March 18, 2019

SCHERRER
WINERY

When it rains…

…we pour a glass of wine in celebration (at least in the Winter). Though currently this may be a minority attitude considering the significantly wet weather and flooding experienced in this part of California over the past weeks. Fortunately, we were not affected by the flooding and only inconvenienced for a few days by closed roads here and there.

Why so happy about rain? I remember the extremely dry start to the 2013-2014 rainy season and by early February of 2014 where I promised myself that I would not ever complain about too much rain, regardless of how inconvenient it may be at the time. It is far better to have more than enough rainfall than not enough. The places in our area that flooded this year have done so in the past and will continue to in the future when conditions are similar. After a catastrophic flood in 1937 a plan was hatched in the 1940's to help alleviate flooding in both the Ukiah Valley and the lower Russian River near Guerneville. Two lakes were created: Lake Mendocino on the Russian River near Ukiah (completed in 1959) and Lake Sonoma on Dry Creek (completed in 1984). While it still floods near Guerneville, I can only imagine how much more severe the flooding would have been without those dams in place. It doesn't make it any easier though for those homes and businesses that have been impacted. It's harder still for some that lost homes in the fires only now to have been hit again with flooding in their new location. Sometimes, when it rains it pours.

What does this high rainfall winter mean for the 2019 vintage? Vineyards on high vigor soils will probably be quite vigorous. Poorly drained soils may see some root die-off and less happy vines during the season. Other soils which are more meager and drain quite well should support very happy, healthy and nutritionally balanced grapevines that will make really nice wine. Regarding the sites I work with, I very much look forward to the upcoming vintage's promise. Whenever we have had abundant early winter rainfall, the vines we work with have looked really healthy and balanced and the wines have turned out well.

Open House

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 2017 Zinfandel futures offering at this event or we will schedule them for shipment.

New Releases

2017 Scherrer Vineyard 'Old & Mature Vines' Zinfandel

When tasting through the barrels prior to bottling, I was quite happy with the verve, and snappy fruit these wines exhibit. What about the early September heat spell people have talked about? Fortunately we were either 1) well ahead of the heat spell at harvest or 2) if it was during it, we were able to get the grapes in before they got 'long in the tooth.' Part of it is that we tend to harvest a little earlier than most people do these days. This means the fruit is a little less fragile and there is a little more room for an extra day on the vine. Yet much of this has to do with the very good relationships we have developed with different farming companies that would and could harvest our fruit when others were over-booked and could not even show up for 1-3 weeks! I think that is quite significant in any kind of vintage. Timing is everything here.

The range of fruit characteristics run from red raspberries and blueberries to a little bit of blackberry, with our signature fresh loam nuance and slight herbal notes. This vintage also shows a mild black pepper aroma that folds into something hinting of the 'Rutherford Dust' note used to describe Cabernet Sauvignon. On the mouth, the wine is medium-full bodied with a very crisp, upward trajectory of surprising length. There is a constant and gentle salivary response throughout, which I think is essential to food-friendliness.

While I have experience using 500 L puncheons to varying degrees for over 30 years, I have normally relied upon 228L barrels and a few 350L hogsheads for the Zinfandels (and Rhone varieties). However, since 2015 I have been also employing more of a particular type of 500 L puncheon not seen in the US before with very positive results. The idea was to 'break in' some of these for our Grenache which does not appreciate new oak so much. Then use the seasoned puncheons for Grenache. The discovery that the Zinfandel absolutely adores the first use of this is a bonus. I find an even more seamless union between the fruit and the wood and am contemplating moving more in that direction as I see the longer-term results unfold. 570 cases produced. *$38 per bottle. Half bottles ($21.50) and Magnums ($80) also available.*

2017 Scherrer Vineyard 'Shale Terrace' Zinfandel

Watching the wonderful early development of the 2016 vintage I look at this upcoming bottling with great anticipation. There's some of that typical stone fruit character and a good bit of savory elements as well. This area presents itself a bit leaner than the Old & Mature Vines bottling and it possesses less dark fruits on the nose and middle palate, yet more red fruits and nectarine. What it offers are Pinot-like layers such as Royal Ann cherries and beet root, along with some light herbal notes, especially on the finish. It's no surprise people describe this as Pinot-like. But I guarantee it is 100% Zinfandel.

Due to the positive response from those who missed the futures offering but still wanted a couple bottles of this, we have continued to hold a small portion of this back in order to have some available at release. We kept less this time, so it should not last very long. 110 cases produced. *$38 per bottle.*

2018 Dry Rosé, Sonoma County

As I regularly tell people, I make this because I love it and sell it because I make more than I can drink. It has been part of our production for 22 years and has been refined along the way. For nearly the past decade it has consisted of roughly 60-70% Syrah and 30-40% Grenache, depending on the vintage. Blending trials are equally rigorous as for any of our red wines. Inspired by the Southern French rosés I have enjoyed, I feel that I have dialed it into my very own personal representation of what our area has to offer.

Aromas of fresh Elephant Heart plum (developed by Luther Burbank in Sebastopol, no less) watermelon rind, candied-apple coating (minus the sugar), fresh Royal Ann cherry and strawberry give way to a nice mouthwatering experience. The aromatics are echoed in the mouth with the addition of boxwood and gooseberry. There is great continuity and length. With or without food, this bone-dry wine is crisp and thoroughly satisfying.

Pink rain: The marketplace seems flooded with pink wines lately. I'm happy people are drinking more rosé and unhappy with the volume of underwhelming stuff in circulation. This will correct itself in time and those of us that are serious about the wine will persevere. In the current environment though, we often hear comments about our "having jumped onto the rosé bandwagon now" too. My response is that we decided to jump on 22 years ago when the wagon was less crowded and have been refining our style the whole while. 275 cases produced. *$24 per bottle.*

2016 Helfer Vineyard Chardonnay, Russian River Valley

This bottling, our 20th vintage from this wonderful yet tiny site, shows great generosity and viscosity as it usually does. It is an impressive site for Chardonnay and regardless of whether we harvest on the earlier side or the later side of 'the window,' its core personality remains remarkably consistent. Star fruit, apple and pear is the fruit signature for Helfer.

Despite a slightly lower alcohol level this year (14.3%) this vintage is a bit more lusty than 2015 or 2014 were before it. It is currently showing its non-fruit elements on its sleeve: Umami-laden lees contact, barrel elements play tag team in balancing that signature star-fruit character of this site. There is an incredible level of creaminess yet it still finishes on a salivary upward note. It works well with roast chicken, lobster and/or close friends. 116 cases produced. *$50 per bottle.*

2015 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

Much to the delight of those who have asked for more of this bottling in the past, we were able to keep a somewhat larger portion of this part of the Scherrer Vineyard for ourselves. It is on a soil somewhat higher in clay than the section that makes up our Scherrer Vineyard designate and it is planted with a different rootstock. These two underground differences are significant and point them toward separate bottlings. This vineyard section, on 140 Ruggieri rootstock, gives more red fruits and relies more on acidity and less on tannin for its structure.

Red cherries, herbal, cassis, dill, freshly tilled loam make up the initial aromas. The more time in the glass, the more the red cherry comes through the mix. At this early stage of life, both the moderate tannic structure and life-giving acidity act as equivalent partners upholding the 'angles' side of things. It is a beautiful wine that I think really showcases the beauty of Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon. I have recently shown it to visitors, and they have all remarked on how refreshing it is. 228 cases produced. *$44 per bottle*

2015 King Family Vineyard Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley

Of the Pinot Noirs we work with, this is on a very different soil and has its own signature. It reflects older-style viticultural choices (clones, rootstock and planting density) which I feel are well-suited to the site. Upon opening the bottle, beet root, cinnamon, slightly floral notes are there. On the mouth, it has good richness with great continuity, upward trajectory and long finish. On day 2 and 3 an open bottle settles into more of a dark cherry core and becomes a seamless unit on the palate. I think it has an extremely good upside to bottle aging. Only 47 cases produced. *$48 per bottle.*

2015 Gunsalus Vineyard Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley

I have been working with this site since 2006 when it was 'merely' a fine component of our Russian River Valley and/or Sonoma County bottlings. Over time I realized it truly deserved to have at least a small amount bottled separately to showcase its lovely signature. Maraschino and tart pie Cherry, fresh plum, pomegranate, and oregano all cascade given varying amounts of air time. One bottle was going strong after 6 days' open. The focus and intensity of the darker colored fruits rose as the days progressed, which portends great things down the road. The bright, crisp acidity which is a real signature of this part of Russian River Valley gives a good salivary response. It is right across the creek and somewhat uphill from the Keefer Vineyard. Yet it has more of a dark fruit note than its neighbor as I recall having worked with Keefer fruit once in the 2006 vintage. 71 cases produced. *$46 per bottle.*

2015 Platt Vineyard Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast

The blocks we have worked with in this vineyard were planted specifically for us nearly 20 years ago. Rootstock was determined by the viticulturalists according to the vigor potential of the soil and the affinity to the variety best suited to the exposure. We got to choose clones of Pinot Noir we were interested in working with. I think the choices made by all were very good, especially in the sections we have assembled to form this bottling.

The Platt family sold this fine vineyard in 2015 and after much friendly discussion, we decided to continue with the relationship albeit on a much smaller scale than previously. There were many other wineries interested in working with the vineyard as well and were willing to pay very high prices for the grapes.

Brilliant red cherry and Madrone bark, roasted beet, sweet loam. Full bodied on entry, this swiftly becomes refreshing and mouth-watering. Interestingly here, the finish grows toward the signature moderately firm tannin framework as opposed to the Russian River Valley wines where the tannins tend to melt before the acidity. Even at this early stage there is great transition and continuity to the flavors and textures. Due to the smaller area I have selected to continue working with and the generally smaller crop in the 2015 vintage, there were only 47 cases produced. *$70 per bottle*

2014 Huntsman Red

I have a keen interest in blending. It may be between different blocks of Scherrer Vineyard Zinfandel for the Old & Mature Vines, or different vintages for the Zinfandoodle, or different clones and/blocks of Pinot Noir, or different barrel types, or as in this case, different varieties: Syrah and Grenache. I already blend these fine partners to produce our dry rosé and there is a long tradition of blending them in the Southern Rhone Valley of France.

I enjoy serving this wine to people who don't know what it is because they typically think it is a richer-style Pinot Noir. Why? Maybe I just like Pinot Noir and see other reds thru a certain lens? Rather, I think the Grenache simply gives a nice perfume and acidic central thrust while the Syrah provides plushness, darker fruits and 'comfort.' No Mourvedre was harmed in the production of this wine, by the way. Unlike Pinot Noir (in general), Huntsman suits beef and tomato-based dishes well.

2014 is slightly more reflective of a drought-winter vintage. We find somewhat firmer structure, more concentration, and dark fruits in the red wines we made vs 2013 as an example. There's a bit of that earthy/dusty think like in the 2017 Old & Mature Vines Zinfandel, this lanolin thing I get from highly aromatic Syrah woven though these "Grenachey floral" notes yielding something like a lingerie sachet. It is difficult to discern between the red and dark fruits. There seems to be an integration of the aromas that is both vexing and compelling. 96 cases produced. *$34 per bottle.*

Recent Releases

Due to the "pink rain" floods, there is bit of the 2017 Dry Rosé available, it's prefect right now, (Josh Raynolds gave it a 91). The 2013 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir ($50) has just recently been released to restaurants and wine shops concurrent with the 2012 vintage ($48). The 2013 shows more non-fruit character (herbal and earthy) than the 2012 and a haunting length and finish. While the 2012 Platt Vineyard Pinot Noir ($68) continues to roll with its sleekness and firmer coastal structure, the 2014 ($70) is really exciting in its vintage-signature dark-fruited youth. 2012 and 2013 Big Brother Pinot Noirs ($56) are showing particularly well now. The 2014 Old & Mature Vines Zinfandel ($38) has entered a portion of its life where everything is seamless.

I certainly appreciate your support. It allows me to pursue this project according to my vision.

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 our gravel parking area are on the west side, so don't hesitate to drive clockwise around to the other side of the building.

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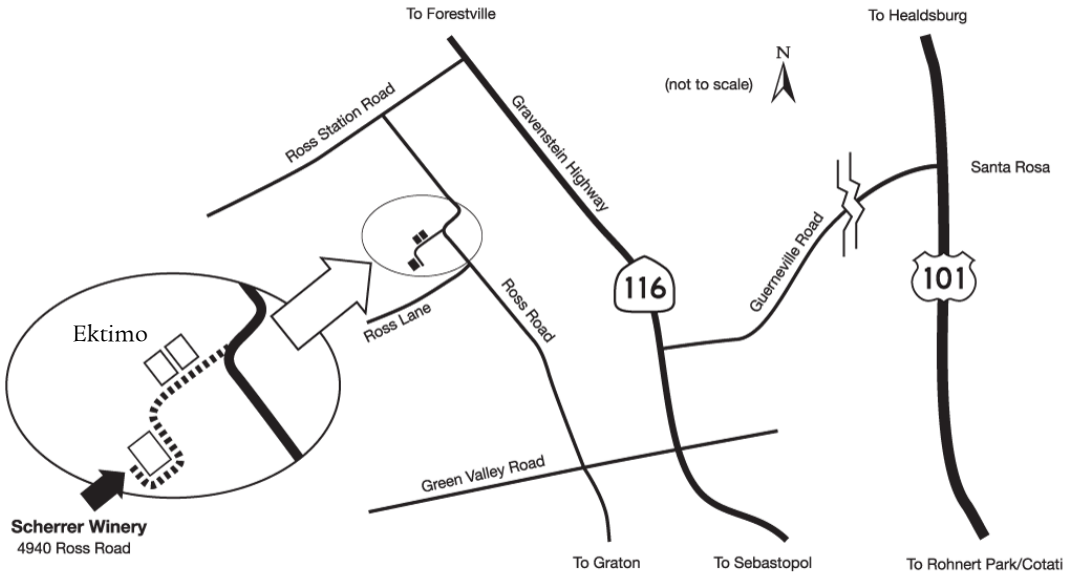

Shipping Information

We will be happy to ship your order to any of the following states when weather is wine friendly.	Case: 12 x 750 mL 24 x 375 mL 6 x 1.5 L	Per bottle (750 mL equivalent)
Pick up is available during Winery Open House events or by appointment	NC	
Golden State Overnight to CA (recommended)	$21/box	$1.75
Golden State 2- Day to AZ, ID, NV, OR, WA and parts of NM	$24/box	$2
Ground to CA, AZ	$30/box	$2.5
Ground to CO, ID, OR, MT, NM, NV, WA or WY	$36/box	$3
Ground to AL, DC, FL, IA, IL, IN, GA, KS, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NY, OH, SC, TN, TX, VA or WI	$48/box	$4
FedEx 2-day to above states plus: HI, AK a little more	$120/box	$10
Overnight to any above state. HI, AK a little more	$168/box	$14

SCHERRER WINERY

MAILING	SHIPPING	
Name	Name	
Street	Company Name	Residential ☐
City, State, Zip Code	Street	
Daytime Phone	City, State, Zip Code	
e-mail:	Delivery Phone	
I am over 21, Date of Birth:	Shipping Notes	

New Releases	Price	Quantity	Amount
2018 Dry Rosé (Grenache & Syrah)	$24 / bottle		
2016 Helfer Vineyard Chardonnay	$50 / bottle		
2017 Old & Mature Vines Zinfandel	$38 / bottle		
	$21.50 / half bottle		
	$80 / magnum		
2017 Shale Terrace Zinfandel (limit 6)	$38 / bottle		
2015 King Family Vineyard Pinot Noir	$48 / bottle		
2015 Gunsalus Vineyard Pinot Noir	$46 / bottle		
2015 Platt Vineyard Pinot Noir	$70 / bottle		
2014 'Huntsman' Red Wine (Grenache & Syrah)	$34 / bottle		
2015 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon	$44 / bottle		
Some Current Wines	**Price**	**Quantity**	**Amount**
2013 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir	$50 / bottle		
2012 / 2013 Big Brother Pinot Noir	$56 / bottle		
2012 Platt Vineyard Pinot Noir	$68 / bottle		
2014 Platt Vineyard Pinot Noir	$70 / bottle		
2014 Old & Mature Vines Zinfandel	$38 / bottle		
	Subtotal		
Discount on wine for total orders of 12 or more bottles		-10%	
	Subtotal		
Sales Tax: Pick up 8.25% Shipping: AZ, CA, DC, FL, GA, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI, WY		%	
Choose ☐ Pick up at Open House or ☐ Shipping method and cost:			
		Total	

Payment: ☐ Visa / MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Check

Card #	Expires:	Security Code:
Signature:		Date:

Winery Office: 966 Tiller Lane, Sebastopol CA 95472 *info@scherrerwinery.com* *Winery: 4940 Ross Rd., Sebastopol CA 95472*
Ph/Fax (707)823-8980