

Carol's Bunch

THE 2016 HARVEST HAS RUN ITS COURSE!

It's time for those Sea-Zin's Greetings once again...it's hard to believe the year has gone by so quickly! After nurturing vines and wines from vineyard to barrel to bottle, the months just disappear before I realize it. But now we are getting your holiday shipment of wines together, a bevy of beauties that are sure to tickle your palates and give some extra joy to your table. We have 5 brand new wines, including new releases of **Wild Thing**, **Rocky Reserve Zin**, **Pinot Noir**, and **Black Magic** in a new super "magical" bottle (the white writing glows in the dark!), plus a very special bottling of **Cox Reserve Zin** that I made just for members of Carol's Bunch and the Cox family, to celebrate the life of Jack Cox, grower of the Wild Thing Zin grapes. Last of all, we have a reprise of one of my all-time favorite wines from 2012, the **Florence Vineyard Petite Sirah** from Dry Creek Valley, an uber-berry-spiced wonder that will compete with Wild Thing for making your heart sing!

As I write this on the full moon of October 15th, we are almost done with Harvest—just one more lot, the Oat Valley Carignane, is still hanging on those old vines, weathering a lovely rainstorm that is battering the windows. I am keeping my fingers crossed that it survives the rain and will be ready once the weather dries up again in a few days, because this is one of my favorite red wines every year. It has been an odd harvest, with a fairly early start, a bit of a lull or breather in the middle, and then it burst into "fast and furious" mode to get grapes into the winery due to two back-to-back weekend heat-waves in late September. The impact of the drought has been seen, tho that hopefully is on its way to being over soon; the other shortage with which we have been having trouble is Labor. The old vine grapes that I work with require hand-harvesting, which means many people laboring for many hours in the hot sticky sun...a very tough job, and the supply of those willing to do it is not nearly sufficient to meet the large demand for their services. In other words, the competition is huge for picking crews among all the vineyards of California, especially as anxious folks see rain coming their way...the exact reason my Carignane is getting a bit of a bath right now! I am not sure what the ultimate solution will be for this "drought" beyond higher pay and better conditions, all of which we are working on already.

That said, the fruit this year looks and, more important, tastes really, *really* good! We were able to get 12 tons for Monga Zin down in Cucamonga in mid-August, which we fermented down there to bring up as wine a week after it finished. It and the Pizazz Zin from Lodi are happily ensconced in their barrels, going thru malo-lactic fermentation and mellowing out already. Rocky Reserve Zin is next up for barrels, along with more Rockpile Petite Sirah, and the "Pet" from the Florence Vineyard in Dry Creek. We had an abundant crop from Peaceland Vineyard this year in both Zin and Petite Sirah, so we will be able to make more of that luscious jewel, which has been winning us tons of medals and great scores! As far as whites, Coquille Blanc's components all came in at the same time and were 'way down in crop, so we will have a smaller production of my favorite Rhone blend, and perhaps more concentration than even the 2014, the best vintage so far. Our Chardonnay came in a bit later and is chugging away in barrels, with 5 different yeasts crafting complexity and round deliciousness.

We are scrambling to clean up these wines and the cellar too, because we host our Bunch pickup party on Nov 4th and the Wine Road's Wine & Food Affair on Nov 5th & 6th. If you are near Sonoma County that weekend, I urge you to partake of this wonderful event—if I was not a host winery, I would be a paying guest, because it is so much fun to taste all the fantastic foods paired with wines at each winery! Sssh-- Mitch and I have sometimes sneaked out to taste a few of our winery-neighbors' offerings, but don't tell anyone!

This is the season of festive eating, so I trust you will have a spot for my wines at your table and in your gift baskets to friends. We toast you and your faithful support of our family winery and its employees—may you have a warm and satisfying holiday filled with family and friends, tasty foods and lots of great "juice" from Carol Shelton Wines!

Cheers,

*Carol & Mitch, Carolyn & Debbie, Rob & Chris,
and Devon, Mark, & Denise!*



Carol Shelton & Chuck Vau in Cox Vineyard.
Photo by Marlene Raderman.

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Grower Feature:

COX VINEYARD, MENDOCINO COUNTY

Cox Vineyard, which lies just north of Ukiah in Mendocino County, is named after its previous owner, Jack Cox, who passed away last August. The vineyard, which is the source for Wild Thing Old Vine Zin & Rendezvous Rosé, has always been managed by his son-in-law Chuck Vau, who owns the vineyard with his wife, Kerri Cox Vau (Jack's daughter). This beautiful estate is a 3,000+ acre ranch with a little over 300 acres currently planted with grapevines. The remaining 90% of the property is designated "watershed" and is a wild, dense forest that Chuck & Kerri hope to keep pristine. Carol has been making Old Vine Zin from the Cox Vineyard since the '90s and continued to do so under her eponymous label since 2000, when it officially became the Wild Thing™.



Carol next to a head-trained old vine in Cox Vineyard.

It was in 1968 that Jack Cox bought the vineyard and surrounding property with no interest in farming it – he was in real estate development and his plan was to sell it off in parcels. However, Jack fell in love with the land and decided he couldn't sell it. At the time there were only 12-13 acres of grapes: Old Vine Zinfandel and Old Vine Carignane, all head-trained and very wild-looking. However, Jack had never grown his own grapes before, and he needed a vineyard manager to get the vineyard up and running.

Enter Chuck Vau...Chuck met Kerri Cox in her freshman year of high school. The first month of school he asked her to the school dance and was surprised when she said yes! When he went to pick up Kerri for their first date, he was introduced to her father, Jack, and they became fast friends. Within a short time, Chuck was helping Jack out, doing odd jobs on his various properties after school, like pulling weeds, painting fences, putting up signs, etc. He wasn't old enough to drive, so Jack would pick him up in the afternoon when he was out of class to take him to his jobs. One day when Jack took Chuck home after working, he asked Chuck if he had ever driven a tractor before, to which Chuck replied, "once."



The next day, Jack picked up Chuck as usual, except that when Chuck opened the door of Jack's Jeep Wagoneer there was a stack of books over two feet high on the seat. Chuck asked, "What's that?" and Jack said "I went to the farm advisor's office and I got every book they have on growing grapes. Take them home, read them, and figure it out." And that was how Chuck got started in the grape business! He was only 16 years old and actually got in trouble because he didn't go to school when he was picking grapes during harvest season. As soon as high school was over, he was working 15 hour days every day out in the vineyard. But to Chuck, "It was fun. It was a great life." ...a life he continues to enjoy to this day with

Cox Vineyard, Continued from page 2...

Kerri and their three daughters, Whitney, Lauren and Natalie. Jack died in August of 2015, and Kerri has maintained his real estate business with her eldest daughter Whitney working at her side, loving the biz that runs in the family veins.

The Cox Vineyard grew over the years, from a dozen or so acres of old vine, head-trained Zinfandel and Carignane to over 300 combined acres of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petite Sirah, Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay. In 1999, Chuck had the vineyard certified organic and joined the CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers), an endeavor that takes a couple of years to complete and is not inexpensive. However, organic fruit is the best type of fruit if you are going to do native fermentation, or, as it has been nicknamed – Wild Fermentation. This is the style Carol utilizes for the Wild Thing Old Vine Zinfandel, her signature wine, the wine for she is most well-known. See the side panel for her thoughts on WILD yeast!

Exceptional grapes and forward-thinking stewardship are the crowning achievements of Jack Cox and the Vaus at the Cox Vineyard. Wild Thing Old Vine Zinfandel and Jack Cox Reserve Old Vine Zinfandel are perfect examples of the quality and care that go into this property, and when the grapes are in the hands of a Zin guru like Carol, the wine will continue to delight palates for the next generation.



Carol holding a cluster of Zinfandel, Cox Vineyard. Photo by Carol Shelton.

Who remembers this?

Carol's original offer of futures of 2000 Wild Thing in January of 2001:

The **Wild Thing™**

derives its name from the use of a “wild yeast” fermentation, using only the “native” yeasts of both vineyard and winery—the more politically and technically correct term these days

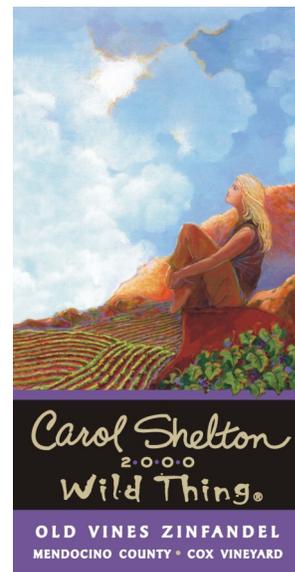
is “uninoculated fermentation.” This makes the wines more complex in aroma and more fully integrated in mouthfeel than those made by selected yeast culture additions, which produce technically correct but occasionally dull and one-dimensional wines. The flip side (the reason that NOT everyone does “wild” ferments) is that there is a greater risk of something going awry, a higher risk of not finishing all the sugar or producing volatile acidity (vinegar aromas) and off-flavors in the finished wines. With very careful monitoring and a lot of experience, these risks are minimized, and the results show the pay-off in interesting flavors and aromas as well as richer mouthfeel and overall texture.

Techie aside: “Wild” fermentation is actually a misnomer—it starts out with true “wild” yeasts, but is finished by some fairly well-domesticated albeit “unselected” versions of the true wine yeast, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*. This is the same as the beer and bread yeast, our real hero of the wine industry!, which comes forth from the nooks and crannies of the winery as the original “wild yeasts” die off, at around 4% alcohol. The wine yeasts eat up all the rest of the sugar to produce the wine with full alcohol, and without residual sweetness...hence “uninoculated” is the more PC term these days, for real tech-heads!

Techie data: 16.5% alcohol, 0.68 acid, 3.75 pH

100% Zinfandel

718 cases produced



Here are the details on this box of deliciousness, listed in suggested tasting order! The total tab for this shipment is **\$138.40**, before any applicable tax & shipping.

2014 PINOT NOIR

Larson Vineyard, Carneros

Larson Vineyard, in the Sonoma side of Carneros, is owned by our friend and fellow home brewer, Ken Larson. In our Pinot Noir we blended two Dijon clones: 60% clone 115 and 40% clone 667, both hailing from the Dijon region of Burgundy originally. We really like the complex flavors, rich fruit and spicy firm tannin structure that this wine delivers...truly a classic "iron fist in a velvet glove!"

New Release & GOLD Medal at Sonoma County Harvest Fair!

Case Production: 480 cases

Aging Potential: 5-10 years

Composition: 99% Pinot Noir, 1% Petite Sirah

Price: \$30/\$24 Club



Carol's Tasting Notes

Rich black cherry fruit, nice black pepper spice and touch of earth. Firm tannins cloaked in velvety plush silkiness, nice spicy finish. More fruit than a lot of Pinot Noirs—a Zin-lover's Pinot!

2014 *Wild Thing*® Old Vine Zinfandel

This is consistently our best-selling favorite in the tasting room and at events, and in retail and restaurants. The wild yeast ferment makes it super creamy and boosts the wonderful berry fruit from our Mendocino grower, and the blend with Carignane and Petite Sirah fills in any "holes" in the flavor profile.

4 Gold Medals & 1 Best of Class, plus 89 Points from Wine Spectator!

Organically Grown & Wild Yeast Fermented

Case Production: 11,650 cases

Aging Potential: 5-7 years

Composition: 80% old vine Zinfandel, 10% old vine Carignane, 9% Petite Sirah, 1% Alicante Bouschet—75% Mendocino County, 20% Sonoma County, 5% Lodi

Price: \$19/\$15.20 Club



Carol's Tasting Notes

Dusty raspberry and black cherry cola with just a touch of herb and cigarbox cedar. Spicy black pepper, caramel oak creaminess. Bright acidity that shows the fruit off well, with a creamy middle mouthfeel and a long zingy-spicy-berry finish.

2014 COX RESERVE, Old Vine Zinfandel

Cox Vineyard, Mendocino County

The Cox Vineyard of Zinfandel and Carignane was planted in the hills NW of Ukiah by Jack Cox in 1956. This special reserve barrel selection is a tribute to his vision and the love he felt for this land of beautiful redwood forests in the rolling coastal ranges where he loved to hunt for deer and wild boar.

Very Limited Release— WINE CLUB ONLY & Gold Medal Winner!

Case Production: 210 cases

Aging Potential: 5-10 years

Composition: 92% Old Vine Zinfandel, 6% Petite Sirah, 2% Old Vine Carignane—100% Cox Vineyard, Mendocino County!

Price: \$28/\$22.40 Club



Carol's Tasting Notes

Deeper and darker blackberry fruit, almost jammy. More roasty caramel-dark chocolate oak and vanilla-mocha latte, a bit perfumey like red roses and ripe raspberries. Round sweet oaky vanilla cream in mouth, delicious blackberry and spice, great depth of flavor and fruit. Very supple, soft finish. Like a blackberry crumble à la mode!

2014 Rocky Reserve Zin

Florence Vineyard, Rockpile

The name for our reserve wine, Rocky Reserve®, comes from the deep red, rocky soils of the Florence Vineyard, 1400 feet above Lake Sonoma and Dry Creek Valley. Full morning sun and gentle afternoon breezes allow 3 weeks' longer hangtime than Zins along Dry Creek, affording very soft, ripe tannins. This is a more elegant and restrained Zin, worthy of ten or more years of cellaring, though it is packed with fragrant blue and blackberry fruit.

New Release & 89 Points from Connoisseurs' Guide!

Case Production: 537 cases

Aging Potential: 15+ years

Composition: 86% Zinfandel, 14% Petite Sirah

Price: \$36/\$28.80 Club



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 long finish! Carol blended Petite Sirah in here to give more structure and just a bit of "friction" as well as gorgeous peppery spice.

2012 PETITE SIRAH FLORENCE VINEYARD

Dry Creek Valley

The Petite Sirah is farmed by legendary Rockpile grower Jack Florence on a well-draining, rocky riverbed vineyard. Located on the northern tip of Dry Creek Valley, this Petite Sirah is brighter and jammier than its Rockpile counterpart.

7 Gold Medals!

Sustainably Grown—

Case Production: 368 cases

Aging Potential: 15+ years

Composition: 93% Petite Sirah, 7% Zinfandel

Price: \$40/\$32 Club



Carol's Tasting Notes

Blue-purple in color, sweet black razzberry jammy fruit—yum!

Dark chocolatey oak spice, bright acidity but very juicy-supple, bit of warm vanilla at finish, structured tannins for aging.

2014 Black Magic Late Harvest Zinfandel

Every once in a while, a twist of fate can deal a quirky hand, and with a stroke of magic it can become an enchanting experience. Black Magic™ Late Harvest Zinfandel conjures up a charming finale for a delicious meal—lusciously jammy and sweet, it complements many foods from savory cheese plates to decadent chocolate desserts. Abracadabra!

2 DOUBLE GOLD Medals, 2 GOLD & Best Red Dessert Wine!

Case Production: 829 cases

Aging Potential: 5-10 years

Residual Sugar: 6.0% (sweet)

Alcohol by Volume: 15.4%

Composition: 100% Late Harvest Zinfandel

Price: \$20/\$16 Club



COOL FACTOID: The white ink on the Black Magic bottle actually will GLOW IN THE DARK!!

Carol's Tasting Notes

Inky blue-purple in color, yummy deep razz-blackberry jam and luscious dark chocolate of oak spices, sweet but not clumsy, pleasingly balanced with a bit a tartness, not at all hotly alcoholic, bit of warm vanilla at finish.

COX RESERVE OLD VINE ZINFANDEL



Jack Cox on his tractor, Cox Vineyard, Mendocino County, California in 2011. Photo by Carol Shelton.

This wine is a very personal tribute to a man I highly respected and who helped me a lot in my winery operations. Jack Cox, the owner of the Cox Vineyard, passed away in August 2015 at the age of 79, and I wanted to commemorate him and his love of the vineyard in my own way. Before I go into detail about this limited production wine, I want to tell you how I fell in love with the vineyard and its stewards, the Cox and Vau families.

I started making wine from the Cox Vineyard in the '90s, back when I worked at Windsor Vineyards; I met Jack Cox, his daughter Kerri and her husband, vineyard manager Chuck Vau through their grapes. I was a bit intimidated by Jack at first, as he could be a bit gruff in his dealings with me. As we worked together, however, I learned that he really did have a passion for his

land and for the Zin I was buying from him in particular. He gave me lots of sage advice over the years—my favorite was when he said, “In making deals, don't take every last crumb off of the table. You've gotta leave something for the next guy.” He felt strongly that it was the right way to do things, and that way the “other guy” has a chance to feel like he won something too. I rang up some pretty good debts with Jack over the years as we grew the winery, and he was always very gracious in allowing me to pay things off as my cash flow improved. He was very clear tho, that I needed to communicate to him when I'd be late in paying so he could plan his own finances better—common sense but a good lesson for someone who was just learning to run a business. I found out after he died that he really felt involved in my little winery, and he was really proud of what I had accomplished as a small entrepreneur...with his help!

I loved their Zin so much that the Wild Thing™ Old Vine Zin was one of first three wines I made when Mitch and I established Carol Shelton Wines in 2000. The production of that one wine has grown and grown, and it now represents more than half of the cases we produce. It has won so many medals over the years I have lost count, along with great scores and accolades such as Wine Spectator's Top 100 wines back in December 2014. The wine, the vineyard, Jack and his family will always have a special place in my heart for being part of the development of Carol Shelton Wines.

Therefore the 2014 Cox Reserve Zin is a tribute to Jack and his dream for that vineyard and the land. He just loved Mendocino County, and he was determined to make it a destination in California. He truly loved the woodlands, the rugged ocean coastline, and deer hunting in “his” range of forested hills. When I created this blend I wanted to be sure to showcase the flavor of his fruit, and not the work of the barrel maker, so I used predominantly 1-year-old barrels. New barrels taste lovely but they clobber fruit too, and that would defeat the purpose of honoring Jack and his family's vines. After blind-tasting every barrel of Cox Zin, I selected 10 American oak barrels for this blend, with just 2 of them (20%) being new. I found some really perfect barrels to cradle his stuff, especially some barrels called “Ambrosia,” some of which are toasted long and slow for Complex flavors, while some are toasted a bit hotter and deeper for Intense flavors. They show off the flavors of the vineyard in a way that is pure and expansive, enhancing the fruit without drowning it out. I really hope you enjoy your bottle of Cox Reserve Zinfandel and toast the memory of our true friend and colleague, Jack Cox.



Carol Shelton

My Mom's Manicotti Recipe

Serve with green salad, crusty bread, and a bottle of Wild Thing Zin or Cox Reserve Zin!

My Mom, Wynne Shelton, was incredible in many ways, but one stellar thing she did was to teach herself to cook. She said she could not boil water when she married my dad in 1947, but by the time I was 3-4 years old she had become a quasi-gourmet cook. She cut a lot of corners in making her meals, and pinched a lot of pennies too, but everything always tasted great! She was also my Girl Scout leader from Brownies thru Cadets, and she made it her goal to teach a whole generation of little girls to cook, so that they were equipped to feed themselves and their families when they grew up...as she had not been. One of my fellow Scouts was Italian, and she passed along her mother's family recipe for Manicotti, which I now share with you. It is very different in that it does not use the pre-made "shells" or manicotti tubes, using instead freshly prepared crepes to create little bundles of ricotta-parmesan filling. My Mom did the sacrilegious thing (for Italians) of substituting Ragu pasta sauce for homemade, but you have to remember that I grew up in Rochester, New York, the HOME of Ragu sauce!! You can make it your own way with tubes and homemade sauce but this how we have done for many, many years.

Manicotti for a family of 6

Filling Ingredients—mix and set aside:

2 eggs, gently beaten
 1 Tbsp fresh Parsley, snipped with scissors (my job as a kid!)
 16 oz. part-skim ricotta cheese
 1 cup parmesan cheese, finely grated
 Dash of salt and pepper

"Noodles" Ingredients (actually crepes):

—whisk well, like pancake batter but lots thinner
 ¾ cup low fat milk
 6 eggs
 6Tbsp flour
 Dash Salt
 1/2 tsp Oregano

Sauce to top "Noodles":

Small jar (24 oz.) of Ragu or tomato sauce of your choice
 Few pats of butter



Melt 1 Tbsp. butter in electric frypan (Teflon coated) set at 350°F. Pour one soup-ladle-full of batter into the electric pan to form a thin layer in the pan. Once you have a thin layer spread to all corners of the pan, let it cook until it is set. Using the edge of a rubber spatula, cut the "noodle" or crepe into 4 squares, and set each on waxed paper (or a flexible cutting board) to cool. Repeat this process until you have used all the batter. When all crepes are made, put 1 T. of the above filling in the middle of each one and fold corners over to make a little bundle. Place these bundles, edges down, into a greased 9x13" casserole dish (we used pyrex—Corning was also very close to Rochester!). Cover the first layer with Ragu pasta sauce, or the sauce of your choice. Make another layer if needed and cover with more sauce. Bake in pre-heated oven at 375°F for 30 minutes or until it is getting just a bit browned on top, and heated thru in the middle. Remove from the oven and let it cool. While it is still warm cut yourself a piece and serve it with a salad, some crusty bread and a glass of Cox Reserve Zin or Wild Thing Zin!

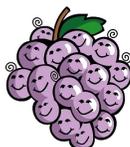
Carol Shelton WINES

Order Form

Wines		Retail Price	Wine Club	Quantity
Wild Thing Chardonnay 2015	*NEW*	\$18	\$14.40	_____
Damiano Viognier 2014	*2 Golds/2 Best of Class* *Last Grab*	\$20	\$16.00	_____
Coquille Blanc 2014	*91 pts/7 Gold/2 Platinum/ 2 Best of Show * *Last Grab*	\$24	\$19.20	_____
Wild Thing Rendezvous Rosé 2015	*91 pts & Editor's Choice/Gold Medal*	\$15	\$12.00	_____
Pinot Noir 2014	*Gold Medal*	\$30	\$24.00	_____
Oat Valley Carignane 2013	*3 Double Golds* *Last Grab*	\$28	\$22.40	_____
Wild Thing Zin 2014	*WS 89 pts/4 Gold Medals*	\$19	\$15.20	_____
Pizazz Zin 2014	*New Release*	\$19	\$15.20	_____
Cox Reserve Zin 2014	*Club Exclusive & Gold Medal*	\$28	\$22.40	_____
Lingfelder Zin 2013	*90 Pts from Connoisseurs' Guide & CA Grapevine*	\$33	\$19.80	_____
Rocky Reserve Zin 2014	*New Release* *89 Points from Connoisseurs' Guide*	\$35	\$28.00	_____
Karma Zin 2012	*90 Pts Robert Parker* *Last Grab*	\$30	\$18.00	_____
Mancini Zin 2013	*92 Pts Wine Spectator/90 Points Robert Parker* *Last Grab*	\$38	\$30.40	_____
Florence Petite Sirah 2012	*5 Gold Medals*	\$40	\$32.00	_____
Rockpile Reserve Petite Sirah 2012	*4 Gold/1 Best of Class* *Last Grab*	\$40	\$32.00	_____
Rockpile Reserve Petite Sirah 2013	*Gold Medal*	\$40	\$32.00	_____
Rockpile Reserve Cabernet 2012	*2 Gold Medal* *Last Grab*	\$50	40% OFF \$30.00	_____
Rockpile Reserve Cabernet 2013		\$50	\$40.00	_____
King Ridge Cabernet 2012	*Gold Medal*	\$50	40% OFF \$30.00	_____
Napa Reserve Cabernet 2009	*94 pts Wine Enthusiast* *Very Last Grab*	\$90	\$72.00	_____
Dessert!				
Black Magic 2014 "Late Harvest" (375 ml)	*NEW/2 Double Gold/ 2 Gold*	\$20	\$16.00	_____
1.5L Magnum Wild Thing Zin 2011	*90 Pts/Top 100 Wines Wine Spectator*	\$80	\$64.00	_____
(375ml) "half bottles" Wild Thing Zin 2013		\$12	\$9.60	_____



Carol Shelton Wines
3354-B Coffey Lane
Santa Rosa, CA
95403



Phone: 707-575-3441
Fax: 707-575-0245
E-mail: wines@carolshelton.com
www.carolshelton.com

