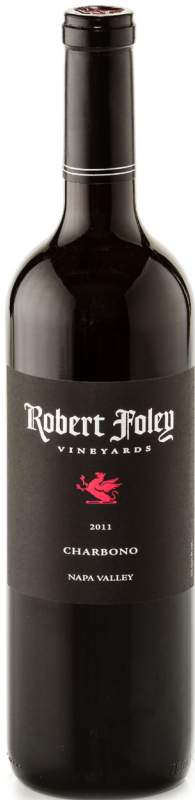


Robert Foley

VINEYARDS



2011 CHARBONO

Charbono is one of the lost grape varieties – almost. Recent reports indicate there are only about 90 acres of this variety in existence, half of this in Napa county. The original cuttings were imported to Calistoga in the Napa Valley from the Savoie region in the French Alps in about 1880. Its original name was Doux Noir, or “soft black,” later called Charbonneau (carbon water). Subsequently, Charbono was wiped out in Europe by the Phylloxera root louse infestation.

Some believed it to be the Italian grape variety Dolcetto but this was proven not to be the case through genetic testing. After repeal of Prohibition in the U.S., Charbono was used by Inglenook for blending with their new Cask Cabernet wines and small amounts were bottled as varietal wine. I tasted the 1968 Inglenook Charbono from cask in 1969 and was inspired to become a winemaker with that taste.

After the record-low yields for this variety in 2010, the 2011 vintage is back on track and the resulting wine is just as good as Charbono gets. We aged this 100% varietal in primarily neutral French cooperage to focus the wine on the fruit component, reminiscent of wild berry jelly, grape candy, and a tease of toast.

SPECIFICATIONS

Wine: 2011 Charbono

Appellation: Napa Valley [Calistoga]

Vineyard: River-bottom (rocky) soil creates a dark, extracted wine. Hot days and cool nights – exactly what Charbono and Cabernet Sauvignon love.

Variety: 100% Charbono

Harvest: Hand picked October 2011

Vinification: Ten-day fermentation, neutral French Oak barrels

Alcohol: 12.1%

Bottled: May 2013

Production: 600 cases

Winemaker: Bob Foley

Retail price: \$35