

JEB DUNNUCK

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MORLET *Family Vineyards*

2018 '**PASSIONNÉMENT**' CABERNET SAUVIGNON

100 POINTS

The ripest, most sexy, and opulent in the lineup, the 2018 ‘Passionnément’ is pure magic in a glass and tops out on my scale. Reminding me of some of the older Harlan Estate releases with its massive yet seamless style, this beauty boasts a monster bouquet of chocolate covered blackcurrants, lavender, crushed violets, new leather, unsmoked tobacco, and flowery incense. Coming from a selection of the top barrels in the vintage, this full-bodied, masterful Cabernet is gorgeously textured and has a stacked, layered mid-palate, perfectly ripe tannins, and a great finish. I followed this bottle for multiple days and it never grew tired or oxidized (which is rare). It’s one of those wines that’s going to drink brilliantly for all of its life. Enjoy this beauty any time over the coming 20-30 years.

2018 '**MON CHEVALIER**' CABERNET SAUVIGNON

99 POINTS

The 2018 ‘Mon Chevalier’ comes from the Knights Valley, just north of Napa Valley in the larger Sonoma County, and it always seems to me to have one foot in Napa and one foot in Sonoma. Boasting a similar ruby/purple color (as do all of the releases here), it’s slightly more reserved and stately (knightly, if you will), with building aromas and flavors of blackcurrants, toasted bread, dried violets, baking spices, and loamy earth. These carry to a pure, full-bodied, multi-dimensional Cabernet that’s flawlessly balanced, has ripe yet certainly present tannins, a notable sense of minerality, and a great, great finish. It’s just another incredible wine from Luc Morlet that can be drunk today with ample pleasure or cellared for 20-30 years if, for some reason, you feel the need to delay gratification.

2018 '**MORLET ESTATE**' CABERNET SAUVIGNON

98 POINTS

The ‘Morlet Estate’ cuvée comes from vines just beside the winery, right off Highway 29, north of St. Helena. It might be the most Bordeaux-like wine in the lineup with its textbook Cabernet notes of cedar pencil, green tobacco, and bouquet garni nuances, yet it still brings that classic Napa Valley fruit and richness, with loads of red, blue, and black fruits all present. Full-bodied, concentrated, and nicely structured on the palate, this beauty is balanced, has integrated acidity, ripe, building tannins, and a great finish. As with all these 2018s from Luc Morlet, it’s an incredible bottle of wine that’s almost impossible to find fault with. While it’s thrilling today, 2-4 years of bottle age are warranted, and it should evolve for decades.

2018 '**CŒUR DE VALLÉE**' CABERNET SAUVIGNON

98 POINTS

All four of the flagship Cabernets from Morlet are absolutely world class. The 2018 ‘Cœur de Vallée’ reveals a dense ruby/purple color as well as a flat-out awesome nose of crème de cassis, black raspberries, flowery incense, dried tobacco, and classy new leather; this carries to a full-bodied, opulent, seamless 2018 with incredible tannins, flawless balance, and a blockbuster of a finish. It’s classic To Kalon with it’s rich, powerful, yet weightless style. While unquestionably very different wines, I kept thinking of a great 1982 Bordeaux while tasting this beauty, as those show a similar level of class, richness, and balance. Enjoy bottles any time over the coming 2-3 decades. This is the finest vintage I’ve tasted for this cuvée.

2018 '**FORCE DE LA NATURE**' CABERNET FRANC

98 POINTS

Another magical vintage for this great cuvée, Luc Morlet’s 2018 ‘Force De La Nature’ offers a ruby/purple hue (it’s not completely opaque) as well as an extraordinary nose of blueberries, blackberries, flowers, graphite, lead pencil, and toasted bread. Incredibly layered and full-bodied on the palate, it’s nevertheless weightless and flawlessly balanced, with ultra-fine tannins and a building, majestic, seamless texture. All Cabernet Franc brought up in new barrels, this borderline perfect wine is going to benefit from 2-4 years of bottle age and cruise for 25+ years.