

2009 Hoot Owl Creek Cabernet Sauvignon

Production: 276 cases

Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon - Clone 337 on 110R

Vineyard: Hoot Owl

Appellation: Alexander Valley

Cooperage: 33% new Remond Aillier barrels, remainder in neutral oak barrels.

Alcohol: 14.79%, 3.75 pH, 0.57 TA

Release date: Spring 2015

Release price: \$68.00

Weather and Growing Season:

2009 was a moderately cool growing year after heavy spring rains, with the normal fog in the morning and clearing to mid-80s in the afternoons. Except for a thunderstorm on September 13 (0.1"rain) we had beautiful ripening cycles in September, with hot afternoons and foggy mornings. The colors and tannins were slow to develop, and continuing wet fog kept the grapes from concentrating. By mid-October sugars had climbed into the 24s, so we brought the Cab in during a misty light rain on Oct 12, in order to avoid the 4" of rain that fell the next few days. We crushed first thing next morning, grateful to have dodged such a major bullet.

Winemaking:

A 4 day soak at 60°F was followed by inoculation with Pasteur Red yeast and warming to 80°F. Fermentation took off, reaching 88°F. Pump overs were gentle, mostly by sprinkler, two times a day for a week, and then one time a day for another week. The wine was pressed and put to barrel (33% new Remond Aillier barrels) to go through Malo-lactic fermentation (finished by Dec 18th). Then it was racked and put back to barrel. The wine was racked 3 more times during its aging period, then bottled June 6, 2011.

Tasting Notes:

Nose: Comes out slowly even now, with cassis and black cherry. There is nice understated French oak and classic Alexander Valley Cab elegance.

Palate: Dark chocolate flavors and black fruit mid palate offer a more subtle approach than the 2008. Oak is the back-up, not a dominant, and the clear bright notes of an Alexander Valley Cabernet are the signature of this wine. Nice acidity and balance make it a beautiful choice for a lamb roast.