



Winemaker: Gary Sitton
Varietal Composition: 100% Cabernet Sauvignon
Appellation: Alexander Valley
Acid/pH: 6.1g/L / 3.66
Residual Sugar: 0.33g/L
Alcohol: 14.5%
Aging: 24 months in French Oak
(91% new)

CLOS du BOIS
BRIARCREST
ALEXANDER VALLEY

Sonoma County 2012 **B**

Clos du Bois Proprietary wines represent the pinnacle of the Clos du Bois winemaking tradition. These wines are limited-production bottlings painstakingly nurtured from vineyard to bottle by winemaker Gary Sitton. Refined and elegant, these wines continue the unbroken tradition of fine, French-inspired winemaking that was our founder Frank Woods' vision and remains our inspiration to this day.

GRAPE SOURCE

Briarcrest is composed of 100% Cabernet Sauvignon harvested from superb hillside and benchland vineyards in Alexander Valley, one of California's most exciting regions for nuanced, structured Cabernet Sauvignon. Vineyards selected include Sink Ranch (62%), Black Oak Basin (24%), Fox Hill Vineyard (8%), and other esteemed sites in Alexander Valley (6%). To allow for maximum expression and purity of flavor, grapes were primarily harvested by hand (97%) from October 17 to October 30, 2012, at an average of 25.5° Brix.

VINTAGE

The 2012 growing season saw moderate temperatures with few heat spikes and above average sunlight. Weather conditions during bloom promoted a strong set, yielding a larger-than-average crop. Given the large crop and moderate temperatures, it took a long time for the crop to ripen, which resulted in flavor development racing ahead of sugars—ideal for flavorful, well-balanced wines. The moderate conditions prevailed for the majority of harvest until late season rain led to sourcing the remaining Cabernet Sauvignon from later-ripening sites. The 2012 vintage shows excellent color extraction, intense varietal aromatics, and good concentration. By all accounts it was a very strong vintage for wine quality.

WINEMAKING

The grapes were destemmed, but not crushed, to extract flavor as gently as possible, then transferred to small stainless steel fermenters where the juice was pumped over the skins three times a day while fermentation ran its course, about eight days in total. At the conclusion of fermentation, the wine remained on the skins for extended maceration for 20 to 32 days, and then underwent 100% malolactic fermentation in barrel, racked, and returned to barrels after fermentation was complete. Separate barrel lots were racked out of barrels, blended, and returned. The wine was aged for 24 months in French oak, 91% new. Bottling took place in January 2015.

WINEMAKER NOTES

The 2012 Briarcrest combines complex structure with elegant fruit and stellar varietal appeal, making it as much a cellar selection as a natural fit for today's table. Inky ruby red in color, on the nose it shows rich aromas of blackberry and black currant, with notes of cedar and toasty oak. On the palate, the wine delivers juicy black cherry, plum, and black coffee flavors, with big, chewy tannins before a lengthy finish.