



Diamond Wine Club

CARTE BLANCHE

Napa Valley

When your family has owned and operated some of the greatest Bordeaux châteaux for nearly a hundred years and you have developed a great affliction for wine on your own, what's a person to do in such a situation?

Why, you would naturally design and operate your own boutique California winery, correct?

Such is the case with 44-year-old Nick Allen. His great, great grandfather was none other than the late Clarence Dillion, a half-French American financier whose love for French wine caused him to purchase France's oldest operating château, Château Haut-Brion, another Bordeaux masterpiece. These wines have consistently been placed among France's greatest wine treasures.

Nick Allen grew up in New Jersey and learned agriculture from his late grandmother. "For some reason, I've always felt destined to wind up in the wine business," declared Allen. "When I was growing up and even today, many people referred to me as 'the wine guy.' The family stories about our involvement in the French wine industry were legendary and always peaked my imagination."

After attending the University of Denver, Nick Allen spent nearly ten years dabbling in real estate and starting a family. But the wine bug kept calling and Allen finally gave in. He became a close friend of noted French-born winemaker Luc Morlet, gifted craftsman at the celebrated Peter Michael Winery of Knight's Valley, Sonoma County fame.

Morlet became Nick Allen's inspiration and even offered a name for his new winery. "He would always tell me, 'You have carte blanche to do whatever you want with this.' As time went by, I liked the way the name resonated, so I decided it would be Carte Blanche Winery for me."

Carte Blanche made its initial release in 2008 with an initial production of just under 750 cases. The wines debuted with excellent press and high scores from both competitions

and periodicals. The new winery was well on its way to success.

In the ten years since its inception, Carte Blanche has slowly grown to its present production level of around 1,200 cases. Nick Allen is a devotee of terroir and prides himself on producing wines inspired by Old World French winemaking mores. He is also dedicated to finding vineyard sites that display particular identities that can be passed on through the resultant wines that are produced.

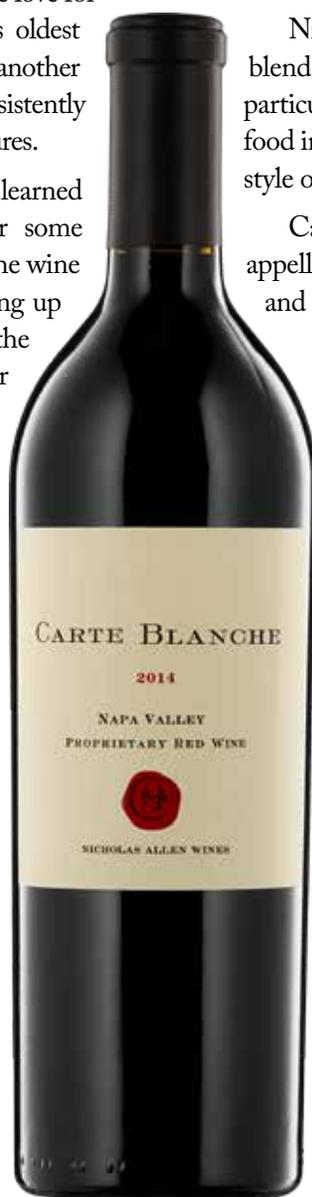
Nick Allen is particularly fond of his proprietary blends (red and white). He counts these wines as particularly accessible on the palate, a factor in wine/food integration that is often neglected in favor of wine style or taste preference.

Carte Blanche Winery is also a friend of multiple appellations and fruit is chosen on the basis of quality and not by a specific location.

Some four years ago, Allen handed over the winemaking chores to Helen Keplinger, a noted winemaker in her own right. Keplinger is a UC Davis grad and boasts stints with the likes of the iconic Heidi Barrett, and also Kathy Joseph (Fiddlehead Cellars), Michel Rolland (Harlan Estate, Dalla Valle) and David Abreu (Kenzo Estate, Abreu Vineyards). She also has extensive international experience with the noted Cellars Melis of the Spanish Priorat growing region just outside Barcelona.

Allen also credits his wife Teil (they met at the University of Denver) who is an accomplished chef and musical enthusiast (Tampa's Gasparilla Music Festival). "Teil is incredible in pairing wine and food," remarked Nick Allen. "She understands food subtleties and the effect wine has on certain dishes. Our mission at Carte Blanche Winery is to provide incredible taste experiences with our wines and Teil is an integral part of our winemaking process and decisions."

continued on page 2





NICK ALLEN, PROPRIETOR

continued from page 1

Nick Allen's next project is to find a permanent location in Napa Valley for his Carte Blanche Winery. "I know what I am looking for," he finalized. "It must be a good location with decent traffic flow. I am not looking for anything grandiose, but I need a place large enough to put a small winery and an inviting tasting room. I want the people who visit to be really comfortable when tasting our wines and appreciate the quality and care that Carte Blanche has to offer. After all, it's all about the people, isn't it?"

Allen calls his wines "his babies" and is a unique winery owner. If passion and persistence have anything to do with success, then Nick Allen and Carte Blanche Winery are well on their way. It is our pleasure to introduce this exceptional wine to our Diamond Wine Club members. Enjoy!

Carte Blanche 2014 Proprietary Red, Napa Valley

200 CASES PRODUCED

97 POINTS — *Jeb Dunnuck (formerly with Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate)*

"A blend of 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 18% Cabernet Franc, and the rest Petite Verdot and Malbec, the 2014 Proprietary Red is killer stuff that checks in near the top of the vintage. Deep purple-colored with loads of cassis and black cherry fruit intermixed with notes of chocolate, scorched earth, and subtle graphite, it's full-bodied, beautifully concentrated, and layered on the palate. It's a sensational Napa blend from winemaker Helen Keplinger."

94 POINTS — *Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate*

"... the 2014 Proprietary Red has a deep garnet-purple color and compelling cassis, black cherries, mulberries and plums on the nose with hints of chocolate box and menthol. Full-bodied and jam-packed with muscular black fruit, it has a very firm, ripe, fine-grained tannic backbone and a long, pure-fruited finish."

94 POINTS — *Antonio Galloni's Vinous*

"The 2014 Proprietary Red Wine is a powerful, tannic wine that is going to need at least a few years to fully come together, but it is impressive, even at this early stage. This is an especially vibrant 2014. Floral, savory overtones laced with violet, lavender, spice and menthol add shades of nuance throughout."



INSTANT Membership Rewards Pricing*

Save 13% to 16% off Winery Retail Price

Winery Retail Price \$125.00/btl.	2+ btls.	6+ btls.	12+ btls.
2-Bottle Members:	\$109.00	\$107.33	\$106.50
4-Bottle Members:	\$109.00	\$106.50	\$105.25

Add a *Plus!* Bottle to your next wine delivery
\$60-\$90/delivery

The *Plus!* Program automatically adds on one special wine to each regularly scheduled wine delivery, or as often as you like! *Plus!* wines are all highly-rated, very small production wines with availability too limited for all regular club members to receive. For more information, visit: GoldMedalWineClub.com/plus

**This month's Diamond Plus!
Featured Wine:**

Reynolds 2012 Reserve
Cabernet Sauvignon
Stags Leap District, Napa Valley

94 Points + Cellar Selection + Gold Medal
- *Tastings.com (Beverage Testing Institute)*

700 CASES PRODUCED



*Effective per bottle prices after Membership Rewards discount is applied at checkout.

Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in above prices. Membership Rewards does not apply to Sale or Special-Offer Wines.