

# 2015 Helios Sunbasket Vineyard Cabernet Franc



Warm spring days in March got the ball rolling and set the stage for an early season. Between the ongoing drought and cold temperatures during bloom, the 2015 crop was smaller than average. Then heat in August and September brought the grapes in for one of the earliest harvests on record. The resulting scraggly clusters of tiny berries were intensely delicious. Lifting minerality greets you and complements the raspberry and blackberry fruit. Floral notes of violets and rose petals typical of Cabernet Franc jump out of the glass, and crisp natural acidity lifts the aromas and flavors. Hints of spice add even more complexity.

- Cathy Corison

CONNOISSEURS' GUIDE  
TO CALIFORNIA WINE



## 94 CORISON Helios Sunbasket Vineyard St. Helena 2015

Given its maker's track record of producing rich but fairly refined Cabernet Sauvignons, it should come as no surprise that this wine shows a sense of sophistication and careful tailoring that sets it well part from the somewhat burlier norm of most of its varietal mates. It eschews blustery ripeness in favor of claret-like restraint, yet it is amazingly deep in fruit... its fruity stamina and implicit layering are guarantors of great things to come. Some wines age on the strength of their potency, while others, such as this, by dint of proportion and balance, and we are not in the least hesitant in predicting no less than a decade of steady improvement for this beautifully crafted offering.

*Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wine, October 2018*

WINE ENTHUSIAST

93 A 100% varietal wine, this shines in its full embrace of woody succulence, driven by a core of balanced red and black cherry. Tightly woven tannins provide structure without distraction or dominance, allowing an earthy thread of leather and clove to close things out.

*Wine Enthusiast, 12/31/2018*

Antonio Galloni  
presents  
vinous  
explore all things wine

90 The 2015 Cabernet Franc Sunbasket Vineyard is a powerful, earthy wine. The intense ripeness of the vintage seems to dominate the wine's balance, while varietal notes are pushed into the background. Super ripe red cherry, plum, spice, cedar and tobacco all open up in the glass.

*Antonio Galloni, Vinous – explore all things wine, January 2018*

James Suckling.com

92 Pretty mint, blue fruit, dried flowers, and blackberries. Lovely aromas. Medium to full body, chewy tannins and a fresh finish. Very enjoyable. Drink now.

*James Suckling, May 2018*

California GRAPEVINE



## 2015 Helios, "Sunbasket Vineyard," St. Helena, Napa Valley

92 Medium to medium-dark ruby color; attractive, deep, ripe, intense, spicy, dark cherry, raspberry, and blackberry fruit aroma with a floral note of rose petal; full body; deep, rich, textured, red and black fruit flavors with bright acidity; full tannin; lingering aftertaste. Nicely balanced and appealing to drink now as it showed some elegance and complexity as it developed with airing in the glass, though will benefit from several more years of bottle aging. Made by Cathy Corison at the Corison Winery. **Very highly recommended.**

*Nick Ponomareff, California Grapevine, Volume 44, December 2018*

Wine & Spirits  
MAGAZINE

## 91 Corison 2015 St. Helena Helios Sunbasket Vineyard Cabernet Franc

This is a warm, spicy franc in 2015, its red and green fruit notes darkened by scents of cocoa nibs. The black tannins show a lot of extract, smoky and firm, needing a few years of bottle age to bring the fruit forward.

*Wine & Spirits Magazine (08/18)*

**94** The Sunbasket Vineyard Cabernet Franc is another stunning wine from Corison in this vintage. It opens to gorgeous aromatics of blackberries, tobacco, floral, minerals and even a subtle savory character, adding further complexity, as they all merge together and burst from the glass.

Displaying remarkable balance and precision, this continues to impress with its outstanding balance of ripe fruit and acidity, keeping it fresh and well poised through the long, beautifully polished finish. A total beauty, with a wonderful future ahead.

*Joe D'Angelo, International Wine Report, May 2018*

### **purely domestic wine report**

**93** The nose is a dense herb-driven black fruit, currant and cocoa. The palate is a firm and lively blackberry, java and hard cherry with mouth-coating dry youthfulness. Drink 2021-2035

*Doug Wilder, purely domestic wine report, Issue 7.4*

**92-93** The nose is fruity, fresh, elegant and offers concentration. It reveals notes of cassis, plum and small notes of blackberry associated with small touches of cherry, hints of liquorice as well as discreet hints of oak, discreet toasted hints and chocolate. The palate is fruity, well-balanced and offers a small juiciness, a slight freshness, a good structure, a beautiful roundness as well as finesse. On the palate this wine expresses notes of juicy blackberry, juicy raspberry and small notes of cherry associated with slight touches of juicy/crunchy redcurrants, crunchy cassis as well as discreet hints of cocoa and an imperceptible touch of coffee.

*Jonathan Choukroun Chicheportiche, Vert de Vin, 5/2018*

**95** Located a few blocks from the Corison estate, the Sunbasket Vineyard has six rows of Cabernet Franc planted. The wine opens with aromas of green peppercorn with ripe dark fruits and shades of Turkish coffee. The palate shows wonderful freshness as perfumed dark fruits mingle with chocolate, black tea and Asian spices with violets. Fantastic in its youth, this will cellar well for decades. This has fantastic elegance, leading to the exceedingly long finish. Drink 2020-2035.

*Owen Bargreen, Washington Wine Blog, August 3, 2019*