

✧ Care and Handling of ALBIREO Wines ✧

ALBIREO wines typically throw a heavy deposit of sediment since they are unfinned and unfiltered. This is usual and proper for the finest of age-worthy wines. The sediment is merely broken down bits of yeasts and grapes and is a vital natural component of wine. Sometimes there may be small red tartrate crystals present as well, but since ALBIREO wines do not have supplemental tartaric acid added to them there will not be many. (Potassium bitartrate crystals often form when there is an overabundance of tartaric acid in wine that is stored at cellar temperatures.) However, to maximize your enjoyment of the wine and to avoid getting much sediment into your wine glass we recommend the following:

- ❶ ALBIREO wines will stay better preserved for long periods of time if the bottles are laid down sideways or stored upside down in their box. This will prevent the corks from drying out. We use high quality long corks so that air will not readily permeate through them and the wines can age gracefully. Remember to always store wines in a dark place away from heat; a cool basement or cellar is best. If the bottles have just been shipped or agitated somehow then it may take a month for the fine suspended particles to settle and the wine to clear. In some wines the finest particles may cause the wine to appear hazy, just as occurs with unfiltered ales, but this does not affect flavor quality. Take care when handling a bottle to not agitate it before opening as this may cause some of the sediment to become re-suspended in the wine.
- ❷ Because the bottles were originally stored upside down at the winery all of the sediment settled onto the corks. Most of it will remain on the corks and inside the necks of the bottles even after standing upright. We recommend opening a bottle slowly and carefully near a sink so that sediment does not fly out with the cork and it can be rinsed off of the cork without staining anything. Any large bits dislodged into the wine during uncorking will quickly sink to the bottom. (It is o.k. to push a disk of sediment down into the wine and let it sink to the bottom.) Also, any residue remaining in the neck may be removed with the handle of a plastic spoon, a cotton swab, or with the little finger if you wish. When pouring the wine we recommend using a bottle filter/finer insert, but a screen [for wine or tea] can optionally be used to catch any loose material. (You may decant the wine into another glass vessel at this point if you want to for serving, taking note of the following item.)
- ❸ When pouring the last of the wine from the bottle allow a small amount of wine to collect in the shoulder of the bottle without dispensing it. We use broad-shouldered bottles so that any remaining sediment will be trapped there instead of pouring out. Again, a bottle filter insert will lessen the amount of sediment exiting the bottle.
- ❹ When finished with a bottle rinse it out so that nothing gets stained while the bottle is taken to the recycling bin.

We hope you will agree that an extra minute of time to prepare the wine for serving is worthwhile in exchange for knowing that you may partake of it in all of its unprocessed and undiminished glory. We strive to make highly flavorful wines in a traditional and natural manner, without chemical or mechanical manipulation, and we back that up by showing you the ingredients right on the label. We hope you truly enjoy your time relaxing with wines from ALBIREO, and we'd love to hear your comments and stories about your experiences.

Cheers and Good Health,
Nels & Christine

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One more note... Why are there no capsules on the tops of ALBIREO bottles? Because they prevent you from seeing the condition of the cork. Have you ever saved a special bottle of wine for many years and then when you are ready to open it and you remove the capsule, well, it turns out the cork has been leaking and made a mess that was completely obscured by the capsule? Yep, and then when you try to pull that mushy cork out the whole thing crumbles. Bummer. To avoid this problem we avoid capsules altogether so that you may inspect your bottles of ALBIREO occasionally for cork integrity. No capsule also means no unrecyclable waste is generated. So rest easily and enjoy the wine when you and it are both ready.