



Something Special

Most wineries seem to talk about how special their sites, winemaking techniques, label design, art collections, celebrity connections are, etc. We are probably little different, though we don't make any claims for the artwork or celebrity connections. That said, I have to admit that in this offering we can make a case of having something very special from the wine's point of view.

We have Zinfandel futures from a pretty much 'no-brainer' vintage, a Chardonnay from a vintage fraught with challenges in various locales that absolutely 'hits it out of the park', and an extraordinary Pinot Noir from an extraordinary site operated by extraordinary people in what is considered an extraordinary vintage. Without sounding like Dana Carvey's old shtick on Saturday Night Live, 'now isn't that special?'

Open House

On August 6th, 7th and 8th, from 10 AM to 5 PM we are pleased to have our summer open house with barreled Zinfandel available for tasting and futures purchase, as well as some new offerings of recently bottled wines. The winery address is **4940 Ross Road, Sebastopol, 95472**. If you get lost, the telephone number at the building itself is 707-824-1933.

Zinfandel Futures

2009 Scherrer Vineyard 'Old & Mature Vines' Zinfandel Futures

We are back to our normal modest yields with the 2009 vintage. You have probably already heard that this is a 'good' (special) vintage, meaning to me that it is fairly easy to make delicious wine with good depth and rather forward fruit. I also found it fairly easy to blend the fermentation lots to create this wine because the amounts from each area within the vineyard happened to be very close to the proportion needed for optimal balance and my idea of the typical expression of this property as a whole. Zinfandoodle (our non-vintage blend of 'leftovers') exists because this is not always the case.

The 2009 OMV has a nice balance of red raspberry, cherry, and plum in the foreground of the aromas. The black fruits really come to the foreground in the mouth, along with some cherry-skin that implies that the structure is built more from grape skins rather than seeds and stems. Another clue of this is how deeply-stained my tongue is after tasting thru the blend trials. After a couple of days in a partially-emptied sample bottle, the whole package is more centered around perfectly ripe wild blackberries. It is quite full-bodied, yet the alcohol remains modest by current Zinfandel standards. I remember that with our first vintage, 1991, I was concerned that the 14.2% alcohol would be too much. Now, this is called 'low alcohol' Zinfandel. In another decade, we may be back to calling this 'high alcohol stuff again.' 800 cases to be produced. *Estimated release price: \$32 per bottle. Futures price: \$240 per case.*

2009 Scherrer Vineyard 'Shale Terrace' Zinfandel Futures

Happily, while this is still a very small block, there was an essentially normal yield here too, so we will not have to limit to only samplers this year. This new vintage really reminds me of the 2008 with slightly less structure. Good ol' stone-fruit thing, stony rather than luxurious texture, earthy, vaguely stony finish (no fires to attempt to attribute that to this year – just typical expression). 160 cases to be produced – but it should still sell out quickly, as usual. If you have purchased Shale before you'll receive a "First Crack" order form and those of you that haven't (but would like to) can "Wish list" an order. "First crack" orders are processed in the order they are received until August 4. We then process "Wish List" orders in the order they were received as wine is available. *Estimated release price: \$28 per bottle. Futures price: \$210 per case.*

Summer Releases

2007 Platt Vineyard Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast

This is new, special, and deserves some space for background. After retiring as CEO and Chairman of Hewlett-Packard, Lew Platt became a top-level executive at Kendall-Jackson, where he honed a passion for great wine and made connections with world-class vineyard and winery professionals. After his mission there was complete, he and his wife, Joan, committed themselves to growing world-class grapes for a few lucky wineries. At the time, we had very few examples of Pinot Noir under our own label so they trusted in what I had done with Zinfandel and Cabernet Sauvignon for ourselves and with Pinot Noir for others. Whether it was more experienced management sense on their part or just simple trust that allowed this, I am grateful for it and have tried to maximize the potential of the grapes from 'our' blocks. Tragically, Lew died suddenly and unexpectedly before a single grape could be harvested. Joan has seen to it that Lew's dream continues.

This is our first vineyard designate release from this fine vineyard, and the last new Pinot Noir release from 2007. The vineyard is located outside the coastal town of Bodega, where that famous Alfred Hitchcock movie 'The Birds' was filmed. Raccoons proved to be more of a hazard as they ate the entire first vintage of the few vines that bore fruit for the first year. By the time we made this wine there were more acres of fruit bearing grapes than raccoons.

We are one of the very lucky few wineries working with the Platt family and their viticultural team. It is a convergence of viticultural commitment, experience and cooperation with the winery. The man who designed the vineyard, Daniel Roberts, and I first met while we were both interviewing for the same vineyard manager position in 1984 [he got the job]. We worked together for a short time after that until I got my first head winemaking job. He is a frustratingly tireless perfectionist.

The wine: Amazing complexity, with the red, black and blue fruits all take turns playing lead while more subtle elements: mild earthiness, minerality and supporting oak play harmony. It has incredible depth and texture considering its transparency to its subtle elements. This site is very cool in that it is spared excessive heat, so the fruit can be quite exposed to the sun without cooking it (in most of the Russian River Valley, we are careful not to over-expose the fruit in accordance with its typical expected climate conditions.). Actually, in such a cool, moist coastal location exhibitionism of one's fruit is desired to avoid rotting of the (wine) grapes. One of the results is surprisingly dark (wine) color. However, it is not so cold as to prevent an amazing degree of physiological development of these Pinot Noir grapes. Everyone who has tasted this wine has really been attracted to it. Critics are no exception. *Burghound Issue 36* "This is first-rate and highly recommended. 93" and *Tanzer's IWC by Josh Reynolds* "Quite lush and concentrated 91(+?)". 90 cases produced. *\$75 per bottle.*

2008 Scherrer Vineyard Chardonnay

After working with this block of Chardonnay for 12 years, I am impressed with this wine's capacity to age and develop interest with time. Lately we have raided some 8-year old bottles from library to serve at various winemaker dinners and tastings, much to the happy astonishment of those in attendance. California Chardonnay is not "supposed" to age and develop like this, especially Alexander Valley fruit. One local restaurant has raided our entire remaining stash of 375's from 2001 and 2002 and another has asked for all the recently "rediscovered" 375's of our 1999 vintage. The winemaking is still pretty much the same these days except that we now employ slightly less new oak and the wine is in barrel for 16 to 18 months rather than 12. From this we expect to gain more complexity in the short-term without sacrificing future development and longevity.

The 2008 vintage gave us a wine with incredible acidity and remarkable focus. There is lime-zest, freshly cut pear, slight hints of crème-brûlée which make you half wonder which kind of dessert is nearby...until you get the wine in your mouth. Then you're back to the shellfish course. As with the 2007, the wine took an exceptionally long time to complete malolactic fermentation (usually a big plus with regard to integration and harmony) and was bottled during its second spring. I think this has an amazing future ahead of it. It is definitely not a vintage to miss. 104 cases produced. *\$32 per bottle, \$18 per half bottle, \$66 per magnum.*

One Toe in the 21st Century

This offering will be sent both thru our traditional paper method and, for those of you we have email addresses for, via an email link to our web site. I think we and our kids have learned how to fold paper at this point and can consider entering the 21st century in this small way. We may end up adding more toes in the future as we see the water is not too cold and the fish do not bite them.

Reflections on Recent Wines

2005 Old and Mature Vines Zinfandel (\$30) was *Coinsurers Guide to California Wine* top Zinfandel in the May 2010 issue. Recently released to restaurants and wine shops, it is going to sell out in record time. Fortunately, the 2006 OMV is showing quite well and will satisfy without extended decanting time. In the July 2010 *Food & Wine* our 2007 Russian River Pinot Noir (\$40) was one of Executive Wine Editor Ray Isle's picks for his own fantasy wine list. We'll release that one to restaurants by the year's end. The 2009 Dry Rosé sold out in record time, much to everyone's surprise.

I think a couple wines showing well right now are the 2006 and 2007 Sonoma County Pinot Noirs (\$35). The 2006 Helfer Chardonnay (\$38) is right between the pretty youthful exuberance and serious adulthood. As always, you can contact us to inquire about other recent wines that may be of interest. We enjoy being able to 'feather out' our various wines over time to avoid creating angst and knee-jerk decisions on your part. That, to me is something special from our perspective.

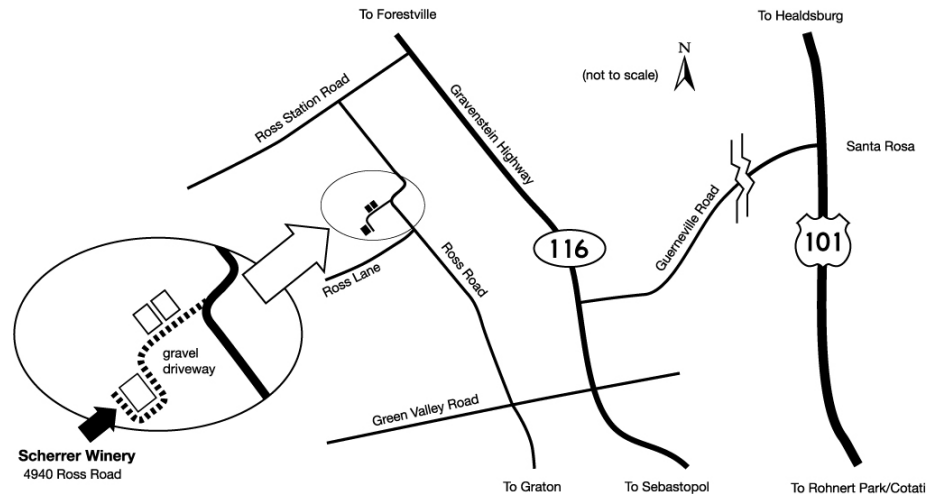
Again, thanks for your continued support. It allows us the creative freedom to do what we love. I am unable to communicate this in such a small space. Judi will undoubtedly suggest a web page for this.



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. Children (including our own) may be playing nearby. 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

	<u>Case</u>	<u>Case Plus</u>	<u>Half Case</u>
We will be happy to ship your order to any of the following states when weather is wine friendly.	12 x 750's 6 x mags	13 to 15 x 750's	6 x 750's 12 x Half Bottles 3 x mags
An adult Signature is required upon delivery.			
GSO Delivery to CA residents (recommended), NV and AZ (if you visited within the last 12 months)	\$15/box	\$18/box	\$12/box
UPS to CA residents	\$22/box	\$22/box	\$15/box
UPS to CO, ID, OR, NM, NV or WA	\$30/box	\$30/box	\$22/box
UPS to DC, IA, IL, MO, NC, ND, NE, NH, TX, MI, MN, NY, OH, VA, WI, WV or WY	\$40/box	\$40/box	\$25/box
FedEx 2-day to above states plus: FL, GA, LA or HI	\$78/box	\$95/box	\$48/box
Overnight to any above state. Delivery to any state address with liquor license. HI or Alaska higher	\$88/box	\$100/box	\$60/box

Shale Terrace "Wish List"



Name, MAILING address & telephone:

SHIPPING address & telephone:

Name _____
 Company _____
 Street _____
 City, State, Zip Code _____
 e-mail: _____ Residence? Yes No
 Changes? Yes No Delivery Phone () _____

Futures Wine for release April 2010	Price (cases only)	Quantity	Amount	Wish List
2009 'Old & Mature Vines' Zinfandel	\$240/case			
2009 'Shale Terrace' Zinfandel	\$210/case	Wish List		
2009 Zin Futures Sampler (6-OMV, 6-Shale)	\$225/case	Wish List		
Futures Subtotal				
Sales Tax: Pick-up or CA Delivery 9.0%			%	
FL, LA, IL, TX, MI, NH, NY, OH, VA include your tax & rate				

Ship these futures in April 2011 I will pick up these futures at the 2011 April Open House

Futures Wine Shipping (see previous page). Chosen Method: _____

Deadlines: August 4 for Shale First Crack
 August 31 for all futures orders

Futures Total

New Releases	Price	Quantity	Amount
2007 Platt Vineyard Pinot Noir	\$75/bottle		
2008 Scherrer Vineyard Chardonnay	\$32/bottle		
	\$18/half bottle		
	\$66/magnum		
Some Past Releases	Price	Quantity	Amount
2006 Helfer Vineyard Chardonnay	\$38/bottle		
2007 Russian River Pinot Noir	\$40/bottle		
2006 or 2007 Sonoma County Pinot Noir	\$35/bottle		
2005 or 2006 'Old & Mature Vines' Zinfandel	\$30/bottle		
2003 Scherrer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon	\$45/bottle		
Subtotal			
Discount on for orders that will total 12 or more bottles (futures build toward discount but are not additionally discounted)		-10%	< >
Wine Total			
Sales Tax: CA Pick-up or CA Delivery 9%			%
FL, IL, LA, TX, MI, NH, NY, VA include your tax & rate			

Ship this wine when weather permits I will pick up this wine at the 2010 August Open House

Shipping (see previous page). Chosen Method: _____

Payment:

Visa / MasterCard American Express Check

Card # _____

Expires: _____

Security Code
 Visa/MC: 3 digits on back
 Am Ex: 4 digits on front

I confirm I am at least 21 years of age. Date of Birth: / /

Signature: _____

Date: _____