

As the challenges of difficult growing seasons fade with time, two things happen. First, in the memory of winemakers, rain events magically become less extreme: the actual torrential rainfall that plagued a harvest shrinks to moderate precipitation and eventually to a vague recollection of moisture. Freakishly cool or brutally hot harvest weather or damaging hail storms are virtually forgotten, as the body has a short memory for pain. At the same time, as the wines themselves mature and are transformed, they reveal themselves to be less extreme after all, until at some point it can be next to impossible to find the insanity of the vintage in the bottle. I've seen these patterns play out again and again in temperate wine-growing areas like Bordeaux, Burgundy and northern Italy—and even in normally hot, bone-dry growing regions. Two thousand eight was such a year for California's North Coast.

From Vintage Retrospective: The 2008 Napa Valley Cabernets (May 2018) by Stephen Tanzer

Vintage	Name	Tasting Notes	Score	Drinking Window	Release Price	Review Date
2008	Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard Clone Six	(14.5% alcohol): Medium ruby. High-toned, liqueur-like aromas of cassis, flowers, graphite, licorice, shoe polish, minerals and tropical bitter chocolate. Wonderfully silky and fine-grained, with very ripe, intense dark fruit and chocolate flavors enlivened by a higher-pitched floral element. A bit more exotic than this producer's Clone 337 version but supported by a firm underpinning of acidity and minerality. Finishes with suave tannins, a sexy note of bitter chocolate and excellent subtle persistence. Still youthful and evolving slowly. – Stephen Tanzer	93	2023 - 2037	N/A	May 2018
2008	Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard Clone 337	(14.5% alcohol): Saturated ruby. A bit less open-knit on the nose than the Clone Six, conveying a rather brooding quality to its scents of blackberry, cassis, spices, licorice and minerals. Wonderfully concentrated, pliant, creamy-sweet wine with near-perfect balance and no rough edges. The very ripe cassis, dark chocolate and mineral flavors spread out to saturate the entire palate, with the firm but smooth tannins playing a supporting role without impinging on the wine's fruit. This wine was more backward at the outset than the Clone Six but its tannins have harmonized beautifully since then. In fact, this wine makes the Clone Six look a bit tight by comparison. Both of these beauties should go on for many years. – Stephen Tanzer	95	2023 - 2037	N/A	May 2018