

PLATINUM SERIES

Select, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers

Blair Fox was in the seventh grade when he first discovered a calling for the wine business. With his father's help Blair entered a project in his school's science fair—one comparing fermentation rates of different yeasts. Blair's project finished third in the competition, but the seed of interest was planted that would slowly nurture into a full-fledged calling almost a decade later.

"Our family was always traveling both locally and even abroad," the 33-year-old Santa Barbara (CA) native recently explained. "We had wine with all our meals and on every trip we went and visited any wineries that were nearby. We probably tasted thousands of wines while I was growing up."

Such a European approach to life influenced Blair Fox when he entered college. Even though he first entered college as a pre-med student, he soon transferred to UC Davis where he was able to switch to a curriculum that enabled him to become one of the university's first Viticulture and Oenology graduates in 1999.

"I took my first viticulture class and realized just how much the field meant to me," he continued. "It was wonderful that I was able to take a balanced program that allowed me to learn about growing grapes and then about how to make them into wine."

While at UC Davis, Fox recalled taking a wine marketing class that forecast Syrah as the new "in" wine for the foreseeable future. Since the Rhône grape was one of Fox's passions and was also heavily planted (along with a number of other Rhône varietals) in his home region of Santa Barbara County, Fox saw a plausible outlet for his talents. By the way, Fox cleverly used the same science fair project to complete his UC Davis studies, but with a great deal more research and information attached.

Blair Fox found immediate employment as winemaker with a small, family-owned winery in the nearby Santa Ynez Valley named Sunstone. He toiled there for three years and with the winery's help, produced the first 125 cases of Blair Fox Cellars in 2001.

Feeling he needed more specific knowledge of his favorite grape varietals, Fox traveled to France where he became acquainted with such wines as Cote d'Rotie, L'Hermitage and Condrieu, the Rhône's three greatest

wines. Returning again to Santa Barbara, he was soon lured away to South Australia, where he was named Vintage Winemaker for Haselgrove Wines of McLaren Vale whose top wine was the indomitable Shiraz. Fox again profited from his experience and eventually returned to Santa Barbara. By this time, he was recognized as an international winemaker of Rhône varietals.

Fox landed a job with Fess Parker Winery in Los Olivos as the Rhône winemaker. After three vintages, he was named head winemaker and still serves in that position to this day.

But Blair Fox had never forgotten the first wines he made for himself under his own label. His agreement with Fess Parker allowed him to continue his efforts for Blair Fox Cellars. The acquisition of grapes from an important vineyard named Paradise Road paved the way for Blair Fox Cellars' meteoric rise. The vineyard is the

eastern most in Santa Barbara County and benefits from a warmer climate than most Santa Barbara vineyards. Fox likens the soil to Australia and the small berries with abundant flavor concentration are perfectly suited to his wines.

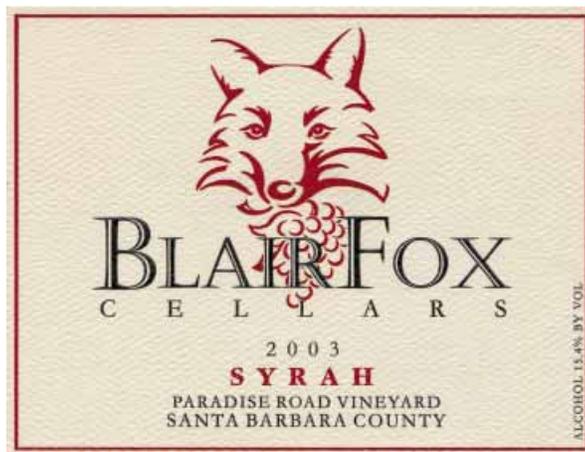
"With the type of vineyard management I prefer, I can really extract the subtleties of the terroir I am seeking," he added. "It all adds to the effect the wine has on the palate."

Blair Fox Cellars' release of 500 cases of its 2003 drew rave reviews from wine guru Robert Parker, the *Wine Spectator* and others. He has maintained his production level in subsequent vintages and will continue the same number in the future.

"At 500 cases I can completely control everything," Fox explained. "It's a good number for me. It doesn't take a lot of my time away from my other duties and I'm proud to say that it can only be found in the finest boutique wine stores and highest caliber restaurants."

While Fox makes the wines, his wife Sarah does everything else for the winery. She handles marketing, tastings and web design. Blair Fox Cellars' label was produced by Sarah's sister Laurie Anderson, a noted graphic designer in her own right.

In the case of Blair Fox Cellars, smaller is definitely better.



TASTING NOTES





Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to Blair Fox Cellars. I am a native of Santa Barbara and a graduate of U.C. Davis with a degree in Viticulture and Enology. After graduating from Davis I had a yearning to make Rhône varietal wines, especially Syrah. I decided to come back to Santa Barbara County because of the outstanding quality of Syrah from this region. After working at other wineries in the area for a few years, traveling through the Rhône Valley of France and working in McLaren Vale, South Australia, I decided to make a small amount of Syrah for myself under my eponymous label, Blair Fox Cellars.

All of Blair Fox Cellars wines are very small, limited production wines of the highest quality. I select the most interesting and well-maintained vineyards in Santa Barbara County and produce only Syrah and Viognier. I am currently making wines from Paradise Road Vineyard, Purisima Mountain Vineyard and Tierra Alta Vineyard for Blair Fox Cellars. I pursue a hands-on winemaking approach to these wines with hopes they demonstrate the quality of this wonderful area and the unique profiles of the individual vineyards. I feel the wines of this area are exceptional and it is a pleasure being able to work with them.

The Paradise Road Vineyard has an elevation of 1200 feet and is located at the top of Highway 154 in Santa Barbara County. This vineyard experiences a much warmer climate than most other Santa Barbara County vineyards and possesses iron rich, nutrient deprived soils. This results in Syrah with tiny berries, small clusters and very concentrated flavors. The 2003 Paradise Road Vineyard Syrah is a dark, full-bodied wine with gorgeous fruit, supple tannin, good acidity and a long, spicy finish. I hope you enjoy my wine!

Cheers,

Blair Fox
Winemaker

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www.blairfoxcellars.com

TASTING NOTES

A big, rich, single-vineyard achievement, Blair Fox's 2003 Paradise Road Vineyard Syrah is the third vintage from this noteworthy vineyard site and showcases the potential the eastern Santa Barbara County is capable of. Just recently, the talented 33-year-old winemaker Blair Fox was awarded the **Andre Tchelistcheff Winemaker of the Year** by the *San Francisco International Wine Competition*, the largest International wine competition in America. The award-winning winemaker also made the 2003 Syrah a winning vintage, when it received **91 Points** from *Robert Parker*: "My favorite wine is the 2003 Syrah Paradise Road Vineyard. This black/ruby/purple-tinged 2003 exhibits sweet anise, plum, cassis, and gamy/meat characteristics. With fabulous fruit, powerful, full-bodied flavors, supple tannin, and decent acidity." The 2003 Syrah garnered **90 Points** from *Wine Spectator* as well: "Firm and structured, with a supple band of red cherry, spice, currant and berry, which fan out nicely on the finish, end with an earthy, spicy aftertaste." Pair the flavor concentrated Blair Fox 2003 Syrah with beef tenderloin, smoked pork chops, or a spicy bean soup. Aged 26 months in oak, and 12 months in bottle. 98% Syrah, 2% Petite Syrah. Enjoy now until 2013.

REORDERS

Known for his exceptional, meticulous winemaking talents and producing wines with a unique terroir-enriched character, Blair Fox has released yet another well received vintage with the 2003 Paradise Road Vineyard Syrah. Given the "Napa Cab" treatment, as Fox likes to say, this wine received specialized hand-winemaking attention from start to finish and is among the four different Syrahs Fox produces that have consistently garnered Gold Medals or 90+ ratings.

The **Blair Fox Cellars 2003 Paradise Road Vineyard Syrah** retails winery-direct for \$34.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

Half-Case-\$29.00 /bottle (\$174.00)

Full-Case-\$24.00 /bottle (\$288.00)

[Plus shipping]

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