


SPIRITS

## Wines Of The Week: Simon Family Estate Cab

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We are firmly in grilled hamburger season—at least, that’s the case with my family. Every chance we get these days, we toss a few patties on the well-loved Weber kettle in our backyard. Something about the ritual, the charcoal chimney, the scrubbing of the grate with the wire brush, the monitoring of the flames with the kids by my side: It feels as emblematic of late-August as anything I can imagine. And when it comes to pairing those hamburgers with wine, I hit some sort of highlight not too long ago with my red Wine of the Week from the new, limited-production Napa Valley producer Simon Family Estate: The Simon Family Estate Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 2019.

Simon Family Estate was founded by Nada and Sam Simon, an Iraqi Catholic immigrant who, over the decades, has gone from nothing to creating a huge business empire,

including Simon Group Holdings, a private equity firm. The winemaker is Maayan Koschitzky, originally from Israel and one of the most respected winemakers in Napa Valley who has, over the years, worked with a who's who of producers, including Dalla Valle, Screaming Eagle, Lail Vineyards, Atelier Melka, and more.

His work with Simon Family is very impressive. He makes the two Double Blessings Cabs, each one an expression of the vintage but through the two distinct lenses of the two sons of Sam and Nada Simon: The "Michael" bottling is dense and rich, flecked with woody spices and has a long, kirsch and cassis-kissed finish, whereas the "Peter" is a bit more open-knit, with tannins that, while promising plenty of aging potential, make it seem a bit more generous right now. I also was very impressed with the "Tigress" Rosé of Grenache, the Golden Ore Sauvignon Blanc, and the Reserve Cab, which will be released in the spring of 2023: Its richness and depth were transporting, lively against its viscosity, with sweet tannins framing kirsch, sachertorte, allspice, clove, cinnamon, tobacco, vanilla, and a hint of something vaguely meaty.

But my red Wine of the Week is available right now through the [allocation list](#): The flagship Napa Valley Cabernet

Sauvignon 2019, a wine that balances crushed blue fruit with savory minerality at its core, flashes of kirsch and cafe mocha, and the perfectly charred top of a crème brûlée. Black licorice, a nod in the direction of cured black olives, and cassis linger through the long, elegant, powerful finish.

In a world of seemingly intractable problems, there is something heartening about absolutely fantastic wine being produced through a partnership between an Iraqi Catholic and an Israeli Jew, both of whom have found terrific success in the United States, and who have forged a beautiful friendship over the years through the always-uniting medium of wine.



Maayan Koschitzsky, left, and Sam Simon. SIMON FAMILY ESTATE