

## ‘It’s not done till it’s done right’

As parents of teenagers, this term seems to echo throughout the house and our minds a lot these days. And I’m quite sure if one listens closely, there are still faint echoes from a generation ago that I suspect the grandparents hear quite clearly. Interestingly, these words are also constantly bouncing off of the Spartan winery walls in their own way all the time. The key is to listen.

When I combine different barrels of each different fermentation lot for their ‘assemblage’ I confront my last chance to change and improve the blend’s future. [Some of us need a deadline] A couple of days ago while combining the different Rosé lots just prior to bottling, I had this opportunity. Because each barrel (even within the same fermentation lot) has its own slightly different twist, I like to combine the most synergistic ones first removing as many variables as possible before finalizing the blend. I was *so* pleased at how the ‘core group’ played together and *so* unhappy with how a few delicious ‘fatter’ barrels affected the delicate balance that, to do it right, I decided to go for the slimmer, more energetic blend. If I had not been in the cellar actually doing the physical work this opportunity would have been missed.

The blending process of our Old & Mature Vines Zinfandel is much the same. I can make adjustments at every step to help keep it on its course. Any barrels not needed for ideal balance of the OMV can later become a component of Zinfandoodle. Working between vintages gives me a wider range of strengths to work with to make it ‘just right’ too.

Our Zinfandel Futures are always bottled at the very last minute just before the spring shipping window closes and right before the open house. Rather than a sign of procrastination, it is the reality that the wine needs every moment of barrel time before it’s ‘done’ and ready to bottle. This is one of the strengths of being a small 4,000 case operation that owns its own bottling equipment and is flexible and sensitive to the material at hand.

## Open House

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We will have this large and diverse set of new releases to show at the April open house. The dates are: **April 5-7, and April 12-14 from 10 am to 5 pm each day.** Everything listed below will be open for tasting, whether already sold out or not. You may pick up any wines ordered now or from last August’s 2011 Zinfandel futures offering at this event or we will schedule them for shipment.

## New Releases

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### **2011 Scherrer Vineyard ‘Old & Mature Vines’ Zinfandel**

It is hard to hide my excitement over this nice, cool vintage in Alexander Valley. The weather allowed perfectly appropriate tannic structure to create a spine for the fleshy fruity parts to hang on to. This was harvested well before any of the fall rains arrived. At the moment before bottling, my tasting notes still stand consistent with those from the future offering *“Nice black, red and blue fruits are juxtaposed against appropriately firm structure and somewhat savory, earthy notes as well.”* I would

add that there is now a little more lavender perfume and spices, but this wine definitely has its own mind and is on its own course for a very long trajectory. I wish we had *waaaay* more of this. 524 cases produced. *\$34 per bottle. Half bottles (\$19) and Magnums (\$70) also available.*

### **2011 Scherrer Vineyard 'Shale Terrace' Zinfandel**

The Shale Terrace gives wines with a very different balance and flavor profile from the OMV bottling. It has a little leaner, mineral character, less overt bramble berry fruit, relying more on stone fruits and earthiness. The 2011 is nearly a carbon-copy of the 2005 version, carrying its stone fruit character a little deeper inside the earthy/spicy core than the 2007 or 2008 vintages. Shale fans will be happy to hear that 2012 produced a good bit more than these few 87 cases produced in 2011. *Sold out on futures (it figures).*

### **2012 Dry Rosé**

Since we have started doing the Syrah/Grenache marriage a couple of years ago, I have never been more pleased with our Rosé. It has the perfume, energy and balance to work really well with a wide variety of foods...or just simply for sipping. Owing to the more generous growing season in 2012, the grape material was just slightly richer than the more austere 2011, so I increased the percentage of Grenache to 40% and set aside some of the Syrah Rosé I had been planning to blend in as it seemed to have a destiny of its own. Time to listen again.

Bone-dry with very crisp acidity, this has nearly floral perfumes, 'rain on stone', red cherry/raspberry and apple aromas that kind of remind me of the smell of the county fair (far away from the livestock pens, though): cotton candy and candied apples (no corn dogs, either). On the palate though, there is not a trace of candy or sweetness. It's all about tart, clean and refreshing. This is perfect for washing down salty food on a warm day and would work as well as any great Mediterranean Rosé would. Sadly, there is less of this than last year and it is on allocation to restaurants and wine shops as well as this offering. It should disappear quickly. 365 cases produced. *\$20 per bottle.*

### **Zinfandoodle v.o.1**

Those of you who have broken the Zinfandoodle code know this 'version' is a blend of 2010 and 2011 Scherrer Zinfandel barrels that didn't perfectly balance the OMV in a given vintage. I cannot think of a better pair of vintages to have side-by-side to illustrate the power of making non-vintage wine! These two vintages were so different in their balance and attitude. There was an excess of generous, low structure elements in 2010 and an excess of structured elements in 2011. Magically, these attitudes were perfectly complimentary: Darker fruits vs. redder fruits and perfumes. In a decade of making this wine every other year, it is absolutely my favorite version.

Version o.1 has a dark core of solid dark fruits and earth within the center of a whirlwind of plums, red raspberry and boysenberry. I like the way it sits in the mouth like an old house cat on your lap on a cold night - it just belongs there. This wine practically purrs. There is less of this than last time and it is also on allocation to restaurants and wine shops as well as this offering here. I seriously doubt this will be around very long once people taste it. 380 cases produced. *\$20 per bottle.*

### **2009 Scherrer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon**

I am really pleased with the expression of this variety on my Dad's vineyard. Planting this was one of his best ideas. This vintage is right in the middle of what I call 'the substantial three' - 2008, 2009

and 2010 which each gave us good generosity for younger-term enjoyment while still having balance for beautiful long term bottle development. Having vintages of this going back to 1997, I am delighted to see the proof that we are on track for really showing what Cab can do when short-term rewards are not the primary concern. That's doing it 'our' kind of right.

The aromas remind me of having a slice of both blackberry pie and mincemeat pie next to each other on the same plate after having just tilled the garden. Fruity, spicy, toasty aromas mingle with the sweet loamy earth in the background. There is a little bit of cassis on top as well to pull things upward. The theme here is about darker toned broodiness that 100% Cabernet Sauvignon wines usually possess. The flavors follow the aromas (without the sweetness of the pies) and there is a broad texture and flashiness that hangs off its amply-structured frame. Appropriate acidity brings the wine to a nice, juicy mouth-watering finish with great persistence. 224 cases produced. *\$50 per bottle.*

### **2010 Sonoma County Pinot Noir**

This is the first release of our 2010 Pinot Noirs. It could actually be labeled as 'Russian River Valley' but I do not feel that this blend usually expresses this origin as clearly. The Sonoma normally carries itself more delicately and tends to find its stride ahead of the other wines. While still true, in 2010 it really does demonstrate its RRV origin more clearly than usual. The core of this wine and the RRV bottling comes from the heart of the Green Valley. Over the years we have been fine-tuning our vineyard relationships. Our long-term contracts stay with those who share our direction and sensibilities best and with the vineyard blocks that have good synergy with each other.

On opening the bottle, I am impressed by the Goldridge soil-signature orange peel notes and how much cinnamon-like spiciness the wine exhibits. With a couple minutes of air, the fruity, cherry, plummy thing comes up even more prominently. It takes about a year in bottle for the wine to find its stride anyway. The texture is now beginning to emerge from within its structure, which is about when we like to first offer the wine here. Yields were quite small this vintage and there is only 25% the amount we produced of this in 2008, so it will not last long in restaurants and wine shops when it is finally released to them in another year or so. 240 cases produced. *\$36 per bottle, \$20 per Half bottle.*

## **Recent Releases & Opportunities**

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For immediate and short term gratification over the next 5 years or so, I'd suggest looking at the 2008 Sonoma County Pinot Noir. Right around last November, that wine slipped into a wonderful zone of early adulthood. The 2009 OMV Zinfandel has also just entered the beginning of its 'zone'. The 2010 Helfer Vineyard Chardonnay is showing fantastic at this early stage and will be gone very soon. I have never been happier with the Scherrer Vineyard Chardonnay than with the 2010 vintage which magically escaped the August heat spell that cooked many Zinfandel stems that year. Nearly three years after bottling, the 2007 RRV Syrah is currently open for business as well.

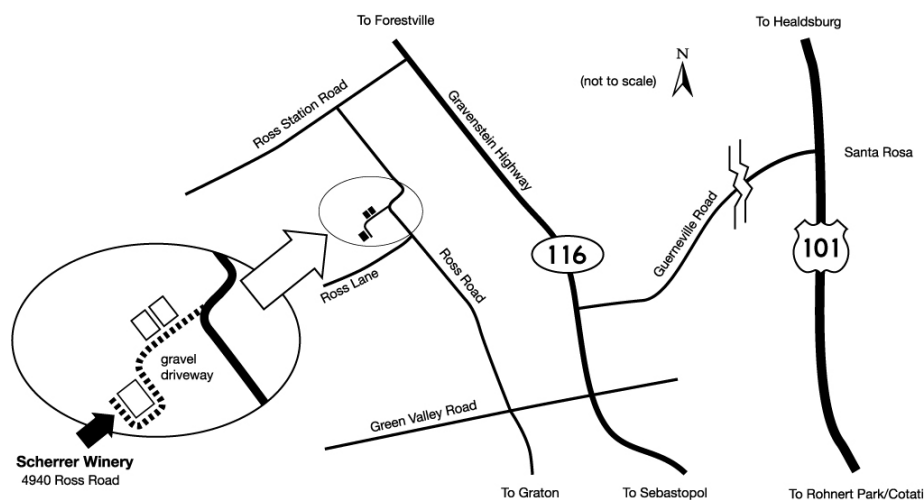
My friend, Master Sommelier Chuck Furuya would probably point out that I'm suggesting consumption many years too soon. But I also recall a few years ago his reminder that wines should be delicious. And so once they become delicious to you, it's OK to enjoy them even if they could become profound much later on. That's what our November Library offering is for: To show you how they age. Sometimes a *sure thing* is the bet to take. In the end, you are the ones who decide when it is done and whether or not it was done right.



## 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

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.

	Case 12 x 750's 6 x mags	Case Plus 13 to 15 x 750's	Half Case 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, NJ, NY, TN, TX, OH, VA, WI 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

