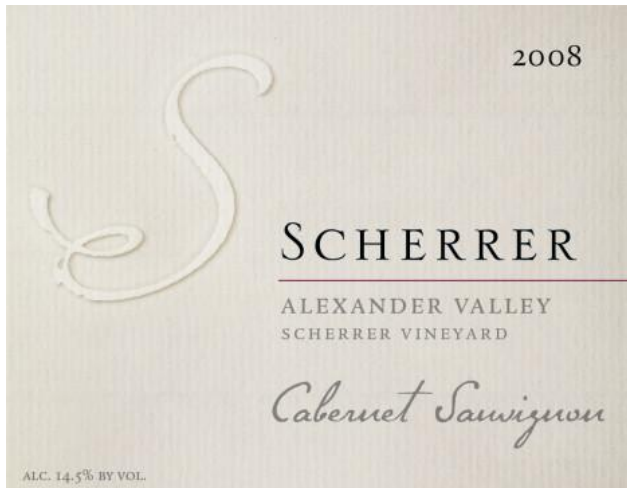


Cabernet Sauvignon

Scherrer Vineyard, 2008



This is a unique and exotic expression of Alexander Valley benchland Cabernet Sauvignon. It was aged in small French oak cooperage for about thirty months, with infrequent racking. Bottled without fining or filtration to respect the expression of the site, this 100% varietal wine enjoys both a youthful suppleness and the structure necessary for lengthy storage.

Winemaker's Notes

The 2008 season was notable for spring frosts in low areas and later with a few smoke-affected areas due to the fires that summer. The Cabernet at my family's vineyard was fortunately spared any of this excitement. I think 2008 is one of the more interesting vintages for this site because it has both the up-front fruit that makes nearer-term enjoyment possible and great substance for long-term aging. It reminds me very much of the 2005 with a touch of the forward plumpness of the 2004. Not quite as red-fruited as the Alexander Valley bottling also harvested from this vineyard, it has a classic cassis/violet/fresh-loam aroma that brings a smile to many a face. With good structural tannin that is enveloped by appropriate viscosity it is delightful right now with food. I prefer opening a bottle a day or two before drinking it now, though. A week would not be a problem.

On the heels of such a well-touted vintage as 2007, these are the wines that really turn heads down the road because they are often simply overlooked or upstaged. Showing a vertical from 2001 thru 2008 for a wine journalist recently, I was pleased to see how this wine stood up to its more developed and evolved and older siblings. This past year, we have broken the unspoken recent trend of having only one vintage of Cabernet Sauvignon at a time in wholesale distribution. I felt that a wine that has a happy spot of about 10 years or more should be in no rush to be sold out so soon after bottling nor should it have to be gone within 12 months of initial release. There is no reason to treat this stuff like a chocolate milkshake*. Many of you have understood this for some time. I finally discovered that a vertical tasting flight is all that was needed to make my point. Of course, the price will have to increase for the cellared wines a nominal amount each year reflecting our effort required to achieve this. The reward is that restaurants will be able to offer something in a more traditional, food-friendly style that has the benefit of time to complete some of its evolution without having to invest in their own aging program, or they could go younger if that is what suits them best. And we can all come back to the well too — for a while, at least. As usual, we pulled an allocation of even older vintages out of library last November and have practically nothing left by the beginning of March. I can take a hint...eventually.