

Another drop in the bucket.

This marks my thirtieth vintage at a commercial winery. It seems like a larger number than it feels, but I did the math three times and got the same answer, so it must be true. The thinning of the hair on top as well as the increasing gray in what remains provides supporting evidence of this. Fortunately, these years of experience made 2008 a fairly easy vintage to deal with those curve balls that nature threw in this year.

First there was the spring frost(s), which reduced the amount of crop in certain areas and increased the variation between each clusters' ripeness. Our antidote: My wooden sorting table and experienced (thank God) crew helped deal with whatever the fantastic growers I work with had not removed already. Then, there was unfavorable weather at bloom, further decreasing crop levels (nothing to be done about that, but acceptance has utility for maintaining ones' focus). Finally, there was a two-week-plus heat spell just as the earliest sites/varieties were nearly finished ripening and were most fragile to heat and dryness. 2004 was the most recent vintage to remind us about that, so without a foggy period on the horizon, waiting was not in the cards. In the end, it was a good vintage to be prepared for anything and to be physically ready from a human as well as facility standpoint.

Yields, however, felt like a drop in the bucket. Happily, not every vintage has had tiny yields and it takes several years to complete a wine for consumption. We are now releasing several wines from 2005 and 2006 as well as digging into the library once again to illustrate the development that our wines can achieve.

New Releases

2006 Helfer Vineyard Chardonnay

This vintage yielded a very rich and full wine. Lime zest, star fruit, minerality/wet stones on the nose, enveloped by a fairly thick texture in the mouth with sufficient, enlivening acidity are the hallmarks of this vineyard. It is just a baby with great promise. 140 cases produced. *\$38 per bottle. Half bottles \$20. Magnums \$80.*

2006 'Big Brother' Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

We first used this name as part of a pair of Russian River Valley Pinot Noirs from 1999: 'Big Brother' and 'Little Sister' was an effort to describe their personalities. I resurrected part of this designation as a way to describe the scope of this particular wine and that it has darker fruits as well as the more typical coastal red fruit. It is very full and generous yet seems quite able to keep its ample self contained within its corset of structure (not so 'brotherly' terms, I'm afraid). Probably should have called it 'Hoochie Mama.' Everyone who has tasted this from barrel or shortly after bottling has inquired as to when it would become available which is a very good sign. 420 cases produced. *\$50 per bottle. Half bottles \$27 Magnums \$104.*

2005 Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon

When a portion of dad's vineyard in Alexander Valley does not fit perfectly into the vineyard designate or the appellation bottling (below), AND it is really nice, what do you do with it? Bottle it separately and give it a different name. Maybe try a different approach to the cellaring. Here, minimal use of new oak allows the simple pleasure of the varietal to show itself at a price suited more for everyday use. It has straightforward cassis, plum, with a clean, refreshing finish. Past bottlings like this have been very popular. 80 cases produced *\$25 per bottle*.

2005 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

This is my favorite bottling of this particular wine to date, although a recent half bottle of the 2000 vintage gives it a real run for its money given the 5 year head start it enjoyed. Great structure, depth and focus portend a long life, yet I am happily surprised at how 'open' it becomes a day after opening or a few hours' time after decanting. The aromas and flavors of cassis, black and a touch of red fruit seem as though one is eating some of these alongside a garden of freshly-tilled loam. The use of some new French oak barrels here adds depth to the texture, and bridges the 'line' between the fruit and earth. 280 cases produced *\$38 per bottle*.

2006 Russian River Valley Syrah

While we still had access to the Bliss Vineyard Syrah, I arranged to work with two additional Syrah Vineyards beginning in 2006. One of these vineyards was converted to Syrah (at my suggestion) from other varieties. It has taken a couple of years after grafting over for it to settle into its 'groove' and display its true personality. Therefore, thru careful blending I am happy to offer this nice expression of Russian River Valley Syrah. Both this and the above two wines were bottled in late summer and really show their stuff several hours after decanting. Pretty, not-over-the-top Syrah character, blue fruits, black pepper mild earthiness and mouth-watering succulence make it a wonderful wine for fall and winter cuisine. One of the things I love about cool-climate Syrah is the perfume it has as well as some mild similarities to large-framed Pinot Noir. 380 cases produced *\$30 per bottle*.

Library Wines

Every year at this time, we take a fresh look at what we have held back for our library and retrospective tastings. We also like to pull out the magnums, since the holidays are such a great time for the large format bottles in addition to older gems. In order to give everyone a fair chance, and to be able to make quick updates as wines sell out, we will post a library order form on our website **beginning 9 AM PST Saturday November 15** at www.scherrerwinery.com/library. Alternatively, you can call the office and we can fax a current list to you. Some items may only include a bottle or two and they will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Quantity discounts will carry over from any wines ordered on this mailer which total 12 or more 750 mL bottle equivalents.

Chardonnay: I have been impressed with how well these develop with several years in the bottle. The 1999 and 2000 Scherrer Vineyard wines have exceeded my expectations and are in a beautiful spot right now. Anything younger is, well, just younger. The Helfer wines have always seemed to need an extra couple of years to really blossom (like that skinny kid in High School) into something very special. The 2004 has just begun to turn that corner. 1998 (our first vintage of that one) is right there. Since we have been aging the Chardonnays a few more months in barrel beginning with 2003/2004, it will be interesting to see how these develop as they reach their first decade.

Pinot Noir: While I have been working with this grape for 20 years, we only have bottlings under our own label since 1999. The ‘Big Brother’ and ‘Little Sister’ wines should be enjoyed before too many more years’ time. I think the material I work with now from Russian River Valley is much more structured and age-worthy. The 1999 Hirsch Vineyard ‘Diaphanous’ has never ceased to surprise me with its longevity, despite its relative delicacy and transparency as a youthful wine. Every year, I have tried to pull out a few more bottles for the library offering with great pain and suffering as I hate to part with them. 2000 was a more structured vintage for our Pinot Noirs which has allowed them to follow a more predictable course over time. The Hirsch bottling from this vintage has not changed much in recent memory.

2001 and 2002 are a bit more relaxed wines, with the 2002 vintage showing a little more youth (duh) and juiciness that has been there all along. The Russian River Valley wines are in a golden spot now. No need to wait, yet no hurry. The Fort Ross wines are running a longer race, for sure. The 2002 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir (actually all from Fort Ross as well) reminds me of the 1999 Hirsch with a bit more up front acidity and ‘snap’ to it. It’s lighter color might make one think it lacks concentration, but it *is* Pinot Noir, after all. Color does not always correlate with concentration. 2003 Fort Ross ‘High Slopes’ is beginning to open up (a little). The 2004 ‘High Slopes’ has so much potential, it would be infanticide to open that if there was something else more developed on hand.

Zinfandel: We just shared a magnum of 1999 OMV with friends. It is still in the same beautiful place as I remember it last year at this time. 1998 is more developed. I remember wondering which would age longer. I had put my money on the 1998. I was wrong. 1999 gets the prize. 1998 is good, but there is no benefit in holding this longer. 1997 could go either way. 2000 has also gotten into a spot of ‘suspended animation’ where it is happy. I did not expect this to do so well due to its uncharacteristically high alcohol for us (over 15%), but it has. 2001-2003 are all in prime drinking shape. 2004 has just entered that stage.

Cabernet Sauvignon: There is a reason some of the most long-lived wines are based upon this variety. None of our Cabernets are in danger of getting tired. True, we only started in 1997. But I have gravitated toward making Cabernet with a bit more structure than the first couple of vintages. Any vintage from 1997 and 2001 are sufficiently developed to give more pleasure than when they were released. 2002 and later are all fairly ‘primary.’ Most of us are accustomed to drinking wines so young. There is nothing wrong with that. I am simply reminded of why we age wine a few years when I have something with a bit of development. Our style is in an interesting spot between what some would call “Old World Underripe” and “New World Overripe.” Purists on either side cannot understand anything slightly outside of their particular ‘box.’ I’d rather have a bucket than a box.

Open House

November Open House Friday the 21st, Saturday the 22nd, and Sunday the 23rd from 10 to 5 at the winery located at 4940 Ross Road, Sebastopol (707) 824-1933. You will be able to taste the new releases just described as well as a selection of older library wines, some of which will also be for sale. As usual, this is not open to the general public – just for those of you on our mailing list. **The new releases and library wines will be available for pick up at the November open house.** If you schedule pick-up for your wine and are not able to make it, we will make arrangements to ship the wine to you

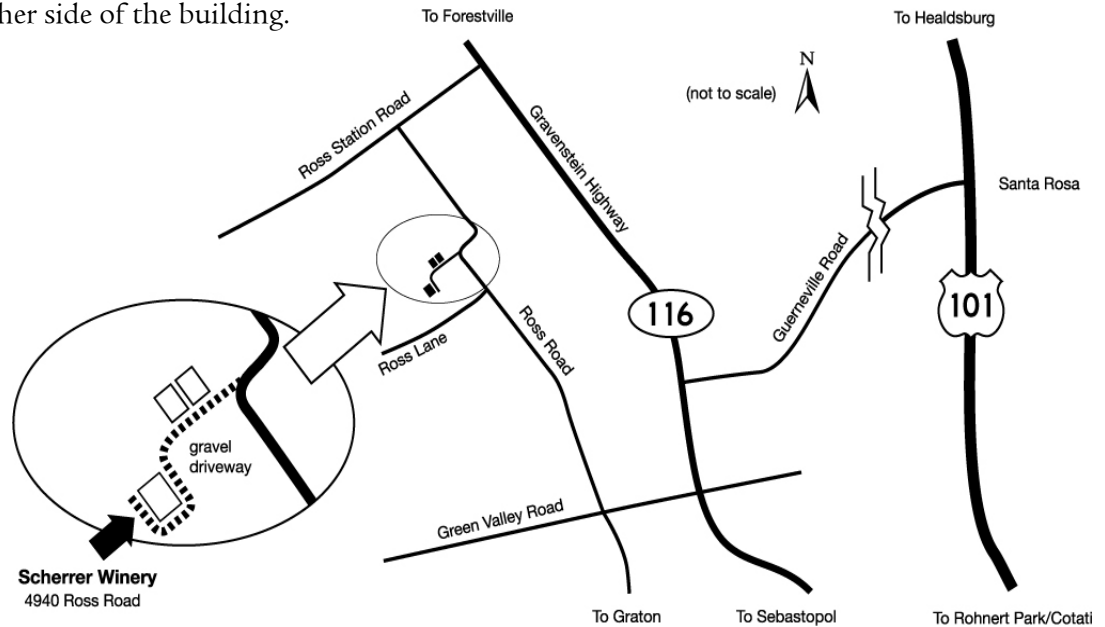
and the shipping costs will be added to your invoice. Shipments of all wines will vary depending on when the weather in your area will be kinder to the wine.

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



Directions

Below is a map of the area local to the winery. 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. The entrance and gravel parking is on the west side, so don't hesitate to drive clockwise around to the other side of the building.



Shipping Information

An adult Signature is required upon delivery.	750 mL	Half Bottle	Magnum
UPS to most greater San Francisco Bay Area residents	\$2.25 (\$22/case)	\$1.50/bottle	\$4.5/bottle
UPS to CA residents	\$3.25 (\$32/case)	\$1.75/bottle	\$6.5/bottle
UPS to CO, ID, OR, NM, NV or WA	\$3.75 (\$38/case)	\$2.0/bottle	\$7.5/bottle
UPS to IA, IL, MO, ND, NE, TX, WI, or WY	\$4.25 (\$44/case)	\$2.25/bottle	\$8.5/bottle
FedEx 2-day to states above plus: DC, FL, GA, LA, MI, MN, NC, ND, NH, NY, OH, VA, or WV	\$8.25 (\$78/case)	\$4.75/bottle	\$16.5/bottle
Overnight to any above state plus: delivery to address with liquor license (any state). HI or Alaska higher	\$10 (\$90/case)	\$5.0/bottle	\$20/bottle