



2009 CHECKERBOARD

Our **2009 Checkerboard** is blended over a 24-26 month period while the wine remains in barrel in our cave. All the individual lots that make up the **2009 Checkerboard** have been selected from our **Aurora Vineyard** located at the 1200 foot elevation on Checkerboard. The vinification process is carried out with exacting attention to detail. Each of our lots comes from a specific block of the **Aurora Vineyard**, and receives incredibly site specific care from **Winemaker Martha McClellan**, to produce a wine that highlights the individual characteristics of the vineyard and the unique site of that lot.

- Our **2009 Checkerboard** is made from 100% estate grown fruit from the **Aurora Vineyard** surrounding the winery.
- All of the wines made at Checkerboard are whole berry fermented from fruit that is hand sorted in the vineyard prior to harvest.
- Depending on the vintage and block, the majority of our fruit is fermented in new French oak 60 gallon barrels from French tonne.... Darnajou and Taransaud. The toast has some variation, but is primarily medium plus.
- In addition to individual barrel fermentation, we ferment in Taransaud tapered oak casks and small double walled and tapered stainless steel tanks.
- Our wines remain in barrel for approximately 24-26 months before they are blending is fully complete.
- After two years in barrel, the wine is bottled, and remains in bottle for 12-14 months more in our cave before it is hand- labeled and packed for shipping from our winery.

The **2009 Checkerboard** is 99% Cabernet Sauvignon (comprised of seven Cabernet clones), with the remaining 1% evenly divided between the Petit Verdot and Merlot. The **2009 Checkerboard** is a big wine, with rich, sweet tannins that are bold, yet velvety and soft in texture. The balanced acidity, dark red fruit, espresso notes and exotic spices reflect the favorable growing conditions that we experienced in the 2009 growing season. Temperatures were very consistent in the mid to high 80s for most of the summer through July. Farming being what it is, the remainder of the growing season was characterized by intense heat spikes leaving us with a greatly reduced harvest due to dehydration of fruit. As a result, we had a dramatically reduced harvest, which left us with significantly less **2009 Checkerboard**.

The **2009 Checkerboard** is a serious wine that will reward the collector who prefers to lay his wines down for a period. We are indeed happy to present our **2009 Checkerboard**, and we look forward to your enjoying it both now and well into the future.