



JEB DUNNUCK

LES DEMOISELLES 2018

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **97**

Based on 62% Mourvèdre, 28% Syrah, and 10% Grenache brought up in 40% new French oak (with 10% in amphora), the 2018 Les Demoiselles is more finesse-driven, with medium to full-bodied aromas and flavors of blackberries, spiced meats, peppery herbs, and leather as well as a gorgeous sense of chalky minerality. It shows the pure, balanced style of the vintage and has enough structure to warrant 2-4 years of bottle age.

INSPIRACIÓN 2018

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **97**

The 2018 Inspiracion is the estate's take on Priorat and is 47% Grenache, 35% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Syrah, and the rest Grenache Blanc. Another thrilling wine, it has a brooding bouquet of blueberries, crushed rocks, violets, and Asian spices that carries to a full-bodied red offering silky tannins, remarkable purity of fruit, and a great, great finish. It's the finest vintage for this cuvée to date and will evolve for 15+ years. As with all these 2018s from Stephan, give bottles a few years.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2018

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **98⁺**

The first vintage since 2013 where Stephan released a straight Cabernet, the 2018 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve includes a splash of Petit Verdot and spent 14 months in new French oak. It's a beautiful wine in every sense and shows classic Paso Robles limestone character. (It actually reminds me of a great recent vintage of Pavie.) Lots of crème de cassis, crushed stone, lead pencil, and a touch of green tobacco all emerge from the glass, and it's full-bodied, with a pure, concentrated, focused texture, building tannins, and a magical finish. It's going to take a decade to hit maturity, but it's a brilliant wine in every way.

FOR HER 2018

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **98**

A blend of 53% Syrah, 35% Grenache, and the rest Viognier, the 2018 For Her sports a glass-staining purple color as well as rocking notes of ripe blackberries, currants, chocolate, crushed violets, and chalky minerality. Full-bodied, broad, and expansive on the palate, it still has a vibrant, pure, gorgeously balanced style as well as a finish that won't quit. Another incredible blend from this estate, it's going to benefit from 2-3 years of bottle age and cruise for 10-15 years in cold cellars.

CHLOÉ 2018

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **99**

A co-fermented blend of 72% Syrah, 21% old vine Grenache, and a solid chunk of Viognier, the 2018 Chloe reveals a dense purple color as well as a flawless bouquet of blackberries, blueberries, crushed stone, spring flowers, and licorice. Full-bodied, deep, rich, and structured, it's a blockbuster beauty that offers incredible elegance paired with power. As with most of these 2018s from l'Aventure, the cellar is going to be your friend.

ESTATE CUVÉE BLANC 2019

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **94**

Reminding me of a top Châteauneuf du Pape Blanc, the 2019 Estate White has gorgeous, tart peach and nectarine fruit characteristics as well as white flower notes, a beautiful sense of minerality, medium to full body, bright acidity, and a great finish. This stunning wine ranks with the top whites from California. The blend is 55% Roussanne, 23% Viognier, and 22% Grenache Blanc.

ESTATE OPTIMUS 2018

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **94**

A normal blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Petite Sirah, and 10% Syrah, the 2018 Optimus reveals a deep purple color as well as beautiful notes of crème de cassis, black licorice, tobacco, chocolate, and a rocky, earthy minerality. It's rich and medium to full-bodied, with beautiful purity and silky tannins. This is a terrific introduction into the wines of l'Aventure and will drink well for over a decade.

ESTATE CUVÉE 2018

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **100**

The 2018 Estate Cuvée checks 45% Syrah, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 15% Petit Verdot brought up in 90% new French oak. Tasting like the straight Cab, yet with more sex appeal, it offers a huge nose of crème de cassis, white flowers, crushed stone, graphite, and crushed flowers. This carries to a full-bodied, gorgeously textured red with incredible balance, no hard edges, a thrilling mid-palate, and a great, great finish. It's going to benefit from 5-6 years of bottle age and keep for upwards of two decades or more. Hats off to winemaker Stephan Asseo on another incredible wine, as well as, I suspect the wine of the vintage.

CÔTE À CÔTE 2018

TASTING DATE 9/01/2020

RATING **98**

Straight-up sexy, the 2018 Cote A Cote is a Grenache-dominated blend that includes 26% Mourvèdre and 23% Syrah, all aged in 35% new French oak. Stunning notes of black raspberries, ground pepper, Asian spices, and candied violets all flow to a full-bodied, concentrated wine that reminds me of a great vintage of Domaine de la Janasse's Châteauneuf du Pape Vieilles Vignes cuvée. It shows more chalky minerality with time in the glass and is pure, seamless, and beautifully put together. Drink it over the coming 10-12 years.