

## Adapting

We are all currently in a situation where we must adapt to rapidly changing conditions. While this was initiated by a biological threat, the human reaction to it has caused changes that cascade through every corner of society. And like most human reactions and responses, not all of it is logical or fact-based. However, that does not change the fact that we must adapt and move forward as best we are able.

Our own early response to the loss of our primary wholesale market, restaurants, was to create our Spring Lock-down Nepenthe offering which was a huge success for all involved. We appreciate the generosity everyone showed and how much of the wine they shared with friends and family. The word of mouth referrals to others stunned us with the much-appreciated support of our small winery; and the screaming deal we offered helped ease the pain of sudden lockdown and life disruption. With the re-opening (before the current re-closing) of many facets of commerce (not to mention the coincidental depletion of the Nepenthe wines) the screaming deal had served its purpose of easing everyone's pain a little. There have been many sad faces over the end of the Nepenthe offer, though. The good news is that every July we offer something somewhat akin to that: Zinfandel Futures.

Many of you that are new to us have not experienced our Zinfandel Futures offering, which has been its own quietly screaming deal since our first vintage in 1991. This is how it works: You get to purchase a case of Zinfandel before it is bottled at a really good price and then it is released the following spring. It was one of the key parts of our being able to kickoff this winery project in the first place providing much needed cash flow to purchase bottles, labels and corks. We have continued doing it every vintage since as a thank-you to our direct customers who have been our most loyal supporters these many years. If you've not experienced our style of Zinfandel and you loved the Nepenthe wines, especially the Pinot Noir, I think you will find our style of Zin in your wheelhouse. Not jammy, heavy or high-octane like the mode of Zins these past decades, ours is more restrained and has balanced the angles and rounds in a similar manner as our Pinot Noirs. I usually pour the Zinfandel before the Pinot Noir in a tasting, which says everything about the styling. Here are [user reviews](#) for those new to us.

Another adaptation to changing conditions: Going topless. Hang onto your Mardi Gras beads, though. In March, just when the shutdown was descending, we placed an order for more red custom capsules (the foil tops that cover the corks) to be delivered in July. We were then informed by the capsule company that that they would now require full prepayment for custom capsule orders due to the uncertainty of the business climate. Me: 'You're kidding me, right? 30 years of reliable payment and you're treating us like we just crawled out from under a rock? Cash-flow is suddenly hard and now you are telling us to finance your operation including your profit 120 days in advance?' Them: 'Yes. It's our new policy. The corporations that supply raw materials to us have asked for prepayment' Me: 'No thanks.'

It made me think. Capsules are the only dispensable part of the package. At \$0.27 per bottle for a decoration that adds no other value, I'd rather continue putting that into quality corks. So we're going topless beginning with some of the 375's of 2018 OMV Zin and a couple of new releases here (2016 Sasha Syrah and 2017 Kick Grenache). In the future, we will have our 'S' brand logo on the ends of the cork to make our topless bottles easier to find in cellar racks. I wish I could say that it was purely ecological motivation that pushed me there. But it wasn't. Perhaps, someday we might go back to using capsules. I wouldn't bet on it, though. However, our Chardonnay will sport capsules for many years due to the minimum order for custom capsules being multiple times our production, we have years' and years' worth of supply.

## Open House? Not the usual.

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Another adaptation we have had to make in the short term for the health of our visitors, our family and ourselves is to suspend these large gatherings in our warehouse winery space. As those of you who have been to the winery know, it is not well-laid out for distancing or graceful flow of people inside or outside the building. The State and County health officials have just prohibited indoor tasting at wineries and will not consider revising this before August 2, 2020. However, there is a near-term answer for tasting our new offerings: Enter ['Region.'](#)

Earlier this year we became a part of this start-up of a multi-winery tasting room at the edge of the City of Sebastopol in The Barlow complex. There are 25 wineries with 2 wines each dispensed from high-tech WineStation machines in one side of the space all year long. The other side has a Wine Bar that each winery hosts for a week twice a year to pour whatever they choose. Their grand opening is July 25. Hours will be Sunday thru Wednesday 1 pm - 8 pm and Thursday thru Saturday 1 pm - 10 pm

**Scherrer will be featured the week of August 10 – 16.** Our new offerings and 2019 Zinfandel Futures samples pulled from barrel will be featured, available for tasting and purchase. One of us will be on hand to help pour all week from 1 - 5 and would love to have a chance to connect in a socially responsible way. It won't be the same as you have come to expect from our old-fashioned Open Houses, though we're thrilled to have an option we can adapt to.

The Region staff has been continuously adapting the layout and business plan to accommodate safe procedures as conditions and protocols have changed including expanding the outside area to facilitate safe outdoor operation. **However**, as State and County Health orders are quite dynamic at the moment, we cannot guarantee our scheduled week of August 10-16 will be possible if they further tighten restrictions on outdoor operation. Please stay tuned. We are all working toward this being a reality while respecting the health of everyone out there.

**Curbside Winery Pickup** is working well and will also be available during the Region tasting week. If you plan to come up and taste at Region, you can then swing by the winery to pick up any pre-orders or your Zinfandel futures from the spring. You'll need to let us know in advance when you're planning on coming by so we have your wine packed up and ready. Then you call us at 707-824-1933 from the parking lot and we bring the wine out to you. The winery address is 4940 Ross Road, Sebastopol, 95472.

## Zinfandel Futures

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Upon reviewing the harvest data for the Zinfandels, I was reminded that we harvested at somewhat lower Brix levels in 2019 than typical. There was a fair bit of uneven ripening again which is a tendency of Zinfandel in any vintage and is something I have grown to embrace and value over the years. Variation and complexity in the wine are the result. I would put 2019 very close to the personality of 2018 with just a tad more structure. So if you loved 2018, you'll love 2019 too.

### **2019 Scherrer Vineyard 'Old & Mature Vines' Zinfandel Futures**

After a very wet late winter and early spring, the vines had plenty of soil moisture to make it through the year. Vines looked great all summer long. As it turned out, the crop level was slightly more generous than 2018, much of it I attribute to my dad's rebuilding the structure of some of the Old Zin vines planted in 1912. A little healthier grapevine wood means a little more fruit.

'Verve' is not a typical word used with Zinfandel. But this is a theme that keeps coming to mind when I taste the components, the blend trials and the final intended blend. Another term, 'catching the crispness' also comes to mind. Red & black cherries, fresh imperial plum, slightly under-ripe blackberries (the ones where some of the drupelets have only just turned dark, but still retain their tartness) and a little fresh loam. Good structure and mouth-watering finish that echoes the red and black fruits. Whenever I've seen a vintage with this sort of verve in its youth, it's aged and developed into something spectacular and long-term.

I remember our second vintage, 1992. When it was released (bottled sooner than I do now) it was a bit recalcitrant, but it opened up with some air time. At a dinner with my wholesale broker at the time, Tom Elliot of Northwest Wines, he reveled in how much like Chambolle-Musigny that Zinfandel seemed. After 25-plus years in bottle, that vintage is still lovely, complex and has retained its verve. About 1,000 cases will be produced. *Estimated release price: \$40 per bottle. Futures price: \$296 per case to be released April 2021.*

### **2019 Scherrer Vineyard 'Shale Terrace' Zinfandel Futures**

For those who are new to us, this is a very small parcel on the family property where there is very little clay and the soil is more like fractured shale with a little silt. The Zin vines grow differently, and the wines are also very different. In 1996, the first vintage I vinified this area, I thought it would blend nicely with the Old and Mature vines growing in a soil containing more clay. This parcel was great alone but did not blend well. In the decades that followed, I have come to better understand the needs of this parcel and what it can become: This is a very unique Zinfandel that dresses up like Pinot Noir and looks pretty good that way.

2019 gave us a somewhat more generous harvest here as well compared to 2018, so there should be a little more of this rare item to go around. Lovely, suave tannins, good sense of minerality/non-fruit is a foil to the typical (for this site) stone fruits and fresh Santa Rosa plum this site illustrates. Its finish is clean and refreshing. At first look last year, the crop seemed smaller than even 2018. But luckily, there was a little more fruit. It is still not a very plentiful yield, but it makes super wine.

Because this has always been a limited production wine, there is usually not enough to go around. So, we have honored peoples' past support of this wine and give those that

purchased Shale in the past (even just a bottle) ‘first crack’ and orders received by July 31 will be processed first in the order they are received while supplies last. Those who have not bought Shale before may place an order which will be placed on the ‘wish list’. Those orders will be filled in the order they are received if there is wine still available after the first-crack July 31 deadline. We also hold back some of the Shale from futures so we will have some available at release next April so those not in the ‘first-crack’ offering can have a few bottles. About 220 cases to be produced *Release price \$40 /bottle. Futures price: \$296 per case to be released April 2021*

## New Releases

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### New Release Sampler Pack

In our effort to bring the Open House tasting to you, we will be offering a special Sampler pack of one bottle of each of the following New Release wines at 15% discount and free ground shipping\*. This offer is not on our regular public website. It is accessed only through [the link here](#) or the links provided on the email newsletter. You can also send in the attached order form or send us an email or give a call. 6 bottles, Special offer ~~\$303~~ \$257

*\*ground shipping will be weather dependent; if needed, we'll plan on storing the wine for you and ship when temperatures are wine friendly. If you are wanting your wine sooner, we are giving a special sampler discount of \$48 for 2-day air (Hawaii higher)*

### 2017 Pinot Noirs

The two 2017 Pinot Noir bottlings below are the first ones released from this vintage. It was a good season with two difficulties which we completely avoided: early September heat and late October fires. Since I like to harvest on the earlier side of our ‘window’, when the weather is warmer than usual and things move faster than normal, we still end up with fruit harvested within ‘the window.’ As I have very good long-term relationships with the vineyards we buy fruit from and with the vineyard management companies we have crossed paths with over the years, I can request and have granted, favors to get fruit picked when it is difficult to find labor. Adapting once again to what nature brings our way.

### 2017 Sonoma County Pinot Noir

Our entry level Pinot bottling, it hails from mostly Russian River Valley fermentation lots that really don't display the core Russian River Valley profile and don't enhance that blend. Instead I bring these lovely parts together to make a seriously delicious Pinot Noir from Sonoma County. Blood orange, beets, a hint of patchouli (yes, we live in Sebastopol after all) are found on the nose. Mouthwatering acidity on entry, good persistence of red fruits and earth on the mid-palate, then comes full-circle to mouthwatering acidity, good grip and nice tang on the finish. This is definitely a food-friendly wine at this early stage as the protein and fat in the food really make the combination come alive. For the chemists out there, the pH's of a few of our Pinot Noirs (Sonoma county and Russian River Valley, most notably) are the lowest at bottling that they have ever been. This portends long cellaring potential. I think pH for a given site is a function of how much water has moved through the plant. So, when you harvest a little earlier, before a heat spell accelerates other ripening processes, there is less potassium passively moved into the fruit. 400 cases produced *\$38 per bottle.*

### **2017 King Family Pinot Noir**

This site differs from all the other Pinot Noir vineyards we work with in three ways. It is on Huichica soil (rather than Goldridge for all the others), it lies to the east of the Laguna de Santa Rosa and it represents older-style viticultural choices (rootstock and wider spacing). This is the old tried-and-true ‘pommard clone’ that has flourished in the area for many decades. It has thicker skins and it tolerates unusually warm weather at harvest when the skins are more prone to dehydration much better than more recent additions to the area. It tends to break dormancy later and ripens later in the season (when heat spikes of Labor Day are long passed) than our other sites as well. In short, it’s a good fit of site and clone.

Dark cherry cola, baking spices, rose hips and fresh loam on the nose, it has a silky texture and rich body that cloaks its substantial structure. I know there is a substantial amount of new French oak in this wine, but you’d never guess that. It soaks it up and incorporates it in the best way – invisibly. The finish echoes the aromas and is very persistent and uplifting, inviting another taste. This could be the most harmonious vintage from this site for us. 47 cases produced. *\$48 per bottle.*

### **2016 Hallberg Vineyard Pinot Noir**

This is one of my all-time favorite Pinot Noir sites. A special, proprietary clone of Pinot Noir was legally imported into the US decades ago and I was fortunate to be able to work with this since 2004. It retains acidity to an astonishing degree and has some fantastic perfumes that Pinot Noir can exhibit at its best. High-toned, floral, sweet fresh beets, slight muskiness. Bright acidity, very mouth-watering with great continuity and clean finish. Antonio Galloni commented “The 2016 Pinot Noir Hallberg Vineyard is stellar. Bright and punchy in its first impression, the 2016 impresses with its fabulous sense of harmony. Raspberry, blood orange, mint, rose petal and anise give the 2016 striking brilliance that complements its chiseled, finely sculpted fruit so well. The 2016 is wiry yet deep, with the first signs of aromatic development just starting to creep in. In a word: terrific. 94 pts.” 70 cases produced. *\$75 per bottle*

### **2016 Sasha Syrah**

The name ‘Sasha’ came from one of our small fermentation tanks, all of which have names. Strikingly, the one named ‘Sasha’ always seemed to make delicate, pretty wines. Back in 2007 when that fermenter had Syrah with such relative delicacy and red fruits (especially for a variety known for darker tones and forcefulness), I had to keep it separate and named it after the tank. We don’t always make this, just when the material is right. Red fruit, savory, pipe tobacco earthiness show from a freshly opened bottle. With air in the glass high-toned rose petal and hints of honeysuckle emerge. On day 2 it shows a well-knitted fabric with hints of fennel woven here and there not unlike 2009 ‘Sasha’ developed. Here is Antonio Galloni’s description as of last winter: “The 2016 Syrah Sasha is bold, luscious and wonderfully inviting. Readers will find a Syrah endowed with sumptuous fruit that retains the classic Scherrer feel. Racy and immediate, the Sasha will likely offer its best drinking over the next few years. 91 pts.” 117 cases produced. *\$36 per bottle*

### **2017 Kick Ranch Grenache**

I remember my surprise the first time I tasted a Ch. Rayas Châteauneuf-du-Pape in 1990. I was struck by the light color and delicacy compared to all the other wines from this region I had been enjoying for several years before that. It seemed like there was an unoaked Pinot Noir snuck into the tasting. After encountering Ch. Rayas a number of times since, I have a

great appreciation for the range of character that 100% Grenache wines can illustrate.

This vintage of Kick Grenache channels some of that Rayas delicacy. Still exhibiting rather primary fruit, it is surprisingly delicate with bright acidity not unlike the Hallberg Pinot Noir above. According to Antonio Galloni “The 2017 Grenache Kick Ranch is a very pretty, perfumed wine. Dried cherry, sweet pipe tobacco, cedar and crushed flowers. The Grenache is quite ethereal and not especially varietal in 2017, but it is an attractive wine to drink now and over the next handful of years. 90 pts.” Of note: I age Grenache in older, larger format cooperage. New oak seems to get in the way of the delicate nuances the grape has. Somehow, by contrast Pinot Noir’s nuances don’t tend to collide with new oak the way Grenache’s do. 115 cases produced. *\$38 per bottle*

### **2016 Scherrer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon**

I grew up with the more classically styled form of this variety as my benchmark. Andre Tchelistcheff, (winemaker at Beaulieu for decades, putting it on the map, and considered the ‘dean of CA winemaking’) was the consultant at the first winery I worked at in the early 80’s. I was fortunate to be invited to regularly sit down with him and the winemaker over several years for tastings of our wines as well as benchmark wines of the world which he used as a teaching tool for us young’uns. Without consciously choosing, I found that this set my aesthetic thermostat, so to speak. Classical style has always been a touchstone since then.

My father decided to plant Cabernet on the property for the first time in the late 1980’s. It is one of his best decisions for both farming and winemaking reasons. It is relatively easy to grow (compared to the Petite Sirah it replaced, Zin and Pinot Noir, at least) and loves the soil and climate in this special Alexander Valley location. From a winemakers perspective, it is a relatively sturdy base that tends to absorb any mistakes the winemaker makes (compared to Pinot Noir, especially) and yet with a careful hand towards restraint and balance, creates a truly age worthy wine.

My approach has evolved over the decades, currently being extremely minimalist when you look at what handling (or lack of) the wine sees. I do not know of any other winery that carries this variety from pressing to bottling without any racking once in barrel for nearly three years. *It just isn’t done.* However, it works really well for us and this material, bringing better texture, more perfume and better longevity since the wine has not had its total oxygen appetite squandered with unnecessary movement and aeration. I also value the savory and lightly herbal elements of the variety that disappear once the fruit is seriously overripe. So we do not over-expose the fruit on the vine to excessive direct sunlight and we harvest at appropriately modest maturity levels. We are not into additives designed to sculpt the wine into a profile that should garner high scores from critics, either. A good site has the natural material to be almost self-sculpted with only the assistance of gentle hands and well-timed action such as harvesting, pressing, etc.

Cassis, mint, a hint of dill and Christmas spices on the nose give way to a mix of red and dark fruits, herbs and Christmas spices on the mouth with a very long, mouth-watering finish. Here’s Antonio Galloni’s take on it: “The 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Scherrer Vineyard is a bit richer and deeper than the straight [Alexander Valley] Cabernet. That extra kick of fruit richness plays off the more savory notes so well. Dark cherry, plum, leather, spice, licorice and dried flowers add striking nuance to this racy yet classically-proportioned Cabernet. 94 points ” 143 cases produced. *\$68 per bottle, \$36 half bottles, \$138 magnums*

## Very Recent Releases

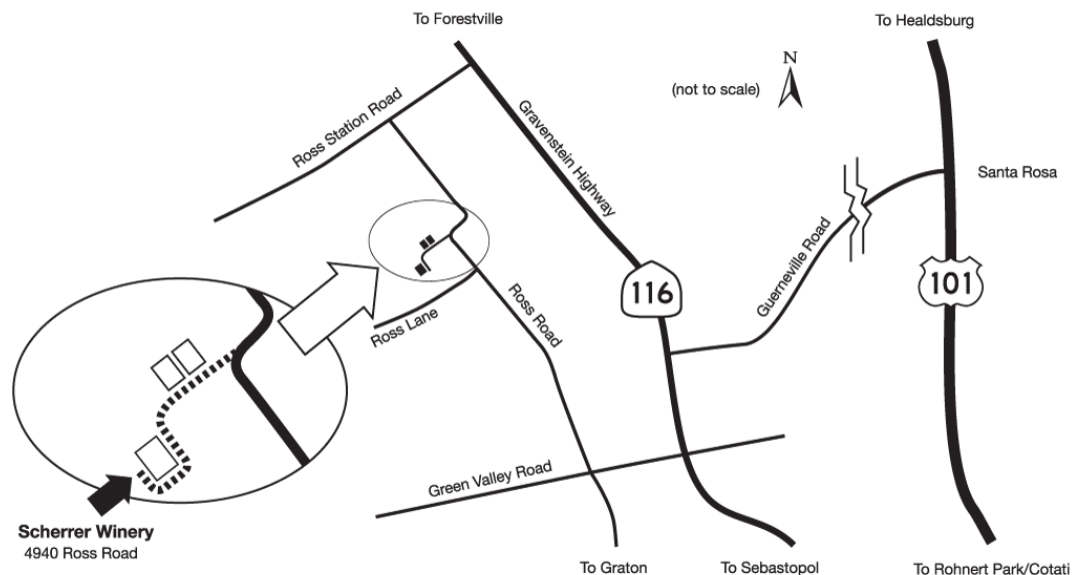
The 2014 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir (\$50) is just getting to play in the few restaurants that are open and wine shops. The 2015 Old & Mature Vine Zin (\$38) is just now going to those same places, though it's a bit further into its curve and is stunning at this point. The last bit of good ol' Zinfandoodle v.14.5 (\$22) has been a wonderful daily drinker for many folks where really good wine at a modest price is the ticket.

The 2017 Helfer Vineyard Chardonnay (\$50) (93 pts Galloni) is really beginning to shine as it enters the second year in bottle. There are just a few cases of 2014 (\$48) left which demonstrates its perfect spot. A couple of our 2016 Pinot Noirs released in the Spring have also gotten some very nice press from Galloni worth noting here. 2016 Gunsalus (\$48) 94 pts and 2016 Platt (\$70) 95 pts. Adding the newly released 2016 Hallberg would make a really nice trio to build a meal around or to make a really special gift for an Oenophile friend.

Again, thanks for your continued support. This past Spring it has meant more than ever before to us. It allows us to keep the doors open to do what we love. As always, I am unable to fully communicate this in such a small space, but still try anyway.

## 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.



**WARNING:** Drinking distilled spirits, beer, coolers, wine and other alcoholic beverages may increase cancer risk, and, during pregnancy, can cause birth defects. For more information go to [www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/alcohol](http://www.P65Warnings.ca.gov/alcohol).

## 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)
<b>Curb-side Pick up</b> is available at the Winery by appointment	NC	
<b>GLS Delivery</b> (recommended) to CA	\$21/box	\$1.75
<b>GLS Delivery 2-Day</b> to AZ, ID, NV, OR, WA and parts of NM	\$24/box	\$2
<b>Ground</b> to CA, AZ	\$30/box	\$2.5
<b>Ground</b> to CO, ID, OR, MT, NM, NV, WA or WY	\$36/box	\$3
<b>Ground</b> to AL, DC, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, KS, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA or WI	\$48/box	\$4
<b>2-day Air</b> to above states plus: HI & Alaska higher	\$120/box	\$10
<b>Overnight</b> to any above state. Delivery to any state address with liquor license. HI or Alaska higher	\$168/box	\$14



MAILING	SHIPPING	
Name	Name	
Street	Company Name	Residential <input type="checkbox"/>
City, State, Zip Code	Street	
Daytime Phone	City, State, Zip Code	
e-mail:	Delivery Phone	
I am over 21. Date of Birth:	Shipping Notes	

Futures Wine - Released April 2021	Price (cases only)	Quantity	Amount
2019 'Old & Mature Vines' Zinfandel	\$296 / case		
2019 'Shale Terrace' Zinfandel	\$296 limit 1 case		
2019 Zin Futures Sampler (6-OMV, 6-Shale)	\$296 limit 1 case		
Futures Subtotal			
Sales Tax: Pick up 8.25% Shipping: AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI, WY			%
Choose: <input type="checkbox"/> Pick up at Winery or <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping method and cost:			
<b>Deadlines: July 31 for Shale First Crack</b> <b>August 31 for all futures orders unless sold out</b>			<b>Futures Total</b>

New Releases	Price	Quantity	Amount
2017 Kick Ranch Grenache	\$38 / bottle		
2016 'Sasha' Russian River Syrah	\$36 / bottle		
2016 Hallberg Vineyard Pinot Noir	\$75 / bottle		
2017 King Family Pinot Noir	\$48 / bottle		
2017 Sonoma County Pinot Noir	\$38 / bottle		
2016 Scherrer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon	\$68 / bottle		
	\$36 / half bottle		
	\$138 / magnum		
New Release Sampler (one each 750 mL, 15% discount)	\$257/ 6 bottle pack		

<b>Current Wines Subtotal</b>			
Discount for orders that will total 12 or more bottles (Futures & New Release Sampler build toward discount but are not additionally discounted)		-10%	< >
<b>Current Wines Total</b>			
Sales Tax: Pick up 8.25% Shipping: AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI, WY			

Choose: <input type="checkbox"/> Pick up at Winery or <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping method and cost:			
<b>Total</b>			

Payment: <input type="checkbox"/> Visa / MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> American Express <input type="checkbox"/> Check	
Card #	Expires: Security Code
Signature:	Date: