



Beckstoffer Vineyard Georges III

Schrader Cellars

2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer Vineyard Georges III Clone 337

97 Points

Wine Advocate – December 2010

The 2008s were bottled in early summer, 2010. From the Beckstoffer Vineyard, the opaque blue/purple-colored 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon George III Clone 337 rocks out of the glass with brilliant aromas of creme de cassis, Christmas fruitcake, cedarwood, licorice and incense. The wine is deep, full-bodied, dense and concentrated with outstanding purity, texture and length. It is approachable now (one of the seductive characteristics of these wines) yet is capable of lasting 25 or more years.

From the reviews I gave Schrader's 2007s and 2008s last year and the 2005s and 2006s previously, to the recent Wine Spectator cover story on Fred and Carol Schrader, there doesn't appear to be a hotter Cabernet Sauvignon producer in the New World than this small boutique winery. Their wines have already received four perfect scores and with this report, that grows to six. A lot of this might be somewhat confusing, but let me try and simplify their philosophy. Schrader Cellars is essentially dedicated to showcasing one of the great vineyard sites of Napa Valley, the Beckstoffer To-Kalon vineyard in Oakville. They produce wines from separate clones and parcels within that vineyard. In 2000, they added another Beckstoffer vineyard, George III, in Rutherford, which has a completely different soil base and offers another study of a different terroir. I suppose one could call this a winery within a vineyard within several parcels using some of the most famed clones of Cabernet Sauvignon to further highlight

these subtle differences. As one can see from the tasting notes, the Old Sparky comes from Clone 4, Clone 6 and Clone 337, the Schrader from Clone 4, Clone 6 and Clone 337, the CCS all from Clone 4, the T6 all from Clone 6, the RBS all from Clone 337 and the George III all from Clone 337. All of this results in about 1,600 cases of wine, which is not a tiny amount as the individual selections run between a maximum of 400 cases for the George III to 150 cases of the T6. The consulting winemaker for Fred and Carol Schrader is no other than Thomas Brown, who has won all kinds of accolades (well-deserved in my opinion) over the last 12 months. In essence, these wines are aged 18-24 months in a majority of Darnajou French barrels with some Taransaud included. The wines are incredibly expressive examples of Cabernet Sauvignon that are as good as it gets for this varietal. Of course they are more similar than dissimilar, but I suspect virtually every vintage they have produced to date has 25-40 years of cellaring potential, and long term aging should produce more and more subtle differences to support this compulsive study of clones and parcels within a given vineyard. I'll try and keep my notes simple, but these are profoundly great, world-class wines. If you can find any, don't hesitate to buy them - you won't regret it. These wines may also appeal to those who think alcohols have gotten out of line in Napa Valley. All of them have between 14.4% and 14.7% alcohol, which is modest for such great, rich wines.