

WESTERN RESERVE WINES CLUB DECEMBER 2024



WINE: Zin Collective
VARIETALS: Zinfandel

Viticulture Area: North Coast of California

Bottle Price: \$14.99
Case Price: \$161.89 plus tax



INTRODUCTION

Zin Collective is a labor of love for winemaker Jamey Whetstone. After spending his formative years in the wine business working for none other than Turley, he has become a passionate advocate for sustainable viticulture and a style of Zin that is fresh, brambly and balanced. As the name suggests, Zin Collective is sourced from like-minded vineyards scattered along the North Coast, with a few choice sites in Lodi as well. Jamey has developed relationships that allow him to source this great fruit at prices that make Zin Collective a go-to. Jamey Whetstone's ability to bring the best of both regions creates The Zin Collective; bright and balanced for California Zin.

REGION:

The North Coast of California, spanning Mendocino, Sonoma, Napa, and Lake counties, is one of the state's most prestigious wine regions. Its proximity to the Pacific Ocean provides a significant cooling influence, resulting in moderate temperatures ideal for high-quality viticulture. The region benefits from diverse soils, including volcanic ash, clay, and gravel, which offer excellent drainage and promote concentrated



flavors in grapes. Fog that rolls in from the coast is a hallmark of the area, extending the growing season and contributing to balanced acidity in wines. Varietals like Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay thrive here, producing wines with complexity and elegance.

Lodi, located in California's Central Valley, presents a distinct contrast with its warm Mediterranean climate and alluvial soils. The region is marked by a unique combination of sandy loam and clay, which enhances water retention while allowing deep root systems for vines. Cooling breezes from the nearby Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta help to moderate temperatures, particularly during hot summer days, preserving acidity in grapes. Known as the "Zinfandel Capital of the World," Lodi produces exceptional old-vine Zinfandel alongside other varietals like Syrah, Merlot, and Chardonnay. Its diverse terroir and innovative winemaking practices have earned Lodi recognition as a leader in sustainable viticulture.

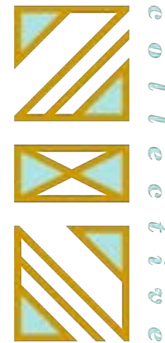
PRODUCER



Jamey Whetstone is a passionate winemaker and founder of Whetstone Wine Cellars in Napa Valley. Originally from South Carolina, Jamey's journey into winemaking began after moving to Napa in 1996 and working at Mustards Grill. He later apprenticed under Ehren Jordan at Turley Wine Cellars, which solidified his love for wine production and vineyard management. His time at Domaine Dujac in Burgundy deepened his appreciation for traditional winemaking methods. In 2002, Jamey established Whetstone Wine Cellars, focusing on crafting wines that reflect a blend of his Southern hospitality and California innovation. His wines often emphasize balance, flavor, and a respect for the terroir.

Jamey's winemaking philosophy prioritizes a hands-on approach to the vineyards and a minimalist style in the cellar. His portfolio includes varietals like Zinfandel, Syrah, Viognier, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay, with a notable dedication to Viognier as a personal favorite.

Beyond winemaking, Jamey enjoys incorporating live music into the Whetstone experience and maintaining strong connections with his community and family. His Southern roots shine through in his hospitality and personal touches, such as handwritten thank-you notes to his customers.



Tasting Notes:

Ruby red, rich nose full of rhubarb, blackberry pie and brambly red fruits. Secondary notes of vanilla and spice box. Medium-bodied mouthful of blackberry, ripe red currant, and black cherry. Supple tannins and perfect acidity buoy and brighten a lengthy finish framed with a trace of tobacco and baker's chocolate.

Food Suggestions:

The Zin Collective Zinfandel pairs perfectly with BBQ sauces, burgers, chili, and other spiced and grilled foods, but it also pairs well with chocolate-based desserts.

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Sources:

<https://www.zincollective.com/>
<https://www.delish.com/>

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WESTERN RESERVE WINES CLUB DECEMBER 2024



WINE: Pasaeli Aegean Çalkarasi Seahorse Rose

VARIETALS: 100% Çalkarasi (Chal-kara-see)

Viticulture Area: Denizli, Aegean, Turkey

Bottle Price: \$16.99 Case Price: \$183.49 plus tax



INTRODUCTION

Çalkarasi (Pronunciation (Chal-kara-see) is grown exclusively in Çal District of Denizli in the Aegean region of Turkey. As a variety, it is very suitable for producing high quality rosé wines due to powerful fruit flavors balanced with good acidity. The Çalkarasi for this wine is coming from a single vineyard at an altitude of 850 meters with warm days and cool nights which helps to preserve acidity. Kept with the skins for an hour and a half, it has a light salmon color. It is fermented in stainless steel tanks.



Founder Seyit Karagzolu is a personal friend of Marc de Grazia and has experience importing fine wines into Turkey before starting his own winery. Michael & Harmon Skurnik met Seyit at an event at Vinitaly a number of years ago, and when he approached us about representing his Turkish wines, we tasted the lineup and became instantly enthusiastic about adding them to the portfolio. Most of the wines are made from indigenous Turkish varieties, as well as a Bordeaux Blend, have great labels, informative back labels, and are priced right.

REGION

The Çal District of Denizli, located in Turkey's Aegean region, is a prominent wine-growing area known for its high-altitude vineyards and unique terroir. The region, positioned between 850 to 1200 meters above sea level, benefits from a Mediterranean climate with warm, dry summers and cooler nights due to its elevation. This diurnal temperature variation helps grapes retain acidity and develop balanced flavors. The soils in Çal are predominantly clay-limestone, rich in minerals, and ideal for producing grapes with notable freshness and minerality, such as Çalkarasi, the region's signature varietal. The combination of climate and soil allows Çal to contribute significantly to Turkey's viticulture, representing a large portion of its wine grape production.

Çalkarasi, which translates to "black from Çal," is a versatile grape thriving in the district's challenging conditions. Known for its use in producing red and rosé wines, this varietal is appreciated for its bright acidity, soft tannins, and flavors of red fruits, citrus, and floral notes like lavender. Several wineries in

Çal, including Kuzubağ and Erdel Winery, have been recognized for their high-quality wines, showcasing both local and international varietals. This area, with its growing reputation for excellent wines, is becoming an important destination for wine enthusiasts exploring Turkey's evolving wine scene.



PRODUCER

Seyit Karagözoğlu, founder of Paşaeli Wines. A boutique of Turkish wineries focused on the revival of extinct Turkish grape varieties since their inception in 2002. All their wines are single vineyard, terroir wines, which explains why Paşaeli's vineyards are so spread out (between Thrace and the Aegean Sea), allowing each grape variety to represent its "homeland." A truly unique expression of the grape and terroir. It feels like being there for a while.

Seyit Karagözoglu founded Pasaeli in 2002. Since day one he has been a strong believer in the indigenous varieties of Turkey. All the wines are single vineyard, terroir wines, which explains why Pasaeli's vineyards are so spread, between Thrace and Aegean so that each grape variety can represent its' "homeland". He really wants to show the terroir.

- Sourced from a vineyard located 950 meters above sea level, with an average of 25-year-old vines
- Mix of sand, limestone, and clay
- Fermented in stainless steel tank at 18°C
- Kept in steel tanks for 3 months on fine

After the first successful experiments, the big hunt for local and abandoned grapes has begun. Kolorko, Yapincak, Çakal, Çal Karasi, Sidalan - some of these grapes are rescued by Pasaeli from extinction and found only in their portfolio. Many of these rare grape varieties are micro vineyards and would never have been marketed if not for the dedication to the local, true "treasures" of Turkey that Pasaeli has. Total production is currently around 150.000 bottles a year. Some of the wines are made in as little as 500 bottles per label. All the red wines are wild ferments, so no artificial yeasts are added. Most of the wines are suitable for vegans as they aren't fined using animal additives. For example, for clearing the wine they use a special kind of clay. All grapes are hand harvested. The Paşaeli wines are well-made, balanced, and great value wines from Turkey.

Tasting Notes:

The nose has lovely aromas of wild strawberries and raspberries. The palate is well balanced with good acidity and lush, juicy fruit. 13% ABV. Calkarasi can make complex red wines with a hint of spice and in this rose it gives more complexity by 3 months on its lees and stirred one a week. It's called Blush but it's not an American kind of sweet Blush wine!

Food Suggestions:

Strong vegetables like beetroot with green herbs, fish dishes, salads, and better not drink on its own.

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<https://www.skurnik.com/sku/calkarasi-rose-seahorse-pasaeli-2-2-2-2/>

<https://www.thestoryofmywine.com/stories/winemaker-dinner-pasaeli-wines-with-seyit-karagozoglu/>

<https://pasaeli.com/>

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WESTERN RESERVE WINES CLUB DECEMBER 2024



WINE: Elqui Wines Syrah 2018

VARIETALS: Syrah

Viticulture: Elqui Valley Coquimbo Chile

Bottle Price: \$27.99 Case Price: \$302.29 plus tax



INTRODUCTION

This single vineyard Syrah is sourced from Maiten Vineyard – A rocky, sandy ancient riverbed sitting 25 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean.

Most of Maiten Vineyard is planted to Carmenere, but Steffan Jorgensen has a 7 acre plateau planted to Syrah, which is the source of fruit for this wine. This plateau sits right in the path of the wind, which drives the chill factor during the night and really slows ripening.

Soil here is similar to that in the basin only rockier – Grapes are just about the only thing able to grow successfully. The idea was to prune these vines to just one cluster per shoot, but the poor conditions create that situation on their own!

Most of the site is planted to the seldom-found clone 100, which offers up massive umami components – Think mushrooms and aged meat, or just smell a glass of this stuff! Most Chilean wineries plant/use clone 174 which is forward/fruity and a completely different thing altogether.

REGION

The Elqui Valley, nestled in the northern reaches of Chile, is a hidden gem in the world of wine. Known for its dramatic landscapes of sun-drenched vineyards framed by arid mountains and crystal-clear skies, this valley offers a unique terroir. Its proximity to the Andes provides a cool climate and significant diurnal temperature shifts, which are perfect for preserving acidity and developing vibrant flavors in grapes. The Elqui Valley is particularly renowned for producing crisp and aromatic white wines, with Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay leading the charge. These wines often exhibit bright citrus, tropical fruit notes, and refreshing minerality that reflect the region's distinctive character.

In recent years, the Elqui Valley has also gained recognition for its elegant and nuanced Syrah. The intense sunlight and rocky soils contribute to wines with deep color, concentrated flavors, and a hint of spiciness that is unique to the region. Winemakers in the Elqui Valley are celebrated for their commitment to sustainable and innovative practices, taking full advantage of the valley's pristine environment. As a lesser-known but rapidly rising star in Chile's wine scene, the Elqui Valley offers wine lovers a chance to explore expressive and high-quality wines that beautifully balance tradition with modernity.



PRODUCER

The winemaker for Elqui Wines in Chile is Danish born, Steffan Jorgensen, who co-founded the winery with his wife, Pamela Núñez. Steffan, originally from Denmark, brings extensive experience to Elqui Wines, having served as the chief winemaker at Bergevin Lane in Washington before starting their venture in Chile. Together, they craft wines that emphasize the unique terroirs of the Elqui Valley, utilizing cool-climate conditions and diverse soils to produce expressive red wines like Syrah, Pinot Noir, and Carménère. All wines are made with special attention to their mineral and earthy aspects and combine with Steffan's style that delivers a broad, voluptuous style with deep acidity.

Vintage: 2018 | **Wine Type:** Red Wine | **Varietal:** 100% Syrah | **Origin:** Chile | **Appellation:** Elqui Valley
Elaboration: Very long maturation period in the vineyards due to very cool nights which make for an oscillation (day/night swings) of more almost 40F. Fermentation takes place in stainless steel tanks with temperature controlled jackets to ensure certain temps are not exceeded. Very important to maintain fresh fruit characters in finished wines. Fermentation takes approx. 12-14 days with total skin contact time of 3-4 weeks depending on lots. **Conservation:** 100% Barrel aged with a mix of New, 1st and 2nd use French, American and Hungarian oak barrels for 24 months.

TECHNICAL DATA

Production: 1100 cases | **Alcohol:** 14.8% | **TA:** 4.82 g/l | **Residual Sugar:** < 2 g/l | **pH:** 3.67

PRESS & POINTS

2018 – 91 Points, James Suckling | 2014 – 91 points, Wine Advocate | 2013 – 91 points, Wine Advocate

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- Soil here is similar to that in the basin only rockier – Grapes are just about the only thing able to grow successfully. The idea was to prune these vines to just one cluster per shoot, but the poor conditions create that situation on their own!
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Tasting Notes:

91 pts James Suckling March 2024:

Rich cassis, sweet black fruit, black chocolate and a touch of spice. Flavorful and generous with medium to full body and a smooth finish. Saline fruits with fine-grained tannins. Drink now.

Food Suggestions:

Pair with grilled meats like steak, burgers, ribs and sausages. Grilled vegetables like eggplant, zucchini and tomatoes. Hard or stinky cheese like Gorgonzola, Stilton, Parmesan, and asiago.

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Sources:

<https://www.elixirwinegroup.com/product/elqui-syrah-reserva>
<https://southernwines.com/product/elqui-syrah-2018/>

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WESTERN RESERVE WINES CLUB DECEMBER 2024

WINE: *Masottina R.D.O. Rive di Ogliano*

Extra Dry (Medium Dry) Prosecco 2019

VARIETALS: *Glera*

Viticulture Area: Veneto, Italy



Bottle Price: \$24.99 | Case Price: \$269.89 plus tax

INTRODUCTION

Roots and inspiration have been renewed for more than 75 harvests for the Dal Bianco family, passing down from year to year and from generation to generation a continuous enchantment, that of the care for the precious gifts that Mother Nature offers through the vineyard. The soul of Masottina wines takes root in the 220-hectare vineyard, selected throughout the history of our family.

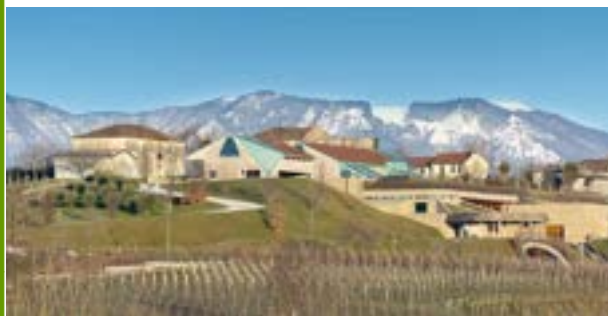
The growth of the vines is the result of a synergy between a gaze always turned towards the horizon and the care of the origins, united by the common thread of the valorization of the different terroirs. These are factors that inspire the entire winemaking process and accompany the final selection, to compose the full harmony of the wines, sealed with the names of the places of which they are most representative.

The cellar is the place where the soul finds maximum expression, keeping the promise of an ancient dream: that of Adriano Dal Bianco who wanted to vinify his grapes with accuracy and speed, to preserve them from oxidation. Today these are the protagonists of painstaking steps, from the choice on the plant to reaching the cellar in the early morning, where they live a second selection.

REGION



Masottina was born in the Prosecco hills of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene, declared **a World Heritage Site by UNESCO** in 2019, listed among the 56 most beautiful places in Italy, as well as one of the 1,121 most spectacular places in the world.



R.D.O. LEVANTE EXTRA DRY
MILLESIMATO
CONEGLIANO VALDOBBIADENE
PROSECCO SUPERIORE
RIVE DI OGLIANO DOCG



PRODUCER

Passion and dedication in the care of the vineyard:

Gravity is an ally of winemaking: it accompanies the entry into the cellar, passes through the soft pressing, follows the arrival of the must in the frementini. The refinement in the tank and careful monitoring finally lead to the birth of Masottina wines, the fruit of family rituals, representative of terroirs with a precious history, selections in a single vineyard or expert blends.

Only in this way is it possible to define the taste-olfactory potential of each combination and its expressive capabilities, in full respect of an always elegant and clean character.

The Masottina method is thus an ancestral and constantly evolving bond between respect for tradition and interpretation of the future, elements with a common soul, inspired by the uniqueness of the territory, by the family passion, by the unmistakable style.

The nature of an exclusive identity:

In every drop of wine, we find the history, the nature of a landscape, but also all the sacrifice and dedication of the hands of those who created it.

Masottina was born in Veneto, in unique territories that the work of the cellar seeks to enhance while preserving their identity, in a region where the vine is a characteristic and identifying element of the landscape.

It is thanks to the history written by Venice, to its expansion and commercial influence that Veneto wines have crossed the borders of their territory already in 1500, thus starting the diffusion that continues today thanks to the international push of the Prosecco phenomenon and other precious denominations.

Tasting Notes:

Winemaker Notes: Pale silver-straw with light gold reflections. The nose has a beautiful array of fleshy white peach, lemon curd, jasmine flower, acacia flower, chrysanthemum, and apple blossom, plus notions of yellow plums, green plums, polished steel, and sliced pear. The mouthfeel is clean and silky, with a beautiful ripeness that is fresh and clean. The wine feels lifted and elegant, without even a gram of excess sweetness—a complete feeling of balance and harmony.

Food Suggestions:

Shellfish · Vegetarian · Appetizers and snacks · Aperitif · Cured Meat

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Sources:

<https://www.masottina.it/le-nostre-radici/>

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95 pts

Decanter

Fragrant aromas of lemon curd with dried petals, bubblegum and jelly sweet notes over chalky undertones. Silky and seductive on the palate with a floral character and zesty acidity, ending in a steely finish.

Decanter

WESTERN RESERVE WINES CLUB DECEMBER 2024

WINE: Maryhill Cabernet Franc

VARIETALS: Cabernet Franc

Viticulture Area: Rattlesnake Hills AVA,

Columbia Valley, Washington State



Bottle Price: \$24.99 | Case Price: \$269.89 plus tax

INTRODUCTION

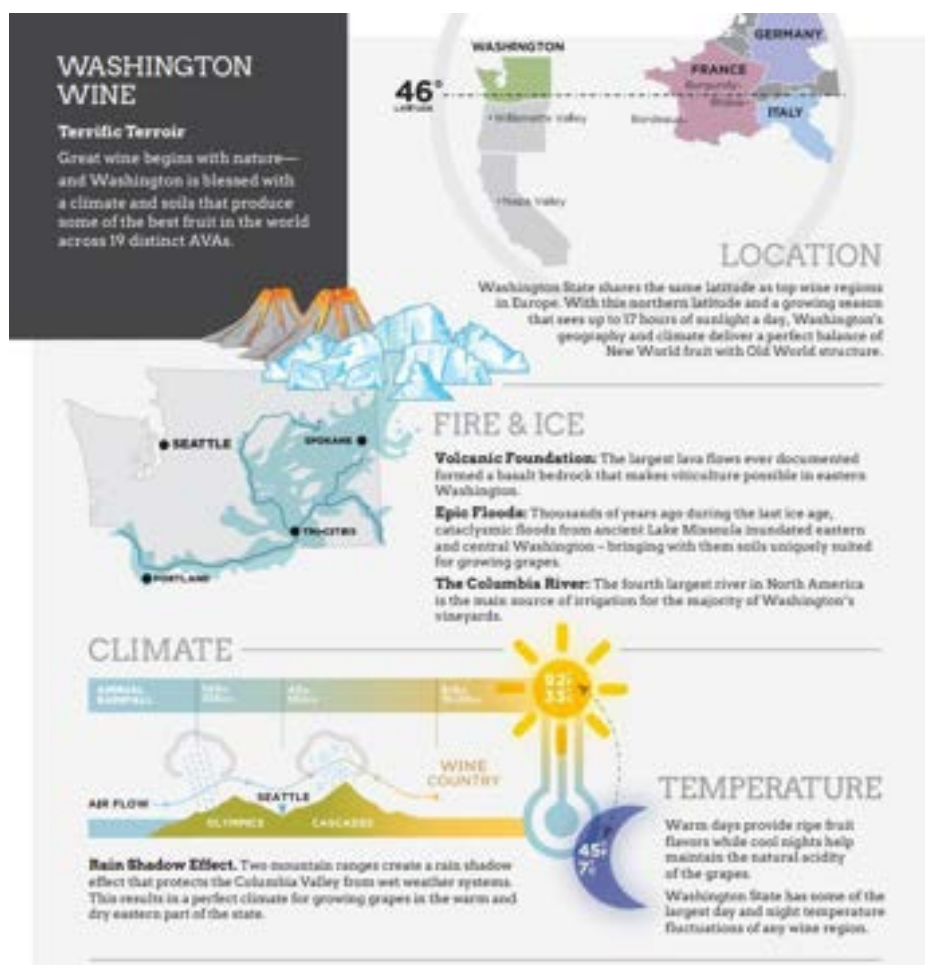
Craig and Vicki Leuthold, the visionary founders of Maryhill Winery, established the winery in 1999 with a passion for showcasing the beauty and diversity of Washington wines. The Leuthold's envisioned a destination winery experience, blending exceptional winemaking with warm hospitality, and have since expanded to include additional tasting rooms across Washington in Spokane, Vancouver, and Woodinville.

REGION

Sourced from the award-winning Elephant Mountain Vineyard in WA State's Rattlesnake Hills AVA.

The Rattlesnake Hills AVA, located within the Yakima Valley in WA State, benefits from a distinct combination of elevation, climate, and soil diversity. Its vineyards, perched at altitudes between 850 and 3,000 feet, enjoy a semi-arid continental climate with warm days and cool nights, ideal for balancing sugar development and acidity in the grapes. The region sees minimal rainfall, requiring controlled irrigation, which allows winemakers to fine-tune the quality of their fruit. The volcanic and mineral-rich soils, primarily silt loam and loam, contribute to the unique flavor profiles of wines from this area.

Maryhill Winery achieved more than 3,000 awards, cementing its status as one of the region's premier wineries.



PRODUCER

Throughout harvest, Winemaker Richard Batchelor worked closely with the grower and visited the vineyard to taste for maturity and ripeness to determine the precise moment to pick the fruit. Grapes were hand-harvested during the cool hours of the morning to preserve bright fruit notes. This single vineyard lot underwent a five day pre-fermentation cold soak before the tank was allowed to go through a native fermentation to dryness in about 21 days. Only the free run juice was collected and no press fraction was used in the making of this wine. The lots were then aged in French oak for 20 months. For the first year this wine was stirred in barrel on its lees and raked when necessary to soften the tannins. After the first 12 months, the wine was

racked off the lees for clarity before bottling. Located in the Columbia Gorge, just outside Goldendale, Maryhill Winery has grown into one of the state's premier wineries, offering stunning views, live music, and award-winning



Craig and Vicki Leuthold

Their dedication to quality and accessibility has earned Maryhill Winery over 3,000 awards, including numerous Platinum Awards, and has introduced countless visitors to WA's unique terroir. By sourcing grapes from some of the best vineyards in the region and producing an expansive portfolio of wines, the Leuthold's have firmly established Maryhill as a cornerstone of the Pacific Northwest wine industry



Tasting Notes:

Aromas of toasted caramel, red fruit, and green pepper that fill the nose, with flavors of granite, tobacco, and cranberry on the palate.

Food Suggestions:

Ideal food pairings include grilled meats like lamb or pork, as the smokiness complements the wine's herbaceous and peppery notes. For vegetarian options, roasted vegetables, especially eggplant or mushrooms, harmonize well with its savory character. Additionally, creamy cheeses like chèvre or camembert highlight its natural acidity and fresh berry flavors

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CHEERS!!!

Sources:

<https://www.maryhillwinery.com/>

<https://www.linesonwines.com/blog/2024/8/21/maryhill-winery>

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Aging

Aged for 9 months in 50% new French Oak

Bottling Date

11/02/2020

Residual Sugar

0.018%

Alcohol %

14.5

Cases produced: 1,950



WESTERN RESERVE WINES CLUB DECEMBER 2024

*WINE: Giovanna Madonia Cantina di Bertinoro
Neblina Albana di Romagna Secco 2022 DOCG*



*VARIETALS: 100% Albana
VITICULTURE AREA: Bertinoro region
of Emilia-Romagna, Italy*

Bottle Price: \$22.99 | Case Price: \$248.29 plus tax

INTRODUCTION

The Giovanna Madonia Cantina, located in the picturesque Bertinoro region of Emilia-Romagna, Italy, is a family-run winery renowned for its dedication to crafting exceptional wines that highlight the area's unique terroir. Bertinoro, often referred to as the "Balcony of Romagna," is situated on a ridge that offers stunning views of the Adriatic Sea and benefits from its maritime breezes, ideal for viticulture. Giovanna Madonia founded the estate in 1992, replanting the vineyards and dedicating herself to producing high-quality wines while respecting traditional and organic farming practices. Today, the winery spans about 14 hectares and is known for its commitment to preserving indigenous grape varieties like Albana and Sangiovese.



REGION



Bertinoro's vineyards cover entirely the hilly soil and grow on a peculiar terrain that gives the wines unique sensations, the Spungone.

This spongy rock is dated back to 3 million years ago and it is a particular type of limestone of organic origin, formed in the sea-

bed before the emergence of Romagna's surface, and it is made by shells and fossils fragments combined with calcareous cement. Therefore, prehistory mixes with the winemaking traditions of our farm, the peculiarities of the territory and the enviable climate of Romagna, to give life to precious vineyards, intergrown with olive trees and woods and so gifting our products with a unique and recognizable value.



PRODUCER

After the end of World War II, my grandfather Pietro bought a large property in Bertinoro which included a 3 hectares vineyard estate, planted with Sangiovese and Albana. The terroir was great and the grapes were excellent, but sometimes a few vines turned dry: when that happened Pietro, being a nostalgic, true Sicilian man, used to plant an olive tree in that small spot. He dreamed of growing a big olive grove.

I ended his dream in 1992, when I replanted all the vineyards and even made them larger. I started from scratch but my determination helped me overcome many situations: I definitely wanted to produce great wines. One of the biggest challenge was exactly framing all those olive trees among the geometric spin of small "Alberello" vines (Bush system). The vines rows were sometimes wider and sometimes narrower, or even interrupted, but I have been keeping the olive trees for decades. Currently the Property extends over 14 hectares (35 acres) of vineyards, which I keep on cultivating with commitment and passion, together with my four daughters, especially Miranda, with whom I produce several thousands bottles of Sangiovese and Albana and a very small quantity of olive oil.

Joanna

100% Albana from a Vineyard trained in Guyot and "Alberello", "Bush" system at a density of 6.500 vines per hectare (2,600 vines per acre). Grape production: 5000 Kg/Ha.

Soil: Calcareous-clayey mixture. Exposure south-west. Altitude 300/350 m.

Harvest: Hand-harvested in small crates usually during the last weeks of September. Harvest 2019.

After an insidious, humid and rainy spring, vintage got interesting, resulting in a slightly early harvest and healthy grapes with fragrance and good acidity.

Tasting Notes:

Bright straw-yellow hue and aromatic bouquet of peach, white melon, exotic fruits, and wisteria. Its palate offers a vibrant interplay of acidity, minerality, and balanced alcohol, making it a refreshing and structured wine. Serving temperature 12°C.

Food Suggestions:

With a notable 14.5% alcohol content, it pairs beautifully with shellfish, pasta, hard cheeses, and lean fish. The Neblina embodies the spirit of Bertinoro's winemaking heritage and Giovanna Madonia's passion for innovation and tradition.

Sources:

<https://giovannamadonia.it/en/neblina/>

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WESTERN RESERVE WINES CLUB DECEMBER 2024

Laely Cabernet Sauvignon 2020

VARIETALS: Cabernet Sauvignon

Viticulture Area: Napa California

Bottle: \$48.99 | Case: \$529.09 plus tax



INTRODUCTION

Laely Heron: Heron's philosophy and wines are direct reflections of Laely's spirit – pioneering, adventurous, daring, smart, adaptable, thrill-seeking, irreverent, non-traditional, and international. Point to any spot on the globe and odds are Laely Heron has been there. At last count, she has resided in or visited six of the seven continents (Antarctica will have to wait) and all 50 states. In addition to English, Laely speaks fluent French and Danish and can order dinner, drinks, and a cab in Swedish, Norwegian, Spanish and Italian.

By the age of 10, Laely had already lived in 12 states. Her father was a mining engineer and adventurer so when a business opportunity arose in Algeria, the family moved to Africa. After a couple of years in North Africa, Laely's family hit the road, traveling first throughout southern Africa in a Volkswagen bus and later backpacking their way through Madagascar, Mauritius, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand. Eventually, the family returned to the States so Laely and her sister could attend high school.

After two years at the University of Colorado, wanderlust called Laely back to Europe to spend her junior year in France. Her passion for wine led to a pivotal event in her life: enrolling at the Institute of Enology in Bordeaux. After university, Laely moved to San Francisco and became the first American employee of the Australian giant Lindeman's. Two years later, Laely moved back to Europe – Denmark specifically – where she eventually started an import company, opened a restaurant, taught wine classes, and began studies to become a Master of Wine.

Laely moved back to San Francisco and launched Heron Wines in 1995. At the time it was rare to see a woman owning a business in an industry traditionally populated by men. Her first release, a Merlot from St. Chinian in southern France, debuted in the U.S. that same year. Her portfolio soon expanded to include California Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah in addition to a six-varietal blend from the Terra Alta region of Spain. Over the next decade, Heron would become a "cult wine" among master sommeliers and chefs, a favorite "by the glass" pour in the nation's top restaurants, and a consistent "Best Buy" in the wine press. Today, Heron Wines makes California Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Sauvignon. Raise a glass with us and toast 28 years of Heron Wines!

REGION

Napa Valley, one of the world's most renowned wine-growing regions, is characterized by its Mediterranean climate, which provides warm days and cool nights ideal for producing balanced and flavorful wines. The valley's diverse soils, including volcanic, gravelly loam, and clay, allow for the cultivation of a wide range of grape varieties, with Cabernet Sauvignon being the most celebrated. Its strengths lie in the high-quality wines produced by its microclimates and AVAs, a strong commitment to sustainability, and a vibrant tourism culture that highlights the best of California winemaking.



PRODUCER

Interview with Laely:

celebrating 25+ years of Heron Wines!

Laely shares some of her highlights with editor-at-large, Catherine Bradford

Here we catch up with Laely, long enough to have her answer some rapid-fire questions:

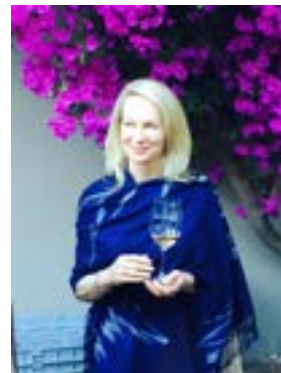
What was your first job? Gymnastics instructor, ice cream scooper, and I was an on-air host for Teen Talk Radio on KOA radio in Denver, Colorado. I can't remember which came first. **Most memorable meal?** The first time I ate at El Bulli. It was mind-blowing: 36 courses of extraordinary art, creativity, and surprise.

I loved every second of my 6-hour meal. I'll never forget the magic of that experience. **Favorite meal to cook?** As if there were one? Variety is the spice of life! **How did you develop your nose for wine?** It might have started in my childhood when my mom would open the spice cabinet and we'd play a guessing game.

City where you feel most at home? Wherever I am. Truly.

Favorite market? I love Mercat de la Boqueria in Barcelona. **What books are on your bedside table?** The Timetables of History, Talking to Strangers, The Long Emergency, and Hidden Valley Road. Highlights over the past 25 years? The highlights are endless. For the last 25 years, I've been able to explore the U.S., Europe, Asia, and many other countries selling my wine. The learning curve – from knowing nothing about business to what it's become – has been the greatest adventure of all.

- 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Petite Verdot
- Cabernet sourced from 40% Howell Mountain, 30% Rutherford, 20% Atlas Peak
- Petite Verdot sourced from Oakville
- Slow extraction and long maceration at lower temperatures



Tasting Notes:

Inky purple in color with a beautiful nose of ripe cassis, followed by dried cherries, subtle cigar box and leather notes. The palate is very supple and rich with juicy wild cherry, dark chocolate, and light allspice followed again by layers and layers of black fruit. The fine grained tannins lead to beautiful complexity in the finish.

Food Suggestions:

A delicious pairing with red meats, red-sauced dishes like eggplant parmesan or herb crusted ahi tuna.

Remember We Taste The Bad Ones

So you don't have to! CHEERS!!!

Sources:

<https://www.heronwines.com/>

https://napavintners.com/downloads/napa_valley_appellation_map.pdf

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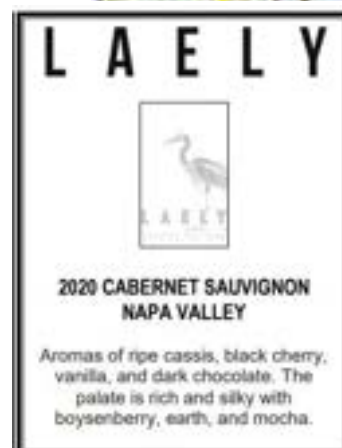
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WESTERN RESERVE WINES CLUB DECEMBER 2024



Ott's Gruner Veltliner Der Ott

VARIETALS: *Gruner Veltliner*

Viticulture Area: *Wagram,
Niederosterreich, Austria*



Bottle Price: \$48.99 | 6-pack Case Price: \$264.54 + tax

INTRODUCTION

The Ott family has been growing and producing wine in the region of Wagram in Lower Austria since 1889. Bernhard Ott is of the fourth generation and has managed the winery since 1993 when he took the helm from his father. When he came home to the winery as a 21-year-old, he was interested in producing wines of the highest quality. Bernhard wanted to prove that elegant and long lived wines could be produced from Grüner Veltliner grown on loess soil, specifically from Rosenberg vineyard.



Bernhard replaced the old wooden casks with stainless steel and began working the vineyards with an aim for the highest high quality. In 2018, nearly 30 years after taking over and switching all vinification and élevage to steel, Bernhard began working with varying sizes of Stockinger fuders.

REGION

The wine-growing region of *Wagram* received its new name in 2007, previously being known as Donauland.

In this region, the vineyards are divided between two distinctly different zones. The first zone, north of the Danube, lies directly to the east of the Kamptal, where the "Wagram" (a vast terrace of land) stretches eastwards around 30 km. The second zone, south of the Danube, home to the small wine villages of the Tulln Basin, as well as the historic wine-growing town of Klosterneuburg, is just a stone's throw away from Vienna.



PRODUCER

Harvest is done 100% by hand, something that is very important to note in a region who's rolling hills and flatter landscape allow for machine harvesting. After picking and a strict selection, the fruit is crushed in the press and maceration is done inside the press. The length of the maceration depends on the vintage, but also on the vineyard and the quality of the fruit. Bernhard uses closed pneumatic presses and has several different sizes. "This is how the press used to operate – there was only one pressing per day, so there was a maceration in the press," explains Bernhard. The juice is "browned" and racked into stainless steel or Stockinger fuder where it is fermented by native yeasts without temperature control. Minimal amounts of sulfur are used at harvest and bottling and the cellar is very cold, inhibiting the development of malolactic. The single vineyard wines from the three Erste Lagen – Rosenberg, Spiegel, and Stein – are on the full less until June or July before racking and bottling. The resulting wines are some of the very finest in Austria, straddling a juicy character with strong soil signatures.

Variety: Grüner Veltliner

Region: Wagram

Vineyard: Mainly from 1er cru sites of Spiegel, Stein, and Rosenberg

Soil Type: Loess, red gravel, and calcareous soils

Fermentation & Élevage: Basket pressed, fermented and aged in large Stockinger oak of various sizes, 90% is "new" oak, but from wood that cured for 13 years

Farming: Certified Respekt Biodynamic



Tasting Notes:

Vinous: Score 93 Date: 2024-07-18 "The 2023 Grüner Veltliner Der Ott is a statement about the best sites, Spiegel, Stein, Rosenberg and Kirchthal, from younger vines up to 35 years old. It was hand-harvested, basket-pressed and made in large, neutral barrels, where it stayed on gross lees until May the following year. Subtlety on the nose has moss, lichen, lemon salt and wet soil, with a highlight of yeastiness. The palate takes all this subtlety, imbues it with tender, ripe, juicy fruit as a backdrop, and adds that salty, yeasty texture. The 2023 comes together in a creamy, smooth, slender synthesis of exquisite length and a super fresh finish. (Bone-dry)"

Food Suggestions:

With its inherent green tones, Grüner Veltliner is an excellent companion for vegetable dishes. It is also a good choice for herb-laced recipes or your favorite seafood dishes.

Sources: <https://www.skurnik.com/sku/gruner-veltliner-der-ott-ott-4-2-2-2/>

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