



Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard

Schrader Cellars

2012 Schrader Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard Schrader

98 Points

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Nearly as prodigious is the 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon Beckstoffer to Kalon Vineyard, which is Clone 4 and Clone 6 blended together from the Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard, this is the highest in alcohol of the 2012s at 14.6%. It was aged in a combination of 50% new Darnajou and 50% new Taransaud barrels. This wine is one of the tighter, more backward of the 2012s, with more structure, tannin, muscle, a masculine personality, oodles of black and blue fruits and a massive mouthfeel, but is somehow much more primary and younger tasting than the other wines. Forget it for a few years and drink it over the following 20-25 years.

The Schraders, working with well-known winemaking consultant Thomas Rivers Brown, continue to farm and produce some of the world's greatest Cabernet Sauvignons from three fabulous Beckstoffer-owned vineyards: the To Kalon Vineyard in Oakville, the Georges III Vineyard in Rutherford and the Las Piedras Vineyard in St. Helena. To Kalon is gravelly, eluvial, loamy soils; Georges III Vineyard is an old creek bed; and Las Piedras Vineyard in St. Helena is planted on old river rock and gravelly loam. All of these blocks utilized for Schrader's wines encompass over 25+ acres and are custom-farmed – as Fred Schrader likes to say, essentially “virtual vineyards,” even though they're not owned by the Schraders. Their initial focus, which has proven so successful, is essentially a microscopic study of different clones planted in different blocks with exactly the same philosophy of viticulture, harvesting, winemaking, élevage and bottling. Production of all the 2012s, which was a slightly more generous and later harvest

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*Napa Valley, Mendocino County and the Red Hills of Lake County*

than 2013 with bigger berries, ranges from 200 cases for the Old Sparky and Georges III, to 520 for the CCS, 420 for the T6, 625 for the RBS, 370 for the Schrader, 620 for the LPV and 100 cases for the newest baby, the Colesworthy, which is a selection of the best barrels of their Las Piedras offering. Some of the other characteristics of these wines are that they all spend about 20 months in barrel, but the percentages of new Darnajou and new Taransaud varied from cuvée to cuvée, although the CCS is 100% new Darnajou, as are the Old Sparky and the Colesworthy. Finished alcohol on the 2012s is in line with other vintages, at 14.4%-14.6%. And in 2013, virtually identical numbers of 14.4%-14.6% were achieved. The consistency and the analytical aspects of the wines is mirrored in the incredible quality that Schrader has produced.-RP