



CLUB 70
1st Quarter 2014 - March

Robert Biale 2012 Black Chicken Zinfandel Retail - \$49

Along with eggs and produce, a teenaged Aldo began discreetly selling his homemade wine to a few wine-loving Napans. Because his rural home phone was a “party line” frequented by nosy eavesdroppers, enterprising Aldo used a code name whereby his customers could order wine without the risk of revealing his secret Zinfandel operation. Thus “Black Chicken” was born – the nickname for a jug of homemade wine from young Aldo’s barrels hidden in the barn.

Winemaking: The fruit was hand-sorted first in the field then again at the winery. Open-top fermentation and punched down three times per day. Pressed to Burgundian oak – 20% new. Aged 14 months.

Tasting Notes: Plump, juicy, and firm, this is one irresistible bird – a Zinfandel brimming with fruit, spices, and an Oak Knoll District perfume of concentrated blackberry compote, bright raspberries, clove, five spice, black tea, toasted brioche, and notes of caramel and vanilla. Voluptuous, gentle, and yummy as it is, this freshly bottled wonder has the stuffing for the long haul and is just getting started. The 2012 Black Chicken – if cellared well – will continue to improve for the next 5-8 years and likely well beyond.

Aloft 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Retail - \$150

Great wine is collaboration between people and nature. Removing all obstacles and enabling a talented winemaker, exceptional vineyard and aspiration to flourish are all essential to keeping aspirations Aloft. Jim Barbour is one of the most talented vineyard managers in the Valley, having worked with Heidi Barrett and many other incredible winemakers. Thomas Rivers Brown is a winemaker extraordinaire; having previously been named “Winemaker of the Year” in addition to scoring multiple perfect 100 point scores.

Producers of some of my favorite reds made in the state, Aloft Cabernet is no different as this tannic and ageworthy wine is packed with massive blackberry fruit, hard tannins and minerality common of Howell Mountain. Big and rich, yet graceful and elegant, this features a subtle mix of cedar, tobacco, dark berry, mocha and espresso notes. Fine-grained tannins mark the long finish. The passion in Aloft wine evokes the earthy aromas of the ripest of blackberries, deep black currants and the elegance of rosehips. Bing cherries, black plum and a hint of tobacco on the palate are a marriage of beautiful flavors. Silky tannins, a smooth mouth feel and a lingering hint of heavenly dark chocolate round out the full experience of this Cabernet Sauvignon.

- Bert