



## **Philippe Melka Pirouette**

Philippe Melka is one of a handful of Napa Valley winemakers with the Midas touch. All his wines seem to turn to gold, as true of Pirouette (his first wine from Washington State), as is it of such Napa Valley cult favorites as Hundred Acre, Seavey Vineyard, Dana Estates and Vineyard 29, among others. “Anything associated with (his) name is of undeniably high, high quality,” Robert Parker Jr. wrote in the March 2013 issue of *Food and Wine* magazine.

It was through a winemaking assignment with Napa Valley’s Quintessa and resulting friendship with Quintessa owner Agustin Huneeus Sr., that Philippe was introduced to Allen Shoup and Long Shadows. One of Allen’s longtime industry allies and closest friends, Agustin was the first vintner to embrace Allen’s vision for Long Shadows and believed Philippe was the perfect winemaker to craft the Bordeaux blend both he and Allen envisioned.

Certainly the Columbia Valley appealed to Philippe’s geology background. Born and educated in Bordeaux, Philippe earned a degree in geology from the University of Bordeaux. On a whim, he took a wine course during his final year of study, a decision he says that “proved to be life changing.” Continuing his studies, he earning a master’s degree in agronomy and enology and honed his skills at some of the most famous wineries in the world, including Chateau Cheval Blanc, Petrus and Chateau Haut-Brion, where his passion for cabernet-based blends, like Pirouette, developed.

Beyond France, Philippe’s travels around the globe in the early 1990s included work among the vines in Western Australia, Italy and Napa Valley, where he and his wife Cheri and two children have made their home since 1995. Together with Cheri, an accomplished wine professional in her own right, Philippe makes some of his most exciting wines under his own label. Métisse and CJ reflect the classic structure, balance and elegance that define all of his wines.

###