

## The Choices We Make

Choices we make during the growing season and at harvest must be lived with for the entire life of a wine. The huge number of options and the gravity of this can be staggering and sometimes paralyzing. As the years pile up, I'm finding it becomes easier to decide what to do given what nature offers. Looking back on how our wines age informs my choices in successive vintages. When a vintage becomes challenging at times, it is important to let go of any surprise, disappointment or fear at the moment and deal with the reality of the material you have in order to shepherd it toward its best end.

Unchallenging ("good") vintages are "important" to those producers who allow rigid formulas or tradition to dictate how to make their wine. It is easy to dismiss one's shortcomings by declaring a "bad" vintage. It is also easy to dismiss entire vintages in one region because of challenges unmet in another region. This translates well to even a vineyard to vineyard analogy.

We have in this offering some new releases from the 2008 and 2009 vintages. Both these vintages have their opportunities and their challenges: 2008 had an icy spring and smoky summer in some places, but managed to make well-regarded later season wines in most areas. 2009 was a "no-brainer" in most of our local area, but still had a wet, warm, fungal finish in some locations for a few later varieties. The exceptions defy the generalizations. Our choices help make the difference.

This fall newsletter is a bit on the late side as our later harvest did not allow any lulls in the middle for me to do justice to this. I'm glad I chose to remain focused on the harvest, though and I'm pleased with my choices this past season.

## Still Thankful

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During the year, we receive a constant trickle of re-orders for wines people have been enjoying as well as the positive feedback that comes with it. As always, we appreciate your support and have a special offer buried in the later part of this newsletter for some half bottles of Zinfandel and Pinot.

## Open House

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**November Open House:** Friday the 18<sup>th</sup>, Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> from 10 to 5 at the winery located at 4940 Ross Road, Sebastopol (707) 824-1933. As usual, you will be able to taste the new releases and a selection of older library wines, most of which will also be for sale. This is not open to the general public – just for those of you on our mailing list and your guests. **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. By popular request, we try very hard to ship by ground across the country in order to economize on freight charges. Since we ship everything

directly from the winery and I personally plan when they go out, I am finding that I can navigate surprisingly narrow temperature windows across the continental US. However, as many of you have found out, I'm stubborn enough to hold shipments if the window does not appear or closes on us. Thanks for your understanding.

## New Releases

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### **2009 Helfer Vineyard Chardonnay**

This is our twelfth vintage of working with this tiny vineyard in the Russian River Valley. I generally try a small bit of experimentation here and there with some of our wine lots. It seemed time to take a fresh look at how we approach this property. In 2009 I was persuaded by Tom Klassen, who worked with us during part of the previous two harvests, to try something new with this wine: foregoing the usual inoculation with my traditional yeast culture in favor of encouraging indigenous yeasts to successively take turns with the fermentation over a very long period of time. The resulting wine has a somewhat rounder, sweeter feel to it, reminiscent of the fresh Chardonnay fruit flavors. It finishes with ample acidity (of course) and is a nice twist on an old friend. Only 58 cases produced. *\$40 per bottle.*

### **2009 Sonoma County Pinot Noir**

This is our first release of the 2009 Pinot Noirs as it seems to find its feet ahead of denser, later bottled wines we make. This is a truly delicious vintage, and this wine has a little bit of savory character which anchors it to food especially after being open for a day or two. I consider this kind of a hybrid between the textural, lithe 2006 Sonoma County bottling and the intensively structured and fruited 2007. It's full-flavored and medium weight so it won't step on any toes. While our strength as a winery is in 'difficult' vintages, we seem to also do well in 'easy' ones too. Imagine that. 276 cases produced. *\$35 per bottle, \$18 per half bottle.*

### **2008 Platt Vineyard Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast.**

With the 2008 Pinot Noir vintage, I could be accused of saving the best for last here. I am pleased that this vineyard escaped both the spring frosts due to its elevation and the summer wildfire smoke issues [like Black Lightnin'] due to both its moderate elevation and how far south it was from the trajectory of the smoke plumes. It has a bit more red and blue fruits than the 2007 vintage and has a more interesting texture/layer/tension aspect to it. I've pondered which vintage I prefer: 2007 or 2008. I'm putting my money on this one by a nose. Win, place, or show, this vineyard is bound for the winners' circle. 185 cases produced. *\$75 per bottle, \$160 per magnum*

### **2008 Timber Vine Vineyard Syrah**

I might also be accused of leading off our 2008 Syrah releases with our most powerful bottling here. It is the one that 'bounced back' from its late September bottling the most effortlessly, so I decided that it volunteered to go first. My favorite part of this vineyard's character is the deep, brooding darkly lit flavors it contains. It's less about the high tones and perfumes like 2007 'Sasha' but more about the earth, mushroomy side of the grape. Some pepperiness and telltale violet (think black violets, if there was such a thing) come into play on the finish. It is our last, and I think finest effort with this vineyard. I thank Joe Mesics, late owner of the vineyard for the opportunity. RIP Joe, amazing stuff. 95 cases produced *\$32 per bottle*

### **2008 Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon**

All of our Cabernet Sauvignons could be labeled as Scherrer Vineyard designates, but they do not all speak clearly of that origin to me, nor do they all exist in harmony in the same blend. Once again, a few barrels demanded separation from the other usual two wines. It is very much like the 2007

version of this with its 'old-school' balance rather than 'chocolate milkshake' style, good red fruit, pert and perky with nice acidity and medium-weight. 136 cases produced \$26 per bottle.

### 2008 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

Compared with the above Sonoma County Cab bottling, this has more intensity and more focused red fruits as usual. These 'AV' bottlings are aging really well and offer good versatility with the variety, bridging the gap between typical Cabernet Sauvignon and Zinfandel fare. The red fruit and zippy acidity are the key here. It is as happy with steak as it is with pizza. Be sure and look for the library offering on the 5<sup>th</sup> there will be some nice older wines available. 136 cases produced. \$38 per bottle.

## Very Recent Releases

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For the second year in a row, we've found some of our very favorite half bottles getting left behind when we are sold out of the 750's and move on to the next vintage. For me this is very frustrating as they are drinking as well or better than the 750's! **So, we are going to offer you the half bottles of the 2006 Old & Mature Zin and the 2006 Russian River Pinot at the "wholesale" cost for the month of November.** Needless to say, they won't last!

It figures that about the time that they have just sold out to restaurants and wine shops both the 2006 Russian River Valley and Sonoma County Pinot Noirs would be showing particularly well. If you've been holding these, it's time to try a bottle. 2006 Big Brother Pinot Noir (\$50) has been relatively hidden from restaurants and wine shops and will probably take over the limelight for the vintage. Not so recent, were several bottles of 1994 (no typo) Old and Mature Vines Zinfandel. These mid-90's wines are in a very interesting and pleasurable state right now. These can make believers out of doubters.

## Library Wines

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**Thinning out the library:** 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.

Our gifted luthier friend Michael Gurian has designed and built a special wooden gift box for our magnums. These will be offered with the Library release on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

In order to give everyone on our mailing list 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 "Order Wine" page beginning 9 AM PST Saturday November 5** The actual link to the page is [http://scherrerwinery.com/pages/order\\_wines.cgi](http://scherrerwinery.com/pages/order_wines.cgi).

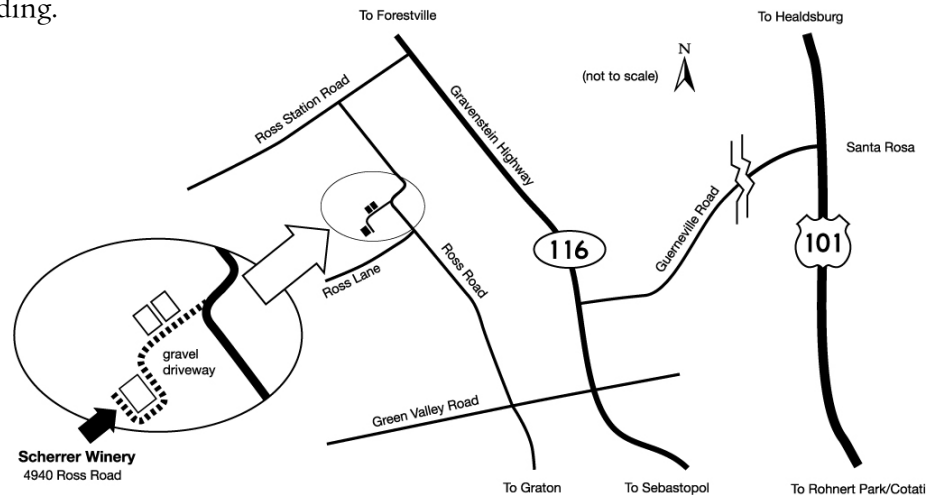
**IMPORTANT:** If you have not already, you need to be registered on our web site and logged in to be able to view the library section on the "Order Wines" page. Alternatively, you can call the office 707-823-8980 and we can fax a current list to you. Some items may only include a bottle or two and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis.



## 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

We will be happy to ship your order to any of the following states when weather is wine friendly.

An adult Signature is required upon delivery.

	<u>Case</u>	<u>Case Plus</u>	<u>Half Case</u>
	12 x 750's 6 x mags	13 to 15 x 750's	6 x 750's 12 x Half Bottles 3 x mags
GSO Delivery to CA residents (recommended), NV and AZ (if you visited within the last 12 months)	\$16/box	\$20/box	\$12/box
UPS to CA residents	\$24/box	\$24/box	\$16/box
UPS to CO, ID, OR, NM, NV or WA	\$32/box	\$32/box	\$24/box
UPS to AL, DC, IA, IL, IN, GA, KS, LA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NC, ND, NE, NH, NY, TN*, TX, OH, VA, WI, WV* or WY	\$42/box	\$42/box	\$26/box
FedEx 2-day to above states plus: FL, HI	\$80/box	\$95/box	\$48/box
Overnight to any above state. Delivery to any state address with liquor license. HI or Alaska higher	\$90/box	\$100/box	\$64/box

\*Pending registrations.