

Carol's Bunch

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Sea-Zins greetings to our loyal members of Carol's Bunch! We hope you are all well and safe from all of the insane coronavirus and weather-disaster and election events of this crazy, messed-up year. Can we just say WOW...just WOW...what a year it has been on so many fronts, in so many parts of the country and world! We really need this upcoming holiday season to regroup, to refill our souls and to savor our time with those we love over some great meals and happier times...and that means that we need to get this marvelous box of joyful libations into your eager paws early in the season, so we can make sure you have it in time for all of your feasts and celebrations. Let the festivities begin!

In this shipment you will find four new vintage releases and two second visits of old friends, plus something much needed, a bottle of our StainRx to get wine stains out of your clothing or tablecloths, especially vital since there is a new wine in this box that has a LOT of STAIN potential! Make sure you do not miss that item since it is small and could get lost in your gleeful opening of your box.

As for the wines in this shipment...what a great assortment! We have the customary **2017 Wild Thing Zin**, always one of our club wines, and a revisit of the **2016 Peaceland Zin**, Carol's favorite due to its wonderful berry jam fruit and vibrantly fresh acidity that makes it such a great food partner. For new releases, we have the **2019 Black Magic Late Harvest Zin**, our slightly sweet dessert jewel, and the **2018 Rocky Reserve Zin**, our perennial flagship wine that has the elegant structure of Cabernet (with no Cab in it!) with Zin's rounder curves and rich berries. We are UBER-excited to announce two whole new wines in this shipment—first, the **Coquille Rouge**, a blend of red Rhône varieties that will be a companion to our beloved Coquille Blanc. It hails from Oakley on the San Joaquin Delta, which strangely is considered part of the "Central Coast", hence the appellation on our label. Its 100+ year old vines

grow on their own roots in sandy soils, not grafted onto rootstock like most other vines, and are totally dry-farmed, leading to a richer concentration of flavors—check out the varietal percentages on the next page. It is a great food-friendly partner to so many dishes from pasta to poultry to pork—check out the recipe in this newsletter! By the way, this wine is the first to be released in our sexy new package—a clean white label branded with the "Coquille" scallop shell that represents the shells on the SHELton family coat of arms, plus a shell embossed on top of its matching red foil! We'd love to hear what you think of it, so drop us a line if you have an opinion to share. The second new release is the long-promised bottling of **2016 Blue Tooth Alicante Bouschet**, coming from the Bastoni Ranch, home of our Karma Zin quasi-field blend. You will seldom see this "teinturier" (purple-fleshed, Google it!) variety bottled pure, as it is a bit lean and hard and lacks middle stuffing to support all of its abundant tannins. Carol has been working her magic on it and while still a wee bit chewy, it is a delicious version with fresh blueberry fruit and cigar box spices. After 3½ years in barrels the tannins are rounder and softer than it was going in...and will be a sturdy match for prime rib or a nice leg of lamb. We only bottled 154 cases of it so if you want to get a bit more for your cellar, exercise your first grab soon!



Winery News!

Many, many thanks to all of you for your messages of concern and support over these past few months. The fires have definitely raised some PTSD in me, and I have shed some tears in memory of the night 3 years ago when we lost our home, but we have moved on. We sold our beautiful newly rebuilt home to a lovely woman who will take great care of it. We are enjoying our new home in Windsor, and the proceeds of the sale will come in quite handy for the new winery building funds!

Continued on back....



Here are the details on this box of deliciousness, listed in suggested tasting order!
The total tab for this shipment is \$137.60, before any applicable tax & shipping.

2017 Wild Thing® Zinfandel

Our Signature Zin, your second serving of this vintage. As usual, Carol used only the yeasts growing on the skins of the grapes to do the fermentation, making it smoother and creamier than many other reds...as some new wine drinkers say—it's “less bitey”—dangerously good!

Organically Grown and Wild Yeast fermented

90 Points Wine Enthusiast, Best of Class, 2 Double Gold and 3 Gold Medals

78% Zinfandel, 14% Carignane, 8% Petite Sirah---99% Mendocino County

Case Production: 9170 cases of 750ml, plus 571 cases of 375ml

Aging Potential: 5-7 years

Price: \$19.00/ \$15.20 Club

Carol's Tasting Notes: Aromas of black cherry, ripe plum and raspberry fruit combine with a hint of cigar box, and vanilla-oak baking spice loveliness. Smoothly textured in mouth, and the palate is very creamy and round, with a finish that is long, with lush jammy fruit.



2018 COQUILLE ROUGE RED Rhône-style Blend, Central Coast

The red wines of the Rhône Valley were the inspiration for this blend, in which Carignane and Grenache Noir bring tangy red fruit, Mourvèdre fills in with savory gaminess, Alicante Bouschet adds spicy blueberry fruit (and color!), and Petite Sirah gives peppery backbone. These century vines in Oakley in the sands of the San Joaquin River Delta demonstrate the true meaning of teamwork, producing a rich and spicy mouthful of deliciousness. This is the new companion wine to our beloved Coquille Blanc blend--let us know what you think!

Premier vintage release!

25% Mourvèdre, 25% Carignane, 25% Petite Sirah, 15% Alicante Bouschet, 5% Grenache Noir, 5% Viognier---87% Central Coast (100+ year-old vines in Oakley), 13% Sonoma Co.

17 months in 10% new American and 90% older French oak barrels

Case Production: 463 cases

Aging potential: 5-20 years

Price: \$25.00 / \$20.00 Club **Brand new blend and label!**

Carol's Tasting Notes: Nose shows delightful strawberry and black cherry fruit, a bit of savory leather notes and sweet vanilla oak. Lively in mouth but super smooth and creamy, earthy flavors with brilliant berry and currant fruit, richly textured and layered, pretty and elegant with a long finish. ***Be sure to check out Pork in Cassis Sauce recipe on insert!**



2018 Rocky Reserve Zin, Florence Vineyard, Rockpile

Our flagship wine, the very best Zin we produce every year. Carol was a co-founder of the Rockpile AVA with her grower, Jack Florence Sr., whose vineyard planted in 1997 at 1400 ft elevation is the star of the show. It lies above our morning fog and has a much more even growing season, which allows for it to develop very polished tannins and Cabernet-like structure...our “Zin with the Heart of a Cab.”

Brand new release—not yet rated!

86% Zinfandel, 12% Petite Sirah, 2% Carignane

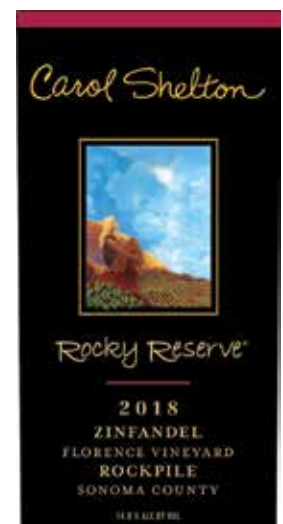
98% Florence Vineyard, Rockpile AVA (all but the Carignane)

Case Production: 578 cases

Aging potential: 5-20 years

Price: \$40.00 / \$33.00 Club **New release!**

Carol's Tasting Notes: Nice dark-red in color, big blueberry-blackberry fruit, spicy-chocolatey oak, nicely focused acidity enhances mineral flavors, elegantly structured tannins for aging, super plush loooong finish!



2016 PEACELAND ZINFANDEL

Peaceland Vineyard, Fountaingrove District

The name of the Peaceland Vineyard comes from the translation of its owners' German last name—Friedland. Three separate clones of Zinfandel each bring different flavor profiles, spiced up by a dollop of "Pet." The unique "tall-head" trained vines were planted in a wild fantasia of settings—steep hillsides, amidst groves of bay and live-oak, most with stunning vistas of the city of Santa Rosa far below. It was this woody setting that brought about its near-demise in the Tubbs Fire of 2017, when the vineyard was partially destroyed—we thought this 2016 would be its penultimate vintage release, but we are über-excited to announce that it has come back from the fires and we will have a 2019 vintage and more!

91 pts Wine Spectator, 92 pts Wine Enthusiast, Best Zin, 3 Double Golds and 6 Gold Medals!

81% Zinfandel, 16% Petite Sirah, 3% Carignane---97% Peaceland Vineyard

Case Production: 566 cases

Aging potential: 10-20 years

Price: \$35.00 / \$28.00 Club **Last Grab!**

Carol's Tasting Notes: Deep spicy jammy black raspberry, rich chocolatey oak, layers of loveliness! Juicy razzberry jam in mouth, bright acidity and good structure for aging. This baby packs everything that Zin should be and much more!



2016 "BLUE TOOTH" ALICANTE BOUSCHET

Bastoni Vineyard, Fountaingrove District

We have long promised to bottle up some "pure" Alicante Bouschet, so here you go! Most red varieties have colorless juice and pulp, and all color is in the skins only; Alicante is one of the 7 rare "teinturier" grape varieties, those that have purple flesh and juice as well as skins. With all that color comes a huge mouthful of tannin, so it seldom stands on its own, but with gentle handling and 3½ years in barrels, this wine is a mellower example of the variety. It is still fairly chewy, but a lovely steak or prime rib would tame that nicely!

Gold Medal, Sonoma County Harvest Fair

88% Alicante Bouschet, 8% Petite Sirah, 2% each Zin and Carignane

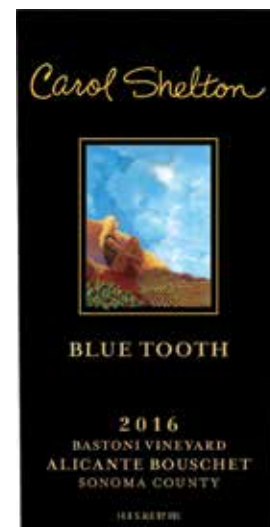
98% Bastoni Vineyard, Fountaingrove District AVA ****3.5 years in barrels!!**

Case Production: 154 cases

Aging potential: 8-20 years

Price: \$33.00 / \$26.40 Club **New release to Carol's Bunch ONLY!**

Carol's Tasting Notes: INKY, **tooth-staining** color! (That's why it is "Bluetooth," get it?!...and why we are sending you some stain remover for fabric—not for teeth tho!) Ripe but mellow blueberry, black currant and elderberry aromas and flavors, wrapped in a spicy cigar box of cedar, clove, cardamom, a bit of soft pipe tobacco. Huge mid-mouthfeel, still pretty chewy in tannins, but will be gorgeous with some roasted meat or cheesy pasta.



2019 Black Magic Late Harvest Zinfandel Dessert Wine

We had to include this perennial favorite sweetie to make sure you all had it for the holidays, along with our legendary 72% cacao chocolate morsels in a tin, the perfect complement for the chocolatey-raspberry goodness in this tiny bottle—it is dessert all by itself!

90 points, Wine Enthusiast

32.4°Brix at Harvest – 6.2% RS and 15.2% alc

85% Late Harvest Zinfandel, 15% Late Harvest Petite Sirah

100% Sonoma County: 60% Dry Creek Valley, 40% Fountaingrove District

Case Production: 920 half-cases produced, in 375ml bottles

Aging potential: 5-8 years, maybe more?

Price: \$20.00/ \$16.00 Club **NEW RELEASE!**

Carol's Tasting Notes: Mocha, cherry cordial, a whiff of raisinettes, lovely chocolate syrup with a slight touch of mint chip, black pepper, and orange peel on the nose. In the mouth are explosions of dark chocolate and coffee, with gorgeous jammy black raspberry with a slightly chewy texture and well-balanced sweetness.



Now for news of the winery and harvest...like most of the world, we have had a wild ride this year. No one got sick, but we had to close the tasting room for all tastings since we have no area outdoors to officially set up for tasting, just a hot, stinky parking lot! Sadly but wisely, our tasting room hostess Debbie Rickards chose to stay home to protect herself and her husband from exposure to the virus. Even so, we had tons of “curbside pick-ups” and orders to ship, thanks to your enthusiastic support...so Carolyn has been quite busy all year even without pouring wine for anyone.



Hand-held digital refractometer is a critical tool to measure sugar in grapes as they ripen—these are purple-juiced Alicante grapes

On the cellar side, we hired a fantastic new Cellarmaster, Chris Malone, who has become a great help to Carol this year, with valuable input on all aspects of our winemaking process. He quite literally got his “trial by fire” with us, as intense heat waves and our super early “fire season” caused concern that our grapes could be tainted by smoke, which hovered over some vineyards more than others, and ash that fell like snow at times. Can you say...?” the Vintage from Hell...?” Sadly, we had to reject fruit from some of our favorite Reserve wines; there will be no 2020 vintage of Rocky Reserve Rockpile Zin, no Rockpile Reserve Petite Sirah or Cab, no Florence Petite Sirah, no Karma Zin, and no Oat Valley Carignane. In addition, we lost the Monga Zin, as it got fried in the heat in Cucamonga. Ouch! We did what we had to do to make the best wines possible and brought in grapes from only the cleanest vineyards, including some brand new ones about which we are really excited! We found three new Zin vineyards, 2 new Cabs (including a tiny bit of Napa Cab!), and possibly a Grenache and a Malbec, if they all turn out as nice as their ferments promised. We finished harvest quite early for us, on October 8th, and now we are cleaning up and evaluating all the wines as we tuck them away in their respective barrels. Phew!

Our new winery planning is slowly moving thru the Planning Department of the Town of Windsor, meeting the requirements for one study after another, hopefully moving

on to the final Building Permit before the end of this year. At that point, the weather plays a part on whether we can break ground, grade the site and pour the foundation. We need the rain for many reasons here, but it will slow down our construction! Our total plan is to build a 50,000 sq ft winery with a beautiful new tasting room and patio, plus (hopefully) a full restaurant, all to be built in the middle of the “Windsor Beverage District,” which is full of other wineries, breweries, a cidery, and even a distillery, and a stone’s throw from the new \$50 million facility of Russian River Brewing. I will be able to bring all of my wine production into one space at long last, and offer all of you a fantastic hospitality center. It will be wonderful to return to Windsor, because I developed much of my winemaking skills during almost 20 years at Windsor Vineyards. Our target date for completion is late 2021/early 2022...we will keep you posted as things progress!



100+ year old Mourvedre vines in Oakley, holding their own vs. factories and power lines!

We hope to be able to see you all face to face in the flesh (and not just Zoom) sometime next Spring, providing that we all get a grip on this pandemic and on our country’s conflicts, both internal and abroad, as well as serious climate concerns. We live with hope in our hearts that progress will be made on the search for a safe and effective vaccine, that fair and just compromises can be reached on socio-political-climate issues, and that life can return to some semblance of “normal” for the world as we know it.

No matter where you find yourselves for the holiday season, we want to wish you safe and wonderful times with loved family and friends, lots of your favorite foods, and of course plenty of delicious Carol Shelton wines!

From our crew to yours, Happy Holidays!

Carol Shelton

RECIPE



Pork Tenderloin with Cassis Sauce

This recipe uses black currants 2 ways, and it is sublime with our new Coquille Rouge, with its blueberry-cassis flavors and spicy cigar box complexity. Make sure to make some rice or couscous to serve alongside this to soak up all of the sauce. Add a fresh salad and a glass (or two) of Coquille Rouge and your meal is complete!

2-3 lbs. Pork Tenderloin, membranes trimmed
(or could use chicken dark meat)

Marinade:

- ½ t. kosher salt
- ½ t. ground black pepper
- ½ t. ground nutmeg
- ½ t. ground cinnamon
- 1 t. minced fresh ginger (I use the tube in produce dept)
or ½ t. dried ground ginger
- 1 t. minced fresh garlic
- 2 T. Raspberry vinegar (balsamic if you can find it, or
cassis vinegar if you can find that!)
- 1 T. Dijon mustard
- 2 T. tomato paste (I use the kind in a tube, on tomato
paste top shelf)
- 2 T. chicken broth—I use this to rinse the tablespoon off
from mustard and tomato paste

Sauce:

- ½ cup low-sodium chicken broth (not stock)—use this to
rinse the marinade bag so you get all of its contents
- ½ cup dry wine (use some of the wine you want to drink
with it, to get a better match!)
- ¼ cup Crème de Cassis liqueur (best is “Vedrennes Super
Cassis”—do NOT use cheap deKuyper brand!)
- ¼ cup dried currants (dried blueberries or cranberries will
do, if you cannot find currants)

- 1T. butter, softened not melted
- 1 T. flour

Combine the first 10 ingredients in a resealable bag or marinating dish, mixing well (shake it up). Then add the meat and let it sit at least one hour at room temperature or up to overnight in fridge. Turn meat over in bag occasionally.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400°F and put an oven-proof skillet or roasting pan in it while it preheats, so it heats too.

Remove pork tenderloin (or chicken) from the bag and reserve marinade in the bag for a few minutes. Place meat on pre-heated pan in oven and sear/roast it for just 5 minutes, then carefully take it out and turn the meat and put it back in the hot oven for another 5 minutes. Continue flipping meat every 5 minutes till it is browned well and is cooked thru, no more than 20 minutes total, to an internal temperature of 140°F (or until just barely pink in middle when cut--see *note). When meat is done, remove it from the pan and put it on a plate to rest, tented lightly with foil.

Use the broth and/or wine to “rinse” the marinade bag (so you do not miss any goodies in it), and then use them both to deglaze the pork roasting pan quickly. Add the crème de cassis as well as dried fruit. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to medium, then let it simmer to reduce in volume by about a third.

Mix flour and butter in a small cup (mash them together) and gradually add this mixture to the sauce remaining in the pan. Stir in well over medium/low heat and let sauce thicken just a bit and get shiny.

For a fancier presentation, put a generous spoonful of sauce on each plate first, then several slices of the pork on top of it with one small spoonful drizzled over the top. We served this alongside pearl couscous cooked in chicken broth with a bit of orange zest, nutmeg and butter added after cooking. The sauce is deliciously tangy and deep in flavor, and very compatible with either Zin or Rhone reds!

**Note:* as an alternative, you could grill the pork, until the meat thermometer in the thickest parts reads 140°F, about 15-20 minutes. Meat will look a little pink when cut into in the middle, but that will fade when off the heat. Then sauce preparation can be happening in a stovetop pan while you are grilling.

