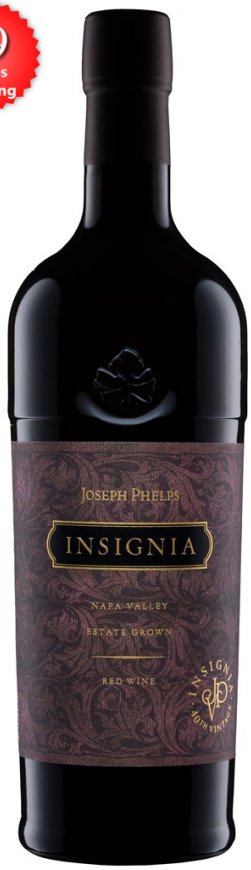
Joseph Phelps

Revered as one of the estate's finest vintages, the 2018 Insignia seduces with its sculpted tannins, radiant aromatics, and seamless structure.

JOSEPH PHELPS
VINEYARDS

99
James Suckling



Alcohol :14,50 %

Composition: 94% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Petit Verdot, 2% Malbec

Insignia 2018

California, USA

Region and Vineyards

Sourced exclusively from the **Joseph Phelps estate vineyards in Napa Valley**, the 2018 Insignia is a testament to the mosaic of terroirs across six premier sites. A significant portion of the blend comes from the **Yountville Vineyard** in the Oak Knoll District, known for cooler temperatures that promote freshness and aromatic lift. **Rutherford** contributes depth and classical Napa structure, particularly from the Banca Dorada vineyard, famed for its dusty, alluvial soils.

Additional complexity is layered in from **Stags Leap District**, **St. Helena**, and **South Napa Valley**, all regions that together provide textural finesse, fruit concentration, and mineral nuances. Each site is meticulously farmed, and the grapes are harvested at optimum ripeness, ensuring a wine of richness and balance that truly represents Napa Valley's grandeur.

Winemaking

The 2018 Insignia is crafted from a meticulous blend of **94% Cabernet Sauvignon**, **4% Petit Verdot**, and **2% Malbec**, all drawn from estate vineyards. Each parcel was vinified separately to preserve the unique character of its terroir, before being carefully assembled into the final cuvée.

The wine was aged for **24 months in 100% new French oak barrels**, using select cooperages to impart complexity, finesse, and ageability. This élevage provides a frame of gentle spice and supple texture, supporting the fruit while allowing it to shine. Bottled unfined and unfiltered, the 2018 Insignia is built for both early enjoyment and long-term cellaring.

Tasting Notes

- **Color**: Deep, inky garnet with vibrant ruby reflections and impressive opacity.
- **Aroma**: Seductive notes of blackberry and black cherry, intertwined with violet, mint, dark chocolate, clove, and sweet tobacco.
- **Palate**: Full-bodied and polished, showing layers of blackcurrant, crushed raspberry, cocoa, and savory undertones. Fine-grained tannins create a seamless mouthfeel, leading to an extraordinarily long and lifted finish.

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JOSEPH PHELPS
VINEYARDS

Insignia 2018

Did you know?

The 2018 vintage received one of the **highest accolades ever given to Insignia**, with **James Suckling awarding it 99 points** and calling it "one of the best Insignias ever." Its elegance and classical structure have drawn comparisons to the estate's legendary bottlings from the late 1970s.

Wine Pairing Ideas

- **Grilled lamb chops with rosemary**: A sublime match for the wine's herbal lift and structured tannins.
- **Filet mignon with black truffle jus**: Enhances the richness and dark fruit depth of the wine.
- **Wild mushroom and pancetta tart**: Savory and earthy tones pair gracefully with the wine's aromatic complexity.
- **Beef Wellington**: A luxurious pairing that mirrors the wine's opulence and elegance.

99 James Suckling

James Suckling (JS) : 99 Points (2018)

Blackberry and black chocolate with mint, conifer and clove. Sweet tobacco, violets and flowers, too. Some graphite. Cool and complex. Full-bodied with ultra fine, dusty tannins and a wonderful, extremely long finish. Savory and refined. A classic-styled 2018. This needs time, but is so approachable and gorgeous. One of the best Insignias ever. Alive and changing all the time. Leave this for five or six years, but so wonderful now.

98 WineEnthusiast

Wine Enthusiast (WE) : 98 Points (2018)

*This impressive blend combines 87% Cabernet Sauvignon with 8% Petit Verdot, 3% Malbec and 2% Cabernet Franc, aging the whole for 24 months in 100% new French oak. Elements of cedar, sage, dried herb and underbrush meet rich red fruit and chalky tannins, with a dusting of cocoa throughout. *Cellar Selection* (VB)*

98 JEB DUNNUCK

Jeb Dunnuck (JD) : 98 Points (2018)

The 2018 Insignia checks in as 87% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Petit Verdot, 3% Malbec and the rest Cabernet Franc, from a mix of vineyards (mostly in the southern part of the valley) aged two years in new French oak. It has an incredible bouquet of cassis, currants, dark chocolate, lead pencil, and tobacco, and while it's unquestionably Napa, it has a regal, structured, almost Bordeaux-like vibe as well. Full-bodied, perfectly balanced, and layered on the palate, with silky tannins, this quintessential Insignia is up with the finest vintages of this cuvée I've tasted and is in the same realm as the 1997 (the first vintage I bought for my personal cellar), 2001, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2016.