

Quarterly Wine Cellar Selection - June 2022



This quarter we're featuring two wines from Napa Valley - Dominus 2018, #1 Wine Spectator's top 100 of 2021, and BOND 'Vecina' 2018. Both are based on classic left bank Bordeaux blends with a majority Cabernet Sauvignon. Dominus is dry farmed at the historic Napanook Vineyard, whilst BOND is from irrigated vines sitting at the western foothills of Oakville, just beneath Harlan Estate. Both wines will give you an insight into their individual winemaking philosophies, viticultural methods, soils and microclimates, with the Bordeaux influence of Christian Moueix at Dominus perhaps lending a more European approach in contrast to the concentrated and powerful style of BOND's 'Vecina' from Bill Harlan. Two producers that highlight Napa Valley's ability to make profound, age-worthy wines.



Dominus 2018, Napa Valley

Dominus Estate is the Napa Valley property of Bordeaux producer Christian Moueix. The wine is bottled from the historic Napanook Vineyard. Located at the foothills of the Mayacamas, the vineyard was planted in 1838 and continues to evolve under the stewardship of Christian Moueix. The estate's Bordeaux varietals benefit from the Yountville microclimate where temperatures are moderated by cool breezes from the San Pablo Bay. The resulting wine is a uniquely refined expression of this special terroir.

Perfectly balanced, Dominus 2018 maintains focus on the palate with aromas of sweet blue fruit, jasmine, cardamom, layers of plum and caramel. The wine finishes very long with lift and acceleration.

Blend: 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc, 5% Petit Verdot

Critical acclaim:

Wine Spectator - 97 points

This is tightly packed, with sleek, pure, driven notes of cassis, plum reduction and blackberry puree allied to an iron spine, while subtle alder, juniper, sweet bay leaf and tobacco notes peek in throughout. Very fine-grained, but impressively sturdy in feel, with a very long, lingering note of iron piercing the finish. For the cellar. Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2024 through 2040.

James Suckling - 100 points

This is incredible on the nose, offering hot stones, blackcurrants, iodine and wet earth. Full-bodied with a tight center palate, then it opens with a tannin structure that is weightless and spreads across the palate. Totally integrated on the palate. This is a magic-carpet wine. Really incredible. One of the reference points for the vintage. Drinkable now and please try a bottle, but it's one for the cellar.

Jeb Dunnock - 100 points

The flagship 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon checks in as 89% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Petit Verdot brought up in 40% new French oak. With an essence of Cabernet-like character in its darker currants, green tobacco, cedar, graphite, and floral aromas and flavors, this gorgeous wine is full-bodied and has bright yet integrated acidity, polished tannins, and a great, great finish. It's just gorgeously put together and a magical, flawless wine. It's going to take a decade to hit maturity but will evolve for 40-50 years in cold cellars. It is as good as it gets in classic, age-worthy Cabernet Sauvignon!



Bond 'Vecina' 2018, Napa Valley

From an 11-acre vineyard sitting near Bond's winery and the Harlan estate, the 2018 Vecina Proprietary Red is the perfect Napa version of a hypothetical blend of a La Mission Haut-Brion and Mouton-Rothschild. This is riveting Cabernet Sauvignon with great intensity, a killer fragrance of burning embers, charcoal, gravel, blackberry, cassis and earth. Fabulously intense and full-bodied, with majestic flavor intensity, a skyscraper-like mouthfeel, incredible purity and length, and supple tannins, this magnificent wine comes closest to the great Harlan Estate itself. Drink it over the next 35 years. These exceptionally impressive wines from Bill Harlan are all majestic in 2018.

Critical acclaim:

Vinous - 99 points

A regal, soaring wine, the 2018 Vecina is immediately captivating. Red fruit, iron, dried rose petal and exotic spice all soar out of the glass. Over the last two months the Vecina has acquired stunning aromatic presence to play off its deep, layered fruit. The 2018 is an absolute gem in the making. As a reminder, Vecina is sourced from Vine Hill Ranch, at the southern end of Oakville, where the Cabernets are distinguished by a beguiling combination of power and savory/earthy intensity.

Robert Parker - 98 points

The 2018 Vecina displays a deep garnet-purple color and offers slowly emerging classic notes of black currants, black cherries, blackberry pie and cedar chest with hints of charcoal, tar, pencil lead and fragrant earth. The full-bodied palate has a rock-solid structure of firm, grainy tannins and tons of freshness supporting the generous black fruits, finishing on a lingering mineral note.

James Suckling - 100 points

Seductive aromas of blackcurrants, plums and flowers, including roses. Really incredible this year with such verticality, depth and brightness. Goes on and on and on. Superb fruit character with plums and currants. Love it. Drinkable now, but give it time. Try after 2025.

