

Space at Last!

We are pleased to announce the Scherrer Winery fall releases and 2003 Zinfandel futures offering at our annual **barrel tasting, August 6, 7, & 8 from 10 to 5** at the production facility, **4940 Ross Road, Sebastopol (707-824-1933)**. As usual, this is not advertised to the general public. Only those on our mailing list and their guests are invited to this 'private party.' The least crowded times to come should be on Friday, and early in the day on the weekend. If you expect to take any bottles of our released wines home with you from the open house, please plan protection for your wine from the possibility of high temperatures. An ice chest or at least a styrofoam shipping container would be a good idea. Anyone with extra used styrofoam shippers may bring them to share.

More floorspace: During the 6 ½ years we have been in our current location (which occupies about 1/3 of an insulated, refrigerated metal building) we have increased production to the point where there was often little airspace left inside. Every year I seemed to find another way to wedge in an additional fermenter, store another bit of equipment outside under a tarp, or rustle up storage space for things elsewhere. The costs were significant: additional expenses, inconvenience, time and mind space devoted to logistics, and working most weekends in order to make up for time spent loading and trucking things between locations.

This summer, we were offered a lease on the rest of the building. We are currently preparing the additional space and moving in. Hopefully, we will be well-situated by the open house. Besides more room, sinks with real drains (goodbye bucket), there are even proper bathrooms inside. However, this doesn't mean a continued increase in production. The past years' increases have met my physical limit at this point. Instead, it means barrels will be stacked closer to the ground and I can think more about winemaking, less about shuffling. The new entrance should be well marked by August.

The young 2003 wines: The Chardonnays from the Scherrer Vineyard and the Helfer Vineyard are quite exciting. I am thrilled by their balance and flavors. From the Fort Ross Vineyard, we only made Pinot Noir in 2003. We have been unable to absorb the increasing production as this coastal vineyard approaches full production, so the vineyard owners began taking the majority of their Pinot Noir and all of the Chardonnay and Pinotage elsewhere this year. The small portion of the vineyard we did work with had a very low crop, giving us only a few barrels of profoundly dense wine. In the Russian River Valley, some blocks of Pinot Noir that had very low soil moisture were challenged by unusual harvest-time heat. Most blocks, fortunately, were not adversely affected. The resulting RRV blend could be our most satisfying yet, which is saying a lot. The Bliss Vineyard Syrah promises a bright future as well. The 2003 Cabernet Sauvignons from Dad's vineyard have a long life ahead in barrel, but already show great promise. At this point, these young Cabernets remind me of the 1999 and 2002 vintages. The 2003 Zinfandels have gorgeous ripeness without being over-the-top. During the blending trials, I have been taken with their depth, smoothness, and balance. I plan to rack them for the first time shortly after you receive this.

FUTURES

2003 Shale Terrace Zinfandel futures: Shortly after barreling this wine, it seemed somewhat atypical: kind of like the 1999 Shale Terrace crossed with our typical 'OMV'. But after malolactic fermentation and several months barrel time, it slid comfortably into its classic profile of stone fruits and unique texture. I thought only Pinot Noir was supposed to do this? Because of the limited production, this is offered 'first crack' to those who bought Shale Terrace in the past. About 200 cases to be produced. *Estimated retail at release: \$24 per bottle. Futures price: \$195 per case. Futures released April 2005*

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2003 Old & Mature Vines Zinfandel futures: Rich, round and deep, the 2003 OMV has the ‘berry pie thing’ of the 1993, but it also has additional texture and sweet earthiness from its increased time on the lees before the first racking, similar the 1999. Both of these older vintages are aging and developing well, and this should be no exception, yet I think the 2003 is beginning a bit rounder and fuller than either of those vintages at a similar stage. Since 1997, there has been a blueberry note in our OMV’s, and I think it has something to do with the more ‘reductive’ aging regime we have gravitated toward since then. I like the complex interplay between the wide range of fruit characters and our winemaking choices that we see in these long-aging wines. I know of no Zinfandels like these. About 800 cases to be produced. *Estimated retail at release: \$28 per bottle. Futures price: \$225 per case. Futures released April 2005*

FALL RELEASES

2002 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir: Essentially from some ‘declassified’ lots of Fort Ross Vineyard Pinot Noir (vineyard designate will be released this November), this wine has nothing to apologize for...at all. It could have been another vineyard designate with some fancy name, but that well ran dry on the RRV Pinot Noirs below. It leans slightly more toward a classical Burgundian brightness and structure than the 2001 vintage. This is a fine example of what the region can achieve. 280 cases produced. *\$35 per bottle, \$18 per 375 mL.*

2002 Russian River Valley Pinot Noirs: Similar to the situation in 1999 that led to the immensely popular ‘*Big Brother*’ and ‘*Little Sister*’ RRV Pinot Noir bottlings, I was faced with certain 2002 fermentation lots that seemed to ‘fight’ when combined with other particular lots. After trying many different approaches, they ultimately sorted themselves out into two different blends that I am very happy with. It was tempting to repeat the 1999 nomenclature, but that wouldn’t be fair to any of the wines, because while there are some similarities to the previous pair, there are important differences too.

2002 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir: The first, larger 2002 blend is a great example of our style of RRV Pinot Noir with a nod (and maybe a wink) in the direction of ‘*Little Sister*.’ Beautiful red-fruit character, precisely centered on the palate make this my current favorite of the two, and something I consider our typical RRV style. More complex than our 1999 ‘*Little Sister*,’ it is called simply ‘Russian River Valley.’ 860 cases produced. *\$35 per bottle, \$18 per 375 mL, \$72 per 1.5L.*

2002 Russian River Valley ‘Laguna’ Pinot Noir: This, the other blend, has a bit more tannin, thicker texture, darker fruits and an interesting savory character on the finish suggesting it as the more masculine of the two, like ‘*Big Brother*.’ Since the three vineyards in the ‘*Laguna*’ bottling formed a triangle bisected by the Laguna de Santa Rosa, I lobbied hard among family and friends for the name ‘*Laguna Triangle*’. Despite the fact that, like the famous region near Bermuda you could also get lost in this wine, I could not generate enough enthusiasm among my closest critics to feel comfortable putting geometry on the (front) label. So, we settled on ‘*Laguna*’ instead. 580 cases produced. *\$35 per bottle, \$18 per 375 mL, \$72 per 1.5L.*

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2003 Vins Gris: Normally, we make only one of these each vintage. This year, there were two very small lots that did not improve the blend, but were wonderful on their own. So, we bottled three editions this year.

2003 Vin Gris: Our usual blend of Zinfandel and Pinot Noir, this is my favorite vintage to date. There is an 'electricity' to the flavors and balance that I have not seen in any other domestic dry rosé. The Press is beginning to catch on. 230 cases produced. *\$14 per bottle, \$30 per 1.5L*

2003 Vin Gris of Pinot Noir: This wine has a delicacy that is perfect for lighter fare. It has cherry and strawberry flavors plus zippy acidity that keeps it fresh and alive. It's hard to believe that it would not fit into the above blend, but both wines are better as individuals. We bottled this in clear burgundy bottles. 32 cases produced. *\$14 per bottle (limit 4)*

2003 Vin Gris of Cabernet Sauvignon: Originally planned to bring structure and depth to the usual blend, this did not harmonize with the Zin and Pinot Juice. The varietal flavors come through, but in a uniquely refreshing package. Serve this one up blind to your favorite wine nut. I plan to make a bit of this in the future regardless of its suitability for our main blend. 22 cases produced. *\$14 per bottle (limit 4)*

The 'Wishes' column on the order form is for requests above the limits on a given wine or in the case of Shale Terrace Zinfandel futures if you have not purchased Shale from us in the past. After July 26, we will begin filling 'wishful' orders in the order arrived as long as supply lasts. **The fall releases will be available for pick up at the August open house.** If you schedule pick-up for your wine and are not able to make it, arrangements will be made to ship the wine to you and the shipping costs added to your invoice. Shipments of the fall releases will vary depending on when weather in your area will be kinder to the wine. If you are anxious to get your wine sooner, I suggest upgrading to Fed-Ex second day or DHL overnight to minimize exposure to extreme temperatures.

The 2003 Zinfandels will be released in the spring of 2005. We can only set up futures purchases for either: 1) pickup at our open house in April or 2) shipping to the legal or 'reciprocal states' listed on the order form. Prior to release, we will send out a letter outlining any concrete changes in shipping laws that may occur after now.

The November 'Library' open house was such a hit last year, we plan to continue doing it. The 2001 Scherrer Cabernet Sauvignon, both the 2002 Fort Ross Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, the 2002 Helfer Chardonnay and the 2002 Bliss Syrah will be released then, plus we will reassess our library and offer a few bottles of selected older vintages as well.

The 2004 growing season so far: Very early budbreak and unusually warm springtime weather have us looking at a very early harvest. Due to a rapid change in the weather during the bloom of some varieties/regions, there will be a lower than usual crop in many areas. My father feels that there will be very little Zinfandel and a scarce bit of Chardonnay from his vineyard this year. His Cabernet seems to have a normal to light crop of loose clusters. Things seem pretty normal to slightly light in the Russian River Valley and at the Fort Ross Vineyard on the Sonoma Coast. The way most things look, we could have a fantastic vintage ahead if weather cooperates.

Thanks for your continued support. It allows us to do what we love to do.

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Below is a map of the area local to the winery. It assumes you have navigated as far as Sebastopol or Santa Rosa. This map is not to scale. **The winery address is 4940 Ross Road, Sebastopol.** If you get lost, the telephone number at the building itself is (707) 824-1933.

Please drive slowly down the driveway. Children (including our own) will be playing nearby. **The new entrance is around the back on the west side of the building.** Parking on the gravel side will now be closer to the entrance, so don't hesitate to drive clockwise around to the other side of the building.

