

TOR

TOR Chardonnay Cuvée Torchiana, 2009

Blend: 100% Hyde selection Wente Clone Chardonnay

Production: 160 cases

Release date: April 2011

Vintage

Looking back to the season as a whole, it represents one of the most uniform weather growing season patterns I can remember. Both Jeff Ames and I agree, had it not been for a mid-October warm rainy storm, this vintage would be recognized as one of California's great vintages. All of our Chardonnay was picked at optimum maturity levels before this late October storm, and we look at these as some of the best Chardonnays we have made. In other words, as most of our peers would chime in, 2009 is a great a vintage for Chardonnay.

Vineyard

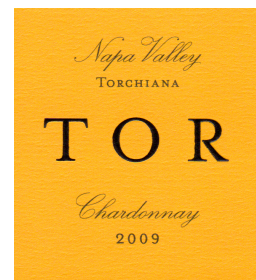
This is my mother's maiden name. Torki, as we called her, was very lovely, very talented painter and actress, who encouraged all us young Kenwards to be creative, and listen to our muse. This is my Hommage to her. In 2009, most of the wine came from a single vineyard Larry Hyde introduced to me in 2008. It belonged to one of his oldest friends in the Napa Valley, Steve Beresini, and was planted nearly three decades ago with cuttings Larry gave Steve. We call this plant material – Hyde selection Wente clone. Today it produces a miniscule crop, usually between a ton to two tons an acre.

Winemaking

These Chardonnays were all made in a very traditional Burgundian fashion. What does that mean? For our Chardonnays we do not inoculate for either alcoholic or malolactic fermentation, we do not fine nor filter the wines and we try to bring the most honest and true expression of the vineyard to you as we can.

Winemaker's tasting notes

The Torchiana might be the most popular Chardonnay that we make. It tends to be the most overtly rich and dense of the Chardonnays and this year follows in that trend. This vintage of Torchiana shows more focus than in previous vintages but does not lose any of the expected richness and density. The nose on this is sea spray-saline, almost Chablis like quality. On the palate it is incredibly focused and precise. If you can picture Chablis in a ripe year and add in some California richness this is what you get with the '09 Torchiana. This might be the wine of the three 2009 Chardonnays to lie down in the cellar and come back to in a couple years to wow your friends.



"...Low yields of 1.5 tons of fruit per acre has resulted in a tiny production of this effort. It reveals a red wine-like tannic profile, but lots of length, richness and intensity. I suspect by the time it is in bottle it could be the finest of the trio of Chardonnays..."

(91-93) Robert Parker's
Wine Advocate Dec. 2010