

Hello Winos!

I am happy to report to you that we are feeling pretty good up here on our wonderful Armida Winery Estate, overlooking the blossoming vineyards in the Dry Creek Valley. Spring is here in full force with our vineyards aglow, and the glorious luminous green of the new buds shooting to the sun. The crop will be set soon for the 2022 vintage and all we need is a couple more weeks to avoid any frost issues. The forecast is favorable so it looks like Brandon will receive the grapes according to plan and then – he'll do his magic! We have been enjoying his wines and you'll be receiving some of his best in this shipment.



Brandon is not only an accomplished winemaker, apparently he is also a very good chef. He just performed a masterful Pizza cooking class and wine pairing on Zoom which many of you enjoyed. If you missed it, be sure to check out the recording on YouTube. Susan and I enjoyed some of the pizza from the show last night for dinner. It paired perfectly with a 2017 Maple Vineyards Zinfandel! Brandon is also going to be hosting personal Barrel Tasting experiences for you, here at the winery this summer, so if you are in the area I wouldn't miss the opportunity. He is one great winemaker and super fun. Thanks Brandon.

We have a handy site on TOCK where you can make a reservation and also now order a lovely charcuterie plate ready to enjoy with your wine tasting. Armida will also be offering 2 new tasting menus to choose from. "Portrait of Place" will be a selection of wines that have defined us, the wines you tasted and enjoyed enough to become fans and members of our wine club (Thank you for that!) Our second option will be "Move over Burgundy" appropriately named by Big Bro Steve. You will enjoy a selection of Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs. Just a reminder – we appreciate an appointment, so we can reserve a special table for you, but if you are in the neighborhood you surely can drop in – we'll always have a spot for you. I just can't believe how beautiful it is. We have created spectacular private and open venues for you to relax and take in the world's greatest view.

Many of you can only visit occasionally, but I want to thank you again for your support during the last few years. It's time to start having fun again! It's time to enjoy Armida again! Let's rekindle our friendship and relive all the great times we've had together!

Cheers,
Bruce

Featured Wines

2018 Domus Alba White Wine

APPELLATION California | BLEND 25% Semillon (Napa Valley) 50% Sauvignon Blanc (Russian River Valley) 25% Pinot Gris (Russian River Valley)
ALCOHOL: 13.7% | TA: 6.4 g/L | pH: 3.25 | RS: 0.7 g/L | CASES: 185

- The Sauvignon Blanc (50%) and Pinot Gris (25%) from this blend originates at our Estate vineyard planted in 1996 alongside the historical Old Redwood Highway just south of Healdsburg.
- The Semillon (25%) was planted in the late 1970's in the eastern edges of Napa Valley.
- After 9 months of aging in barrel the two wines were blended in tank and barreled down into carefully selected French Oak barrels (35% new).
- Following a total of 17 months of barrel aging the wine was minimally fined and filtered before being bottled.
- The wine finishes with lemon marmalade on buttered toast flavors that opens up the unctuous texture and minerality of this white blend.

Drink now or cellar for up to 15 years. White wine blends with Semillon in them will age well.



2018 Gap's Crown Vineyard Chardonnay

APPELLATION Sonoma Coast | BLEND 100% Chardonnay | OAK 40% New French Oak, 16 months in French Oak
ALCOHOL: 13.6% | TA: 6.1 g/L | pH: 3.41 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 280

- Gap's Crown Vineyard is named after the weather phenomenon known as the Petaluma Wind Gap.
- The wine underwent full malolactic fermentation to soften the higher acids.
- Aged over 16 months then minimally fined and filtered just prior to bottling.
- Higher tones of tropical fruit and citrus rinds become prominent as the wine opens up.
- The wine is bright and refreshing on the entry, yet the lush texture and minerality on the finish is the hallmark of this wine.

Drink now or cellar until 2028.



2018 Gap's Crown Vineyard Pinot Noir

APPELLATION Sonoma Coast | BLEND 100% Pinot Noir | OAK 40% New French Oak 16 months in French Oak
ALCOHOL: 14.1% | TA: 5.7 g/L | pH: 3.71 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 279

- Daily, these valleys fill with coastal fog, slowing the ripening process, creating a inimitable balance of rich flavors, textures and minerality.
- The skins were held in contact with the wine for 15 days during fermentation, and then drained to 100% French oak barrels. (40% new)
- Fresh and textural on the entry, spiced fruit essences and toasted pastries tease and excite the palate.
- Strawberry and cranberry flavors mix in a complex balance of acidity and fruit flavors.

Drink now or cellar until 2032



2018 Maple Vineyards Zinfandel

APPELLATION Dry Creek Valley Sonoma County | BLEND 92% Zinfandel 8% Petite Sirah
ALCOHOL: 14.9% | TA: 7.2 g/L | pH: 3.38 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 1,130

- Maple Vineyards is 27 acres of exceptional head-trained, certified sustainable Zinfandel on the high bench-land in the heart of Dry Creek Valley.
- The oldest block was planted in 1910, linking our current wines to the rich history and traditions of the early immigrants of Dry Creek Valley.
- Maple Vineyards is harvested on 10 separate days throughout a three week span. Varying ripeness in each lot of wine displays different flavors.
- Combination of American, French, and Eastern European Oak Barrel aging
- Some lots of grapes are fermented in open top tanks (like Pinot Noir) and some are fermented in closed top tank (like Cabernet) to contribute different mouthfeels to the final blend.
- Dark black fruits are balanced with savory spices
- The seductive finish isn't cloying and sweet, but rather refined, lush and succulent, and the integrated tannins and great balance of savory and spice will continue to gain in complexity over the next fifteen years.



2018 Parmelee-Hill Vineyard Zinfandel

APPELLATION Sonoma Coast Sonoma County | BLEND 100% Zinfandel
ALCOHOL: 14.5% | TA: 8.1 g/L | pH: 3.18 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 347

94 POINTS WINE ENTHUSIAST

- Originally planted to very cool climate varietals, Steve Hill asked Armida's Owners BRUCE and Steve Cousins if they would like him to plant a one-acre block of Zinfandel.
- This acre was planted with steep terraces facing southward to maximize sun exposure - the warmest part of Parmelee-Hill vineyard.
- Cold nights, warm days, well-draining soils, and immaculate farming ensure that this Zinfandel flourishes in this very cool vineyard site.
- Once fermentation was complete, only the free-run wine was drained to a separate tank before being transferred into predominately French oak barrels to age for 16 months.
- The bright juicy acidity, a hallmark of Parmelee-Hill Vineyard, balances the sweetness of oak influence and sandy texture on the palate.
- The wine's fine, plush mouthfeel balances the expanding finish with subtle notes of cola and candied fruit.



2018 Parmelee-Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir

APPELLATION Sonoma Coast | BLEND 100% Pinot Noir | OAK 40% New French Oak 16 months in French Oak | ALCOHOL: 14.9% | TA: 5.7 g/L | pH: 3.71 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 279

- Located off Arnold Drive just south of the town of Sonoma and planted in 1994, the vineyard is located only 10 miles from San Pablo Bay.
- The marine influence of cooling afternoon winds result in Pinot Noir grapes with relatively thick skin, creating increased color and phenolics in the wine.
- This inimitable, challenging vineyard site displays the potential of Pinot Noir grown along the cool southern Sonoma Coast.
- The grapes were gently hand-picked before dawn to ensure that cold fruit arrives at the winery, and then sorted by hand before being slowly destemmed into an open top tank.
- We leave the skin in contact with the juice (essential for color extraction) for 14 days before being the wine is drained to 100% French oak barrels.
- The wine was racked once in the spring and aged over 16 months before being bottled.
- The Parmelee-Hill Pinot Noir reveals scents of lavender, cherry, and caramelized plums.
- Slight savory hints suggest some rosemary and sage notes balancing the fruit aromatics.
- The entry is silky soft and smooth, with flavors of strawberry pie and fruit Danish coating the palate.
- The wine finishes with the essence and texture of fresh raspberries.



2018 Italo's Vineyard Zinfandel

APPELLATION Alexander Valley Sonoma County | BLEND 95% Zinfandel 5% Petite Sirah
ALCOHOL: 14.2% | TA: 7.1 g/L | pH: 3.95 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 145

- In 1937 Gino and Italo Sbragia planted this 5-acre vineyard on an eastern-facing slope with deep draining soils.
- Straddling the border of Dry Creek Valley at Lytton Springs Road on the south-western edge of Alexander Valley.
- Once fermentation was complete only the free-run wine was drained to a separate tank before being transferred into a mix of French and Hungarian oak barrels.
- The barrels were racked once in springtime and allowed to continue aging for 16 months before bottling.
- Medium to full-bodied - the 5% of Petite Sirah inter-planted amongst the Zinfandel adds structure, spice and texture.
- A strong aroma of strawberry pie accompanies subtler ones of cinnamon, clove and vanilla.



2018 Il Campo Estate Field Blend

APPELLATION Dry Creek Valley Sonoma County | BLEND 80% Zinfandel 18% Petite Sirah 2% Mixed Blacks | ALCOHOL: 14.9% | TA: 8.0 g/L | pH: 3.34 | RS: 1.0 g/L (Dry) | CASES: 327

- Il Campo is grown, fermented, and barrel-aged at our estate on Westside Road on the southern tip of the Dry Creek Valley.
- Six acres were planted in the late 1990's on eastern-facing sloping hills.
- This vineyard orientation ensures that the vineyard would see direct sunlight only during the often foggy mornings.
- "Il Campo" is Italian for "the fields," to honor the early Italian immigrants to the Dry Creek Valley, where some original plantings of field blends are still being used today.
- We followed suit and planted 5 acres of Zinfandel, 1 acre of Petite Sirah, and small amounts of Carignan and Alicante Bouschet.
- Twice daily for the next 15 days the wine was stirred with the skins to extract color, flavors, tannins and texture from the grapes.
- Once fermentation was complete, only the free-run wine was drained to a separate tank before being aged 16 months in our proprietary combination of American, Hungarian and French oak barrels.
- Bright cranberry and pomegranate awakens the pallet on the entry.
- The slightly sandy texture tastes as if someone sprinkled cocoa powder in your mouth.
- The finish is powerful and concentrated, yet balanced by the acidity and fruitfulness of the wine.
- The structure will allow this wine to continue to evolve in the bottle for the next 15 years.



Behind the Cellar Door

Hello Friends,

Wow, a lot is going on, I feel like it is all happening at once. I have so much information to share that I don't think that I can cohesively put it all into proper sentences and paragraphs.

- I just finished pouring for Armida at this year's ZinEx festival in San Francisco. My wife helped me pour our wines and it was great to see some of you members at the Grand Tasting. We had a blast pouring some fun wines from current and past releases. We were pouring 2015 and 2016 Gold Mine Ranch Zinfandel, and they were aging perfectly. For the "live-auction" dinner event we poured verticals of Il Campo and Parmelee-Hill Zinfandel. The event was a 1950's Prom theme, and my wife and I got into the spirit with our outfits. (see attached photo)



- A huge thank you to Bruce and Steve Cousins for their donations to the ZinEx event. Their generous donations helped provide necessary funds to Zinfandel Advocates and Producers non-profit organization. These funds are used to preserve and educate the public about the historical significance that Zinfandel has on our local society.

- In mid-April we will be bottling our newest Sauvignon Blanc and Rosé. The Sauv Blanc is perfect, with an alluring tropical characteristic. The Rosé was made from Grenache grapes grown at the famous Chalone Vineyard. Grenache is the perfect grape for making rosé and I'm excited that the fruit from Chalone adds some minerality/complexity due to their unique soils.

- Soon, we will begin to offer a new option for your tasting experience at Armida. "Barrel Tasting with the Winemaker" You will join me to taste 4 different wines out of barrel in our domed barrel room. We will then pour you and your guests 4 finished wines with a charcuterie plate. It will be a great educational experience to learn about how a wine will age.

- I had a great time doing the Pizza Making Demonstration on Zoom. It was great to see you all "virtually." The wines and pizzas tasted great and I'm hoping that everyone learned something and had a great time. If you didn't get the opportunity to join the Zoom, please go to our Armida Winery channel on YouTube and you should be able to find the recording. Thanks to all for the support.

- Hopefully you have all received some information about the wine river cruise that Armida is participating in. In July of 2023 I will be hosting a week-long river cruise through France. We will begin just outside of the Burgundy area and end up next to the Mediterranean Sea. I will be hosting seminars and winemaker dinners on board and joining you all for day excursions around the towns of France. Please email me if you have any questions. Brandon@armida.com

- At the end of March, Bill Merkes, longtime co-owner of Gold Mine Ranch peacefully passed on. I got to work very closely with Bill since we began sourcing fruit from Gold Mine Ranch in 2011. His passion and energy for the old-vine Zinfandel vines at Gold Mine Ranch, will be remembered in our wines that we worked on together.

I work that keep on going, but I'd rather tell you the rest of it in person. Please come visit us and see all of the work that Bruce did on the outdoor area for our members. The place looks amazing, you've got to see it. Until we meet again, enjoy the wines, and thank you for your support.

Winemaker,
Brandon Pidades
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Events at Armida

Call or email the winery for any updates to events.

follow us



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