

Carol's Bunch

WHEN IT RAINS... IT POURS.

Winter Goodies for you!

Welcome to Winter 2017, the chaotic season of America's discontent...but no matter what your political leanings are, the wines in this shipment are sure to bring you at least 6 bottles' worth of comfort.

Your February club shipment has some really special goodies! As for new releases, the new vintage of 2016 *Wild Thing Rendezvous Rosé* gives you a teasing taste of Spring with its crisply dry, cranberry-watermelon delight. Also in this shipment is the newest release of 2014 *Peaceland Zinfandel*. The 2014 is the sophomore vintage for us from the incredible PeaceLand Vineyard in the Fountainingrove District. The 2013 was outstanding, and the new vintage stays true to form. We skipped your usual bottle of *Wild Thing Zin* for the 2014 *Monga Zin*, because we wanted you to get at least one bottle before it sells out! There won't be a 2015 vintage due to extremely low yields in the vineyard, but there will be a 2016...you just have to wait for it! Next is the 2014 *Karma Reserve*; the latest incarnation of Karma gets the spotlight in this newsletter, as we are featuring this new Zin-based blend on Pages 2-3. The 2013 *King Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon* is your last chance at this mountain-grown wonder, redolent of black cherry and chocolate, with what we call "great bones"—good tannin structure supporting a lushly round body—oops, let's try not to get too sexy here! Last but not least is the 2013 *Rockpile Reserve Petite Sirah*; a Double Gold Medal winner that will be featured at the San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition public tasting this month.



Carol tasting the 2016 Rosé in January days prior to bottling.

Probably the most common question we have been asked this winter is...what is all of this RAIN going to do for the grapes this vintage?! Well, the vines are soaking it all up and will have nice staying power to get thru a long hot dry summer, if we have one. Yields are largely determined by how we pruned the year before (a year ago), so they will probably be average to slightly higher, and as long as we can get into the muddy vineyards to prune, we should see no issues from all of this liquid gold falling from soggy Cali skies! The biggest change we are hoping to see is a return to more normal acid/pH balance in the finished fruit. With the absence of any soil moisture, the roots did not get a good flow of minerals and acid molecules, which caused some grapes to have both high acidity and high pH, a difficult situation for a winemaker to address. Carol's 39 years of experience helped, but it will be great to be able to receive our fruit with exactly the chemistry and balance we'd like to see, without having to jump thru hoops to get it.

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It was great to see many of you during Winter Wineland weekend in January! Our staff outdid themselves decorating the cellar to look like a warm getaway from the chilly winter rains. Chef Greg Hallihan provided some delicious Mushroom Lentil Soup, and there were so many requests for the recipe that we decided to include it in this newsletter. We have many more events coming up, from the re-tooled **ZAP "Zin Experience"** in San Francisco on February 23-25, to **Barrel Tasting** in two back-to-back, three-day weekends in early March. At this event we will be offering "futures" sales at hefty discounts on the wines from barrels of the 2014 and 2015 Reserves; even if you cannot come to taste them yourself, we will still offer them to you for purchase ...so watch for an email from us in early March, ok?

If you want a peak into daily activities at Carol Shelton Wines, whether it is out in the vineyard, on the bottling line or blending up in the office or even on the road for sales, you can see our photographs on Instagram (@carolsheltonwines), Facebook (Carol Shelton Wines), and Twitter (@WildThingZin). We would love it if you tag us in your posts when you are drinking our wines or sharing a Zinful moment with friends!

Cheers,
Carol Shelton



Feature:

GOOD KARMA

Karma has been re-incarnated...once again. It has evolved since 2001 from a field-blended but single-vineyard Zinfandel (Rue), to a post-harvest blended Zin from a different single vineyard (Bastoni), and now it has evolved further, into a Reserve Red Blend from some of northern California's finest fruit.

Karma Zin was a twinkle in my eye when I first met Robert and Carlene Rue...

The idea of Karma Zin was born from the concept that I would make wine for the Rues in exchange for fruit, a handshake deal, you might call it. The Rue Vineyard is a beautiful century-old vineyard, in the old "field blend" tradition, in which its nine acres of head-trained Zinfandel vines were randomly interplanted with about 5% each of Petite Sirah, Carignane, and Alicante Bouschet, sometime between 1890 and 1910. Our Karma Zin was a great ode to this prestigious Sonoma County vineyard until the Rue family built their own winery in 2008, Robert Rue Vineyards, using their entire crop. There was no longer enough for our own Karma Zin bottling. I was pretty devastated then, and I thought that there would be no more good Karma for me.

However, this parting of the ways was rather cosmically timed, as it turns out. Later in 2008, Martha & Russ Messana, who I had met on the 2005 ZAP cruise around the Mediterranean, offered me the first crop off of their newly re-planted family vineyard out on Riebli Road in the hills east of Santa Rosa. Martha's father Pasquale Bastoni had lovingly tended the vineyard over many decades, but as third generation owners, Martha and Russ had to make the difficult decision to replant the century-old vineyard in 2005, due to economically impossible low yields and declining quality. Wisely, they kept to the varieties that were originally planted and had served her father so well: Zinfandel, Petite Sirah and Alicante Bouschet. With the first crop off of the young vines coming in 2008, I agreed to give them a trial...and WOW! I was hooked! From my first taste of the juice in my fermenting tanks, I knew that I had found my new Karma Zin. The flavors were so reminiscent of my Rue-Karma, in spite of the vine age difference...it was all about the blending of compatible varieties that brought out the layers of spice and blueberry and plush roundness. With the Messanas so passionate about growing high quality fruit, I committed to buy their grapes, which I used for a vineyard designate from 2008 thru 2012, the Bastoni Vineyard incarnation of Karma Zin.



Ripe Zinfandel in Bastoni Vineyard, Harvest 2014. Photo by Carol Shelton.



Carol Blending. Photo by Chubb Portraits, 2008.

Due to various reasons, I decided not to bottle the 2013 Karma Zin from the Bastoni Vineyard. With that little gap in production, I had time to think about the future of my Karma, with an eye to what I had made thusfar. As of the 2012 vintage, I had bottled 8 Zinfandels, 7 of which were single-vineyard Zinfandels that represent their unique terroir. I also had a red Carignane, a Pinot Noir, two Petite Sirahs, and two Cabernet Sauvignons, each of which also honored the terroir of their vineyard and AVA (American Viticulture Area, essentially the American version of a French Appellation Contrôlée). I realized that one wine missing from my portfolio, one that interested me a lot, was a Red Proprietary Blend, also known as a Winemaker's Blend. The idea took shape slowly...and Karma Zin morphed into my new blend, the Karma Reserve.

The Winemaker's Vision...

Blending is the second oldest winemaking tool – access to great fruit is the oldest. I am lucky enough to have access to great fruit from all over California, but in particular, Sonoma County. Historically, blending has led to the most classic and revered wines in the world, such as Châteauneuf-du-Pape in the Rhône Valley (which allows 18 different varieties, though the most utilized is 13 by Château de Beaucastel), Côte-Rôtie (one of my favorites, as it involves co-fermenting up to 20% Viognier with Syrah to make a super purple-y purple wine), Bordeaux (both red and white), Chiantis, and even French Champagnes, which



Carol's purple hand and tongue while sampling Petite Sirah from Rockpile. Photo by Mitch Mackenzie.

aren't typically from a single variety, but a mix of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier.

The cool part of making these blends is that there are no restrictions on varieties used, vineyards or regions to be named on the labels, and even the vintage can be a bit less controlled than if an AVA is named on the label. Our federal TTB regulates every word on our wine labels and bottles, and each label must pass its COLA, or Certificate of Label Approval, before we can print the batch and use them for bottling. For instance, in order to say "Zinfandel" on the label it must contain 75% Zin or more, and we must be able to prove that fact with accurate record-keeping from grapes to bottles. If we name a vineyard it must be 95% from that vineyard, and if we name an AVA, it must 85% from that AVA, and 95% from the named vintage. Then things get looser—if we ONLY use the name "Sonoma County," then only 75% of the grapes had to hail from that county and it only has to be 85% vintage. I used to do these calculations all by hand—thank goodness for Excel worksheets that help me with my blend math now! So...as I was saying...doing a red blend frees me up from all these complicated

rules and 'rithmetic! I can do whatever feels best, tastes best, and makes the most sense for the type of blend that I want to bottle and ultimately...drink!

With a goal of creating a blend that I would enjoy drinking as a daily invocation of good Karma, I used Zinfandel from Bastoni Vineyard in the newly appointed Fountaingrove District (see newsletter from April 2016), a complementary Zin from Lingenfelder Vineyard in the Russian River Valley, and a softer bit from the Cox Vineyard in Mendocino County. There is Petite Sirah from Bastoni Vineyard, from Peaceland Vineyard and from Rockpile Vineyard, all blended with Alicante Bouschet from Bastoni Vineyard. I also added Cabernet Sauvignon from Sikorski's mountaintop King Ridge Vineyard on the Sonoma Coast AVA, some Carignane from Cox Vineyard and a pinch of Viognier from Damiano Vineyard in Placer County. I wouldn't bother trying to memorize that blend because I promise you that the next vintage won't be the exact same blend!

THE BLEND: 2014 Karma Reserve (approximately 60 barrels)

From *Fountaingrove District* AVA (30 barrels):

- 20 barrels of Bastoni Zinfandel
- 3.5 barrels of Bastoni Alicante Bouschet
- 4 barrels of Bastoni Petite Sirah
- 1 barrel of Peaceland Zinfandel
- 1.5 barrels of Peaceland Petite Sirah

From *Russian River Valley* AVA (approximately 14 barrels):

- 8 barrels of Lingenfelder Zinfandel
- 6 barrels of Mancini Vineyard Old Vine Zinfandel

2 barrels of *Rockpile* AVA Petite Sirah

4 barrels of *Sonoma Coast* AVA Sikorski Vineyard
(aka King Ridge Reserve) Cabernet Sauvignon

From *Mendocino County* AVA (9 barrels):

- 7 barrels of Cox Vineyard Old Vine Zinfandel
- 1 barrel of Cox Vineyard Old Carignane
- 1 barrel of Cox Vineyard Petite Sirah

From the *Sierra Foothills* AVA:

- 1 barrel of Viognier from Damiano Vineyard



Blending Trials at Carol Shelton Wines.

It is a jewel of a blend, already gaining plenty of sexy scores and awards. I guess it's three times a charm when it comes to great Karma! What will be your next incarnation?

Here are the details on this box of deliciousness, listed in suggested tasting order! The total tab for this shipment is **\$143.20**, before any applicable tax & shipping.

2016 *Wild Thing*[®] RENDEZVOUS ROSÉ

A rendezvous with friends is all the more delicious over a bottle of luscious chilled dry rosé, hence the name of our "Rendezvous Rosé." Created by bleeding half of the "pink" juice off of red Carignane grapes 2 and a 1/2 days after crushing them, it is fermented cold like a white wine to retain every luscious drop of crisp strawberry fruitiness.

Organically Grown

Case Production: 977 cases

Aging Potential: 3-5 years

Composition: Price: \$15/\$12.00 Club **New Release!**



Carol's Tasting Notes

Light cranberry color, juicy strawberry-watermelon fruit aromas, nice mineral, nice lift of spring flowers and fresh zest from cara-cara oranges, tangy vanilla crème fraîche on strawberry shortcake! Refreshingly crisp and dry, mouth-watering actually. Great with almost any food, from sushi to salmon to BBQ!

2014 PEACELAND ZINFANDEL Peaceland Vineyard, Fountaingrove District

The name of the PeaceLand Vineyard comes from the translation of its owners' German last name—Friedland. The unique "tall-head" trained vines are 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 the three separate clones of Zinfandel that drew us to try them out...and we are hooked!

Case Production: 183 cases

Aging Potential: 10-15 years

Composition: 86% Zinfandel --equal parts of three clones: DuPratt, Costa Magnum, St. Peters Church, plus 12% Petite Sirah, & 2%Viognier

Price: \$33/\$26.40 Club

90 Points Connoisseurs' Guide, Double Gold Medal—Sonoma County Harvest Fair & Gold Medal—SF Chronicle International Wine Competition!



Carol's Tasting Notes

Deep spicy jammy berry, 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!

2014 MONGA ZIN OLD VINE Lopez Vineyard, Cucamonga Valley

Our darling Monga is back...but not for long! We were out of Monga for 8 months after the 2013 was gone, and we will be out of Monga again for 8 months after this one. With the severe drought in SoCA, these 90+ year old vines have been struggling even more, producing only 1.1 tons/acre in 2016, vs our usual of 2-3 ton/acre in the North Coast. So if you love her spicy mouthful of humongousness, better grab some while you can!

Organically Grown—

Case Production: 1093 cases

Aging Potential: 10+ years

Composition: 100% Zinfandel

Price: \$21/\$16.80 Club **88 Points from Wine Spectator!**



Carol's Tasting Notes

Deep cherry fruit, dried cranberry, orange zest, berry patch in the sun! Dusty vanilla-caramel oak, graham crackers, and cocoa. Fragrant Moroccan-Asian spices—Chinese 5-spice mélange... Mouthfeel is creamy yet tangy, bright cherry, firm-sturdy tannins and a long, lush finish. Super concentrated. Quite drinkable now, but will age a good 15-20 years. Very mouth-filling!

2014 KARMA RESERVE RED WINE

Karma has been reincarnated from Zinfandel to a red blend. It's Karma: if you do good things, something good will happen. Our Karma Reserve red blend is a complex wine that is both bold and fruity, brimming with dark fruit flavors and deep toasted oak. We pass along this good Karma to younow pay it forward!

Case Production: 1513 cases

Aging Potential: 10-15 years

Composition: 70% Zinfandel, 14% Petite Sirah, 6% Alicante Bouschet, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Carignane, 2% Viognier

Price: \$30/\$24.00 Club

**91 Points Wine Spectator & 90 Points Connoisseurs' Guide,
2 Gold Medals & Best of Class (So far!)**



Carol's Tasting Notes

Quite lively and fragrant with ripe blueberry, raspberry and blackberry fruits, tart pomegranate and red Jolly Ranchers! Cedar box, brown spices-nutmeg/cinnamon, cherry cola, dark chocolate, a soft whiff of violets, creamy vanilla oak, kick of peppercorn. Very complexly layered weaving of fruit and spice, uber-dense and deep—wow! Rich in mouth, bright berry fruit tang like a wonderful berry cobbler, good structure for aging, a bit chewy in its youth.

2013 KING RIDGE RESERVE Cabernet Sauvignon King Ridge Vineyard, Sonoma Coast/Cazadero

The high elevation of this vineyard (2000 feet in "coastal" west Sonoma County) gives it an elegant flavor profile, a bit similar to our wines from the Rockpile AVA. The vineyard faces several sheer granite rock outcroppings called The Devil's Ribs, which absorb the sun's heat all day long and radiate it back to the vines slowly all night, allowing the fruit to get more evenly ripe earlier in the harvest season. It is graciously styled with black cherry-cassis fruit and a nice hint of tobacco and cedar-spice, with a long smooth finish.

Case Production: 244 cases

Aging Potential: 15+ years

Composition: 95.2% Cabernet Sauvignon from King Ridge Vineyard, 4.8% Petite Sirah from Rockpile.

Price: \$40/\$32 Club **3 Gold Medals!**



Carol's Tasting Notes

Dark red in color. Black cherry-cola and cassis fruit, long and deep on nose and palate. Cedary oak spice and warm pipe tobacco aromas, dark chocolate, vanilla at finish, smoothly structured tannins.

2013 ROCKPILE RESERVE PETITE SIRAH Rockpile Vineyard, Rockpile

This Petite Sirah is the from the Parks' Rockpile Vineyard, one of the first vineyards to be planted in the AVA, back in 1992. It is not a "rip your face off" Petite, but elegant while still full bodied, and packed with blueberries, black pepper and sweet oak.

Case Production: 253 cases

Aging Potential: 15+ years

Composition: 100% Petite Sirah from Rockpile Vineyard

Price: \$40/\$32 Club

2 Gold Medals and a Double Gold!



Carol's Tasting Notes

Dark red in color. Black cherry-cola and blueberry-black peppery fruit, long and deep on nose and palate. Cedary oak spice and warm pipe tobacco aromas, dark chocolate, vanilla at finish, smoothly structured tannins.



Did you miss Monga Zin?

You may have noticed it's been a while since Monga Zin showed up in a Club shipment. If you wondered why, it is because the Lopez Vineyard, home of Monga Zin, is about a century old and produces less and less fruit each year. The photo on the left is Carol in the Lopez Vineyard in the last year. Notice that the vine is small. Some vines in Lopez Vineyard are not producing fruit and some, like this one Carol is holding, only produce one bunch per vine, while some produce a few bunches. While the tiny yields are exquisite in quality, they are still small yields, leading to smaller case production.

The 2014 (in this shipment) spent an extra 8 months in barrel to develop into deliciousness, and we didn't receive any fruit in 2015. We delayed the release of the 2014 until the wine was ready—so enjoy! You will have to wait another year before we bottle the 2016 which is currently in barrel aging to perfection.

Carol in Lopez Vineyard, Cucamonga Valley.

REMINDER:

Did you pick up your Club Shipment?

Thanks to your enthusiastic support, we have grown a lot in the last few years. Now we are having a hard time fitting everything into our current building. This means we don't have room to store your wine.

For those of you who enjoy picking up your club shipment, we've implemented a new policy of a maximum 6 months of storage time.

We'll give you a call to remind you that your wine is here. If, after a year, you keep forgetting your wines, we will ship them to you at your expense.

We are really sorry if this inconveniences you, but we are just out of space!

Call us with any questions or concerns:

(707) 575-3441

KARMA RESERVE

2014 SONOMA COUNTY RED WINE

91 Points
[Web Only]
Wine Spectator



A BLEND OF ZINFANDEL,
PETITE SIRAH, ALICANTE
BOUSCHET, CABERNET
SAUVIGNON, CARIGNANE &
VIOGNIER

“Dark and brooding, with black cherry and bittersweet chocolate aromas and plump flavors of orange zest, black licorice and smoky cracked pepper. Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, Alicante Bouschet, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carignane and Viognier. Drink now through 2027. 1,513 cases made.”

—TF

Carol Shelton
WINES

Mark your calendars for these upcoming EVENTS:

February 23 – 25, 2017

Zinfandel Experience with ZAP

Different events all involving Zinfandel, in San Francisco over 3 days. Advance tickets online at www.ZinfandelExperience.com.

March 3-5 & March 10-12, 2016

40th Annual Barrel Tasting Weekend

11:00 am – 4:00 pm each day.

⇒ Advance tickets online: \$50 Weekend, \$40 Sunday Only, \$5 Designated Driver.

⇒ At the door: \$65 Weekend, \$45 Sunday ONLY, \$10 Designated Driver.

www.wineroad.com/events/barrel-tasting/

April 29th—Wine Club Pickup Part

May 10th—Elevating Zin (in LA)

San Francisco Chronicle WINE COMPETITION

THE LARGEST COMPETITION OF AMERICAN WINES

DOUBLE GOLD

2013 Rockpile Reserve Petite Sirah

&

9 GOLD Medals

2015 Wild Thing Viognier
2015 Wild Thing Rendezvous Rosé
2014 Wild Thing Zinfandel
2014 Karma Reserve Red Wine
2014 Oat Valley Carignane
2014 Rocky Reserve Zinfandel
2014 PeaceLand Zinfandel
2013 Florence Petite Sirah
2014 Black Magic
Late Harvest Zin



Carol Shelton
WINES

Hearty Mushroom Lentil Soup (Vegetarian)

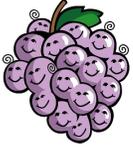
Serves 4-6. Chef Greg Hallihan's recipe was such a hit at Winter Wineland in January that we have included his recipe for all those who requested it!

Ingredients:

1 Tbsp Cooking Oil
3 cups Brown or Green Lentils (or a mix)
1 1/2 cups Carrots, chopped
1 cup Celery, chopped
1/2 cup Onion, chopped
1/2 cup of Wild Thing Old Vine Zinfandel
1 cup Tomatoes, chopped
2 Tbsp Tomato Paste (1/2 small can, or the whole can if you like it thicker)
3 quarts Vegetable Stock
1 1/2 Tbsp Cumin
1/2 Tbsp Oregano
5 cups mushrooms – a mix of white button & cremini, chopped
Salt & Pepper



Instructions: In a very large soup pot, sweat the carrots, onions, and celery with 1 Tbsp cooking oil. Add cumin, oregano and tomato paste and tomatoes and stir well. When the veggies are cooked through, pour in the wine and reduce until the wine is half the volume. Add the mushrooms and continue to sauté until the mushrooms are cooked and start to shrink as they sweat. Add the lentils and vegetable stock and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and let the soup simmer for 45 minutes. When the timer goes off check the consistency of the soup – if it is too thick, you may add more stock. Season with salt and pepper to your taste and serve with crusty bread, a salad and a nice glass of Carol Shelton Zin!



Carol Shelton WINES

Order Form

Wines	Retail Price	Wine Club	Quantity
Wild Thing Chardonnay 2015 *Platinum/Gold Medals & BOC*	\$18	\$14.40	_____
Damiano Viognier 2014 *Best of Class/2 Gold Medal*	\$20	30% OFF: \$14.00	_____
Coquille Blanc 2014 *91 pts/2xBOS/BOC/10 Gold Medals *	\$24	\$19.20	_____
Wild Thing Rendezvous Rosé 2016 *NEW*	\$15	\$12.00	_____
Wild Thing Rendezvous Rosé 2015 *91 pts/2 Gold Medals*	\$15	\$12.00	_____
Pinot Noir 2014 *Gold Medal*	\$30	\$24.00	_____
Oat Valley Carignane 2013 *3 Double Gold BOC/2 Gold*	\$28	30% OFF: \$19.60	_____
Wild Thing Zin 2014 *Best of Class/6 Gold Medals*	\$19	\$15.20	_____
Pizazz Zin 2014 *New Release*	\$19	\$15.20	_____
Monga Zin 2014 *New Release*	\$21	\$16.80	_____
Lingenfelder Zin 2013 *90 pts Connoisseurs Guide *	\$33	30% OFF: \$23.10	_____
Karma Reserve 2014 *91pts WS & 3 Gold Medals*	\$30	\$24.00	_____
Cuvee Jacqueline 2014 *Select barrels from Cox Vineyard*	\$30	30% OFF: \$21.00	_____
Mancini Zin 2013 *92 pts Wine Spectator*	\$38	\$30.40	_____
Rocky Reserve Zin 2014 *Gold Medal*	\$36	\$28.80	_____
Florence Petite Sirah 2012 *7 Gold Medals*	\$40	30% OFF: \$28.00	_____
Rockpile Reserve Petite Sirah 2012 *4 Gold Medals*	\$40	\$32.00	_____
King Ridge Cabernet 2012 *2 Gold Medals*	\$40	30% OFF: \$28.00	_____
Rockpile Reserve Cabernet 2012 *2 Gold Medals*	\$50	30% OFF: \$35.00	_____
<u>Dessert!</u>			
Black Magic 2014 "Late Harvest" (375 ml) *4 stars at OC/Double Gold/Best Red Dessert Wine/91 pts/4 Golds*	\$20	\$16.00	_____
<u>1.5L Magnum</u> Wild Thing Zin 2011 (Top 100 Wine Spectator)	\$80	\$64.00	_____
<u>(375ml)</u> "half bottles" Wild Thing Zin 2013	\$12	\$9.60	_____
<u>Wine Club Only</u>			
PeaceLand Zin 2014 *90pts Conn Guide/Double Gold & Gold*	\$30	\$24.00	_____
Florence Petite Sirah 2013 *92 pts Robert Parker/5 Gold & BOC*	\$40	\$32.00	_____
Rockpile Reserve Petite Sirah 2013 * Gold & Double Gold*	\$40	\$32.00	_____
King Ridge Cabernet 2013 *87 pts Conn Guide/ 3 Golds*	\$40	\$32.00	_____
Napa Reserve Cabernet 2009 *94 pts Wine Enthusiast*	\$90	\$72.00	_____