

Antonio Galloni
vinous
explore all things wine

July 2020

MORLET *Family Vineyards*

“This is gorgeous set of wines from Luc and Jodie Morlet.

The Cabernets are terrific, both in absolute terms and within the context of this very challenging vintage. Morlet fans will also enjoy the three Pinots, that capture both the richness, along with the pedigree of the year. Lastly, the Syrah is positively stellar.”

2017 ‘Force de la Nature’ 96 points *Oakville, Napa Valley Cabernet Franc*

A gorgeous, large-scaled wine, the 2017 ‘Force de la Nature’ offers a striking mélange of lifted aromatics and deep, pliant fruit. Rose petal, mint, raspberry jam, mocha and blood orange infuse the 2017 with tremendous character and nuance. This is a fabulous expression of Franc.

2017 ‘Mon Chevalier’ 96 points *Knights Valley Cabernet Sauvignon*

The 2017 ‘Mon Chevalier’ is rich, deep and unctuous, with all of the character that makes wines from this site so exciting. Graphite, inky blue/purplish fruit, spice and lavender infuse the 2017 with tremendous complexity. In the glass, the 2017 is savory, rich and expansive, not to mention hugely appealing.

2017 ‘Passionnement’ 95 points *Oakville, Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon*

The 2017 ‘Passionnement’ captures the essence of the Morlet style. Inky, dark and voluptuous, with tons of depth, the 2017 screams with character. Inky fruit, chocolate, leather, licorice and spice all build in a Cabernet endowed with superb density and power. The 2017 is big, bold and beautiful.

2017 ‘Morlet Estate’ 94 points *St. Helena, Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon*

The 2017 ‘Morlet Estate’ emerges from Luc and Jodie Morlet’s estate vineyard in St. Helena’s Northern Corridor. Sensual and alluring, the 2017 has so much to offer. Here the fruit expression leans towards the red end of the spectrum. Inky red fruit, blood orange, raspberry jam and a host of exotic floral/spice overtones give the Estate its extroverted personality.

2018 ‘Coup de Cœur’ 95 points *Sonoma Coast Chardonnay*

The 2018 ‘Coup de Cœur’ is a selection of the best barrels in the cellar. Not surprisingly, it brings together all the best elements of the wines, starting with soaring aromatics and beautifully layered fruit. Rich, unctuous and flamboyant, the 2018 is a super-classic Chardonnay from Luc and Jodie Morlet.

2018 ‘Ma Princesse’ 94 points *Russian River Valley Chardonnay*

The 2018 ‘Ma Princesse’ is explosive in the glass. Apricot, pear, dried flowers, marzipan and lemon oil all build in a Chardonnay that marries fruit intensity and energy. Time in the glass brings out a whole range of exotic tropical flavors before brighter, more saline notes bring it all together on the finish.

2018 ‘Ma Douce’ 94 points *Fort Ross-Seaview Chardonnay*

The 2018 ‘Ma Douce’ captures all the magic of the Wente clone in its unctuous personality. Apricot, spice, dried flowers and lightly honeyed notes open up with a bit of coaxing. Creamy, powerful and resonant, the 2018 has a lot going on.

2018 ‘Joli Cœur’ 95 points *Fort Ross-Seaview Pinot Noir*

The 2018 ‘Joli Cœur’ is a dense, explosive wine. Inky dark fruit, leather, licorice and mint all flesh out as this dramatic, full throttle Pinot shows off its personality. This is a decidedly rich style for the west Sonoma Coast.

2018 ‘En Famille’ 95 points *Fort Ross-Seaview Pinot Noir*

The 2018 ‘En Famille’ is fermented and aged exclusively in puncheon. It also has a brighter aromatic profile that works especially well here. Mint, blood orange and red/purplish berry fruit resonate with notable energy and vibrancy. This southeast-facing site yields a Pinot of real distinction.

2018 ‘Côteaux Nobles’ 94 points *Fort Ross-Seaview Pinot Noir*

The 2018 ‘Côteaux Nobles’ is the most overt of the Morlet Pinots. Dark raspberry, blueberry jam, licorice, spice, cedar, game and earthiness flavors build in an ample, dense Pinot endowed with tremendous size.

2017 ‘Bouquet Garni’ 96 points *Bennett Valley Syrah*

One of the highlights in this range, the 2017 ‘Bouquet Garni’ explodes from the glass with remarkable intensity. Inky dark fruit, licorice, grilled herbs, menthol and licorice give the Syrah tremendous presence. This cool site in Bennett Valley yields a Syrah with tons of aromatic intensity. A blend of three field selections, co-fermented and vinified in a combination of puncheon and stainless steel. More than anything, the 2017 is captivating, and also a fitting finish to this tasting.