



# Platinum Wine Club

90+ Rated, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers.

## Wine Spots Wines | Napa Valley

There aren't many practicing lawyers who have given up the courtroom to become winery owners.

In the case of Wine Spots Wines' owner Daniel Le Francois, 56, the story of his real-life odyssey into the wine world bears revealing.

Le Francois attended the University of Virginia and graduated with a law degree. He joined a Washington-based law firm and began the practice of law. Some time later, Le Francois realized the exercise of law was not for him, so he set out for an extended backpack adventure in Asia and other places.

He eventually ended up in Europe and was particularly impressed with France. It was there that he first experienced the great grape's calling, and he readily admits the time was the beginning of his sojourn to become owner of Wine Spots Wines.

"I was in Southern France, in Bordeaux's Saint-Émilion to be exact," he recalled. "Something about the place, the ambiance, the greatness of the wines - well, they had an amazing effect on me. From that point on, I knew I wanted to be associated in some way with wine."

For the next few decades, Daniel Le Francois worked at a number of assorted jobs within the wine industry. He became a vice president for the well-respected French cognac producer, Camus, where he developed new brand innovations for the company.

"We were right near Bordeaux so I had the opportunity to taste and visit most of the great Châteaux of the region and learn about wine," Le Francois went on. "I even had the chance to eat at Château Lafite Rothschild a number of times. It was all a great opportunity for me."

Le Francois eventually became associated with Asian duty-free shops, where he became the wine buyer for the multi-national collection of stores. During that time, he tasted a huge number of wines from around the world and finally settled in on what he really wanted to do - open his own winery in Sonoma County.

"I had always dreamed of doing my own thing," he added. "I felt I had acquired a really good sense of

*terroir*, meaning the identification of exactly where a wine comes from. I had tasted many thousands of wines from just about everywhere and I had learned to identify certain aspects of their origin. I wanted to put that knowledge to good use."

Wine Spots Wines first saw the light of day in 2005, with a modest release of around 600 cases. That level has grown steadily and the company now produces around 3,000 cases per annum.

All Wine Spots wines' fruit is sourced from Le Francois' large number of contacts within the wine grower family. "I have worked with many of these people for a number of years and I am able to consistently buy some of the best fruit available. After all, it's all about place, isn't it? The best places produce the finest wines, right?" he asked.

### *What about the name?*

"I was traveling at one point, and a drop of wine fell on my map. I was in wine country and the drop made me think of how nice it would be to be able to point out the exact location of the vineyard. I also thought it would make an interesting name for a winery," he finalized. Each wine produced by Wine Spots Wines cleverly details the exact spot where it was grown, a first in the wine business.

Daniel Le Francois is joined in his efforts by noted winemaker Scott Peterson (Naked Wines, Scenic Root Winegrowers, WineCraft) who serves as his consulting winemaker. Peterson, a UC Davis alum, has been with Le Francois for more than a decade and has had a firm hand in directing Wine Spots Wines' particular style and direction for its wines.

Many accolades and high scores have vaulted Wine Spots Wines into the rarefied air of the highest-caliber Sonoma County wine producers. Its ascension to that level shows what perseverance and a great palate can provide a fledgling winery.

We are happy to introduce Wine Spots Wines to our *Platinum Wine Club* members with this magnificent Merlot selection. We are sure you will hear a great deal more about this winery in the future. Enjoy!



# Wine Spots | 2017 Merlot, Napa Valley



**92 POINTS +  
GOLD MEDAL**

— Critics Challenge

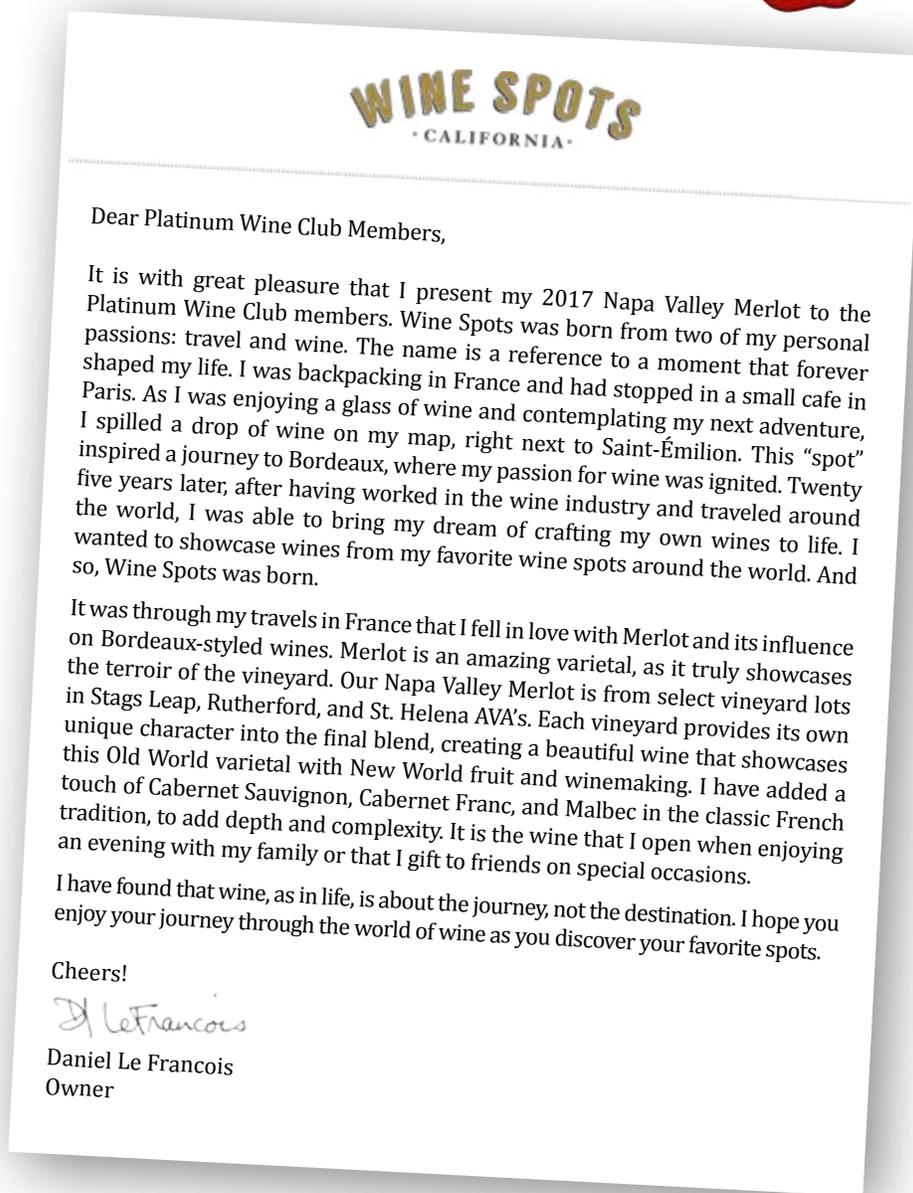
## 1,200 cases produced

The Wine Spots 2017 Merlot comes from three AVA's in Napa Valley's hillside vineyards, within Stag's Leap, Rutherford and St. Helena. Each superb site lends its own signature characteristics to build this elegant Merlot. This beautiful 2017 vintage is reminiscent of the finesse and elegance of Bordeaux's Right Bank, with soft tannins and a refined palate. Sweet cherries and plum aromas are accented by notes of vanilla on the nose, while French oak aging in small barrels emphasizes the soft tannins and fruit flavors of cherry, plum and blackberries on the palate. Hints of toasty oak come through on the long finish. Aged 12 months in oak. 90% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc/Malbec. Enjoy!



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Winery Retail Price \$49.00/btl.	2+ btls.	6+ btls.	12+ btls.
2-Bottle Members:	\$42.00	\$40.33	\$39.50
4-Bottle Members:	\$42.00	\$39.50	\$38.25



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off Winery Retail Price**

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The *Plus!* Program automatically adds on one special wine to each regularly scheduled wine delivery, or as often as you like! *Plus!* wines are all highly-rated, very small production wines with availability too limited for all regular club members to receive. For more information, visit: [GoldMedalWineClub.com/plus](http://GoldMedalWineClub.com/plus)

**This month's Platinum *Plus!*  
Featured Wine:**

**Thacher 2016 'Normal Deviation'  
Zinfandel/Petite Sirah,  
Paso Robles**

92 Points - CA Grapevine  
210 Cases Produced



Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in above prices.  
\*Effective per bottle prices after Membership Rewards discount is applied at checkout. Membership Rewards does not apply to Sale or Special-Offer Wines.