

## Les Lunes 'Black Vineyard Merlot' 2017

**Producer** - Diego Roig & Shaunt Oungouliau - Les Lunes/ Populis

**Provenance:** Coombsville AVA in Napa

**Farming:** 40 acres + purchased fruit. Always organic, usually older vines.

**Grape(s):** 100% Merlot

**Vineyard(s):** Farmed by Les Lunes since 2017, Black Vineyard is in the Coombsville AVA of Napa with 40-50 year old vines planted in thin volcanic soils punctuated by large boulders.

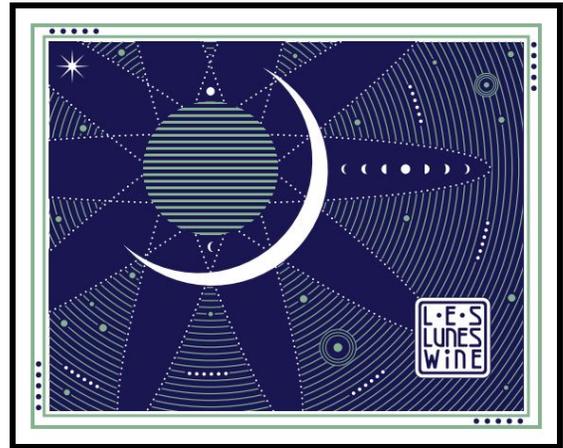
**Vintage:** long, cool vintage with harvest taking place 2-3 weeks later than normal resulting in lower alcohol, high acid wines with great ripeness to balance. Really prolific vintage for Carignane allowing Diego and Shaunt to experiment more freely.

**Fermentation:** Hand harvested bunches were destemmed, foot crushed and fermented spontaneously two weeks in polyethylene flex tank with daily punch downs. Aged for a year in neutral barrel, blended and aged for another year in barrel. Bottled and then aged for one more year before release.

**Fining/ Filtration:** none.

**Sulfite:** none added.

**Misc:** They've been producing this wine since their first vintage in 2014 and farming the vineyard since 2015. The focus of this wine is to make an old school 'golden era' Californian Bordelaise wine.



### The Producer:

Les Lunes represents the 'vigneron' project of Diego Roig and Shaunt Oungouliau of Populis fame. A vehicle for regenerative farming that has been steadily expanding, they have converted 40 acres of conventionally farmed vineyards to organic practices. Supplemented by historic vineyards grown by multi-generational farmers with the same ethos, the Les Lunes wines are studies in tactful winemaking that emphasize minimalism over cellar acrobatics. Les Lunes represents about one third of their 4,000 case output and with each successive harvest they inch closer to their goal of working exclusively with grapes they farm themselves. The cellar craft is gentle, patience is the primary tool used to get the best out of the bottle. These are wines that speak to yesteryear's dreamy Cali vibe, capturing the golden hue of 1970's Californian viticulture. Soooooo....time travel wine?

### The Vineyard

The Merlot comes from Black Vineyard, the first vineyard in the Coombsville AVA to have a vineyard designated wine made from it. Les Lunes has farmed Black Vineyard since 2017, rehabilitating it after a period of disrepair and converting to organics and dry farming. They heard about the site from a vineyard manager friend of theirs and were excited for the possibility to work a historic vineyard in Napa. The vines were planted in the 70's and 80's into a thin, volcanic soil punctuated with boulders to the point where they can't even drive a tractor through all of the rows.

### **The Cellar**

Hand harvested bunches were destemmed, foot crushed and fermented spontaneously for about two weeks in polyethylene flex tank with once daily punch downs. The two varieties were fermented separately and pressed once the wine went dry. Aiming for 'more than just a glou glou style' the Les Lunes reds are aged for three years knowing that most wine is drunk quickly after release. After press the base wines go into barrel where they spend a year tucked away in the back part of the cellar where it stays at an even 50 degrees to undergo slow malolactic conversion and finishing up any lingering alcoholic fermentation and natural clarification. The following Fall, the base wines are blended together and barrelled down again to go into the second winter super clean. The following Spring the wine starts to show 'great focus and resolution' in Shaunt's words as well as the dawning of tertiary characteristics. After a year in bottle the wine is released. No added sulfite. Shaunt says "I always had a chip on my shoulder about Napa" Shaunt says, "but people were just making blown out wines; lower alcohol and you can actually see it for what it is."

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