

Napa's first black female winemaker begins 15th vintage at Lobo

Backed by classic training, pioneer Victoria Coleman enters her 15th vintage as winemaker at Lobo Wines.

NAPA, CA, USA, January 25, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Napa's first black woman winemaker, Victoria Coleman, begins 15th vintage at Lobo.

“

Victoria is the complete package-incredibly knowledgeable, devoted to the wine and maybe the best palate I've ever encountered. She is warm, kind and self-effacing.”

Randy Wulff

Victoria hails from Seattle and began in production at Stag's Leap Wine Cellars under the tutelage of owner Warren Winiarski and head winemaker Michael Silacci (Opus One). She graduated in viticulture and enology program at UC Davis whereafter apprenticed for a season at Chateau Mouton Rothschild under direction of Erick Tourbier. Upon returning to the US, she met with Krys and Randy Wulff of Lobo and was hired nearly “on the spot” to be the brand's winemaker in 2008, beginning with the

brand's Cabernet. Her first vintage in Napa was 2005 for Mario Bazan. She began consulting for a winery in China in 2010 and continued to work over there on and off until 2020. She has also crafted the MC4 Cabernet from St. Helena.

Her winemaking style begins with a sense of place, believing that wine is made in the vineyard first. Coming from a classic “school”, she seeks for complexity, finesse and balance in all the wines she produces.

Krys and Randy Wulff have been growing premium grapes in Napa Valley for over 20 years and now hold 21 acres under vine. The 17-acre vineyard in the Oak Knoll District contains Chardonnay and Syrah mostly sold to Lewis, Pinot Noir mostly sold to Mumm and Cabernet Sauvignon to wineries like The Prisoner, Pine Ridge and currently, Peju. Of the 42 acres they own at 1350 feet up the hillside of Atlas Peak, they have planted 4 to Cabernet Sauvignon with small blocks of Merlot and Petit Verdot for blending. All this fruit is reserved for their flagship wine. The family reserves only about 20-25 percent of overall production on the valley floor for wine under their own label, Lobo, Spanish for “wolf” and established in 2007. Both sites are cooler climate spots providing for a longer ripening season allowing the fruit to develop depth and complexity.

"Victoria is the complete package--incredibly knowledgeable, devoted to the wine and maybe the best palate I've ever encountered. While her skillset is remarkable, she is no diva. She is warm, kind and self-effacing." – Randy Wulff

Coleman took on the Pinot Noir with the 2013 vintage after its original winemaker retired. It was the 2007 Pinot Noir that started the enterprise. She now crafts every Lobo wine except the Chardonnay which is currently produced by Randy Lewis' team for the Wulffs. The wines consistently receive 90-plus ratings from the major critics and publications, with the 2015 Napa Valley Cabernet the highest rated California Cab by Decanter. Wines include rosé of Pinot Noir, Pinot Noir, Merlot, a Syrah blend and two Cabernets. She added to her experience by taking the reigns as Director of Winemaking at The Caves at Soda Canyon for 2021, the "custom crush" where Lobo is made and the Wulffs are investors. The facility now produces wines for 15 small Napa brands. Here she oversaw the cellar team and coordinated all winery production work in addition to crafting Lobo. She is hopeful for the future as a range of women with varied ethnic diversity are on the rise throughout the industry, seeking mentorship.

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