



Robert Parker's

Wine Advocate

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SCHERRER WINERY	2013	CHARDONNAY HELFER VYD.	RUSSIAN RIVER	(\$48.00)	WHITE	93
SCHERRER WINERY	2013	ZINFANDEL OLD & MATURE VINES	ALEXANDER VALLEY	(\$36.00)	RED	93
SCHERRER WINERY	2011	PINOT NOIR	RUSSIAN RIVER	(\$46.00)	RED	90
SCHERRER WINERY	2013	GRENACHE KICK RANCH	SONOMA	(\$36.00)	RED	91
SCHERRER WINERY	2012	SYRAH CALYPSO VYD.	GREEN VALLEY	(\$45.00)	RED	93+
SCHERRER WINERY	2012	CABERNET SAUVIGNON	ALEXANDER VALLEY	(\$55.00)	RED	95

It was good to see veteran winemaker and vineyard owner Fred Scherrer on my last trip to California. His first vintage was 1991, and he spent 10 years working with Tom Dehlinger. Because of Scherrer's interest in Rhône varieties, he encouraged Dehlinger to plant Syrah in 1989. That certainly turned out well for Tom Dehlinger. These are some upcoming releases from his total production of 4,000-6,000 cases per year. Scherrer is basically a one-man crew, although he has assistance. These were all impressive wines and to his credit he has kept a realistic pricing model – so, consumers take note.

The **2013 Chardonnay Helfer Vineyard** is put through full malolactic, aged in about 50% new oak and bottled with neither fining nor filtration. This is a combination of Old Wente and Dijon clones. This is a hell of a bottle of Chardonnay – cutting a broad swath across the palate, but with no heaviness just precision, plenty of honeysuckle, tangerine oil, white peach and tropical fruit such as subtle pineapple. Crisp, elegant and full-bodied, but pure and rich, with the oak playing a minor role, this is a beauty to drink over the next 5-7 years. From a vineyard planted in 1912, with subsequent plantings in the 1970s and 1980s, the **2013 Zinfandel Old & Mature Vines** was aged totally in French oak. A juicy, outrageously delicious Zinfandel, with full-bodied terrific black raspberry and black cherry fruit, pepper, earth and underbrush. Its opulence and lushness are pure hedonism at its best. Moreover, the alcohol is relatively tame by Zinfandel standards these days coming in at 14.5%. This should drink nicely for another 7-8 years. A real sleeper selection, given the variety and the vintage, is the **2011 Pinot Noir**. I don't know whether Scherrer intentionally held this back, but it is really strutting its

stuff now, with notes of rose petals, wood spice, forest floor, sweet black cherries, raspberries and a hint of strawberry jam. Spicy, round, delicious, sexy and lush, it should be consumed over the next 5-6 years. I was also extremely pleased with Scherrer's **2013 Grenache Kick Ranch**. It is a big boy, at 15% alcohol, but then Grenache has to be ripe in order to produce quality. This is a beauty, with classic notes of kirsch liqueur, loamy soil, pepper and spice. The wine has fabulous fruit, a full-bodied mouthfeel, and wonderful elegance with an already burgeoning complexity in its aromatics. This was a real sleeper selection as well and is best drunk over the next 5-6 years. Scherrer hit pay dirt again with his **2012 Syrah Calypso Vineyard**. Opaque purple with notes of steak tartare, lavender, blackberry and cassis, this is a big, rich, juicy and succulent Syrah to drink over the next decade. Lastly, and a real killer effort, is the **2012 Cabernet Sauvignon**. Alexander Valley has been producing more and more top Cabernets and deserves certainly to be considered up there with some of the best AVAs in Napa. This opaque purple wine has a beautiful nose of blueberry, blackberry, licorice and earthy undertones. Stunningly full-proportioned the wine has terrific depth of fruit and richness. Scherrer was telling me the Cabernet was planted on the old St. George rootstock that was favored and not prone to the Phylloxera scourge that took out all of the AXR rootstocks primarily in the 1980s. This long, rich, concentrated Cabernet Sauvignon also has licorice and unsmoked cigar tobacco nuances, giving it great complexity and palate presence. The price is a steal for what it is. Look for it to continue to drink well for 20-25 years. Tel. (707) 823-8980; scherrerwinery.com