

TOR

TOR Cabernet Sauvignon Mast Vineyard, 2007

Blend: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Production: 264 cases
Release Date: October 2009

Vintage

The year began with some of the coldest temperatures on record, while the vines were safely in dormancy. Winter transitioned into spring earlier than usual, with budding, bloom and set all ahead of schedule. For the most part, it was a long cool growing season with few heat spikes. Labor Day brought back the heat, which was short lived, then back to cool, creating ideal harvest conditions into late October. All our Cabernet vineyards had extraordinary hang time contributing to their completeness and complexity.

Vineyard

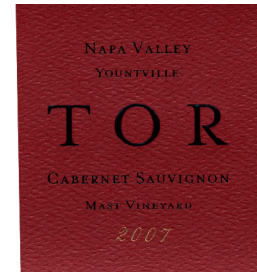
This vineyard was first planted in 1972 by the Mast family on their estate in the Napa Valley. It is south of the Dominus vineyard in the Yountville appellation and has sloped, western hills. The soils, like many of the better vineyards with similar orientation, have much rock and are well drained. It is planted to Clone 337, and fortunately our specific block is in the rockiest section. Curiously, I have tracked this vineyard for two decades, noticing a unique micro-climate which develops late in the growing season. When all of the neighboring western facing, benched-vineyards find shade as the sun drops lower on the horizon, Mast finds a gap in the western hill and holds light and heat longer. Unique terroir.

Winemaking

During the long growing season of 2007, we thinned all Cabernet blocks several times to bring crop into balance with the vine growth. This extra labor paid off with uniformly ripe grapes at harvest. All the Cabernets had excellent uniformity in grape quality; seeds almost tasting like walnuts, no greenness. After morning crushing, the must was presoaked till the indigenous yeast began to slowly metabolize grape sugar, signaling a beginning of fermentation. For the Mast, soaks and fermentation lasted 25 days; the juice was then racked off directly into small Taransaud and Damey French oak barrels. After 22 months in small oak, the wine went to bottle unfiltered, unfinned. Net - net, minimal handling or intervention.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes

On the nose there is big, rich blackberry followed by notes of tar and currants. On the palate this wine is sneaky with a long finish. It begins with a very rich, sweet entry and though packed with tannin, it never shows those tannins – absolutely palate coating with venison, smoke, tobacco and cloves. The very ripe, sweet tannins allow the wine to truly coat the palate with richness. Extremely well balanced, this wine should age gracefully for years to come. If consumed in the next couple of years, I highly recommend a few hours (or better yet, one day) of decanting.



"More chocolate, tobacco leaf, spice box, and black and red currant aromas jump from the glass. Pure, elegant, and clearly made in a more feminine, gracious style, this well-balanced effort will benefit from 2-3 years of cellaring given its intensity and tannic strength. It should evolve for two decades or more."

Rated (92+) by
Robert Parker, Jr.
"The Wine Advocate"