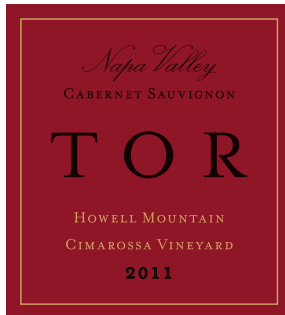


T O R



TOR Cabernet Sauvignon Cimarossa Vineyard, 2011

Blend: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Production: 344 cases
Release date: January 2014

Vintage

After all the grapes were in, I was asked by the Wine Spectator to comment on the vintage - "I think there will be some **exceptional wines**, but they won't be because of luck. They will reflect experienced growers and winemakers who took adversity and turned it to their advantage." Now that the wines are in the bottle, I stick with that quote.

Adversity – from the get go. It was a very cool, late start to the growing year that remained cool to the very end, late October. Along this journey, we had significant rain in June that, depending on the vineyard location, dictated bloom and set. High on Howell Mountain, the set was excellent at Cimarossa, and by late October the clusters were fully ripe, beautiful fruit. Mast, in Yountville, also had a good set and excellent fruit at harvest. In the western foothills of Oakville in our prized blocks of Clone 6 in To Kalon, we harvested less than a quarter of a ton for two acres. If you are into the struggling vine/low tonnage = high quality axiom, this should be the greatest year yet for To Kalon, for the crop was miniscule. To insure high quality, we opened up the canopies more than we have for some time, and worked hard at the sorting table - what we crushed was excellent. A whole lot more work, for a whole lot less wine. But, we really like what did make it to bottle. These are, as predicted, "**exceptional wines.**"

Vineyards

"Cimarossa" means 'red hill top' in Italian, which aptly defines this very special hillside vineyard planted on a volcanic cinder cone. The elevation is 2,100 feet, and the soils are predominately red volcanic rock and dust. Not much can be cultivated on these steep hills besides vines and some olive trees (which produce my favorite California olive oil). This is a special place: the clusters are small, the berries are tiny, but the flavors are BIG! Our last Cimarossa vineyard designate was in 2009 and earned the highest Wine Spectator score for that appellation, ever.

Winemaking

The Cimarossa Cabernet always demands a bit of a deft hand when fermented. The fruit from Howell Mountain naturally has a lot of tannin. The key is to keep it sweet tannin and not let it veer to the dry side. This wine is fermented warm and fast and comes off its skins quickly. The Cimarossa also tends to get one more additional racking than our other single vineyard Cabernets. The barrels used on this wine are always 100% Darnajou due to the spicy, sweet profile that they can lend to Cabernet Sauvignon.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes

This is the biggest Cabernet in profile from 2011 but still shows the vintage very clearly. This has classic Howell Mountain richness and density with the blueberry/blackberry that we normally get from this great Cabernet site. Perhaps the longest lived Cimarossa we have had since the 2003, this will be one to try on release but consider cellaring and trying it over a long lifetime.