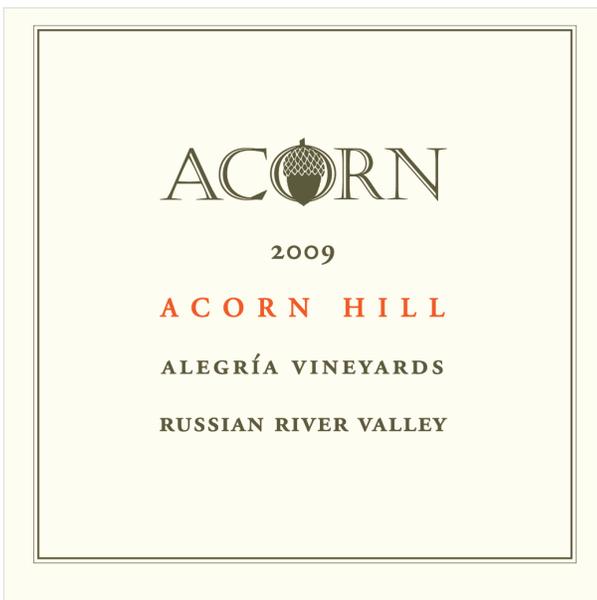




USA, Red Blend, Acorn Hill, Acorn Winery, Alegría Vineyard, Russian River Valley, Healdsburg, Sonoma, California, 2009



A red blend of: 54% Syrah, 44% Sangiovese, 1% Viognier, 0.5% Canaiolo, and 0.5% Mammolo.

N: Clean, inviting, barrel room wafts layer perfectly atop black cherry, plum skin, and savory notes. Wet earth, wild herbs, and aged leather delight. She closes with a touch of sage and wild prairie. Complex countryside aromas here. Love it.

T: Medium full-to-full mouthfeel. Plums and black cherry intertwined with earth, herb, and tobacco flavors. Currants and oak dominate a long finish. Just a touch of chalkiness slightly detracts from an otherwise beautifully integrated and complex experience.

Alcohol = 13.7%

Winemakers = Bill Nachbaur and Clay Mauritson

<http://www.acornwinery.com/>

Price = \$45

N = A / A+

T = A-

I = A-

Overall = A- / A

This wine was a media sample kindly provided by the winery.

From the winery:

“Barrel Aging: 21 months

Barrel Program: 51% French, 28% Hungarian, 21% American; 30% new

Case Production: 95

Acorn Hill is our estate reserve wine made from the hillside blocks we planted at Alegría Vineyards in 1991 and 1992. We selected and combined our favorite barrels of Sangiovese and Syrah to create the blend. The Sangiovese was co-fermented with Canaiolo and Mammolo; the Syrah was co-fermented with Viognier; so each component was a field blend, making this a special blend of field blends.

The growing season in 2009 was a very cool, which allowed the grapes to mature slowly but steadily. We picked the Sangiovese just before a mid-October rain and the Syrah a week later. The first lot was fermented with Brunello yeast and we used Syrah yeast for the second. We barrel aged the wines separately for a year before assembling the blend for further barrel aging and integration. The wine's complex flavors highlighted by mineral notes are an elegant reflection of the hill itself. You can almost taste the rocky clay loam soils and feel the sun on the south and west-facing slopes of Acorn Hill.

Approachable upon release, this wine will age beautifully to be enjoyed for years to come.”

RATINGS KEY

Country of origin is listed first, then the name of the grape(s), the maker, wine name, additional geographic information, and finally the vintage year.

C = Color. Rarely noted unless unique for that wine.

N = Nose, aroma - how it smells.

T = Taste, mouthfeel, finish.

I = “Intangible”. Subjective feel. Squishy impressions on how the wine was independent of anything objective.

Either the American scholastic A-F “grades” scale, or the standard numeric scale is used.

A+ or 98-100 = Incredible. Beautiful. Elegant. The stars have aligned.

A or 94-97 = Total quality on all fronts. Seriously memorable. The starting material must have been excellent, and the winemaker clearly took pride in her/his art.

A- or 90-93 = Brilliant. Special stuff indeed. Do what you can to try it, you will not be disappointed.

B+ or 87-89 = Very Good. Above average quality. Worth a try.

B or 84-86 = Good.

B- or 80-83 = Good, with some detracting notes.

C- to C+ = Fair. Likely unbalanced. Faults, but not terminal ones.

D and F = Avoid.

To see this review online, visit <http://www.brainwines.com/usa-red-blend-acorn-hill-acorn-winery-alegra-vineyard-russian-river-valley-healdsburg-sonoma-california-2010/>