



Nestled in a pristine alpine valley in southwestern Oregon's rugged Siskiyou Mountain range, Foris Vineyards has been a true viticultural pioneer for over thirty five years. Specializing in Alsace varietals and Pinot Noir, Foris Vineyards consistently garners accolades for both quality and value. The dramatic natural beauty and purity of our surrounding environment is reflected in the vibrant epicurean wines that have earned us a place in some of America's finest restaurants and wine shops.

2008 Syrah Port

Sweet wine, fortified with the addition of grape brandy has many different names around the world. The most famous and the one that has become synonymous with this wine style is Port. Ironically, the original Portuguese producers no longer use the term, but instead use Oporto to distinguish themselves from what they consider "imposters" be they Australian, Californian or yes, even Oregonian. At Foris, we don't think of ourselves as trying to imitate or copy the great wines made by our Iberian friends half-way around the world. Rather we simply took the basic concept and made our own interpretation, much like a musician reinterprets a classic song.

The grapes best suited to making port do not present themselves every year. We are looking for a very high level of ripeness and its accompanying sugar development. We also like small berries to give the depth and concentration needed to balance such a powerful wine. Needless to say, we don't produce this wine every year and this bottling may be our favorite to date.

Syrah often struggles to ripen in Southern Oregon and letting it hang late into the season increases the risk of frost or rain bringing things to an unceremonious end. 2008 was one of the more cooperative vintages in this regard and we found ourselves presented with a small block of Syrah that had achieved a level of ripeness not often seen in these parts. We crushed the fruit into small shallow open-top bins and manually punched it down twice a day. The fermentation was arrested just over halfway through with the addition of high-proof pot-still brandy made from our own Chardonnay. Two years aging in older French oak rounded out the edges, yet left intact a beautiful core of black fruits and Christmas spices.

While port is most often thought of as a desert wine, it is a popular aperitif in many parts of the world. However, its perfect setting in our opinion is paired with candied walnuts and a wedge of Stilton cheese. A bearskin rug and roaring fireplace are not required, just highly recommended.

Analysis:

Harvest Brix 30.2, Alc 21%, # of Cases 150