

Fall/Winter 2009 Newsletter

Greetings From Stuhlmuller Vineyards,

As I sit down to write this, the 2009 harvest has drawn to a close, and all the grapes are in our winery going through various stages of the winemaking process. The season got off to an exciting start with the arrival of our winemaker Leo Hansen's first child, Max, on August 7. While winemakers generally endure a few sleepless nights during harvest, it's safe to say, Leo has had more than his fair share this year. But before you start worrying that a sleep-deprived winemaker might be a cause for concern, consider the fact that this will be Max's birth-year vintage—and that Leo is planning on laying down numerous cases of the 2009s for a long, patient slumber. Knowing this, I wouldn't be surprised if these were the best wines Leo has ever made. With this in mind, I hope you will join me in raising a glass to Leo, Debbie and Max, and to the promise of great things to come!

Happy Holidays!

Fritz Stuhlmuller

Harvest 2009

Some vintages have a lot of drama, others don't. The 2009 growing season definitely falls into the latter category. Overall, 2009 offered a somewhat cooler summer, with no major heat spikes. As a result, harvest came in a couple of weeks later than normal, and at a relaxed pace that allowed us to pick blocks at our leisure as each showed optimal ripeness. Our Chardonnay arrived at the winery with perfect flavors, but at lower Brix than normal—an ideal scenario that translates to lower alcohol levels and excellent acidity, qualities that dovetail beautifully with our style of winemaking.

As good as our Chardonnay looks right now, it's the Cabernet that has us doing the occasional jig. Not only did we do a lot of canopy work with our Cab this year to further enhance quality, but low-to-moderate yields in 2009 have ensured lovely depth and concentration in the wines. Even though all of our lots are not pressed out yet, the early indicators couldn't be better. These are beautiful dark magenta colored wines, with excellent tannin structures and head-turning aromatics. While it is too soon to say anything with certainty, these could be stellar Cabernets.

New Releases

Following in the footsteps of some of the most acclaimed wines we have ever produced, we are pleased to offer you three exciting new releases.

2007 Alexander Valley Reserve Chardonnay (\$38/750ml bottle)

Our 2007 Estate Chardonnay earned **92 points** from *The Wine Advocate*, **91 points** from *Wine Spectator* and **92 points** from *Wine Enthusiast*. And this is the reserve bottling!!!

If you want to wow your guests over the holidays, open a bottle of this voluptuous white. It begins with aromas of ripe pear, plum, Meyer lemon, vanilla and buttered popcorn. On the palate, a core of Asian pear, yellow fruit and spice dominates, accentuated by elements

of hazelnut and lemon custard. Throughout, integrated oak and a beam of stony minerality balance the lush, round fruit, making this a rich and lovely complement to many dishes.

2008 Alexander Valley Estate Chardonnay (\$24/750ml bottle)

Picking up where the benchmark 2007 bottling left off, this stunning 2008 wine displays aromas of Bartlett pear, Meyer lemon peel, hard lemon candy, clove and honeysuckle. On the palate, it is lushly textured and full-bodied, displaying flavors of poached pear and lime custard, alongside brown baking spices and Stuhlmuller Vineyard's signature wet stone minerality. From its captivating first impression to its elegant conclusion, this Chardonnay offers remarkable depth and nuance at an equally appealing price.

2007 Alexander Valley Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (\$36/750ml bottle)

Wine Spectator and *Wine Advocate* both gave the 2006 vintage of this wine **91 points**. And while 2006 was a good vintage, many people think 2007 was one of the finest vintages in memory. This wine displays seductive aromas of black cherry, blackberry, sweet black licorice, cinnamon and a hint of pipe tobacco. The palate is juicy and mouthfilling with plush layers of crème de cassis, blackberry, black tea and earth, supported by firm, ripe tannins and a lively acidity. A perfect holiday red!

Current Releases

The 2002 Stuhlmuller Vineyards Fortified Cabernet (\$45/500ml bottle—40 cases)

We are also pleased to offer you our special Fortified Cabernet Sauvignon. Crafted in the style and tradition of a great Port, using premium, barrel-aged St. George brandy, this amazing wine pairs the heady grandeur of port with voluptuous, super-ripe Alexander Valley Cab flavors. Bottled from the cask, this standout fortified wine is overflowing with flavors of dark fruit, cocoa, vanilla, mocha and sweet oak.

2006 Alexander Valley Reserve Cabernet (\$65/750ml bottle) 327 cases produced

This Reserve Cabernet displays an inviting inky-purple color that leads to pronounced aromas of blueberry, blackberry and violets, underscored by notes of nutmeg and vanilla. Rich and full-bodied, with powerful tannins cloaked in a velvety texture, it reveals sophisticated flavors of blueberry pie, blue flowers and loamy earth that conclude in a long, satisfying finish.

Place An Order/Taste Before You Buy

If you would like to place an order, just fill out the enclosed order form, or to learn more visit **stuhlmullervineyards.com**. Or, if you would like to taste some of these delicious wines before purchasing, call 707.431.7745 to arrange a private tasting any day from Friday through Monday (10a.m. – 4 p.m.). Held at the poured cement tasting bar in the old converted barn that houses our winery, these free, by-appointment tastings are a relaxed and informative way to explore our wines!