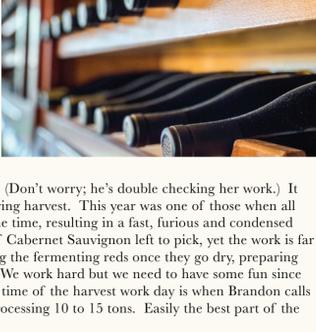




Hello Winos

I'm taking a few minutes away from the crush pad to report on the 2022 harvest, my 27th one! Over these years we've experienced perfect conditions and some very challenging ones, as in 2010 when we received fruit that was subpar, the result of early rain. That also happened to be Brandon's first Armida vintage and what a job he did salvaging the fruit. I knew then that we made a great call bringing him on as our winemaker, as he is now making some of the best wines in the world! This would be the time to give a big shout out to Brandon, who, during harvest, works many hours during the day, with few days off. This year he's been teaching his daughter how to do lab analysis. (Don't worry; he's double checking her work.) It may be the only way he gets to spend time with her during harvest. This year was one of those when all the different varietals ripened at approximately the same time, resulting in a fast, furious and condensed harvest season. As I write this we only have five tons of Cabernet Sauvignon left to pick, yet the work is far from done. There are still many man hours left pressing the fermenting reds once they go dry, preparing the wine for barrels, and finally, barreling them down. We work hard but we need to have some fun since we're on the crush pad for so many hours. My favorite time of the harvest work day is when Brandon calls a Safety Meeting. That is usually after a good run of processing 10 to 15 tons. Easily the best part of the safety meeting is when he hands out the cold beer!



After 27 years, my brother Steve and I have decided that it is time to plan for the next couple of decades. We want to slow down a little, play a little more golf and spend more time with our families. As such, I am very excited to announce that Steve's son, Matt Cousins, is joining the management team here. He comes to us with an extensive background and experience working for some of Napa Valley's most prestigious and successful wineries. He's already been helping out here and will be full-time the week of October 10th. Matt, come on down!

We're so excited about our new outdoor hospitality venue and since we built it primarily for you, we can't wait for you to enjoy it! You can book an appointment on TOCK, or call, or just drive on up. Can't wait to see you and hope that it will be soon! BTW, when you do visit, you're likely to run into one of us Cousins' as my big Bro, Steve, is now spending his time working with me and Matt. WOW – Matt, big Bro and me: watch out wine world!

Cheers!
Bruce

Featured Wines

92 PTS
Wine Enthusiast



2019 Chalone Vineyard Chardonnay

APPELLATION: Chalone | BLEND: 100% Chardonnay | OAK: 35% New French Oak, 16 months in French Oak
ALCOHOL: 14.3% | TA: 6.0 g/L | pH: 3.40 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 225

- Chalone Vineyard is located on the west-side of Pinnacles National Park, about 60 miles east of the Pacific Ocean in Monterey County.
- The vineyard was originally planted in the 1900's – our block was planted in 1960.
- Chardonnay is planted on rolling hills at close to 1,600 feet of elevation.
- The soil is unique to the Chalone area, comprised of a significant amount of limestone and decomposed granite.
- Gently hand-harvested at night to ensure cold fruit arrives at the winery, where the grapes were whole-cluster pressed. Malolactic fermentation occurred to help balance mouthfeel.
- Aged over 16 months before being minimally fined and filtered just prior to bottling. The concentration and depth of flavors deliver an approachable wine in its youth, with the promise to gain complexity with extended bottle aging - up to 10 years.

2018 Durell Vineyard Chardonnay

APPELLATION: Sonoma Coast | BLEND: 100% Chardonnay | OAK: 60% New French Oak
ALCOHOL: 14.5% | TA: 5.7 g/L | pH: 3.54 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 203

- Unfortunately, this is our final vintage of Durell Vineyard Chardonnay. Our block of vines were old and struggling, and were removed after the 2018 harvest.
- Only 10 miles north of the San Pablo Bay, the marine influence plays a significant role in the grape crop's flavor and character development.
- We select two different clones, clone 76 and clone 15, from two separate blocks, with two different soil structures; creating a more diverse and interesting wine.
- After fermentation the wine was kept on the lees and stirred every two weeks until malolactic fermentation was finished in late spring.
- Aged over 16 months before being minimally fined and filtered right before bottling.
- The rich, smooth wine enters the mouth with a blast of D'anjou Pear, lemon cookie flavors and distinctive minerality.
- The lengthy, expansive finish surrounds the palate with flavors of fresh citrus and spiced apple pie.



2018 Castelli-Knight Ranch Pinot Noir

APPELLATION: RR Valley | BLEND: 100% Pinot Noir | OAK: 50% New French Oak 16 mths
ALCOHOL: 14.1% | TA: 5.8 g/L | pH: 3.51 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 377

- Approximately 42 acres of two different clones of Pinot Noir (777 and 115) were planted on the rolling hills of the ranch in 1997.
- The soil structure consists of sandy loam and red clay with very little topsoil, creating a stressful, low-vigor environment in which Pinot Noir excels.
- Grape skins were held in contact with the wine for 15 days before being drained to 100% French Oak Barrels (40% new).
- The wine was racked once in the spring and aged over 16 months before being bottled.
- The entry is bright and fresh, with flavors of juicy plums and soft strawberries pleasing the palate.
- The wine's fine, plush mouthfeel balances the expanding finish with subtle notes of cola and candied fruit.



2019 Parmelee-Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir

APPELLATION: Sonoma Coast | BLEND: 100% Pinot Noir | OAK: 40% New French Oak 16 months in French Oak
ALCOHOL: 13.7% | TA: 5.9 g/L | pH: 3.68 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 358

- 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, increasing 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 this 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.



94 PTS
Wine Enthusiast

2019 Il Campo Estate Field Blend

APPELLATION: Dry Creek Valley Sonoma County | BLEND: 80% Zinfandel 18% Petite Sirah 2% Mixed Blacks
ALCOHOL: 14.5% | TA: 6.4 g/L | pH: 3.46 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 480

- 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 is exposed to 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.
- Today, using low-watering techniques and sustainable farming practices, Il Campo is poised to create its own history well into the next century.
- Gently hand harvested and delivered to our crush pad by a tractor.
- The grapes are sorted during picking and once again on our winemaking sorting table.
- We destemmed and crush the fruit, and carefully transferred the must into a tank.
- The must was then cold soaked at cold temperatures for five days before the onset of fermentation.
- 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.
- Nostalgic aromas of blackberry pie and cherry soda rise out of the glass on the initial pouring.
- Layers of mocha, licorice and cedar awaken the wine is swirled.
- Bright cranberry and pomegranate awakes the pallet on the entry.
- 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.



Silver
North Coast Wine Challenge

2019 Shorty's Block Maple Vineyards

APPELLATION: Dry Creek Valley Sonoma County | BLEND: 90% Zinfandel, 8% Carignane, 2% "Mixed-Blacks"
ALCOHOL: 14.7% | TA: 6.3 g/L | pH: 3.48 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 233

- Shorty's Block is a 1+ acre section in the heart of Maple Vineyards. The block has been known throughout the 100+ years of its existence as the "spice block." Due to the significant number of Carignane vines here, Shorty's Block is uniquely different from other wines from Maples Vineyards.
- Maple Vineyards is 27 acres of extraordinary head-trained, certified sustainable Zinfandel sitting on the high bench-land in the sweet spot of Dry Creek Valley.
- The old-vines aren't irrigated, triggering stress conditions on the vines before harvest - creating small grapes with big flavors.
- The grapes are sorted for quality before being transferred by gravity to an open-top tank for a two-week fermentation, followed by gentle transfer to French Oak barrels for sixteen months of aging.
- Medium bodied with bright fruit and firm acidity.
- Higher amounts of Carignane give this wine more red fruit aromas and flavors such as raspberries and cherries. The Carignane also softens the tannin structure allowing this wine to be more enjoyable at a youthful age.
- Toasty oak notes compliment the fruit, providing a balanced structure across the palate.
- Drink now or age for the next 10+ years.



2019 Tina's Block Zinfandel, Maple Vineyards

APPELLATION: Dry Creek Valley Sonoma County | BLEND: 80% Zinfandel 20% Mixed Blacks
ALCOHOL: 14.2% | TA: 6.1 g/L | pH: 3.47 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 527

- Maple Vineyards contains 27 acres of exceptional head-trained zinfandel, on high bench land in the heart of Dry Creek Valley.
- Tina's Block, the oldest block in the vineyard, was planted in 1910 and sustainability farmed since.
- This 2-acre parcel has records claiming that the block was planted to all Zinfandel, but we know that Tina's Block is currently comprised of at least 20% mixed black varietals.
- Petite Sirah, Carignan, Cinsault, Mission, and Alicante Bouschet are inter-planted throughout the block giving this wine unique character and flavors.
- David Rafanelli continues traditional, labor intensive, farming techniques today, personally managing the farming as did Tom and Tina Maple before him.
- The sandy-loam riverbed soil is remarkable porous, allowing all nutrients and rains to reach down to the deep roots.
- The old-vines aren't irrigated, stressing the vines before harvest, and producing small grapes with big flavors..
- Gently hand harvested early in the morning before being carefully sorted, the grapes were destemmed and carefully transferred to small fermenters.
- The must was then cold soaked at cold temperatures for five days before the onset of fermentation.
- 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 transferred into our proprietary mix of French and Hungarian oak barrels to age for 16 months.
- Blackberry and plum aromas mix with subtle hints of anise, graham cracker and black currant.
- The entry is a burst of refreshingly sweet raspberry pie and blueberries balanced with juicy cranberries.
- The seductive, ripe finish has a sandy-textured note that will continue to soften with aging.
- The savory and spice flavors of the wine will gain in complexity over the next fifteen years.



91 PTS
Wine Enthusiast

90 PTS
Jeb Dummuck

2019 Gold Mine Ranch Zinfandel

APPELLATION: Dry Creek Valley Sonoma County | BLEND: 100% Zinfandel
ALCOHOL: 14.6% | TA: 6.8 g/L | pH: 3.58 | RS: (Dry) | CASES: 241

- Gold Mine Ranch's 3-acre vineyard was planted before the original owner was drafted into the service before World War I.
- Returning from war, the owner set out to discover precious metals on his property to craft jewelry.
- He burrowed two holes near the Zinfandel in search of gold, and henceforth the vineyard was known as "Gold Mine Ranch."
- Today, the century-old vineyard is dry-farmed and organically managed using techniques and farming traditions similar to those of the original owner.
- Gently hand harvested early in the morning before being hand sorted, the grapes were destemmed and carefully transferred to a small open top tank.
- The must was then cold soaked at cold temperatures for five days before the onset of fermentation.
- 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 into 40% new European Oak Barrels to age for 16 months.
- The combination of sweet fleshy fruit and savory spice aromatics are the hallmarks of Gold Mine Ranch.
- First impressions of plums and cherries are followed by aromas of anise, peppercorn, and cola.
- Bright cranberries reward the opening sip with a middle of vibrant raspberry jam and blackberries.
- The finish continues with a sense of texture, showing that this wine will continue to improve with age over the next decade.



Behind the Cellar Door

Armida Members,

Wow, what a wild ride this harvest has been beginning with an early start! The Chalone Vineyard Pinot Noir and Chardonnay hit the crush pad before the end of August. A nearly week-long heat wave around Labor Day pretty much ripened everything else and we ended up harvesting 85% of this year's harvest in a three-week window. We've been busy; very, very busy! The yields from the vineyards have been a little light, yet (and as is often concomitant with a low yield year) the quality of fruit is incredible. We have only a couple of more vineyards to pick and Harvest '22 will be over.

We are now in the process of getting these amazing 2022 wines to barrel - easier said than done. Selecting barrels is an important part of winemaking. It's a decision that infuses the key flavor profile of sweet, round oak, with the wine's pure, sometimes punchy fruit flavors. Flavors extracted from these lovely oak barrels act on the wine as it ages inside the barrel, helping develop the desired aroma, structure, texture and flavor profile.

Over the past thirteen harvests we've carefully selected new barrels that showcase the unique flavors of each vineyard. A good example is Tina's Block Zinfandel vs. our Il Campo Field Blend. I have always thought of Tina's Block as a classy and sophisticated Zinfandel, and we have matched it to new French Oak barrels. The sumptuous, rich fruit of Tina's Block is perfectly framed by the silky tannins and beautiful toastier aromatics of the French Oak. Il Campo, with close to 20% Petite Sirah in the blend, is a brawnier wine, heavier on the palate with more tannin. This wine required a "designer" barrel where I instructed the cooper to blend three different types of oak into one barrel. The body of the barrel was comprised of American and European oak, while the "heads" of the barrels are made from French oak. The different oaks work in harmony to highlight the fruit in the wine as well as impart a sensation of sweetness and a more balanced wine. Fun!

Members, your support allows us to live our passion of making exceptional, memorable wines. Thank you! The long hours of harvest seem shorter when we see your smiles here. Enjoy the wines, the harvest season, and please come say HI soon.

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MAILING LIST