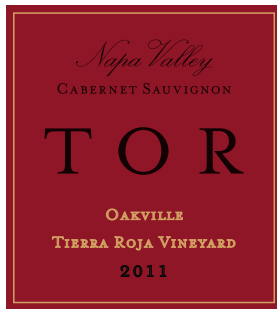


# T O R



## TOR Cabernet Sauvignon Tierra Roja Vineyard, 2011

Blend: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon  
Production: 150 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**

Drive the Oakville Cross Road to the Silverado Trail then look directly forward and up and you see Tierra Roja, a small four acre jewel of a hillside vineyard. Great neighbors – Backus, Screaming Eagle, Maya and Rudd. The vineyard is dotted with big rocks, and the soil is definitely Roja (very red). You might expect the wines to be massive, but they are very perfumed, dark, and complex - more like Screaming Eagle than neighbor Dalla Valle.

### **Winemaking**

The 2011 Tierra Roja Cabernet was again a wonderful wine to ferment. This vineyard seems to give off more of the finished wine smells more than any other while it is fermenting. Out of the tank you can actually smell the blackberry and meat. This was fermented for about 17 days on its skins and then put down to almost 100% Darnajou wood - along with a small amount of Taransaud and Sylvain. We gave the Tierra Roja more pump-overs for longer than our other Oakville Cabernet at To Kalon. This received at least two pump-overs, and on occasion three each day. This is a beautiful wine.

### **Winemaker's Tasting Notes**

I always love Tierra Roja. There is a very distinct, very bright fruit profile to this wine. It shows mostly black fruits with black cherries and blackberries, but the red soils that this vineyard sit on give it an additional bit of lift and energy. As much as I enjoy this wine now, I think that its best days are ahead of it. The very low yields contributed to a build meant to last a long time. If you are a fan of the Oakville Cabernets made from this area in the early 1990's like I am, you will love this wine.