

TOR

TOR Cabernet Sauvignon To Kalon Clone 4, 2008

Blend: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Production: 130 cases, magnums only, six bottles per case
Release Date: January 2011

Vintage

The 2008 vintage has the potential to be one of Napa Valley's finest, yet most challenging vintages in recent memory. Our expert growers made more than 20 passes through their vineyards, and left a very small but very high quality crop. A few distinctive notes about the vintage—it was the second consecutive drought year and almost all of the rain came in January; the ground was dry by April. Spring was mostly remembered for an unbelievably long frost period, which influenced the set. Frost was the culprit for a severely reduced crop in most appellations. On Howell Mountain, we were not able to make a wine from our block of Cimarossa, mostly due to these conditions. We picked up two old, but extraordinary blocks in Andy Beckstoffer's To Kalon vineyard. Along with Mast, all our vineyards were 40 to 50 percent off normal crop yield. The fruit had an extraordinarily long hang time, as a result of the very long cool summer, with a heat spike in September, and a long Indian summer. It was an amazing growing season, but we had to work hard to bring out the best.

Vineyard

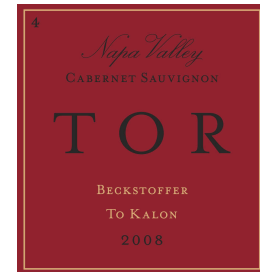
One of the To Kalon Blocks we used is planted to what I have called one of California's heritage clones—Clone 4, an integral component of the great BV Cabernets made by André Tchelistcheff from the middle of the last century. Those of you who know us and our wines know we champion this clone, and have worked with it in the past; most notably with an old vineyard in Rutherford, that has since been replanted. For us, this block gave us a wine that has exceptional color, structure, and lift, more like a mountain Cabernet, and seemed ideal for bottle for this vintage in MAGNUMS ONLY.

Winemaking

We made multiple passes through our Clone 4 To Kalon vineyard, opening up the canopy, removing the grapes that had ripened unevenly. The grapes set early in the season and had a long hang time. We picked them only when the seeds were fully mature without a hint of greenness. We picked on October 9th, the last of our To Kalon Cabernets to be picked. In the winery we used indigenous yeasts, took our normal direction of unfiltered unfiltered, minimal handling through the aging process. We continue to work with small, excellent cooperages—all French. For the Clone 4 we used barrels from Ermitage, in addition to Taransaud and Darnajou. We never over-handle our wines, and for this magnum bottling we let the grapes do all the talking.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes

Aromatically where the other 2 To Kalons might have some red and some black fruits, this is all black fruits. Grilled meats/sweet cedar smoke/dry BBQ rub. On the palate this wine is intense and palate gripping with great/round intense Clone 4 tannins. Black cherries/ink/black licorice and slow cooked brisket. This is the wine for a long decant or to cellar.



"An amazing wine that wows you with incredible depth, richness, focus and purity, offering tiers of great dark berry fruit, plum, cherry, cassis, crème de cassis and subtle smoky, toasty notes, ending with a long, persistent finish that highlights its purity and focus. Drink now through 2025. 130 cases made."

Rated 97
James Laube,
"The Wine Spectator"
May 31, 2011 issue