MOONE • TSAI

2023 Black List XL

Tasting Notes

Benefitting from moderate winter rainfall, and balanced temperatures throughout the 2023 growing season, the region enjoyed early bud break, followed by a cool spring that promoted even fruit development. Harvest began later than usual, allowing for optimal ripeness and flavor concentration. While yields ended up being slightly lower than average, the fruit quality proved exceptional with fine acidity levels and vibrant fruit characteristics.

Deep, dark and alluringly refined, this 100% Cabernet Sauvignon pays tribute to one of our most cherished vineyard sites in the hallowed St Helena AVA. Ripe black and red fruits along with sweet baking spices announce the wine's poetic intentions, with the attack unfolding in full verse, followed by stanzas of blackberry, boysenberry, further accented by hints of candied orange peel, and crushed cocoa nib. Fermented in stainless steel tanks, with an average of 3-days cold soak (4-days on skins), the wine is aged 20 months in 70% new French oak – to reveal a sinewy structure marked by silky tannins, medium+ acidity, a pleasing weight, and superb balance. Beguilingly beautiful, this Black List selection invites comparison to Homer's dark-eyed enchantress, Calypso in his epic poem *The Odyssey*. As Odysseus himself wondered, while held in captivity for seven years on Ogygia, home to the dangerous nymph, Calypso; who could resist the overtures offered by such a disarming temptress?

- *"...the goddess took me in in all her kindness; welcomed and cherished me and even vowed to make me immortal, ageless in all my days"*
    - ***The Odyssey***, Book 7, lines 292 - 297

The backbone of this radiant Cabernet draws from an acclaimed site located 180 feet above the valley floor on the western side of St Helena. Deep well-draining and characterized by a high percentage of old riverbed gravel and cobble stone, these Alluvial soils force the roots to search for water more earnestly. With vines planted in the mid 1980's in the old school California "sprawl" style, the fruit that is borne results in gorgeously concentrated Cabernets that are textural and darker in tone with chocolatey tannins.

Winemaker: **Philippe Melka**, Bordeaux-bred (Chateau Haut Brion, Petrus) and heralded by Robert Parker as one of the top nine winemakers in the world. "Where possible, I will minimize winemaking techniques in the cellar so I can create a wine that tells the story of the vineyard. In the end, it must be about the fruit."

Wine Facts

Varietal Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Production: 150 cases
Vineyards: St. Helena
Harvest Date: Oct.12th , 2023.
Cooperage: 70% new French oak (20 months): St. Martin, Francois Freres, Taransaud
Bottle Date: July 8, 2025