



# ROBERT CRAIG WINERY

## FALL 2008 NEWSLETTER

### 2007 Durell Chardonnay Sets The Standard For Viticultural Excellence

Durell Vineyard's star continues to ascend as a superb producer of Chardonnay grapes in Sonoma Valley, and we're very fortunate to have a small allocation of fruit from the vineyard's choice Sand Hill Block.

Our winemaking consultant Keith Emerson's deft touch produces a nuanced Chardonnay of great purity and clarity.

Only a few tons were harvested in 2007, so the supply is extremely limited.

**Aroma:** The exquisite nose will carry you away. Pear and white nectarine with notes of peach blossom and honeysuckle.

**Flavors:** Rich, ripe pear and nectarine lead into a lively Burgundian mineral component. Hints of lychee and grapefruit.

**Finish:** Crisp, well-balanced. Bright fruit lingers on the palate. One glass is not enough!

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Durell Vineyard's tightly bunched grape clusters are the ideal component for crafting an exceptional single vineyard Chardonnay.



The vineyard crew prepares to bud over a section of our Howell Mountain estate vineyard. Low-lying fog, which permeates Napa Valley's lower elevations, is visible in the distance. The winery site at nearly 2300 feet along the ridgeline provides ideal grape-growing conditions.

### 2005 HOWELL MOUNTAIN CABERNET DELIVERS A SUBLIME COMBO OF DARK FRUIT & FINE TANNINS

If there were a Goddess on Howell Mountain, this would be her wine! The dark, deep, wild mountain fruit and warm pepper and spice flow from the opening aromatics, over the mid-palate and through a powerful, extended finish. Unfiltered and unfined. Decanting recommended.

**Aroma:** Enticing wild berry and black fruit open up, followed by white pepper, hazelnut, vanilla and a floral touch.

**Flavors:** Luscious, mouth-filling black-berry coats the palate, accented with more white pepper, roasted coffee, anise, clove and mineral notes.

**Finish:** The focused flavors pour into the finish, extending this Cabernet's lively complexity. Fine, silky tannins.

#### Wine Information

*Harvest dates:* Sept. 27 - Oct. 22

*Average sugar:* 25.2° Brix

*TA:* .57; *pH:* 3.81

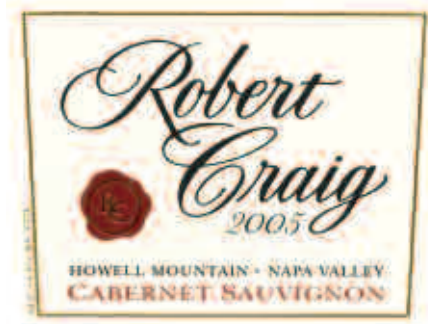
*Alcohol:* 14.8%

*Barrel Aging:* 20 months in French oak

*Bottling Date:* July 2007

*Total Production:* Only 1100 cases made

*Price:* \$70 (See Order Form special pricing.)





## Top Customer Al Fresco Dinner on the Mountain



Top customers joined Bob and Lynn Craig on a Sunday afternoon in May to enjoy an al fresco dinner featuring roast pig prepared by Vineyard Manager Carlos Mendez. A winery and vineyard tour with Bob was followed by dinner overlooking Napa Valley, complete with Mariachi serenades.

## 2007 Durell Vineyard Chardonnay Debuts



Continued from Page 1

### Wine Information

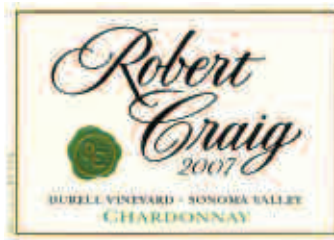
**Harvest dates:** Sept. 15 – Oct. 2; **Average sugar:** 24.5° Brix;

**TA:** .56; **pH:** 3.74

**Alcohol:** 14.1%; **Barrel Aging:** 30% in French oak; 70% in stainless steel; **Bottling Date:** April 2008

**Total Production:** Only 390 cases made

**Price:** \$45 (See Order Form for savings.)



## WINE REVIEW CORNER

### 2006 Zinfandel - Howell Mountain

“...Surprisingly structured for a Zinfandel, the palate shows almost Cabernet-like density with sleek, polished blackberry, smooth ground pepper on the finish lasting for 60 seconds. A stunning example of mountain-grown Zinfandel.” *Score: 96+ Doug Wilder, Vinfolio Issue 192*

### 2005 Mt. Veeder Cabernet & 2005 Howell Mountain Cabernet

“These are wonderful successes for this vintage. The Mt. Veeder is supple and full bodied. . . fine balance and a very long finish. The Howell Mountain is both rich and lean, with supple texture and a tannic richness on the finish. . .” *Four Stars+ Ronn Weigand, Restaurant News, #125/26*

“The 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain is now being made by Keith Emerson (Vineyard 29, Emerson Brown). The depth and power in this wine really set it apart.” *Score: 94+ Doug Wilder, Vinfolio Issue 202*

“Big, intense and bold – everything you might expect from a serious Howell Mountain Cabernet. . . packed with ripe dark fruits, rich and dense on the palate, and finishes with chewy tannins that will age out with time. . .” *Score: 93 Robert Whitley, WineReviewOnline.com, Aug 5*

### From Houston - Pairings: Robert Craig Cabernet, Grilled Steak (and a Hurricane)

“...after a few hours of hacksawing, dragging and piling a yard full of tree limbs, I gratefully tucked into a neighbor’s mixed grill. . . I chose to let the soothing powers of the Robert Craig 2005 Mt. Veeder Cabernet Sauvignon do their thing. . . This wine offers loads of cedar and cigar box accents to the super-concentrated blackberry and plum fruit. Should age beautifully for at least 10 years.” *(Weekend Wine Selection) WineSkinny.com, Sept. 15*

## ROBERT CRAIG WINERY FALL ORDER FORM

### ❖❖ ROBERT CRAIG WINERY ❖❖ 15TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL!

**First 15 orders will receive  
15% OFF 1-6 bottles or  
20% OFF 7+ bottles**

CALL PETER AT 707-252-2250, EXT 1  
TO PLACE ORDER.

Select any current release.  
Ok to mix & match wines.

### GOOD NEWS! 30 CASES OF 2005 HOWELL MOUNTAIN CABERNET AVAILABLE!

SAVE 5% - 10% ON ALL ORDERS  
THROUGH NOV. 30TH

For the first time in three years, we have a bit more Howell Mountain Cabernet and are pleased to offer 30 cases to our mailing list customers.

As always, the supply will go quickly. Reorder deadline is Nov. 30th, first-come, first-served!

Cellar getting low? This is a great time before holiday parties and gift-giving to stock up on Robert Craig wines.

### LOOKING FOR EVEN GREATER SAVINGS? OUR CABERNET CLUB IS THE ANSWER

- Four Magnificent Napa Valley Mountain Cabernets
- Only Two Shipments Per Year
- 15% - 25% Savings
- Exclusive Club Events

#### 2009 Cabernet Release Schedule

- Affinity ~ Cabernet Blend & Mt. Veeder Cabernet (Late-March)
- Howell Mountain & Spring Mountain (Club Only) Cabernets (Late-October)

For more details, email  
[Rachel@robertcraigwine.com](mailto:Rachel@robertcraigwine.com) or  
call 707-252-2250, ext. 2

Wine Offerings <i>Savings valid thru 11/30/2008</i>	Quantity	Retail Price	TOTAL
<b>NEW!</b> 2005 Howell Mtn. Cabernet		\$70	
2005 Howell Mtn. <b>Magnum</b> (1.5L)		\$160	
2005 Howell Mtn. <b>3L Etched</b> (3.0L)		\$395	
<b>NEW!</b> 2007 Durell Chardonnay		\$45	
2005 Mt. Veeder Cabernet		\$70	
2005 Affinity Cabernet Blend		\$45	
2005 Affinity <b>Half-Bottle</b> (375ml)		\$24	
2006 Zinfandel - Howell Mtn.		\$50	
2006 Mt. George Cuvee - Red Blend		\$30	
<i>NEW RELEASE SPECIAL! Take 5% off orders of 1 to 6 bottles or 10% off 7 or more bottles - ok to mix and match</i>			
<i>Order total</i>			
<i>Applicable sales tax &amp; shipping will be added</i> For shipping charges, go to: <a href="http://www.robertcraigwine.com/orderform.pdf">http://www.robertcraigwine.com/orderform.pdf</a>			
GRAND TOTAL			

### PLEASE COMPLETE ALL PAYMENT INFORMATION BELOW

Customer name as it appears on card (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number (VI, MC, AMEX) \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Shipment Information: business address preferred. Adult signature required. No post office boxes.

Email address (IMPORTANT!) home email preferred \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Company (for shipping to a business address) \_\_\_\_\_

Delivery Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Fax your order: 707/265-9162 Phone: 707/252-2250, ext. 1  
Mail to: 880 Vallejo Street, Napa, CA 94559  
Email: [Peter@robertcraigwine.com](mailto:Peter@robertcraigwine.com)

## Frost, Warm Summer Combine For An Early 2008 Harvest

Mother Nature is unpredictable in what she serves up for each harvest, and this growing season was no exception. It will be long remembered for 22 straight days of early morning and late evening frost. This occurred right after budbreak, in the critical growing period from mid-March to late April. Typically, the early growing season will have only 3-6 days of frost warnings.

Location and terrain play a big role in how well a vineyard survives the frost, which behaves much like a liquid, flowing with air currents. In low-lying vineyards, the air movement may be restricted by trees or other obstacles and the frost puddles in these pockets.

Unlike some growers, we did not experience major crop loss. The Affinity vineyards' wind machine protected against severe damage and the steep mountain-top locations on Howell Mountain and Mount Veeder diminished the frost impact. Overall, our crop loss averaged 10-20%.

Then, Mother Nature had another trick up her sleeve. Shortly after the long cold snap, daytime temperatures reached almost 100 degrees. This occurred during bloom, when excessive heat can damage the grape blossoms, resulting in "shatter" which leaves a grape cluster with many gaps that otherwise would have been filled with fruit.

After that roller coaster beginning, the season settled into a more normal pattern of moderate evenings and warm days.

In late summer, the evenings became cooler than usual near the Bay, where our Affinity vineyards are located. This cooling influence, however, did not extend into areas further up in the mountains.

As a result, the mountain grapes, which normally ripen later in the Fall, progressed at the same pace as those in the Affinity vineyards. So, we ended up with a compressed picking schedule, with grapes coming into the winery at the same time from many locations.

Fortunately, prospects look very good for all aspects of quality, so that is positive. At this juncture, it appears that we are about a week to 10 days ahead of the norm for picking grapes.

Wish us luck!

*Robert Craig*

October 2008

• 2007 HOWELL MOUNTAIN CABERNET • 2007 DURELL CHARDONNAY  
NEW WINE RELEASES:  
FIRST 15 ORDERS WILL SAVE 15%-20%!

Fall 2008

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