



Arbios Cellars

“Winemaking defines the essence of my life; transforming a challenge into a vision of elegance, grace and power.”

- Bill Arbios

After a notable winemaking career with many prominent wineries, Bill Arbios fulfilled a longstanding dream of having his own label with the debut of Arbios Cellars in 1993. Arbios Cellars focuses on a single Bordeaux-style red wine, made from 100 percent Cabernet Sauvignon grapes grown in the acclaimed Alexander Valley of Sonoma County.

Placing the emphasis on the terroir, Bill believes in honoring the character of the fruit without over-manipulating the wine. The resulting wines are ripe and intense with rich plum and cherry flavors and intriguing notes of olive and earth – a style that has been described as a cross between the new and old world.

Arbios Cellars’ production has grown from a mere 125 cases of the 1993 vintage to approximately 3000 cases today. The wine is available in major U.S. and Canadian markets with distribution in numerous high-end restaurants and retail shops. In 2000, Bill launched a second label, Praxis, from the Greek word for practice. These wines, priced about half that of the Arbios label, allow Bill to experiment and practice his craft with new varietals and different terroirs. All of the Arbios and Praxis wines emphasize terroir with more than half made from a single vineyard.

Winemaking Philosophy and Viticultural Practices

“Winemaking’s not a formula where you take grapes and yeast and combine them in a tank. It’s about responding to individual characteristics; taking care of any problems that might arise along the way; shaping the wine in a continually weaving, responsive process that is truly satisfying. It’s not like being in a factory—it’s creating a work of art.”

- Bill Arbios

www.ArbiosCellars.com

Arbios Cellars, 561 Mission Boulevard, Santa Rosa, CA 95409

(707) 539-5641 phone

(707) 539-5642 fax



The Arbios Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon is crafted in classic Bordeaux-style to have moderate alcohol and good fruit and character. Winemaker Bill Arbios likes to be “honest” with the fruit, avoiding overripe characteristics that do not promote longevity.

Although Bill has a successful track record crafting blended wines, he now prefers the additional challenges and artistry that go into making wine from a single vineyard. Rather than using a “formula” to obtain the same wine every time, Bill’s interest is in capturing the essence of time and place. Since fewer winemaking tools are available without blending, Bill relies on vineyard manipulation to reach his goals. Canopy management is an essential part of the vineyard management. “Speckled shade” leaf removal is used to allow the grapes adequate exposure to the sun without cooking them. This increases the development of deep color and ripe fruit flavors. Strategic shoot position is critical in obtaining maximum photosynthesis. The careful shoot positioning orients the leaves for maximum exposure to the sun and avoids shading adjacent vine rows. This also enhances airflow through the vine, minimizing the risk of mold and mildew development.

In addition, careful attention is paid to vine nutrition with a comprehensive composting program that leads to increased vine vigor. Both drip irrigation and regulated deficit irrigation are practiced in the vineyards. This method of limiting the irrigation forces the vines to struggle in a manner conducive to exceptional grape quality.

Caring for the grapes doesn’t end in the vineyard. In order to fully extract the grapes’ color, cold maceration is used before the fermentation and extended maceration after the fermentation. At all times, only the most gentle handling and passionate care are used to ease the transition from vine to bottle.

After fermentation, the wines rest until “ripe” in French oak barrels for 18 months. Bill believes strongly in the careful and efficient barrel selection, focusing on barrels that bring spiciness and chocolate or coconut tones to the flavor profile of his wines, while avoiding barrels that bring a more aggressive wooden edge to wine. Barrels with an extremely fine grain wood, like the barrels produced by the well-known cooperages Sylvain or Taransaud, are preferred. Bill experiments with toast levels to achieve a balanced hint of smokiness in the wine that cannot come from the grapes alone. This balance is the key as Bill feels strongly that oak is to be used as a spice, not an ingredient.

When the barrel aging is complete, the wine is gently moved to tank and blended together. It is then lightly filtered and bottled in our signature, enameled bottles and sealed with the highest quality cork available.

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