



Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard

Schrader Cellars

2013 Cabernet Sauvignon

95 Points

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The 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon from clone 4, but a different block of the Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard, shows great fruit, but not nearly the complexity of the CCS. It is one of those micro-examples that is a fabulous wine, but somehow never seems to be up to the quality of the CCS, which is made from the same clone in an adjacent block. Nevertheless, this wine is full-bodied, rich and dense, with classic tobacco leaf, graphite, blackcurrant and licorice, and some toasty, smoky oak in the background. Drink it over the next 30 years.

After the remarkable performance of the 2012s, I would be hard-pressed to believe that Schrader could equal or eclipse that vintage, but they seem to have certainly equaled the quality of the 2012s. The 2013s are slightly more coiled and more tightly knit and with probably greater definition. That said, they all possess fabulous concentration and palate presence. Any of these will make a spectacular elixir/vinous treat to serve and consume over the next 25-30+ years. First-time readers may need to do a little research, but this is essentially a clonal study with micro-blends from the famous Oakville vineyard, the Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard, and more recently, a look at several other vineyards – the Beckstoffer George III Vineyard in Rutherford and the Beckstoffer Las Piedras Vineyard. Essentially, all of the wines are treated identically – aged in mostly Darnajou with some Taransaud barrels, they tend to always come in around 14.5%-14.7% natural alcohol, spend 20 months in all new oak and are bottled unfiltered. Since the beginning, they have been made by none other than the famed Napa consultant, Thomas Rivers Brown.

The wines are more similar than dissimilar, but I'll do my best to catalog the subtle differences that can be found. However, at this pinnacle of quality, they are few and far between. Production ranges from a low of 110 cases for the Colesworthy and 186 cases for the George III, to as much as 608 cases for the RBS and 650 cases for the LPV...-RP