

Bacchus-Vinothek

Weinhandlung Grimm

2022 September RELEASES



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Seña 2020: On Thursday the 1st of September

James Suckling (98): „...Complex, with savory, spicy character, showing tobacco, salted plums, olives, black cherries, cassis and a hint of white pepper on the nose, followed by a refined, savory, balsamic accent. A full-bodied Seña with juicy fruit chiseling into the tight, extremely fine-grained tannins. Long, bright and still elegant from this warm vintage. 53% cabernet sauvignon, 25% malbec, 15% carmenere and 7% petit verdot. A wine with lots of harmony now, but better to drink from 2025.

Parker/Luis Gutiérrez (97): „...The 2020 Seña is a blend of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Malbec, 15% Carmenere and 7% Petit Verdot (a little higher in search of acidity) from grapes harvested early, the second week of March, and fermented mostly in stainless steel and 10% in concrete eggs. It has a moderate 13.5% alcohol and good freshness. It's subtle and layered, not only fruit but with more spice; it has polished tannins and very integrated oak after 22 months in barrique, 78% new, and with 10% of the volume in large Stockinger barrels. The warmer years seem to be nicely managed, so that it's not reflected in the ripeness but is more a matter of texture and quality of the tannins; in the warmer years, like 2017 or this 2019, the wines have a little more grip, but these are definitely finer than those from the 2017 vintage. This wine has intensity and complexity, with no mintiness or herbal notes; it's spicy and juicy, with energy and depth. It has structure, color, stuffing and acidity to develop nicely in bottle. 100,000 bottles produced. It was bottled in February 2022.

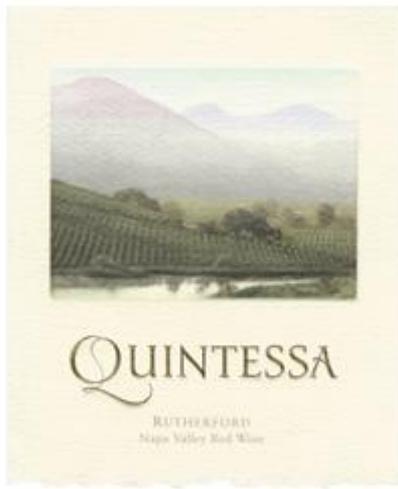
I tasted the 2020s from Seña, as there is now a second wine, Rocas de Seña. 2020 had a very warm spring, while the summer was milder but with a warm end of the season, but they harvested in March. It wasn't as warm as 2017, but it's considered a warm year; and yields were higher, so the ripeness is more contained. The key to the vintage was availability of water: because it was a very dry year, those that had their own reservoirs were better off, and then the harvest date in April was extremely warm. 2020 was warmer than 2019, perhaps a finer and more elegant version of 2017, more in the style of 2012. The wines are now sold through the Bordeaux négoce“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (95): „...A blend of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Malbec, 15% Carmenere, and 7% Petit Verdot, the 2020 Sena is medium to deep garnet-purple in color. It strolls out with confident scents of creme de cassis, juicy black plums, and cedar chest, followed by suggestions of wild thyme, underbrush, and black olives with a touch of lilacs. The medium-bodied palate is elegantly styled and tightly wound, featuring firm, grainy tannins and a lively backbone to support the bright, crunchy fruit, finishing long and perfumed.“

Vinous/Joaquin Hidalgo (94): „...The 2020 Seña was made in another warm, early-ripening year further complicated by the restrictions that came with the COVID pandemic, which hindered decision-making in the vineyard. A blend of 53% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Malbec, 15% Carménère and 7% Petit Verdot, it was aged for 22 months, 90% in French barrels and the rest in *foudres*. A purplish garnet red, the intense, ripe nose presents notes of herb, blackcurrant and plum while in the mouth the rich balance gives a gentle boost channeled by firm but restrained tannins. Juicy and relaxed with nuanced flavor, it will improve in the bottle.

Quintessa 2019: On Thursday the 1st of September

Michael Grimm (95+): „...würzige, tief schwarze Nase, Kräuter, Amarenakirschen, feine Amaronearomatik, sehr warme Frucht, gute Säure, feine florale Noten am Gaumen, Enzian, elegante Mitte, feine Leder und Tabaknoten, sehr schön“



Hidden in the heart of Rutherford, Quintessa is a 280-acre site that reflects a diversity of geology, biodiversity, exposures and microclimates. Inspired by this distinct property, founders Agustin and Valeria Huneus believed that it was destined to become one of the world's great wine estates. Today, a total of 160 acres are planted with Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Carménère on 26 vineyard blocks. Each block is farmed—*organically and biodynamically*—harvested, and vinified individually to preserve and enhance the nuances of the land. Inspired by the land's natural grandeur, the Huneus family dedicated themselves to capturing the beauty and harmony of this land in the form of a great wine.

The 2019 vintage

The 2019 Quintessa celebrates the precision and nuance of a vintage that reflects the full complexity of our estate. It is an expression of Quintessa in a graceful growing season, yielding a wine of transparency and depth—full of flavor, while also energizing and persistent.

After a graceful start of the season, spring temperatures remained cool through May, which slowed the emergence of bloom on the vine. This slight delay allowed for an ideal fruit-set. Temperatures warmed slightly in summer, encouraging an even arc of ripening while maintaining vibrant acidity. The season gave us a well-paced and steady harvest period.

Tasting note

„The 2019 Quintessa offers nuance, depth, and great persistence. A complex of flower, forest, fruit, and earth notes harmonize with fine-grained tannin and vibrant acidity. It is a wine of precision as well as transparency. The 2019 Quintessa will drink well now for those who prefer a youthful expression but will also last in cellar for at least another twenty years for those who enjoy the complexities of age.”

2019 vintage in video: <https://bit.ly/Quintessa2019>



100/100

This is a winemaker's master class in blending and understanding of a longstanding site. Dried herb, cedar and pencil shavings accent lifted red fruit and brilliant acidity on the palate, with a supple yet still youthfully grippy texture that is framed by structured, graceful tannins.



99/100

So much earth and spice with walnut and wet earth. Like fog laying over the valley in the morning. Black fruit. Medium-to full-bodied with super-fine tannins that are long and persistent, with graceful progression and length on the palate. So long, with real definition. September 2022 release. From biodynamically grown grapes. Hard not to drink now, but will age wonderfully. - James Suckling



97/100

I was blown away by the 2019 Red Blend from Quintessa, which is up with the crème de la crème of the vintage. Based on Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Carmenère, this full-bodied beauty has a perfectly balanced, seamless, yet expansive and classic 2019 style as well as gorgeous aromatics of cassis, flowers, chalky minerality, and integrated oak. It's hard to resist already, but I have no doubt this will evolve for 20 years if stored properly. - Jeb Dunnuck



97/100

Concentrated, powerful and creamy damson and blackberry fruit, rippled through with sage, fennel and warm earth. Hard not to be seduced by the precision and chiselled freshness that plays with a more gourmet brioche and chocolate finish. You'll find the same energy and vitality as in the 2018 vintage, and the same graphite and slate texture to the tannins. A year without too many extremes of temperature, and by this point the vineyard work was extremely precise - 26 different blocks, 86 separate picking sections, far greater accounting for the impact of terroir in the vineyard practices. Winemaker Rebekah Wineberg, consultant Michel Rolland, 60% new oak for ageing. - Jane Anson



96/100

Composed of 92% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Merlot, 2% Carmenere, and 1% Petit Verdot, the 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon is deep garnet-purple colored. It explodes from the glass with bombastic scents of blackcurrant cordial, baked plums, and blueberry preserves, giving way to a fragrant undercurrent of dried roses, cedar chest, camphor, and Sichuan pepper. The full-bodied palate reveals impressive restraint, offering a refreshing backbone and loads of savory accents to counter the generous fruit, finishing with a quiet intensity and great plushness. The result is a very cleverly done Cabernet! - Lisa Perrotti-Brown



94/100

The 2019 Quintessa is one of the best wines I have tasted here in some time. Broad swaths of tannin wrap around a core intense dark plum, mocha, licorice and spice. The 2019 clearly needs a few years in bottle to come together. Quintessa is a large, sprawling property with many different exposures. My feeling is that it may not ultimately be suited to making a single large production flagship wine, but that perhaps a series of smaller production wines might showcase the site better. - Antonio Galloni

2019 Inglenook Rubicon



Jane Anson (100): „...A storming, stonking Napa wine, playing at the top of its game in 2019. Somehow takes the power and concentration of Napa but makes it full of texture, life, light and shade. Espresso, liquorice root, cocoa bean, cassis, cranberry, black cherry, cold ash and crayon. Hard not to fall in love with, nothing overdone, everything in its place. Winemaker Todd DeVincezi, consultant winemaker Philippe Bascaules. All aged in French oak barrels, 75% new. Hold +8 years or carafe 6hours”

James Suckling (97): „...Aromas of ripe berries, sweet vanilla, licorice, dark chocolate and bread crust. Notes of dried herbs and pinewood, too. So well grounded. Smooth, with a lingering, silky mouth-feel. Full body and ripe, chewy tannins. Toned and muscular with hints of crushed rocks. Firm, linear finish. Try after 2025.“

Parker/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (96+): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Rubicon is a blend of 81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 3% Petit Verdot. Deep garnet-purple in color, the

nose pops with vivacious notes of warm cassis, blackberry pie and redcurrant jelly, plus hints of crushed rocks, bay leaves and pencil lead. Medium to full-bodied, it delivers a solid, firm and grainy texture with a lively backbone cutting through dense earth-laced layers, finishing long and minerally. Impressive!“

Jeb Dunnuck (96): „...The flagship 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Rubicon is slightly deeper purple-hued and checks in as a blend of 81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 3% Petit Verdot. It's a clear step up, offering a terrific nose of ripe cassis and spiced currant fruits as well as cedary herbs, tobacco, and earth. Nicely concentrated, medium to full-bodied, and balanced, it has plenty of up-front charm (as do most 2019s) yet will have two decades of longevity. It needs plenty of air to show at its best today, so don't be afraid to put this in a decanter. 7363 cases.“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (95): „...The 2019 Rubicon is a blend of 81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 3% Petit Verdot. Deep garnet-purple colored, it needs a bit of coaxing to unleash energetic notes of blackcurrant jelly, black raspberries, and boysenberry preserves, leading to suggestions of cedar chest, tapenade, forest floor, and Indian spices. The medium-bodied palate is surprisingly elegant and refreshing, possessing ripe, finely grained tannins to support the elegant black fruit and exotic spice layers, finishing long and fragrant. This is a very classy and impressive Rubicon!“

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (95): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Rubicon offers a captivating mix of textural intensity and vibrancy. Black cherry, spice, rose petal, menthol and licorice are all beautifully delineated. A wine of vertical lift and drive, the 2019 has the vibrancy to develop beautifully for years to come.“

2019 Inglenook Cabernet Sauvignon

Jane Anson (94): „...The depth and power of this wine is striking from the first moment, and even now after two years in bottle it is fresh out of the gate, barely revving up its engines. Black cherry, fennel, slate, tobacco, cigar box, give it a few more years in bottle to fully smooth out, then enjoy this luscious example of Napa Cab. Winemaker Todd DeVincezi, consultant winemaker Philippe Bascaules, 43% new oak.“

Parker/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (92): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of 96% Cabernet Sauvignon and 4% Cabernet Franc. Deep garnet-purple in color, it springs from the glass with vibrant notes of crushed black raspberries, black plums and blackcurrant pastilles, plus hints of underbrush and bouquet garni. Medium to full-bodied with intense, pure black fruit flavors, the fruit is well-framed by ripe, grainy tannins and fantastic freshness, finishing with a skip in its step”.

James Suckling (95): „...This shows notes of ripe blackberries and blackcurrants with hints of licorice, cloves, walnuts and chocolate. It has full body and a velvety tannin structure. Juicy and vibrant fruit on the palate with a touch of earthiness. Smooth and delicious. Long, fruity finish. Very pure fruit. Try after 2024.“

Jeb Dunnuck (91): „...Starting with the 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon, this ruby/plum-hued effort displays attractive currants and savory black cherry fruit as well as notes of tobacco, savory herbs, leather, and earth. Medium to full-bodied on the palate, it's nicely textured, moderately concentrated, and balanced, with outstanding length. 10,608 cases“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (91): „...Made from 96% Cabernet Sauvignon and 4% Cabernet Franc, the 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon is deep garnet-purple colored. It comes bounding out with exuberant notes of crushed black cherries, juicy blackcurrants, and spice cake, plus touches of espresso, tilled soil, and black olives. The medium-bodied palate is juicy and refreshing, delivering plush tannins and a spicy kick to the finish.

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (94): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon is one of the most potent wines I have tasted from Inglenook in a long time. Readers should be patient, as the 2019 is a mere infant. A rush of black cherry, mocha, licorice, spice and leather builds as this sumptuous, towering wine gradually opens with a bit of aeration. I would give the 2019 at least a few years in bottle, as the grippy tannins need time to soften.“

2020 Inglenook Blancaneaux

Jane Anson (97): „...Spicy and focused white wine, with depth and width to its flavours, strewn with slate, spiced white pear, peach pit and rosemary-studded stone fruit. Grippy and taut, showcasing just how well Rhone blends can work in the Napa climate. Winemaking and ageing in 60% stainless steel, 40% French oak, 22% new.“

James Suckling (91): „...Pear and white-peach aromas with some citrus follow through to a full body with layers of fruit and a fresh finish. Mineral undertones. A rather solid and delicious white. Viognier, marsanne and roussanne. Drink now.“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (90): „...A blend of 36% Viognier, 33% Marsanne, and 31% Roussanne, the 2020 Blancaneaux slips sensuously from the glass with notes of white peaches, allspice, jasmine tea, and apple sauce, plus a hint of aniseed. Medium to full-bodied, the palate has a lovely satiny texture and a spicy spark of apple flavors, finishing perfumed.“

Opus-One 2019 + Overture : On Monday the 05th of September

Overture – release 2022

Michael Grimm (92+): „...tolle, frische, sehr schöne Frucht, blaubeerig, sehr gute Struktur, Mitte schlanker“

Jane Anson (93): „...Gorgeous plum colour, sumptuous and ready to dive into. The aromatics are deliciously open, with crunchy raspberry and blueberry fruits, balanced and well put together. Feels cohesive, juicy, with plenty of 2019 character (although this is multi vintage, with exact percentages not stated), with nuanced fresh mint leaf and crayon. High Cabernet Sauvignon in this blend, 60% new oak, 40% one year oak, bottled August 2021.“

2019 Opus-One



Michael Grimm (98+, im Februar und August verkostet mit identischer Bewertung): „...große Frische, klare Frucht, tolle Cassis-Aromatik, schöne Intensität, dunkle Beeren, blau- bis schwarzbeerig, feine florale Noten, viel Charme, Grafite, Schoko, feine Tabak-Nuancen, am Gaumen feine Süße, ganz große Finesse“

Parker/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (97-99): „...Winemaker Michael Silacci commented that usually the blends are finished in January or February after the vintage. This year, with the 2019s, he was still tweaking the blend, but he did mention that this is "pretty close to the final blend." Deep garnet-purple in color, the 2019 Opus One leaps from the glass with notes of Black Forest cake, Morello cherries, mulberries and fresh blackcurrants plus hints of licorice, wilted roses, Sichuan pepper and iron ore. Full-bodied, the palate is jam-packed with juicy black, blue and red fruits, framed by velvety tannins and background freshness, finishing on a compelling earthy/mineral note. Tasted as a barrel sample, this is a truly magnificent Opus One in the making!“

James Suckling (99): „...The purity of fruit is really something else here, with currants and fresh flowers, such as violets and roses. Flower stems as well. Fantastic length and structure to the wine, with tightness and focus. Wonderful fruit. Graceful. A blend of 78% cabernet sauvignon, 8% merlot, 7% petit verdot, 6% cabernet franc and 1% malbec. Try after 2028.“

Jeb Dunnuck (96-98): „...Similarly ruby/purple-hued, the 2019 Opus One is cut from the same cloth as the 2018 yet has a touch more baby fat and opulence, at least as this stage. Beautiful black raspberry, cassis, toasted spice, lead pencil, and subtle oak all make an appearance, and it's medium to full-bodied, with a rounded, layered mouthfeel, impressive tannins, and a great finish. I don't think it has the same precision as the 2018, but it brings another level of hedonism. It's another beautiful wine from this team. The blend is 78% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot.“

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (97): „...The 2019 Opus One is a dense, beautifully layered wine, but it is also quite restrained. That should serve it well in time. Tasted next to the 2018, the 2019 possesses a bit more textural nuance and body, yet it has all the classicism that is such an Opus One signature. Bright floral accents linger on the sublime finish“



Jane Anson (98): „...The balance of the 2019 vintage in Napa is a pleasure to taste, and this is one of my favourite Opus One's for years, showing nuance, depth and concentration, and a ton of rich dark fruits. There is so much to love here, it ebbs and flows through the palate, has some of the character of the early years, those 1979s and 1980s that are still tasting incredible, and the utterly brilliant 1987. Raspberry, blueberry, damson, cassis, there are crunchy fruits and sweet fruits at the same time, playing off against each other, fine tannins, a full bloom of floral violet and peony aromatics, gentle woodsmoke and white pepper, with tension, depth and poise. 22 day skin contact. A wet winter meant a late bud break, 10-15 days behind average, followed by a hot summer that allowed the vines to catch up, so harvest relatively normal beginning September 10 for one month.“

2019 Masseto

Parker/Monica Lerner (98): „...This bottle opens a new chapter for one of Italy's most celebrated and collected wines. The first vintage made entirely in its dedicated state-of-the-art winery (and the first vintage

with a 10% dabble of Cabernet Franc added to what has historically always been a pure expression of Merlot), the Masseto 2019 Masseto has two main themes at heart: concentration and elegance. And managing those two seemingly contrasting elements requires a little bit of magic. That's the Masseto magic we look for. The 2019 vintage delivers it in spades with lovely concentrated fruit, blackberry, integrated spice, tobacco, crushed slate, pencil shaving and lots of texture and fiber to push a lasting mouthfeel. The wine's richness translates into density and power to the palate, meanwhile the bouquet reveals fluidity and new sides as the wine opens in the glass. The finish is tapered and focused."

James Suckling (99): „...Intense aromas of blackberries and black olives, together with hints of rosemary bush and lavender. Perfumed and nuanced. Full-bodied, yet so tight and integrated, with weightless tannins that frame the wine in a precise and curated fashion. Very structured and built for aging. It's rather shy now, but will reward those who are patient. A kind of stealth in its nature. A more thought-provoking edition of Masseto. Needs time to show its true self. Try after 2027.“

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (98+): „...The 2019 Masseto is fabulous. Silky, gracious and super-refined, the 2019 is a total knock-out. So often Masseto is a powerhouse at this stage, but the 2019 is so elegant, so precise. This is the first year that includes Cabernet Franc, 10% in this case. I can't say I am at all surprised given how much Franc has added to Massetino. Red berry fruit, mocha, cinnamon and blood orange lend freshness throughout. The 2019 has just been bottle, so it's early. But there certainly appears to be a lot to look forward to. (Originally Published in March 2022)

- By Antonio Galloni on February 2022

“We had a very cool spring in 2019 and almost as much rain as 2018,” Ornellaia and Masseto Estate Manager Axel Heinz relayed. “The biggest difference between the two years is that summer was much drier in 2019. We saw good diurnal shifts leading up to what was a late harvest. For example, we did not have to rush to pick the Merlots, as we often do. Harvest was a week later than 2018.”

The biggest shift I have seen at both estates is a focus on gentler winemaking. I have tasted the new releases from Ornellaia and Masseto at the same time every year for over fifteen years and vividly recall what were once brutally forbidding young wines. That is rarely the case these days. One thing about 2019 is that the alcohols are on the high side despite the lack of shock weather events. “In Bolgheri lack of excess heat lets the vines work very efficiently, which can result in higher sugars, whereas alcohols are often lower in years with excess heat, where the vines shut down to conserve energy.” Masseto fans will note the appearance of Cabernet Franc in the blend for the first time.“

Jeb Dunnuck (97): „...Reminding me of a great Pomerol in a way, the 2019 Masseto is as always 100% Merlot and is a pure, seamless, just incredibly sexy expression of this terroir, showing the warmer style of the vintage. Giving up loads of redcurrants, sweet tobacco, savory herbs, dusty earth, and chalky mineral notes, as well as some subtle chocolaty oak, it has a wonderful purity and precision in its aromatics and already shows considerable complexity. These all carry over to the palate, where the wine is full-bodied, has a silky, layered mouthfeel, building, chalky tannins, and a great finish. This ripe, powerful Masseto clocks in at over %15 alcohol, yet the balance is spot on and it remains light on its feet and graceful, with no sensation of weight or heaviness. It unquestionably deserves 7-8 years of bottle age and, I suspect, will have 30 years of longevity, probably longer.“

2020 Massetino

Parker/Monica Lerner (95): „...The Masseto 2020 Massetino (Merlot with a touch of Cabernet Franc) is extremely generous and rich. This wine puts it all out there in full view with a bouquet that is stitched together with ripe blackberry and black cherry preserves, black stone or pencil shaving, sweet spice, cigar, smoke and tar. This was a warm and sunny vintage, and you feel the power of those sunbeams locked within the dark, opulent and concentrated fruit on display here. This is a special treat, and the 2020 edition offers a clear identity for Massetino. This vintage comes close to out-powering the bouquet of the 2019 Masseto also hitting the market now.“

Vin de Constance 2019 : On Tuesday the 06th of September

Constantia was one of the most famous and expensive sweet wines in the 18th and 19th centuries.

This wine from South Africa was one of the favorite wines from Napoleon Bonaparte, George IV of England and Otto von Bismarck. 100% Muscat de Frontignan. 97/100 from James Suckling.

James Suckling (97): „...Bright, medium to deep gold hue, showing focused and pure aromas of honeysuckle, fresh vanilla, lemon tart, dried mango, ginger and a hint of saffron. Certainly quite sweet, but not unctuous, with the natural, effortless acidity managing to balance the lushness. Intense, yet scented and naturally expressive. Persistent finish. You crave for a second glass if you drink it now, but you can also hold it for a decade in your cellar.“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (94): „...The 2019 Vin De Constance is made from 100% Muscat de Frontignan. Pale gold color, it is SO fragrant, with floral notes of roses and lavender over a core of lychees, mango, and guava notes plus suggestions of musk melon and spice cake. SO pure, on the palate, it is superbly rich and sweet with a fantastic backbone of acidity, oily, long, pure and intense. This is like liquid Turkish delight!“

Almaviva 2020 + Epu 2020 : On Wednesday the 07th of September

This Chilean wine is a collaboration between Baron Philippe de Rothschild and Chile's Concha y Toro.

2020 Almaviva

James Suckling (98): „...Fresh and deep nose, full of blueberries, minty cassis, mussels, cigars, dark spice and roasted sesame oak, which will need a year or two to fully integrate. A medium-to full-bodied Almaviva with supple, silky tannins and a wealth of black and blue fruit that provides a lot of charm now. Voluptuous and flattering on the palate, hallmarked by its tension and taut texture. Very long. This is the 25th anniversary bottling. 68% cabernet sauvignon, 24% carmenere, 6% cabernet franc and 2% petit verdot. Drinkable now, but better from 2024.“

Parker/Luis Gutiérrez (96): „...2020 was exceptionally dry, with 75% less rain than usual in the period between May and September, which resulted in an earlier harvest to produce a 2020 Almaviva with 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Carmenère (from Peumo), 6% Cabernet Franc and 2% Petit Verdot, so with no Merlot this time. The process was as careful as possible, without using any bombs, doing manual and optical sorting of the grapes, pressing in small vertical presses and aging of 20 months in French oak barrels, 73% of them new and the rest second use. The wine reached good ripeness with 14.9% alcohol. It still shows the effect of the élevage a bit, with abundant notes of sweet spices, a creamy touch and some smoke. I tasted it next to the 2019, and the wines have a very similar aromatic palette with a clear note of baked peppers. What was amazing in 2020 was that they harvested the Carmenere almost five weeks earlier than they normally would, and the result is not a green wine at all. As in all dry years, the wines show a little more tannic, a little in the style of the 2017—but the 2020 has more tension than the 2017, and the 2017 was more powerful and with a bigger tannic structure. The 2019 had more volume than the 2018, and the 2020 is closer to the 2019 than the 2018. 200,000 bottles produced. It was bottled during the second half of February 2022.

I tasted the 2020 wines from Almaviva with winemaker Michel Friou, which represents Almaviva's 25th vintage. The 2020s were bright and expressive, nicely crafted, clean and with integrated oak. 2020 was a dry vintage (one big concern, 2021 and 2022 are almost the same) and also warm, so the wines have to reflect that condition with a very early harvest, almost three weeks earlier than the average. But having an early harvest was a blessing because Covid arrived. As on previous occasions, he provided some back vintages to give context, and the older wines consistently show an animal note. This time I had the 1996, which had hints of leather but felt very classical and still alive, with good color. The wines from the turn of the century show the effect of the new oak; the 2009 still has abundant notes of toast and smoke, with hints of roasted sesame seeds, and it was a ripe year—it still felt tannic, or perhaps the quality of the tannins is not the same as nowadays. I also revisited 2019, the previous vintage, which showed very much in line with the style of the 2020, cleaner, sleeker, velvety and caressing, still powerful but with elegance.

2020 Epu de Almaviva

James Suckling (94): „...Lots of finely roasted sweet spice and roasted sesame to the blackberries, cassis and iron, together with hints of blue fruit and cured meat. A medium-to full-bodied palate, filled with rather generous sweet berries. Fleshy, supple and savory with quite fine-grained tannins and a long finish. First year with 10% new wood. 81% cabernet sauvignon, 12% carmenere, 5% merlot and 2% cabernet franc. Already delicious, but can hold, too.“

Parker/Luis Gutiérrez (94): „...The current release of their second wine is the 2020 Epu. It's selected from the same terroir and vineyard in Puente Alto, one of the most reputed places for Cabernet Sauvignon in Chile, but from the younger vines (five- to 20-year-old vines) and harvested a little earlier to preserve acidity and fruit. In the warm and dry 2020 vintage, the wine was produced with a blend of 81% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Carmenere, 5% Merlot and 2% Cabernet Franc, usually higher in Cabernet and lower in Carmenere than Almaviva. It has red ripe berries, the textbook blackberries and cassis and some creamy oak. It's ripe at 14.8% alcohol and has mellow acidity, good freshness and balance, with a pH of 3.71 and 4.8 grams of acidity (tartaric). It matured for 12 months in French barriques, 10% new and 90% second use. The wine has a bright nose with a clean note of baked "morrón" peppers intermixed with red berry compote. It has a velvety plate with the luxurious texture of the modern Bordeaux, with abundant, slightly dusty tannins. It's approachable and round but should reward some time in bottle. This is a pretty serious Epu. 75,000 bottles produced. It was bottled at the end of 2021 and the first days of 2022. This is the second vintage sold through the Place de Bordeaux négociant system.“

2016 Château d'Yquem

Parker/Luisa Perrotti Brown (98+): „...Containing 135 grams per liter of residual sugar, the pale lemon-gold colored 2016 d'Yquem leaps from the glass with honeyed apricots, pineapple, green mango, crushed rocks, candied ginger, coriander seed and citrus peel with hints of orange blossom. The palate is very tightly wound, vibrant and refreshing with layer upon layer of minerals and spices, finishing with epic poise and persistence.“

James Suckling (99): „...A very classic Yquem. Breathtakingly wide spectrum of floral honey, exotic fruit (passion fruit, mango and pineapple), caramel and marzipan aromas. But none of this is a jot too much. In fact, the wine is extremely precise and finely nuanced. Wonderful freshness and textural complexity, in spite of the considerable concentration and extravagance. Very suave and sensual finish that goes on and on. Drink or hold.“

Solaia 2019 : On Thursday the 08th of September

2019 Solaia

James Suckling (98): „...This has a complex array of blackberries, black cherries, cocoa, dried herbs, slate, tobacco, olives and charred bark. Some dried roses and iodine, too. Medium-to full-bodied with firm yet refined tannins. Powerful, in an understated way. Long. 73% cabernet sauvignon, 7% cabernet franc and 20% sangiovese. Try in 2025.“

Parker/Monica Lerner (97): „...The Marchesi Antinori 2019 Solaia is another blockbuster success from Tuscany's leading wine estate. The blend sees a slightly higher percentage of Cabernet Franc and a slightly lower percentage of Sangiovese. The current mix is 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Sangiovese and 10% Cabernet Franc (which has been creeping up in recent years, especially as the climate changes). The soils at the Solaia vineyard are rich in Galestro rock, which is an especially happy pairing with Cabernet Franc in particular. Managing Director Renzo Cotarella tells me that that a vintage like 2019 is proof that the final character of a wine comes from its surrounding territory, not from the blend. This is a generous and extremely expressive edition with lots of dark fruit, spice and sweet tobacco. The tannins are beautifully velvety and soft. This is a beautiful wine that collectors will love.“

MORLET FAMILY VINEYARD « COEUR DE VALLEE » OAKVILLE 2019

Ratings : JEB DUNNUCK 98 / ANTONIO GALLONI 95

We are very pleased to announce you the upcoming release of Morlet Family Vineyard - "Coeur de Vallée" Oakville 2019 on September the 16th 2022.

2020 Hommage à Jacques Perrin – Château Beaucastel

Parker/Joe Czerwinski (97-99): „...Tasted from foudre, the 2020 Chateaneuf du Pape Hommage à Jacques Perrin is approximately 60% Mourvèdre (from the same parcel, year after year), with the balance a blend of Grenache, Syrah and Counoise. Ripe plums and truffle-like notes mark the nose, while the palate is full-bodied and rich, with a long, velvety finish. Showing even more complexity and length than the regular bottling, there's a chance this could reach a triple-digit score down the road.

Always one of the highlights of my visits in Chateaneuf du Pape, the cellars at Beaucastel were a bit dusty when I arrived, as the long-awaited expansion had just gotten underway. Built using the latest practices in sustainability and conservation, it's expected to be completed in 2024. The 2021 Syrah had just been picked, and the expectation was that the Grenache would be harvested beginning the following day. Something worth noting, although the family doesn't actively promote it, is that Beaucastel's farming has been certified organic since 1966, and the vineyards have been farmed along biodynamic principles since 1974 (although not certified as such). Marc Perrin and his cousin César Perrin, who conducted the tasting, are high on the prospects for 2020, which they compare to 2016. "It was a beautiful summer, all the way through October," said César. "What I really like is the finesse of it," said Marc. "With global warming, Mourvèdre is performing better and better here." Their opinions aside, don't discount the bottled 2019s, which are also excellent. The 2019 Hommage à Jacques Perrin is simply stupendous, and not to be missed by serious collectors. As always, my visit here included a substantial lineup of the Famille Perrin wines from other appellations, which will be included in the next installment of my Southern Rhône coverage.

James Suckling (99): „...Enveloping nose of super-ripe orange, pomegranate and cigar leaf that's still very youthful and needs time to reveal its myriad nuances. Also notes of licorice, dried herbs and rose petals. Enormous concentration, silkiness and finesse on the expansive palate. Extravagant in the best sense of that word! The finish gets finer, the closer it gets to infinity. Drinkable now, but best from 2025.

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (98+): „...A blend of 75% Mourvedre, 10% Syrah, 10% Grenache, and 5% Counoise, the 2020 Hommage à Jacques Perrin is medium to deep garnet-purple in color. It needs a lot of swirling to unlock notions of tar, chargrill, Sichuan pepper, and black truffles, giving way to a fragrant core of black cherries, boysenberries, and tapenade with a touch of rose oil. The full-bodied palate is firm with taut, rounded tannins texturing the densely laden black fruits and savory layers, delivering great freshness and loads of earthy layers on the finish of this beautiful wine.“

Jane Anson (96): „...Beaucastel continues to set the bar for what Châteauneuf du Pape can do, and it is delivering a superb 2020 vintage of Hommage à Jacques Perrin here, using grapes from a dedicated 4ha of the property. Characterful smoked earth, dried herbs, grilled blackberry and blueberry fruits, immediately setting out the effortless way that these soils cope with the heat, and turn it into an important part of the personality. Relax and take your time with this wine, as it stretches out, deepening as it goes. So much complexity and teasing power. Director Charles Perrin, winemaker César Perrin.“

2019 Cerro Sur – FAVIA – Napa Valley



Decanter/Georgina Hindle (100): „...A new addition to the Place de Bordeaux this year - the eponymous project of husband and wife duo; viticulturist Annie Favia and winemaker Andy Erickson. A beautifully scented nose full of rose and violet touches, the Cabernet Franc nuances leap from the glass - fresh and minty, full of herbal sun-kissed ripe fruit but pristinely delivered. Smooth and driving on the palate, crunchy, crisp flavours give a real bite to the palate - red berries, blackcurrants and raisins, all nicely integrated and balanced. This doesn't feel super worked and polished, instead it gives crystalline iron-minerality, lifted acidity and fragrance throughout - real signatures of the terroir and the minimal interventionist winemaking style - the grapes speak more than the winemaking. I just love the sense of wildness, a smoked touch with blue fruits, Asian spices and slightly angular tannins but with ripe fruit giving the body and cool acidity giving the freshness. A stunning wine and welcome addition to the Place. Ageing in French oak barrels (50% new).“

Jane Anson (98): „...This stands out for its welcoming, nuanced and earthy aromatics, with sapidity and grace to the blueberry, raspberry and redcurrant fruits. A deeper ink and cold ash edge comes in through the mid

palate, and the texture shows a chalky, angular edge to the tannins. Nothing too much, this is restrained and juicy, reflecting its location in a cooler climate part of the valley, and its Cabernet Franc dominance. Great quality, one to look out for. First vintage going through the Bordeaux system, with 3,000 bottles allocated for the Place. Ageing in 50% new French oak barrels, harvest September 30 to October 7. Owners, viticulturalists and winemakers Annie Favia and Andy Erickson“

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (98): „...From a north-facing site at elevation, the 2019 Cerro Sur is a bold, savory wine loaded with energy. This Cabernet Franc-based wine is bursting with tension. Floral, spice and mocha accents lend striking aromatic top notes. I am so impressed with the wine's elegance and total sense of finesse. This is an especially savory wine with strong cool-climate aromas and flavors that are so captivating.

James Suckling (97): „...This mostly cabernet franc shows intriguing character of tar, graphite, ink and black berries, following through to a medium to full body with layered and slightly dusty tannins and a succulent finish. So drinkable now, but will improve with age.“

2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Coombsville – FAVIA – Napa Valley



Favia Winery was founded in 2001 as a collaboration between Viticulturist Annie Favia and Winemaker Andy Erickson. Based in Coombsville, Napa Valley, California, their philosophy is simple: create soulful wines that express the true nature of the vineyards from which they come. The wines focus on two cultivars that thrive in the Napa Valley: Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc.

Rancho Chimiles, the classic California ranch high in the mountains east of Coombsville, is the home of the Cabernet Franc at the core of our perennially impressive blended red wine, Cerro Sur.

These mature vines, in this very special terroir, produce a wine of singular character, aromatic enthusiasm, and fresh, focused flavors. After careful sorting, the grapes are carefully monitored through fermentation and maceration, giving the wine a fine and a narrow focus. This is followed by 22 months of aging in 50% new French oak barrels, and bottling without fining or filtration, giving the wine a depth and generosity that is incredibly appealing and age worthy.

Decanter/Georgina Hindle (96): „...A new addition to the Place de Bordeaux this year - the eponymous project of husband and wife duo; viticulturist Annie Favia and winemaker Andy Erickson. This is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon from Coombsville reflecting the gravelly, volcanic terroir and proximity to San Pablo Bay with a minimal interventionist practise. Powerful and expressive nose, extremely aromatic, but feels direct and quite detailed. Juicy and alive, you feel the life pulsing through this wine, it's got depth of flavour but the texture is light graceful piercing almost with a sharp crisp tang that is so thrilling. The acidity is

there giving life and joy to the blackcurrant and berry fruits and this has such detail and nuance in the savoury earthy edges; smoked meats, liquorice, dark chocolate dusting, iodine-soy saltiness, strawberry tang and long finish. Well structured, with balance and elegance and lovely details throughout. So much character here“

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (98): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Coombsville is a blend mostly from Meteor. A stunning wine, the 2019 possesses off the charts richness and tremendous depth that just builds with time in the glass. Inky dark fruit, plum, spice, licorice, menthol and crushed berries saturate the palate. The 2019 is one of the very finest wines I have ever tasted from Andy Erickson and Annie Favia. Don't miss it.“

Jane Anson (96): „...From Coombsville, one of the fresher areas of Napa, with fog influence, packed full of black fruits, more punchy and concentrated than the Cerro Sur from the same estate. Expect dark fruits and layers of liquorice and graphite, together with a restrained and slightly chalky feel to the tannins. Grippy, freshly-grated slate texture with a refreshing hit on the finish, hangs on in there delivering waves of flavour. This will age for a good decade or more. Harvest September 30 to October 7, 50% new oak. Natural

yeasts, low intervention, no filtering or fining. Owners, viticulturalists and winemakers Annie Favia and Andy Erickson.“

2019 Cardinale – Napa Valley

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (99): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of 91% Cabernet Sauvignon and 9% Merlot from Ed Corra vineyard, Stags Leap, St Helena - from all over the valley! Deep garnet-purple in color, it sashays out with gorgeous blackcurrant preserves, wild blueberries, and Morello cherries scents, plus hints of roses, fragrant earth, allspice, and violets with dark chocolate. Full-bodied, rich, and seductive with achingly velvety tannins and a laser-precise backbone of acidity, this beautiful wine finishes with epic length and seductive fragrance. 5,100 cases were made.“

Parker/Joe Czerwinski (96): „...The 2019 Cardinale is a blend of 91% Cabernet Sauvignon and 9% Merlot, with the Merlot from a particular block on Howell Mountain. Overall, it's about 80% mountain fruit and 20% valley-floor fruit, according to winemaker Chris Carpenter. Cherries and cassis dominate the nose, while the full-bodied palate is rich and velvety, with a long, mouthwatering finish that adds barrel-derived notes of vanilla, powdered sugar and cedar.

As winemaker Chris Carpenter describes it, when crafting Cardinale, he is "trying to make a wine at the highest level that is multi-appellation, emphasizing the most successful AVAs in each vintage." While some vintages have included as much as 27% Merlot (always from a single block on Howell Mountain), it's more commonly only around 10% Merlot, with the rest Cabernet Sauvignon. Does Cardinale lack a bit of the individuality of the Lokoya bottlings? Inevitably, the answer is yes, but that's both its weakness (in great years) and its strength (in lesser vintages“

James Suckling (98): „...So much crushed lead pencil, tile and dried flowers, together with blackberries and brambleberries. Full-bodied with round, polished tannins. Layered and so delicious. Black olives and graphite at the end. This potpourri of Napa cabernet character takes your palate on a tour of so many of the regions, including all the mountains, such as Howell, Veeder and Spring Mountain, as well as Atlas Peak, Stags Leap, Yountville and St. Helena. Precision and polish to the wine. Drinkable now, but better to hold.“

Jeb Dunnuck (98+): „...Pure, classic California notes of crème de cassis, spicy oak, chalky minerality, graphite, and spring flowers emerge from the 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon, a blend of 91% Cabernet Sauvignon and 9% Merlot that's sourced from multiple mountain AVAs in the valley. Full-bodied and powerful on the palate, it has a deep, rich mid-palate, beautiful tannins, notable acidity, and a great, great finish. It's another brilliant wine from Carpenter that can offer pleasure today yet also evolve for 20-25 years or more.“

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (97+): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon is one of the most finessed wines I have ever tasted here. That seems to be the direction Chris Carpenter is pursuing of late. So more than a vintage or place (Cardinale is a blend of hillside and valley floor sites) what comes through is the wine's finesse. Floral overtones lift a core of red cherry fruit, pomegranate and blood orange. I imagine the 2019 will enjoy a long life based on its spectacular balance.“

2019 Penfolds Bin 169 Cabernet Sauvignon 2019

Penfolds has an iconic status that few New World producers have. Established in 1844 at the Magill Estate near Adelaide, it laid the foundation for fine wine production in Australia.



Penfolds Bin 169 was created to celebrate the modern winemaking philosophy at Penfolds that emphasizes both the regionality and maturation of Cabernet Sauvignon in fine grained French oak.

Michael Grimm (94+): „...sehr intensive, warme Frucht, Tabak, etwas Leder, kräftige Säure, Mitte eher schlank, sehr rotbeerig, Brombeeren, etwas Lakritze, feine Bitternote, lang“

Parker/Erin Larkin (97+): „...Made only in appropriate vintages, and always from Coonwarra, the 2019 Bin 169 Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon is aromatically reticent at this stage, however the power of the fruit in the mouth is unassailable. It blossoms on the back palate and shows pedigree and impressive stature. This is a supremely elegant wine of poise and detail, couched in a framework of power and dense muscly tannin. We all have our preferences between Bin 707 and Bin 169, but for me, my heart has always been with the 169. I think Cabernet deserves an elegant casing, and that is made from French oak (17 months in French oak, 56% new, to be precise). This is pure, but far too young right now. We know this has decades of graceful development ahead of it.“

James Suckling (97): „...Such impressive freshness to the aromas of pure mulberries, blackcurrants, blueberries, redcurrants and a swathe of roasting herbs, such as bay leaf and sage. Iodine and nori, too. The French oak is nicely subsumed already and there's fruit purity that really sings here. The palate has a wealth of rich and ripe blue and black-fruit flavors with plenty of extract and depth on offer. This is an impressively bold, smoothly honed and focused cabernet. Fine, polished tannins frame the long finish. Drink over the next decade and more.“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (93): „...The 2019 Penfolds Bin 169 Cabernet Sauvignon is made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, all sourced from Coonawarra, and aged in French oak hogsheads (slightly larger than the classic Bordeaux barriques), 56% new, for 17 months. Deep garnet-purple in color, it needs a bit of

coaxing to release unabashedly bold blackcurrant jelly, blackberry pie, and black cherry compote scents, leading to wafts of tree bark, crushed rocks, unsmoked cigars, and camphor. Full-bodied, the palate delivers a powerful core of black fruits, framed by grainy tannins and a lively line of acidity, finishing with compelling purity.“

2019 Cheval des Andes

Parker/Luis Gutiérrez (98): „...The 2019 Cheval des Andes had a more reductive vinification and élevage, making the wine a bit shy and in need of time to open up, as one of their objectives was to make it more age-worthy. Another objective is to get to a 50/50 blend of Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon, which they achieved in this vintage for the first time, going back to the initial character of the wine that was the idea of Argentinean winemaker Roberto de la Mota; so, they are closing the circle and going back to the initial idea, with more implication from the Cheval Blanc team. This is the first vintage fully under the charge of the new French winemaker, Gerald Gabillet, who fermented by plot, isolating some specific parts of the vineyard, like the borders where you tend to get higher yields because of the irrigation. It matured in 225- and 400-liter oak barrels and in oak vats. They used more barrels and vats from Stockinger, which they like and rotate; the wine spends an average of 13 to 14 months in oak, but some lots get 11 months and others get 16. 2019 was a mild vintage, cooler than 2017 and warmer than 2018, with rain at the right time, which helped to avoid hydric stress, and without extremes (which they had in 2020 with three weeks of extreme heat). The wine is young and tender and a bit oaky, which Gerald attributed to the reductiveness; it's ripe without excess, with around 14.2% alcohol, mellow acidity and velvety tannins. There's more Cabernet here, so the aromatic expression can be something between 2017 and 2018, but Cabernet marks the palate a lot and makes the wine more age-worthy, as it provides the structure and length that the Malbec lacks. So, the wine might be less accessible when young and should develop slowly in bottle. It's tasty and supple and has the ingredients and the balance for what they are aiming for. In the following vintages, they follow this path, and Gabillet feels that having more precision allows the wines to reflect the differences between vintages better. They keep producing around 100,000 bottles. It was bottled in late January 2021. The way they want to describe the wine is the Argentinean expression of Cheval Blanc. And I can only agree.“

James Suckling (97): „...A refined but spicy Cheval, showing charcoal, blueberries, wild herbs, lavender and hints of bacon and cedar. Medium to full body with extremely fine tannins that get dialed into the fruit with violet, spices and sweet blue fruit at the end. Long and subtle. Drink or hold.

Vinous/Joaquin Hidalgo (97): „...The 2019 Cheval des Andes is a 50/50 blend of Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon from Las Compuertas and Paraje Altamira, Mendoza. The 2019 was 40% aged in 225-liter barrels, 40% in 500-liter barrels and 20% in *foudres*. It's red with violet flecks in the glass. It has a fresh nose of plum and blackcurrant accompanied by hints of white pepper, mint and violets over a bed of cedar and sandalwood. On the palate, the feel is finely grained with a leaner, more agile flow than in previous years, while the freshness brings plenty of energy before the lengthy finish of fruit and country herb aromas.“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (96+): „...The 2019 Cheval des Andes, a blend of 50% Malbec and 50% Cabernet Sauvignon, is the result of a joint venture between Chateau Cheval Blanc and Terrazas de Los Andes. Medium to deep garnet-purple in color, it rolls out with broody notions of scorched earth, dried herbs, damp soil, and crushed rocks over a core of baked plums and warm cassis, plus a hint of licorice. The medium-bodied palate is delicately crafted with subtle savory and earthy flavors framed by chewy tannins, finishing minerally.“

2019 Vérité La Muse



Michael Grimm (98+-99): „...extrem fruchtige, klare, blaubeerige Frucht, feines Leder, Lakritze, schöne Tabaknote, sehr elegant, große Finesse, schöne Länge, retro extrem große Nase“

Parker/Erin Brooks (99): „...The 2019 La Muse is a blend of 90% Merlot, 5% Cab Franc and 5% Malbec. Deep ruby-purple, it explodes with cassis, violets and aniseed, with wafts of thyme, tobacco and iron, offering new nuances with each return to the glass. The full-bodied palate is powerful and refined, with loads of rounded tannins, focused freshness and ethereal character. It's exceptionally expressive and structured and should be very long lived in the cellar.

James Suckling (99): „...Blueberries, blackberries and crushed stones. Pure fruit. Full-bodied with round tannins that have powdery character. Creamy and round mouth-feel. Very unique. Great

finish. 90% merlot, 5% cabernet franc and 5% malbec. Best from 2026.“

Jeb Dunnuck (98): „...The 2019 La Muse offers a luxurious and layered perfume of red apple, sweet tobacco, and fresh leather. The palate is generous, with velveteen texture, notes of cassis, violets, and fresh earth, and a weightless feel. The most open of the three presented by Verite, this is an incredible wine and will be fantastic to check in on over the next two or more decades.“

2019 Vérité La Joie

Michael Grimm (99+): „...klasse und ganz große Nase, viel Cassis, vor allem aber auch viel Tabak, komplex, ganz große und klare Frucht, Schmelz, Charme, Schoko, Druck und trotzdem sehr charmant, feine Bitterschoko und feine Süße im Finish, ganz groß“

Parker/Erin Brooks (99): „...The 2019 La Joie is an elegant expression that offers power, freshness and expressive, floral character. A blend of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc and 4% Petit Verdot, it has a deep ruby color and opens slowly from black cherries and blueberries to accents of violets, ground coffee and licorice. The full-bodied palate has generous, grainy tannins, detailed, perfumed flavors and bright acidity, finishing with an alluring iron character. 2,500 cases were made.“

James Suckling (98): „...The purity of fruit with currants, spices and flowers is very impressive, as is the long, creamy texture. Full-bodied with medium, round tannins and a fresh finish. Oyster and iodine notes come through. Excellent. Drink after 2026.“

Jeb Dunnuck (99): „...Composed of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and the remainder of Petit Verdot, the 2019 La Joie is compact and unfolds more slowly in the glass. The nose is rich with graphite, sage oil, and black plum. The palate is full of kirsch, fresh leather, currant, and tobacco, with fine tannins that go for ages, along with the fruit and well-balanced acidity. This will warrant 3-5 years cellar to express its full potential over the following 20 years.“

2019 Vérité Le Désir

Michael Grimm (98+99): „...sehr schöne, süße, aromatische Frucht, hellere Beeren, knackig, spicy, viel Charme, schöne Süße und frische Säure, feine florale Noten, sehr elegant und fein, feine Frucht-Likörnase, große Eleganz und Fiensse“

Parker/Erin Brooks (100): „...The 2019 Le Désir is an exceptional blend of 83% Cabernet Franc, 8% Merlot, 5% Malbec and 4% Cabernet Sauvignon, offering complex, layered flavors, soaring aromatics and very detailed expression. Deep ruby-purple in color, its aromas unfold slowly and offer new nuances with each return to the glass: Morello cherries, warm chocolate, dried thyme, desiccated roses and dried herbs. The full-bodied palate offers concentrated, floral fruits, pixelated tannins, bursts of fresh acidity and a very long finish with layer after layer of detailed flavor. 2,500 cases were made.“

James Suckling (100): „...Sublime cabernet franc aromas of currants, flowers and citrus. Full-bodied with incredible purity of fruit and length. You don't feel the tannins, but they are there. The acidity gives you dynamic reality and perfect length. A truly great wine. 83% cabernet franc, 8% merlot, 5% malbec, and 4% cabernet sauvignon. Best from 2026.“

Jeb Dunnuck (98): „...The 2019 Le Desir is based on Cabernet Franc, with the remainder 8% Merlot, 5% Malbec, and 4% Cabernet Sauvignon. It is complex and layered, with hints of saddle leather, pencil shavings, tangy red cherry, and blackcurrant. The palate is full and elegantly structured, with mocha, red plum, and turned soil. This is an incredible wine with lots of underlying tension that will be a pleasure to revisit if afforded the opportunity. Drink over the next 20 or more years.“

„...I tasted several vintages of Vérité at the winery with Chris Jackson, brand winemaker Fabian Krause, Pierre Seillan and his daughter, Hélène, in the spring of 2022. We tasted the recently bottled 2019s, barrel samples of the 2020s and several library vintages, including the 2002s, which will be re-released soon, and the inaugural 1998s, which was Pierre's first vintage in California—the 72-year-old has now crafted 54 vintages around the world. “Hélène is here to continue our family tradition,” he said. “I am my dad's experience,” Hélène responded. “I met Jess and Barbara in 1995 in Bordeaux at Vin Expo,” Pierre remembered. “I had worked in all the appellations in Bordeaux, taking the grapes from across its appellations because we were a négociant. I was frustrated with the system in Bordeaux, where you are limited and restricted.” He had traveled to California in 1976 for an eight-month internship in Temecula and had doubts about the climate. “I thought it was too hot, the grapes were too ripe—marmalade grapes,” he quipped. “When Jess asked me if I thought I could make a Merlot as good as Pétrus, I remembered my experience in Temecula. That's why we chose Sonoma County. We had signs already at that time of global warming. Jess had envisioned a coastal focus from the beginning.” Pierre said no one back then was talking much about grapes like Merlot or Cabernet Franc in California; the focus was on Cabernet Sauvignon and Zinfandel. “No one was speaking about Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon,” he continued. “Sonoma had the complexity of geography, many microclimates and proximity to the Pacific Ocean and its breezes. Pétrus has three types of soil; we have 40. Vérité doesn't have the best grapes—it's the diversity and the soil. Why not make something better than Pétrus?” Ironically, Pierre said the inaugural 1998 vintage was one of the worst he ever experienced; just two cuvées were made. “It was El Niño, and I was nine,” remembered Hélène. “I had just moved from my hometown of Bordeaux to Sonoma as a fifth-grader. It just never stopped raining.” Pierre said from his perspective, “Ripening was good, but acidity was really low. I was worried about a stuck fermentation, and I didn't want to add acid. So, I looked at the second crop and those tiny, acidic berries. I blended them into my tank to help the fermentation. I learned that when I lived in the Loire. I'm not smart—I just listened to the old people,” he humbly recalled. In the cellar, there are about 50 small micro crus that are picked and fermented separately. “We have 50 tanks, so every tank

is different,” said H el ene. In an effort to rein in the fruit’s natural concentration and powerful tannins, they carefully extracted for 12 days or less, although they emphasized that there’s no winemaking protocol. They utilized 15 different coopers to maximize their blending options. At this stage, the 2020 blends are completed, although the wines are still in barrel. They will be bottled in 2023 and released much later. H el ene said it was another drought year with heat toward the end of the vintage, resulting in earlier ripeness. After the fires started, they picked and brought in all the grapes within 10 days. “The wind doesn’t sit here, so if you were more coastal and picked earlier, you could have been alright in 2020,” she explained. “I hope people realize that they have to pick earlier.” Although lab results indicated the grapes were clean, the Seillans say they will hold the wines back before release. “We are certain, but I think giving people that confidence in the evolution of the wines over time is the right thing to do.” I asked Pierre if he felt there is a “peak” of evolution for the V erit e wines. “There is a change that happens between 12-16 years,” he said after some consideration. “When I think about an ideal drinking window, it’s those changes I like.” As H el ene takes over the estate, Pierre is sentimental about his time in California. “I will not be here forever. H el ene is here to continue our family tradition. You, Chris, H el ene—you represent the future generation. I leave it to you.”

Joseph Phelps 2019 : On Tuesday the 13th of September

Joseph Phelps, a building contractor from Colorado, first invested in vineyards in the Napa Valley in 1972. In 1974 Phelps, and his winemaker Walter Schugg, produced their first vintage of Insignia, which at the time was one of the first Bordeaux blends in California.

This estate has just been purchased by LVMH

Joseph Phelps Insignia 2019 has 96-98/100 from Wine Advocate

Joseph Phelps Cabernet Sauvignon 2019 has 91-93/100 from Wine Advocate

2019 Cabernet Sauvignon – Joseph Phelps

Michael Grimm (93): „...sch one, klare, reife, frische Frucht, viel Schoko, feines Vanille, Cassis, feine Bitterschoko, lang“

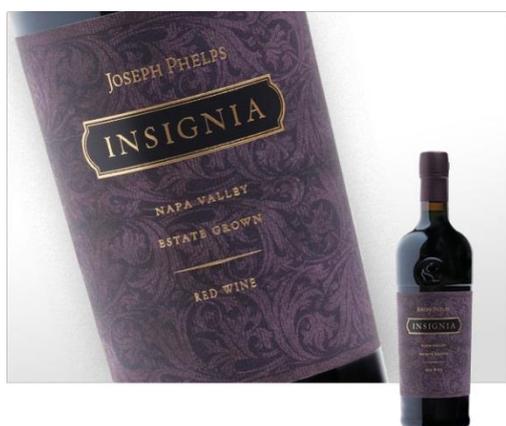
Parker/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (91-93): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of 93% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Merlot, 1% Petit Verdot and 1% Malbec. It is due to age in oak for 18 months, in 48% new (58% French, 42% American) and 52% two-year-old French and American oak barrels. Deep garnet-purple in color, it rolls effortlessly out of the glass with beautifully pure notes of fresh black plums, black cherries and crushed blackcurrants plus hints of cinnamon stick, tobacco leaf and charcoal. Medium to full-bodied, the palate hits the ground running with expressive black fruits and soft, supple tannins, lifted by just enough freshness and finishing pleasantly savory. 40,000 are due to be made. (Tasted as a barrel sample.)“

James Suckling (94): „...Blackberry and light dried fruit with oyster-shell undertones. It’s full-bodied with round, lightly chewy tannins that nicely accentuate the fruit character. Walnuts and wet earth. Delicious now, but better in two or three years.“

Jeb Dunnuck (92): „...Starting with the 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley, which is a no-brainer cuv ee in most vintages, it reveals a dense purple hue to go with classic Napa Cabernet notes of ripe blackcurrants, scorched earth, lead pencil, chalky minerality, and a touch of spice box. Rich, medium to full-bodied, and beautifully balanced, with silky tannins, it’s a classic, concentrated, yet elegant style of Cabernet Sauvignon that will deliver the goods for two decades if properly stored. It way over-delivers. The blend is 93% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot and Malbec, aged 18 months in just under 50% new French and American oak. 40,000 cases.“

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (93): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley) is absolutely gorgeous. Succulent red cherry, red plum, mocha, spice and leather are front and center. Soft contours and silky plush tannins give the 2019 its tremendous immediacy and overall appeal. The 2019 is a superb wine in its peer group.“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (93): „...The 2019 Cabernet Sauvignon is composed of 94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Cabernet Franc, 2% Merlot, and 1% Malbec. Deep garnet-purple colored, it bursts from the glass with bold notions of creme de cassis, baked plums, and black cherry preserves, plus suggestions of licorice, cast-iron pan, and charcuterie, with a touch of roses. The full-bodied palate is packed with black fruit preserves and loads of spicy accents, framed by firm, grainy tannins and seamless freshness, finishing long and fragrant.“



2019 Insignia – Joseph Phelps

Michael Grimm (96): „...sehr komplexe, intensive aber sehr sch on balancierte Nase, Grafite, etwas Tabak, Cassis, warm am Gaumen, sehr sch one Struktur mit gro er Balance, sehr fein, langes Finale“

Parker/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (96-98): „...The 2019 Insignia is composed of 93% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Petit Verdot and 2% Malbec. The vineyard sources this year include: 32% Yountville (Oak Knoll District), 23% Banca Dorada (Rutherford), 14% Suscol (South Napa Valley), 14% Home Ranch (St. Helena), 12% Las Rocas (Stags Leap District), 3% Barboza (Stags Leap District) and 2% El Venadito (Oak Knoll District). The wine is aging for 24 months in 100% new French oak barrels. Deep garnet-purple in color, it needs

a little swirling to unlock a gorgeous perfume of black cherry compote, stewed plums and blackcurrant pastilles with hints of bay leaves, red roses, underbrush and pencil lead plus a hint of menthol. Medium to full-bodied, the palate delivers impactful black fruit preserves layers with finely grained tannins and seamless freshness, finishing long and layered. 18,000 cases are due to be made. (Tasted as a barrel sample.)

James Suckling (98): „...A very aromatic Insignia with pencil-shaving and graphite highlights to the dark fruit and blackberries. Full-bodied, yet tensioned and vertical, with very fine tannins that run deep and layered in the wine. Needs time to come together, but fantastic tension and structure. Try after 2027.“

Jeb Dunnuck (96-98): „...Much more expressive and complex compared to the backward, masculine Backus Vineyard (which is common when comparing these two cuvées), the 2019 Insignia offers a gorgeous perfume of crème de cassis, chocolate, lavender, dried flowers, tobacco, and leafy herbs. Possessing full-bodied richness, a layered, seamless texture, gorgeous tannins, and just a classy, balanced character, this beauty is going to shine with just 3-4 years of bottle age yet still cruise in cold cellars for 30 years. It actually reminds me slightly of the 1997.“

Vinous/Antonio Galloni (94-97): „...Tasted from barrel, the 2019 Insignia is a mere infant. Swaths of tannin wrap around a core of dark fruit. The 2019 is a brooding, potent Insignia that is going to need time to come around“

TWI/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (97): „...A blend of 93% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Petit Verdot, and 2% Malbec, the 2019 Insignia is deep garnet-purple colored. It needs a shake or two before the glass combusts with atomic scents of crème de cassis, blueberry preserves, and stewed black cherries, followed by subtle suggestions of cedar chest, pencil lead, iron ore, and crushed rocks, plus a waft of cloves. Full-bodied, rich, and concentrated, the palate delivers compelling poise led by firm, fine-grained tannins and a lively line of freshness, finishing with epic length.“

2010 Chateau Latour – release 2022

Parker/Lisa Perrotti-Brown (100): „...The 2010 Latour is deep garnet in color, and—WOW—it erupts from the glass with powerful crème de cassis, Black Forest cake and blackberry pie scents plus intense sparks of dried roses, cigar boxes, fragrant earth and smoked meats with aniseed and crushed rocks wafts. Full-bodied, concentrated and oh-so-decadent in the mouth, it has a firm, grainy texture and lovely freshness carrying the rich, opulent fruit to an epically long finish. It is incredibly tempting to drink now, but I suspect this hedonic experience isn't a scratch on the mind-blowing, otherworldly secrets this time capsule will have to reveal given another 7-10 years in bottle and continuing over the following fifty years++.“

James Suckling (100): „...The aromas of flowers such as roses, violets and lilacs jump from the glass then turn to dark berries such as blueberries and blackberries. It's full-bodied, with velvety tannins and dense and intense with a chocolate, berry and currant character. This is juicy and rich with wood still showing a bit, but „it's all coming together wonderfully. Muscular yet toned. Another perfect wine like the 2010. Try in 2022.

Vinous/Neal Martin (100): „...The 2010 Latour is conspicuously deep in colour. It has an intellectual, intense and captivating bouquet with mineral-rich black fruit, graphite and crushed rose petal scents. Utterly spellbinding. The palate is the real deal. Heavenly balance, perfect acidity with seamlessly integrated new oak, there is an enthralling crescendo towards a finish that is simply as good as Bordeaux gets. Impeccable. Tasted blind at Farr Vintners 10-Year On Bordeaux horizontal.“

2020 Testamatta, Bibi Graetz



Michael Grimm (92): „...schöne, klassische Sangiovese-Nase, Sauerkirschen, feine Faßnote, Mandeln, sehr fein, kräftige Säure, lang, feine Süße im Finish“

Parker/Monica Lerner (95): „...Bibi Graetz has long been tinkering with his formula for this wine, and this vintage represents a new chapter. The 2020 Testamatta is a blend of Sangiovese from old and new vines, with a priority on cooler growing conditions (and even a few northern exposures). In the wake of climate change, and in the pursuit of elegance, Bibi is changing his approach. He also has a new vineyard property near Fiesole, and the introduction of these grapes (from a breezy, high-elevation site) are what gives Testamatta its beautiful clarity, sharpness and lifted bouquet. The new Fiesole fruit makes up about 30% to 35% of this wine. The results are vibrant, transparent and fresh both in terms of acidity and aromatic intensity. This is a wine in transformation and a wine to watch.“

James Suckling (94): „...Beautiful, fresh aromas of sour cherries, orange peel and lemon bush. Medium-bodied with firm, racy acidity and ultra-fine tannins that add brightness and energy to the wine. This is definitely following the new wave of crunchy, vivid Tuscan sangioveses, which emphasize drinkability and transparency. Lighter than past vintages. Drink now or hold.“

Jane Anson (97): „...Gloriously jewel-like in colour, understated joyful frame flowing with juicy black cherry, raspberry, mandarin peel, fresh acidities and bounce. Everything feels in high definition, continuing the evolution of Testamatta from its earliest years. Softly brushed tannins that are barely there, extremely easy to recommend, you are going to want to share this wine. Harvest September 24 to October 25, taking things slowly. From a range of plots set at 400m to 600m altitude across Tuscany, with vines that head up

to 80 years old. Natural yeasts, manual punch downs, 10 days maceration and barrel ageing with no new oak.“

Decanter/Georgina Hindle (97): „...Wild roses and wild strawberries, the nose has a lovely fragrance and expression. Lifted and bright, this has such a beautiful delicacy to it, a creamy, chalkiness comes from the fine tannins with bright, succulent strawberry and raspberry leaf elements. You feel the savoury side too, the sweet vanilla spice and dried herb aspect which counter the fruit and the high acidity. I adore the finesse here, the sharp fruit giving the energy and the chalky texture giving the layers. Feels well controlled, powerful yet delivered with poise. It doesn't have so much overt weight, it's definitely more ethereal in terms of density, but the nuance of flavour is thrillingly captivating and this has a long lifted finish. A contemplative wine that keeps you wanting more and more. Made in new winery facilities in Fiesole. Grapes were picked from the best six vineyards; Vincigliata, Olmo, Londa, Lamole, Montefili and Siena with each divided into parcels and harvested up to eight times to get the perfect ripening points. Natural and indigenous fermentation in open top barriques (225l) for smaller parcels and 50hl cask or stainless steel tanks for larger plots. After 7-10 days of maceration, the parcels are moved into old barriques and 50hl casks for 20 months.“

2020 Colore, Bibi Graetz



Michael Grimm (94+): „...komplexere und fleischigere Nase als Testamatta, feines Leder, dunkle Beeren und Kirschen, Körper, tolle Balance“

Parker/Monica Lerner (96): „...The Bibi Graetz 2020 Colore is a pure expression of Sangiovese all sourced from old vines that are carefully selected in various parts of Tuscany. Much of the fruit comes from a high elevation and cool site in Lamole, or from 70-year-old vines in Bagno a Ripoli or Vincigliata near Fiesole. A small percentage of old vines in Olmo is also used. Bibi has a preference for old vines, and you can taste the lovely depth and complexity that comes through in the Colore. Compared to his other wine Testamatta, this wine has seen fewer stylistic changes over the years, and the goal has always been elegance and finesse. Colore boasts a pretty luminous quality with dark fruit aromas and wild berry. There are hints of licorice and mint as well. Mineral flavors and bright acidity are what set Colore apart.“

James Suckling (98): „...The subtlety and perfumed nature of this wine is enchanting, offering flowers, orange peel and cherries. Wonderful ripe strawberries, too. Full-bodied, but not over the top, with tannins that are polished and run the length of the wine. It's tight, but gives you every indication of a terrific wine. You want to drink it now, and you probably should do, because it's so alluring. Yet it will age beautifully as well. Drink or hold.“

Jane Anson (98): „...A reliably brilliant Colore, full of life, generosity and pleasure. This is perfumed and nuanced, plenty of sage, liquorice root, white pepper, dried roses and campfire soot, against a pristine set of raspberry, damson and fresher redcurrant and greengage fruits. Concentration builds slowly through the palate to show slightly higher tannic grip than Testamatta - although one of the things I enjoy about the Graetz wines is that both Testamatta and Colore have their distinct characters, but it is never clear which one is the 'better' wine. Colore comes from the oldest vineyards of Sangiovese that stretch from 80 to 130 years old, harvested slowly and methodically by going up to eight times through the rows to ensure the right level of maturity before picking - obsessional winemaking that bears results in the glass.

Decanter/Georgina Hindle (98): „...Bright and lively on the palate, such beautifully expressed raspberry and red cherry fruit flavours alongside high-shining acidity that is so clean and precise. A supremely joyful expression with hints of caramelised strawberries and fresh mint. So sharp but so well defined with a clarity to the palate that is gorgeous. Really delivers a sophisticated, charming, characterful wine that is balanced, easy to enjoy with plenty of life. A more structured and perhaps harder to understand wine than Testamatta this year, but both have their own lovely personalities. This is so complete and abundant, muscular but controlled and full of complexity and detail - there's weight and density without heaviness. A sensational wine. Ageing 12 months in 500l French oak barrels.“