROIR:** Situated on the north end of the Howell Mountain summit cap at 2,250' of elevation, this 26-acre vineyard, first planted in 1950, rests on a plateau overlooking the southeast face of Mount St Helena and the whole of Pope Valley. Replanted by Duckhorn Winery in 1998 to primarily Bordeaux varieties on varying rootstocks, the Candlestick Vineyard produces wines that are dense, dark and explosive with flavor. The pure white volcanic ash and Tufa soils are poor and well drained leading to low yields and intensely flavored berries.

**TASTING NOTES:** The 2018 Howell Mountain is a full-throttle Merlot experience with all the tannin structure and backbone that Howell Mountain brings. It couples an exotic perfume in the nose and dark cassis and wild bramble berry fruit in the mouth.

**ABOUT ROBERT CRAIG WINERY:** With a passion for Napa Valley Mountain Cabernet, Bob Craig founded his eponymous winery on Howell Mountain with three friends from business school. In 2004, CEO Elton Slone joined the winery and became a full partner in 2007. Following Bob's retirement and departure from the wine business in 2012, Slone has continued to move the business forward with the other three founding partners. Known for producing small-lot, site-expressive wines from high elevation vineyards, Robert Craig Winery consistently garners high scores and positive accolades from the wine press.

