

## 2020 Helios Sunbasket Vineyard Cabernet Franc



The result of a long and cool ripening season (and oblivious to the Covid chaos swirling around it), the 2020 Cabernet Franc was picked nearly three weeks before the Glass Fire broke out and was safely down to barrels by then. Industrial-grade air filters kept smoke out of the winery, protecting our lovely 2020's.

Intense dried rose petal and lavender perfume jump out of the glass, with bright cherry and brambly raspberry aromas and flavors leading the way. Hints of bacon and baking spices chime in and stony minerality ties it all together. Unity.

~ Cathy Corison

### THE New Wine Review

**97** Gorgeously perfumed, this is a seamless, supple and succulent wine, giving in red fruit and light as air. Though fresh and elegant, it offers understated substance, length and a demure herbal earthiness that speaks to the variety's ultimate greatness when in the right hands.

*Virginie Boone, The New Wine Review, May 2023*



**93** The 2020 Cabernet Franc Helios Sunbasket Vineyard is a very pretty wine. Cedar, tobacco, dried flowers, spice and dried herbs give the 2020 lovely aromatic presence to play off its mid-weight structure. Nicely lifted and quite elegant, the 2020 is impressive for the year. This is a very pretty wine that marries the aromatics of Franc with the natural richness of the vintage.

*Antonio Galloni, Vinous, October 2022*

### JAMES SUCKLING.COM

**94** Very fresh and floral, with a mixture of red and black cherries, white pepper, plums, hibiscus, olives and fine herbs. Quite bright and pristine with the fruit, showing streamlined linearity and crunchiness. Juicy, with fresh, fine tannins. Delicious now, but will hold.

*jamessuckling.com, September 13, 2022*

### WINE ENTHUSIAST

**94** This well-balanced, moderately tannic yet relatively light-bodied wine is generous in blackberries and blueberries, with subtle cedar and mint accents that add complexity and interest. Expect it to gain even more complexity and richness with time.

*Jim Gordon, Wine Enthusiast Magazine, November 2023*



**96** The single-varietal 2020 Helios Sunbasket Vineyard Cabernet Franc is deep garnet-purple in color. Notes of kirsch, raspberry coulis, wild blueberries, and juicy red plums prance out of the glass, leading to touches of garrigue, graphite, and wild sage. The medium-bodied palate vibrates with energetic red berry and mineral-inspired flavors, framed by fine-grained tannins and lovely tension, leading to a long and perfumed finish on this beautiful wine.

*Lisa Perrotti-Brown, The Wine Independent, November 8, 2023*

### VIEW FROM THE CELLAR

**95** The 2020 Cabernet Franc "Sunbasket Vineyard" bottling from Cathy Corison is a lovely young wine that really shows its varietal character in this vintage, where it comes in at 13.5 percent octane. The bouquet is gorgeous, wafting from the glass in a mix of black cherries, sweet dark berries, tobacco leaf, dark soil tones, a hint of tree bark, gentle new oak and a smoky topnote. On the palate the wine is pure, full-bodied, focused and complex, with a beautiful core of black fruit, fine soil signature, suave, fine-grained tannins, excellent balance and a long, pure and very promising finish. This strikes me as the finest cabernet franc bottling I have yet tasted from Cathy Corison!

*John Gilman, View from the Cellar, March-April 2023, #104*



**93** A near neighbor to Corison's Kronos Vineyard, Sunbasket is just to the north; originally planted by André Tchelistcheff, it became part of Corison's estate in 2014. The vineyard includes several rows of cabernet franc, which Corison keeps separate from the cabernet sauvignon. In 2020, those vines produced a franc with youthful friskiness. It needs air to shed its oak, bringing out a dark sour cherry flavor leaning into savory tannins with a silken, refined texture.

*Joshua Greene, Wine & Spirits Magazine, 10/23*

## vinography

Medium to dark garnet in color, this wine smells of crushed nuts, plum and cherry. In the mouth, juicy and bright flavors of cherry and plum skin mix with pencil lead and dried herbs. Excellent acidity keeps things juicy, as limber, athletic tannins embrace the palate. Elegant. 13.5% alcohol. Score: between **9** and **9.5**.

*Alder Yarrow, Vinography.com, 8/26/23*



**94** The 2020 Helios Sunbasket Vineyard' Cabernet Franc is one of the great wines of its kind that I have tasted from this vintage. Red currants mark the nose alongside bright red raspberry, sandalwood and shades of purple rose petals. The palate comes off very bright with soft tannins that frame a core of bright red fruits, salty soils and a strong acid backbone. Enjoy this beautiful wine now and over the next few years.

*owenbargreen.com, April 27, 2023*



**\*\*\*\*\*** Another first rate Helios Cabernet Franc, this 2020 is a wonderful version of the varietal: fine and distinctive in aroma and flavor (blackberry, red currant, blueberry jam, rose petal, tobacco, herbs, black pepper, oak), nicely balanced, and long and mildly tannic on the finish. Very enjoyable now, but likely at its best after 2025, and beyond.

*Ronn Wiegand, Restaurant Wine, March 2024*

## International WINE REPORT

**93** The 2020 'Helios' Sunbasket Vineyard Cabernet Franc is a wonderful showing in this vintage. It seems the warmth from the vintage has amped up the volume a bit, resulting in a touch more opulence than previous releases, yet still retaining its elegance and freshness. There are pretty aromas of cherries, plums, tobacco, florals, dried spices and wet stones that all take shape. It possesses a medium-body with lovely overall balance and poise along with a silky, elegant framework that persists through the finish. Another gorgeous wine from Cathy Corison that should drink beautifully for a decade.

*Joe D'Angelo, International Wine Report, April 2023*

## purely domestic wine report

**93** The nose is fresh tar and sweet baking spice with notes of dried plum and dark cherry. The palate entry is densely-packed herb, black plum and sleek nectarine in the core finishing with textured blossom and soaked cherry. Beautiful balance.

*Doug Wilder, Purely Domestic Wine Report, Issue 10.1, August 1, 2023*



**92** The nose of the 2020 Helios Cabernet Franc Sunbasket Vineyard is a complex, beguiling mix of dried bracken, thyme, sage and ripe black cherries. Medium-bodied, it's softly dusty in feel, with a lingering, silky finish.

*Joe Czerwinski, Wine Advocate, December 29, 2023*

## JEB DUNNUCK

The 2020 Cabernet Franc Helios Sunbasket Vineyard comes from a site in St. Helena that was purchased by the Corisons in 2015, although they had sourced fruit from this site for decades. Offering a medium-bodied, elegant, if not even pretty, style as well as solid red and black fruits, some *herbes de Provence*, flowers, and leathery nuances, solid tannins and a good finish, it should evolve gracefully for a decade. It's 100% Cabernet Franc that spent 20 months in 50% new oak.

*Jeb Dunnuck, JebDunnuck.com, 12/26/23*