

2007 Dashe Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon Todd Brothers Ranch Alexander Valley

HISTORY

These old, rugged Cabernet Sauvignon vines grown on the Todd Brothers Ranch in Alexander Valley are some of our favorite vines on the property. The vines produce an unusually structured and complex wine—more reminiscent of a classic Bordeaux-style wine than a typical California Cabernet—with intense fruit, balance, and full tannins that respond beautifully to extended bottle age. It needs either extended aging or, if consumed young, it should be decanted well before drinking to allow the wine to soften and integrate the fruit and tannin.

To make our Cabernet Sauvignon, we use a combination of both French and American winemaking techniques. Since both Michael and Anne have worked in top Cabernet-producing wineries such as Chateau Lafite-Rothschild, Chateau La Dominique, Ridge Vineyards and Far Niente, we use techniques we learned to increase the intensity of flavor and aromas, while also gaining complexity, subtlety, and lush texture. It truly is an example of “the iron fist in a velvet glove,” showing wonderfully intense Cabernet flavors, along with a perfumed aroma, layers and layers of fruit and spice, and a long, complex finish.

PRODUCTION

The 2007 vintage was one of the best in a decade, in terms of fruit quality and growing conditions. The vines, as is typical for this vineyard, produced a fairly small crop of Cabernet Sauvignon, only about two tons per acre. The grapes were crushed into our smallest fermentation tank (1500 gallons) and allowed to slowly ferment using only the yeast present on the skin of the grapes. This “native fermentation” allows the characteristics of the vineyard shine through the resulting wine.

During fermentation the temperature was allowed to get above 90° F, to aid in the extraction of color and flavor. We let the wine stay on the fermented skins for an extended time to extract the maximum flavor and color, after which we pressed the grapes in a gentle membrane press so as not to extract dry or harsh tannins.

The wine was aged for over 30 months in 100% French oak barrels, with about 20% of the wine aged in new oak. In our blending trials, we blended Petit Verdot with the Cabernet, for spice and length of finish. A big, balanced, substantial wine, we believe that this Cabernet Sauvignon will be quite a long-lived, able to age 15 years or more.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Varietals: 95% Cabernet Sauvignon, 5% Petit Verdot
Appellation: Alexander Valley, Sonoma County
Alcohol: 13.8 % by vol.
Time in oak: 30 months
Oak: 100% French oak; 20% new
Production: 241 cases, 750mL
Release date: April 15, 2011
Sugg. retail price: \$38.00 bottle
Optimum time for consumption: 2012-2025

TASTING NOTES

Color: Reddish-purple
Aroma: Cassis, blackberry, black pepper, vanilla, fennel, chocolate
Taste: Intense blackberry and cassis flavors, ripe plum, licorice, lavender, chocolate, velvety texture in the midpalette but with firm tannins, long, intense sweet finish of blackberry and spice that persists for minutes.