



Beckstoffer Dr. Crane and Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard

Realm Cellars

2012 Realm The Absurd Proprietary Red Wine

100 Points

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The 2012 Proprietary Red Absurd is, in essence, the owner's and winemaker Benoit Touquette's selection of their favorite barrels. This is another three-digit tour de force in winemaking. A blend of 82% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc and dollops of Merlot and Petit Verdot, all from the Dr. Crane and To Kalon vineyards, it boasts a soaring, majestic set of aromatics consisting of blueberries, baking spices, wet gravel, blackberries and acacia flowers. Full-bodied, opulent and voluptuously textured with sweet tannin and a mindboggling, long finish, this is magnificent stuff! Kudos to the entire Realm Cellars family. This is their finest achievement to date (and I haven't even tasted their 2013s). Drink now through 2032.

Realm Cellars boasts an impressive team of highly motivated men and women led by Juan Mercado and winemaker Benoit Touquette. The consulting winemaker is Michel Rolland. Realm accesses some outstanding vineyard sources, particularly those owned by the omnipresent, bigger-than-life force of Napa Valley, Andy Beckstoffer. Fate was not kind to Realm in the beginning with their first vintage, 2003, completely destroyed by a fire in a Vallejo warehouse where it was being stored. But Juan Mercado, a former medic in the first Gulf war, and someone who learned his trade from the likes of Thomas Rivers Brown, Michel Rolland, John Kongsgaard and Les Behrens, stuck with it, and is now producing incredible wines. These 2012s represent the finest efforts Realm has produced to date. The heart of the Realm philosophy is to access some of Napa Valley's finest vineyards and put together either single-vineyard bottlings or creative proprietary blends. All of these 2012s were outrageously delicious, and I can't recommend them highly enough-*RP*