

## 2018 Corison Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon



2018 is the darkest, inkiest vintage in my memory, the result of an extremely long, cool ripening season with cold nights. Happily, natural acidity persists during ripening under these conditions and wildly complex flavors and aromas result. Because the weather was perfect at flowering, we had a bumper crop of deliciousness, making everyone happy.

Violet and dried rose perfume jumps out of the glass along with tart cherry, blueberry, plum and cassis fruit. Flavors follow with cocoa and refreshing minerality joining the party, and a tantalizing white pepper note for interest. Signature velvety tannins add texture and a gentle grip to complete the picture.

~ Cathy Corison



**93** The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley) is fabulous. Bright, floral overtones add liveliness and lift to a core of fruit ranging from red to purplish. Vibrant and seriously expressive, the 2018 dazzles with its class and nuance. The Napa Valley Cabernet is positively alluring, even at this early stage – not to mention flat-out delicious.

*Antonio Galloni, January 2020*

**Decanter** **94** Perennially a yardstick of balance and grace, Cathy Corison's St. Helena Cabernet admirably sums up the best that the 2018 vintage has to offer: power, clarity and poise. Delicate and deft aromas of red plums and damp soil. The palate is silky and fine, with a zesty, high-toned quality through the finish.

*Matthew Luczy, 13 October, 2020*

**vinography** [The Soul of Refinement: Recent & Upcoming Releases from Corison Winery, Napa](#)  
**9.5** Dark purple in the glass, this wine smells of dried herbs, black cherry, blackcurrants, and lavender. In the mouth, intense blackcurrant and dried herb notes are juicy with fantastic acidity and savory with hints of dried flowers. A hint of salinity creeps into the finish along with a dusty earth note. Powdery tannins flex their muscles on the edges of the palate. While this is tasty right now, I'd leave it alone for 5 years to start getting the true magic here.

*Alder Yarrow, vinography.com, August 25, 2021*

### JamesSuckling.com

**94** Aromas of currants, walnuts, stones and berries follow through to a full body with firm, layered tannins and a pretty finish. Lovely polish to this. Needs a year or two to come completely together, but already delicious. Try after 2021.

*16 December, 2020*

**JEB DUNNUCK** I always love the wines from Cathy Corison, and 2018 is a vintage that certainly plays to her strengths with its classic, elegant style. Looking at her 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon, this medium ruby/purple-colored effort offers an old school bouquet of red and black currants, menthol, spring flowers, and violets to go with a medium-bodied, elegant style on the palate... It offers medium-bodied richness, terrific overall balance, seamless tannins, and a great finish. Drink this classic, balanced, satisfying Cabernet from Corison over the coming 15 years or so.

*jebdunnuck.com, 1/27/21*



**93** Delightfully fresh in feel, with Damson plum, cherry paste and red licorice notes that come across as bright and engaging, while violet and anise details chime through. Ample length and energy, with fruit in reserve, all with a fun, almost carefree feel thanks to its relatively toast-free finish. Drink now through 2035.

*James Molesworth, March 2, 2022*



...long on style, the latest from Corison runs a predictable course that should be familiar to all fans of the winery. It aims successfully for finesse and steers well away from the lavishly oaked, high-ripeness, blockbuster model favored by a good many Cabernet makers... this is a deliberate, very carefully measured wine that hits the mark smartly as far as keen varietal identity goes, and it capably proves that richness and grace are not mutually exclusive.

*August 2021*

## purely domestic wine report

**97** The nose is supple blackberry, licorice, black currant and cedar. The palate entry is polished and lean black plum with beautifully balanced core of spice, ripe blueberry showing pristine delicacy. The finish develops a mouth-coating dusty black fruit and faint essence of minty bay laurel. Drink 2021 - 2040. *Doug Wilder, Vol 9.1*

## WINE ENTHUSIAST 95 – Cellar Selection

This is a high-toned, tart and earthy wine from the beloved producer, structured and grippy in its youth. Textured, the savory character is etched in dried herb, violet and currant, it evolves to share elegant and delicate layers of blue fruit and black cherry. Graphite, turned earth and black pepper endure. Enjoy through 2038. *Virginie Boone, December 1, 2021*

Jancis Robinson

Mid crimson. Aromatic with ripe but modulated cassis fruit and a hint of balsam. Non showy. Some fine sandpaper tannins still in evidence and a really refreshing finish. Made for the table with impressive refinement. I'd decant it this year and next. 13.8%  
Drink 2021–2030 *Jancis Robinson, 11 Nov. 2021*



**92** Cathy Corison's 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon remains true to her own stylistic bent, weighing in at 13.8%. Hints of tobacco and crushed stone accent cassis, with minimal wood influence on the nose, despite it being aged 20 months in 50% new French oak. Medium to full-bodied, it's concentrated, silky, long and elegant, a balanced, refreshing alternative to much of what Napa has to offer these days. *Joe Czerwinski, 31st May, 2022*

**VIEW FROM THE CELLAR 96** The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon from Cathy Corison is another absolutely classic wine and yet another legend in the making. The wine is just a whisper higher in octane than the Sunbasket cabernet, tipping the scales at 13.8 percent alcohol and offering up all of the precision, purity and structural sophistication that one has come to routinely expect of young vintages of Corison cabernet sauvignon. The lovely bouquet wafts from the glass in a polished blend of black cherries, sweet dark berries, tobacco leaf, Rutherford Dust, cigar smoke and a deft framing of spicy new oak. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied and seamlessly balanced, with a beautifully refined attack, a rock solid core of fruit, exemplary soil signature, ripe, buried tannins and great focus and grip on the long, complex and perfectly balanced finish. This is a stunning young wine! 2033-2100  
*John Gilman, Sept-Oct 2021, Issue #95*

## terroir REVIEW

The 2018 is an opaque ruby red color with a pink rim and perfumed of blackberry flowers (which is one of my favorite scents, ephemeral as it is in June in New England). There's also a sense of black raspberries, black and red currants, and a fresh green leafiness that suggests tarragon. The palate is texturally silken, with vibrant acidity and smooth, graphitic tannins. The overall effect is like velvet. The flavors continue the aromatics: black and red cherries, black and red raspberries, and black currant. In the deep distance the herbs kick in again. It's a bright, high-key wine, refreshing; the platonic ideal (seldom realized) of Napa Cabernet. *Meg Maker, January 9, 2023*



**95** The 2018 Corison 'Napa Valley' Cabernet Sauvignon is a beautiful offering that shows violets and red currant aromatics alongside sage, blackberry compote and shades of pipe tobacco. The sense of balance is gorgeous here as red and dark fruits parade with graphite, leather and freshly tilled soils. Seamless and highly refined, this shows beautiful restraint and bright acidity that should carry this wine over two decades. Drink 2021–2040. *owenbargreen.com, September 14, 2021*



**93** Medium- dark ruby color; very attractive, deep, ripe, complex, dark cherry and blackberry fruit aroma with earthy and herbal notes, and hints of baking spices; full body; rich, ripe, nicely balanced, somewhat elegant, red and black fruit flavors with bright acidity, hints of dried herbs, and undertones of well proportioned toasty oak; full tannin; lingering aftertaste. **Very highly recommended.**  
*Nick Ponomareff, June 2021*

## Forbes

Bright purple; aromas of black currant, black plum and lavender. Medium-full with a rich mid-palate, good acidity, youthful tannins that are not shy and very good persistence. This is clearly a very young wine that needs time, but there is good overall harmony as well as impressive varietal character. Give 3-4 years to settle down; peak in 8-10 years, perhaps longer.

*Tom Hyland, Dec. 24, 2021*



★★★★+ Corison's 2018 reds are possibly the winery's best yet... The Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is first rate: fragrant, medium rich, and finely flavored (black currant, rose petal, blueberry, cedar, tobacco), with a long palate evolution, good balance, and a vibrant, persistent finish.

*Ronn Wiegand, July 2022, Issues 200-203*

## Bigger Than Your Head

The deep black-purple hue offers a glowing magenta rim; the highly perfumed bouquet delivers seamless notes of iodine, iron and flint, mint, cedar, cassis, lavender and licorice and, not least, smoke, loam and profound graphite minerality; that mineral character persists on the palate, where the wine is lively and energetic, lithe and supple, deep-set in dusty, velvety tannins that exhibit the barest presence of oak; a few moments in the glass unfurl hints of espresso bean and bittersweet chocolate, raspberries and plums, tapenade and underbrush; incredibly complex in detail and dimension yet singular of purpose and magisterial elegance. Now through 2030 through '34. **Exceptional.**

*Fredric Koepfel, biggerthanyourhead.net, 21 Jul 2021*

## International WINE REPORT

93 The 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon from Corison is beautiful example of a refined Napa Cabernet. It begins with lovely aromatics of black raspberries, dark plums and hints of blackberries that are joined by graphite, tobacco, spring florals and licorice which all come together beautifully in the glass. On the palate this possesses a gorgeous medium body that is well-structured and defined, with remarkable overall balance and poise. It goes on to display wonderful freshness, and focus, along with vibrant acidity that provides a burst of energy through the long finish. This is a wonderful Cabernet that is built to age incredibly well, that said, it would be best to allow this a few years of bottle age before approaching.

*Joe D'Angelo, Summer 2021*

## Lewin on Wine

Wine, Food, and Experiences

Nose offers a delicious faintly piquant impression, relatively aromatic, then ripeness is nicely offset by freshness on the palate. Tannins are already quite silky. The aromatics carry through to the palate, which offers subtle hints of the oak aging. This really could be enjoyed almost immediately, but should become increasingly elegant over the next few years.

*Benjamin Lewin, July 12, 2021*

## GOOD VITIS

94 Decanted for three hours. The young nose wafts cherry, blackberry, boysenberry, black currant, sweet leather, and black plum. Bordering on full bodied, the black tea tannins are broad and thick while the acid is formidable but integrated. The fruit flavors are dark... while the earthy notes include tobacco, baking spice, and black pepper. The depth is evident in the mouthfeel, suggesting a good five to seven years will usher in some unveiling of complexity.

*Aaron Menenberg, goodvitis.com, Nov. 14, 2021*



94 Superbly balanced, fresh and ready to drink in its youth, this is a delicious, refined Napa Cabernet Sauvignon. There are elements of cedar spice, huckleberry and herbs, all integrated with a silky mouth feel and round tannins. Everything is in the right proportion in this exemplary Cab. Sourced from three bench land vineyards between Rutherford and St. Helena.

*Donald Winkler, i-winereview.com, Oct. 27, 2021*

## Drink the Bottles

95 The 2018 Corison Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is deep purple, nearly opaque in the glass. There is a patchwork of aromas that begin with currants, cherry, young fresh berries and flower petals. This wine, with some time in the glass, also introduces bright minerality and fertile earth notes. Tangy cherry, blueberry and dried herbs on the palate, connecting with dark chocolate bits and silky tannin that place a tender hold on the mouth to a very charming and long finish. This wine will continue to blossom in the bottle but it's drinking exquisitely now and will continue to for 2 or more decades.

*Jeff Lawson, drinkthebottles.com, Nov. 12, 2021*

## The Nittany Epicurean

The wine showed a dark garnet almost opaque color. Black cherry, raspberry preserves, cassis, vanilla and oak all arrived on the alluring nose. Black cherry, raspberry preserves and cassis brought luxury to the palate that was followed by undertones of blackberry and oak. The wine was full-bodied and exhibited great length along with soft tannins. *Michael Chelus, May 21, 2022*