

2016 Helios Sunbasket Vineyard Cabernet Franc



Heat in April kick-started the 2016 season, followed by a temperate July and very cool August. With ideal weather all season, a gentle late heat spell in September brought in this vintage. Daytime highs stayed below 100F from *veraison* to harvest, and nighttime lows were on the cool side, creating a nearly perfect season.

This wine is very pretty. Expressive aromas of dried flowers and pencil lead minerality complement raspberry and tart cherry fruit. Darker notes of cassis and anise chime in and vibrant natural acidity keeps it lively.

~ Cathy Corison



94 The 2016 Cabernet Franc Sunbasket Vineyard is a gorgeous wine that captures all the radiance of this site on the southern edge of St. Helena. Aromatically expressive and wonderfully nuanced, the 2016 has so much to offer. Mocha, dried flowers and mint add perfume to this elegant, wonderfully polished Cabernet Franc from Cathy Corison. The 2016 is simply stunning.
Antonio Galloni, Dec 2018

VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

94+ The 2016 Cabernet Franc “Helios” bottling from Cathy Corison from her Sunbasket Vineyard is really good this year, coming in at 13.6 percent octane and offering up glorious purity and precision in its aromatic constellation of sweet dark berries, tobacco leaf, a fine base of soil tones, cigar ash, a dollop of menthol, a dash of cedar and a beautiful floral topnote redolent of both lavender and violets. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and very, very elegant in profile, with lovely depth at the core, ripe, seamless tannins, good acids and outstanding focus and grip on the long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. This is a stunning wine.

John Gilman, July-August 2019, Issue #82



Top 100 Best Wines of 2019

93 For three decades, Cathy Corison consistently relied on Sunbasket, a vineyard just to the north of her winery, for part of her St. Helena Cabernet Sauvignon. When she purchased the site in 2014, she began to bottle the fruit as a vineyard designate. In 2016, the franc from Sunbasket has the kind of clarity and earthy detail that the variety rarely delivers in Napa Valley. While the flavors are rich and fully saturated, the wine feels relatively light as it opens and the tannins yield their cool, herbal complexities. Decant this if you open it now, to serve with seared duck breast. (10/19)



☀ The latest Helios from Corison very much shows the constraint for which its maker is known and, when measured against the broader field of Cabernet Francs, is a comparatively elegant, well-behaved wine that shies away from extract and tannic heft. It is cut from lighter cloth with accessible aromas of red berries, creamy oak and dried flowers that are echoed in kind by its mid-density flavors, and its fine-grained tannins firm without imparting much in the way of astringency. *October 2019*

JamesSuckling.com

93 I love the fresh character here of oyster shell, crushed stones, blueberries, iodine and fresh herbs. Full body and cutting acidity that fits so well with the layers of vibrant blue fruit. Velvety tannins. Drink now or hold.

May 3, 2019

purely domestic wine report

94 The nose holds beautiful aromatics of sap and blackberry, herb and sandalwood. The palate entry is a precise black fruit, currant, cocoa and herb. Finely grained texture.

Doug Wilder, Issue 7.4



2016 Helios, “Sunbasket Vineyard,” St. Helena, Napa Valley – Medium to medium-dark ruby; attractive, deep, ripe, spicy, dark cherry and berry fruit aroma with a perfumed floral note of rose petal and a hint of mocha; full body; deep, rich, ripe, elegantly styled, nicely balanced, red and dark berry fruit flavors with bright acidity; full tannin; lingering aftertaste. Very approachable and drinkable now, though should benefit from another three to five more years of bottle aging. Made by Corison Winery. **Very highly recommended.**

Volume 45, August 2019



★★★★ An excellent Cabernet Franc, in a ripe, supple, medium rich style. It has complex character (black currant, rose petal, cherry, baked potato, herbs, mint), modest oakiness (tobacco, toast), full body, and excellent balance, with a persistent finish. Very fine quality; warrants further aging. 100% Cabernet Franc. 13.6%
[2022-2030]

Ronn Wiegand, February 2020, Issues #187-9

WINE ENTHUSIAST

92 Herbal and brimming in violet aromas, this is a 100% varietal wine that shows old-world classicism, its tannins structured and behaved. Pencil shavings, red currant, cassis and smoky oak combine effortlessly along a high-toned palate of underlying freshness.

11/1/19



93 The 2016 Sunbasket Vineyard ‘Helios’ Cabernet Franc is another beautiful showing from Cathy Corison in this vintage. This gorgeous wine begins with inviting aromas of fresh red currants and ripe raspberries that are joined together with accents of spring flowers, graphite, tobacco and gravelly minerals all taking shape. Elegant, pure and precise, this medium-bodied Cabernet Franc continues to impress with its striking balance and finesse all the way through the graceful finish. While this will be accessible early on, it will also continue to flourish in the cellar over the course of the next decade.

May 2019