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## Winery & Vineyards Visits – Acorn Winery (Alegría Vineyard) in the Russian River Valley, Sonoma County, California, USA

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### Highlights

The warm and knowledgable Betsy and Bill.

True “Field blending” (40-50 different grape types on just 27 acres).



Great wines.

Excellent and down-to-earth atmosphere and wine making approach.

Solid soil and cork learning tools on display in the tasting room.

Learning without effort.

40-50 varietals = from A to Z, seriously.

Madeline Angevine and Plavac Mali both think the place is cool.

### Alegría Vineyards

Is a very special site indeed. From their website...

“We purchased Alegría Vineyards in 1990, becoming stewards of a century-old field-blend Zinfandel vineyard. We learned from public records that the vines were planted in 1890, and there were grapevines on the property in the 1880s. Our first goal was to revive the old vineyard. Next, we planted 17 acres of new vines. Today Alegría Vineyards has 26 acres planted with Zinfandel, Syrah, Cabernet Franc, Sangiovese, Dolcetto, Petite Sirah, Alicante Bouschet, and many lesser-known varieties, about 40 in all.”

### Other wine facts of interest

- They have seven different clones of Sangiovese alone out there in their lovely, amazingly heterogeneous, vineyard.
- Their “Medley” red wine can have up to thirty, yes 30!, varietals in it.

### Wines I tasted

#### Rosato, Dry Rosé (2011) (\$22)

“A vineyard blend of 54% Sangiovese, 25% Dolcetto, 20% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Viognier.”

N/ Red berries and cranberries. Canvas. Light wafts of barnyard / almost Brett-like. Intriguing crushed oyster shells. Marine / shoreline aromas. Light white pepper.

T/ Nice acid pop! Strawberries, cranberries, fresh hay, cream, and a close of crushed river rocks.

Rating = B / B+

#### Russian River Valley Cabernet Franc (2008) (\$30)

“A single-vineyard field blend of 96% Cabernet Franc with 3% Merlot and 1% Petit Verdot.”

N / Smoky stewed plums, vanilla, game, and light blood (deliciously so).

T/ Full mouthfeel. Deep. BBQ smoked plum saucd. Nice, tight mineral and hardwood close. Lightly tannic and copper finish.

Rating = B- (*Updated...* just needed more time in the bottle. Second bottle rated 2 months later was much improved. Rating raised to B+)

Russian River Valley Sangiovese (2008) (\$29)

“A single-vineyard field blend of 98% Sangiovese (7 different clones) with 1% Canaiolo and 1% Mammolo.”

N / Sweet cherry and confection. Slight mader. Baking spices. Wild herbs. Nutmeg.

T / Medium-full mouthfeel. Deep blackcherry. Rich strawberry reduction. Game.

Rating = B+

Russian River Valley Syrah (2008) (\$33)

“A single-vineyard field-blend of 98% Syrah and 2% Viognier.”

N/ Barrel room. Stewed black pepper. Flint. Light confectionary. Leather. Stew of plum skins. Lovely florals on the lasting close.

T/ Full mouthfeel. Wonderfully clean and acidic but fruit-packed with blackcherry and plum center stage. Slight milk chocolate and a pinch of pucker on an extended finish.

Rating = A / A-

Russian River Valley Zinfandel (2008) (\$45)

“80% Zinfandel, 11% Petite Sirah, and 7% Alicante Bouschet. The remaining 2% of the field blend includes Carignane, Trousseau, Sangiovese, Petit Bouschet, Negrette, Syrah, Plavac Mali, Tannat, Muscat Noir, Peloursin, Bécian, Cinsaut, and Grenache.”

N / Red berry jam session. Clean, plummy essence layered on top of that. White pepper. Asian spices.

T/ Medium mouthfeel. Clean acid pop with a tannic pinch. Note: her pucker subsided after two hours of air. Clean jamminess, but neither surgary nor soft – in short, the right kind of jam. Nice angular lines across the entire experience.

Rating = B+

Acorn Hill, a red blend (2008) (\$45)

“A vineyard blend of 42% Sangiovese, 42% Syrah, 12% Zinfandel, and 4% other varieties.”

N/ Sexy, deep, mysterious on the nose. Red berries and black pepper fun. Field of mixed flowers.

T/ Extremely clean and harmonious blend. Darting blue and black fruits. Lush, extended fruit and spiced finish. Solid acid work cleans and readies you for your next sip.

Rating = B+ / A-

Medley, a red blend (actually a blend OF field blends) (2008) (\$38)

“A vineyard blend of 33% Zinfandel, 31% Cabernet Franc, 23% Syrah, 3% Cinsaut, 2% Muscats, 1% Merlot, 1% Blue Portuguese, and 6% other varieties.”

N/ Florals floating over a blackcherry and plum jam. Thick, but soft, minerality. Nailed it.

T/ Like a Zin red berry jam but with a floral reduction that is just awesome. Complex depth, layers, and transitions.

Blueberry flavored chocolate. A touch of pucker, but a payload of minerality as well. Loved it.

Rating = A

The 2010 barrel sample of Medley

Like the 2008, but a touch dryer, and even more vibrant. A fresher, deeper profile than the 08.

Rating = A / A+


Winemakers = Bill Nachbaur & Clay Mauritson

Vineyard and Tasting Room pictures


<https://picasaweb.google.com/100723272189800267231/Acorn?authuser=0&authkey=Gv1sRgCMnG-K3bldv6jgE&feat=directlink>

Also, please see:

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

**Acorn Winery** ♦ P.O. Box 2061, Healdsburg, CA 95448 ♦ 707-433-6440 ♦ [nachbaur@acornwinery.com](mailto:nachbaur@acornwinery.com)   
*Appointment required for visits* ♦ 12040 Old Redwood Highway, Healdsburg, CA 95448

*Wines tasted were media samples generously provided by the winery.*

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