

WINE



PRESS

Gold Medal Wine Club Newsletter: Vol. 18 No. 10



**CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED
AND SERIOUSLY AMBITIOUS,
NINER WINE ESTATES
SETS THE STANDARD FOR
PASO ROBLES.**



Niner Wine Estates is known for its medal-winning wines that portray the desirable terroir of the Paso Robles region.



The Niner team works together to produce exceptional, world-class wines from California's Central Coast.

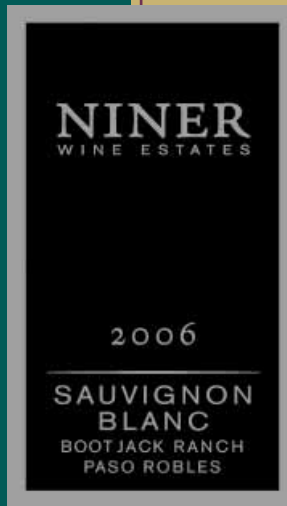


Niner's Bootjack Ranch property is a leading vineyard site in the Paso Robles appellation.



2006 SAUVIGNON BLANC

Grown in conditions similar to those in Bordeaux, France, the Niner Wine Estates 2006 Sauvignon Blanc was produced from the leading Paso Robles vineyard Bootjack Ranch. Planted mostly to red varietals, a small portion of the Bootjack Ranch property is planted to Sauvignon Blanc, as is typical in France since the grape thrives in the same conditions. Cool nights and warm days contribute to a long growing season, ultimately yielding grapes of deep color and concentrated flavors. This award-winning vintage received a Gold Medal from the *Central Coast Wine Competition*, a Silver Medal from the *Pacific Rim International Wine Competition*, as well as a Silver Medal from the *San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition*. Fresh and rich in texture and flavor, the 2006 Sauvignon Blanc is aromatically lively with aromas and flavors of pear, grapefruit, and pineapple that are juxtaposed by persimmon, lemon meringue and buttery nuances. It is refreshing, with a good mouthfeel, full body and a nice acid balance. The soft citrus candy finish lingers on the palate. Winery food pairing recommendations include cheese tortellini with pesto and toasted pine nuts, grilled swordfish with olive tapenade, and pizza with spinach, bacon, and caramelized onions. 100% Sauvignon Blanc. Enjoy now until 2010.



2006 VINTAGE:

GOLD MEDAL – *CENTRAL COAST WINE COMPETITION*

SILVER MEDAL – *PACIFIC RIM INTERNATIONAL WINE COMPETITION*;

SILVER MEDAL – *SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE WINE COMPETITION*

LEGACY: WITH THE INAUGURAL RELEASE IN

2004, NINER SAUVIGNON BLANCS HAVE EARNED PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS FROM THE START, INCLUDING THE CRITICS AWARD, GOLD MEDALS, AND SILVER MEDALS.

Just the facts:

pH	3.37
Alcohol	14.1%
Total Acid	0.62 g/100 mls
Cases Produced	1300
Drink Now or Up to Year	2010



NINER WINE ESTATES

Niner Wine Estates can be said to owe its existence to the fact that there are many other non-wine related businesses located in the town. Situated as it is almost exactly between Los Angeles and San Francisco, the business area of Paso Robles is among the most beautiful on the entire California coastline.

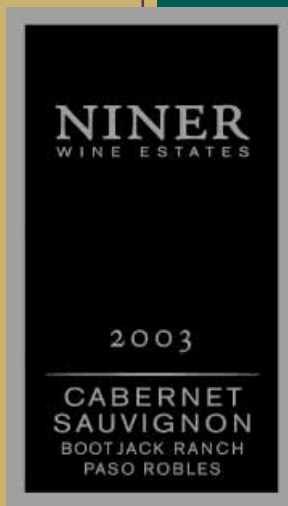
More than a decade ago, 1996 to be exact, Niner Wine Estates owner Dick Niner came to Paso Robles to investigate a sunglass manufacturer called Dioptics that was in some sort of financial/management difficulty. Eventually Niner gained control of the company and in doing so, fell in love with the surrounding area. He began visiting wineries in the Paso Robles area and learned what he could about the groundswell of attention the entire Central Coast area was receiving on a national and international basis.

He asked a bunch of questions and finally made the decision to attempt to acquire some property that he could make into a winery. He first acquired the Bootjack Ranch in 2001, a 224-acre property on the eastern side of Paso

2003 VINTAGE:

SILVER MEDAL – SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE
WINE COMPETITION.

LEGACY: THE BOOTJACK RANCH VINEYARD IS KNOWN FOR PRODUCING PREMIUM RED BLENDS, AND THIS FIRST VINTAGE RELEASE FROM NINER HAS SET THE STAGE FOR A NUMBER OF AWARD-WINNING WINES TO COME.



Produced from the renowned Bootjack Ranch vineyard on the eastside of the Salinas River in Paso Robles, the Niner 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon was made from four-year-old vines and the grapes were all handpicked and sorted in the vineyard to ensure optimum quality. This wine garnered a well-deserving Silver Medal from the *San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition*, which is the largest competition of American wines in the world. Niner’s Cabernet Sauvignon begins with aromas of blueberry, cherry, chocolate mint, and cinnamon spice, while a slight earthiness, and a bit of vanilla and toasty oak follows. An equal amount of Merlot and Cabernet Franc were added to the final blend. The Merlot brings a soft roundness to the middle of the finished wine, and Cabernet Franc lends elevated blueberry flavors and a chewy richness. In the mouth, the wine has a soft approach, with some up-front tannin, a solid middle, great structure, and a lasting fruitful finish. Try pairing the Niner 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon with thyme-marinated roast pork loin, black pepper crusted New York steak, and classic Osso Buco. 76% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, 12% Cabernet Franc. Aged 16 months in oak. Enjoy now until 2014.

Just the facts:

pH	3.78
Alcohol	14.5%
Total Acid	0.66 g/100 mls
Cases Produced	1209
Aged in Oak	16 months
Drink Now or Up to Year	2014

Robles that contained fifty-four planted acres. He had used the services of noted winegrower Jim Smoot in acquiring the land and enticed Smoot to remain on board as a consultant.

He then hired iconic winemaker Chuck Ortman (of Meridian Vineyards fame and a resident of Paso Robles) to add credence to his team and began the process of producing the first wines from the new entity. Ortman still remains a consultant on an as-needed basis.

The process of selecting a name for the new winery dragged on until Dick Niner was convinced that his surname fit perfectly with the

specter of the new winery and was in fact, a staple of Northern California folklore.

It wasn’t until 2006 that the first 5,000 cases of Niner Wine Estates were first released that drew a number of excellent critical reviews. When the wines were entered in competitions, they responded with a proportionate number of ribbons and medals and Niner Wine Estates was on its way.

In 2004, a talented winemaker named Amanda Cramer joined the team and took responsibility for all of Niner’s wines. The winery’s



Heart Hill Vineyard is the charming home to Niner’s future state of the art winery and tasting room facility.

production has grown to around 10,000 cases, and is expected to grow more in the future.

In Cramer's opinion, Niner's future is directly related to the quality



*Vineyard Specialist
Jerry Grant hand
selects some premium
Sangiovese grapes.*

of grapes it is able to produce.

"Since it is our intention to always be an estate grown

winery, our long term growth is directly tied to how well our vines do," she stated. "It is possible that we can one day become a 40,000 case winery, but

hospitality center.

"We have already broken ground on the project," Cramer added. "The complex will include a 50,000 square foot state-of-the-art winery with all the bells and whistles. Our hospitality center will have some really great views and a good deal of landscaping. If everything goes as planned, our builders tell us we can expect to open sometime in August of 2009. As you can imagine, it is a most exciting project for everyone involved, but once it is completed, it will make us a totally self sufficient winery."


Niner Wine Estates can also expect to benefit from the ongoing project to sub-divide the existing Paso Robles AVA (American Viticultural Area) into a number of sub districts, a plan endorsed by many of the local wineries. While the project is currently stalled, Cramer feels that the TTB (Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau) will eventually approve the legislation to everyone's satisfaction.

"It makes a great deal of sense to sub-divide and it has proven to be quite effective in other areas such as Napa Valley and Sonoma County," she concluded. "In our opinion, everyone will benefit if we are put

When the wines were entered in competitions, they responded with a proportionate number of ribbons and medals and Niner Wine Estates was on its way.

that is definitely a long term goal. It will probably take us ten years or more to achieve that type of growth, and that depends on whether we actually plant all the plantable acreage."

Right now, Niner Wine Estates is involved in a remarkable project that will turn their Heart Hill Vineyard site into a fully working winery and

into smaller AVA's that more clearly define the soils and conditions that affect our wineries. It has also proven to be more economically feasible to do so, and that is a major consideration for many of the parties involved." 

The Wine Wizard

1) Where did Sangiovese originate?

2) What is the timing of harvest determined by?

3) Which California wines are typically harvested between July and August?

See Page 7 for Answers.

About The Winemaker

Amanda Cramer is the Niner Estates' first and only winemaker, joining the winery in 2004.

A New Hampshire native and former math teacher, she enrolled at UC Davis and learned to make wines. Amanda has held positions at Far Niente, Chimney Rock, and Paradigm and also furthered her craft in both Australia and Chile.



Dick Niner



Dick Niner was born the fifth of eight children in rural Berkley Springs, West Virginia, reported to be a part of the last county in the United States to install electricity.

His early youth was spent toiling on the farm to provide enough food for his family. When the chance came to attend Princeton University, Niner jumped at the prospect and excelled in his courses. Through his academic success, another golden opportunity developed and Niner was invited to attend Harvard's Business School, the springboard for many of our country's most successful business executives.

When Dick Niner entered the business world, he found a niche in locating a number of varied businesses that needed help to achieve their real worth. During his career Dick spent 30 years investing in a wide variety of small businesses, in various parts of the United States. Most were turn-arounds, in industries as diverse as air freight, men's toiletries, candy manufacturing, military electronics, medical devices, garage door openers, electrical-utility cable, sunglasses, and school supplies, to name a few. The common theme in all of them was the need to find a new management team and motivate them to develop the company's full potential. He was referred to as a venture capitalist when the term was still in its infancy.

During 1996, he acquired a small company in Paso Robles and immediately fell in love with the area. He considered its proximity to the ocean and lush landscape the ultimate in picturesque surroundings and decided to do something about it.

Some twenty-five years earlier, Niner had attempted to purchase a French chateau for one of his customers only to have the deal foiled by the French Government who wanted to ensure its famous chateaux remained in the hands of French citizens.


THE WINE REGION



The region that comprises the Paso Robles AVA has become in recent years one of the most sought after growing areas in the Central Coast. Both properties that comprise Niner Wine Estates benefit from a proximity to the ocean, not more than 12 miles away. Bootjack Ranch was the first property in the Niner Estates portfolio and comprises 125 acres of planted vines. It is located some nine miles east of Paso Robles on Route 46. Heart Hill, Niner's other vineyard, is only 20-planted acres, located in the western sector of the Paso Robles AVA, and benefits from temperatures that are a few degrees cooler than other areas. Situated ten minutes inland over the Santa Lucia



Niner's vineyard properties arguably produce some of Paso Robles' most highly coveted wines.

Mountains, the region provides optimum growing conditions with warm days and cool nights for growing nearly 26,000 vineyard acres. Benefiting from the state's largest diurnal temperature swing, grapes fully ripen with balanced sugar and acid flavors. 



*Orzo Feta Salad
with Grilled Shrimp
and Mint-Scallion Chutney* *Braised Pork Shanks*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Pair with Niner Wine Estates 2006 Sauvignon Blanc— Serves 4

Shrimp Ingredients:

1 Pound (about 24) Medium Shrimp,
shelled and de-veined
Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
Salt and freshly ground Pepper
4 Skewers

Chutney Ingredients:

2 1/2 Cups (about 40) fresh Mint Leaves
5 Scallions, white parts only, chopped
2 Tablespoons slivered almonds, toasted
1/8 Teaspoon Kosher Salt

Preparation:

Place 6 shrimp on each skewer. Coat shrimp with Extra-Virgin Olive Oil and salt and pepper to taste. Cover and set aside for up to 1 hour at room temperature or 2 hours refrigerated. In a food processor or blender, combine all chutney ingredients. Process until the ingredients are uniformly chopped into tiny pieces, about 30 seconds. The chutney will be chunky. Cover and set aside for up to 2 hours at room temperature or overnight in the refrigerator. Bring a medium-large pot of salted water to boil. Add the orzo and cook until firm but tender, about 6 minutes. Drain, and immediately run cold water over pasta. Drain well and place in a large bowl. Add Extra-Virgin Olive Oil to the orzo and mix to coat. Then add all the remaining ingredients. Mix well. Taste, and add more salt and pepper if needed. Let sit at room temperature for about 1 hour to let the flavors meld together. In the middle of four dinner plates, spoon about 1 cup of the salad. Prepare a grill, or preheat the broiler. Grill or broil the shrimp for 2 to 3 minutes on one side. Turn and cook for 1 to 2 minutes more or until they feel slightly firm to the touch and have turned pink. Place each skewer diagonally across the salad. Spoon a little chutney across the shrimp, and serve immediately. Serve any remaining chutney on the side.

Salad Ingredients:

1/2 Pound Orzo
1 Cup slivered fresh basil leaves
8 Ounces Feta Cheese, crumbled
(about 1 cup)
3/4 Cup Slivered Almonds, toasted
1 Cup fresh Spinach Leaves, slivered
(about 2 ounces)
1/3 Cup fresh Lemon Juice
Salt and freshly ground Pepper

Pair with Niner Wine Estates 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon— Serves 6

Ingredients:

1/2 Cup All Purpose Flour	2 Medium Celery Ribs, chopped
2 Tablespoons Chile Powder	6 Garlic Cloves, minced
Kosher Salt and freshly ground Pepper	1 Cup dry white wine
Six 1/2-Pound Pork Shanks	6 Cups Chicken Stock or broth
1/3 Cup Extra-Virgin Olive Oil	3 Rosemary Sprigs
1 Medium Onion, chopped	3 Bay Leaves
2 Medium Carrots, chopped	3 Thyme Sprigs

Preparation:

In a large re-sealable plastic bag, combine the flour and chili powder with 1 tablespoon each of salt and pepper. Add the pork shanks and shake to coat thoroughly. In a large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil. Add 3 of the pork shanks and cook over moderately high heat until browned all over, about 10 minutes. Transfer browned shanks to a deep, heavy casserole. Wipe out skillet and brown remaining shanks in remaining extra-virgin olive oil; lower heat if necessary. Add shanks to casserole. Add onion, carrots, celery and garlic to skillet. Cook over moderate heat until softened, about 5 minutes. Add the wine and bring to boil. Simmer until slightly reduced, about 2 minutes. Pour wine and vegetables over the pork. Add stock, rosemary, bay leaves and thyme, season with salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Tuck shanks into the liquid so they're mostly submerged. Cover and cook over moderately low heat for 2 hours, or until very tender. Turn the pork shanks every 30 minutes to keep submerged. Transfer braised shanks to a large, deep platter, cover and keep warm. Strain liquid, pressing hard on the solids; discard the solids. Return liquid to the casserole and boil until reduced to 4 cups, about 20 minutes. Spoon off fat, pour the pork gravy over the braised shanks and serve.

Results

2005 Perry Creek Syrah

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
93%	6%	1%

2006 Perry Creek Zinfandel

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
94%	5%	1%

2005 Winsome Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
93%	4%	3%

2006 Winsome Reserve Chardonnay

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
92%	5%	3%

The above wines were recently featured. To see our current inventory and reorder online, visit us at: www.goldmedalwine.com/member. Click on Judge The Wines and submit your own wine ratings to be entered into our monthly drawing to win a 1/2 case of Gold Series wines.

Dick Niner

Spotlight, continued from page 5

Dick Niner recalled his early West Virginia childhood on the farm and reasoned that grape farming was probably the loftiest type of agricultural expression and jumped into the wine business. His early instinct to put together a top management team almost certainly guaranteed the project's ultimate success.

The step into the wine business was huge for the financier, since it was the first business project that he had started from scratch.

However, for Dick Niner, the Paso Robles winery was also a definite labor of love. Determined to do the project correctly, Niner developed a plan that would eventually produce a model winery, complete with a number of breathtaking panoramas.

Niner even balked at using his family name for the winery. A Paso Robles graphic designer originally from Germany, Thomas Reiss, finally convinced Dick and his wife Pam that their name was a natural for the new winery. Niner Wine Estates' distinctive rectangular labeling soon followed and has proven most successful during the winery's early stages of marketing.

Speaking of Pam Niner, it is widely held around the winery that the two are a team in every sense of the word. Dick Niner is careful to include his wife in key decision making for the winery and Pam Niner has taken the lead in developing the winery's landscaping and aesthetic aspirations. The new hospitality building will have a great deal of Pam Niner's personal decorative touches included within its confines.



1) Sangiovese is believed to have originated in Tuscany, Italy in 1722 and is still the most popular grape varietal grown there today. Although it can be found as a single varietal wine, Sangiovese is often used as the major blending component in Italian Chiantis. Italian immigrants brought the Sangiovese grape to California in the 1800s, and the wine has since become quite popular internationally.

2) Harvest is primarily determined by the ripeness of the grape as measured by sugar, acid and tannin levels with winemakers basing their decision to pick based on the style of wine they wish to produce. The weather also shapes the timing of harvest with the threat of heat, rain, hail, and frost which can damage the grapes and bring various diseases.

3) California sparkling wines are often harvested in July and August at a slightly unripe point to help maintain a crisp acidity in the wine. The majority of Northern Hemisphere harvesting occurs in late August to early October with some late harvest wine grapes being harvested throughout the autumn. Ice wine grapes can be harvested as late as January.

THE ART OF FINE WINE



Les Vendanges is a tapestry that was woven in Flanders in the 15th century and depicts the wine harvest celebration of the Middle Ages. The original currently hangs in the Cluny museum in Paris, France.

THE GRAPEVINE

"I absolutely loved the Winsome Chardonnay and just placed my order for additional bottles. Didn't realize it was from Lodi but when I saw that on the re-order form, didn't surprise me. I found other wines from that region that I loved as well. [Winsome 2006 Chardonnay]"

– Laura Ruben

"My husband and I have been club members for a few years, now and usually forget to fill out the score cards, but I had to make an exception for this one. Every sip was pure perfection, and we finished the bottle with a sigh. This is a remarkably delightful wine!"

[Winsome 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon]"

– Geraldine Cannon Becker

This Holiday Season,

remember that Wine Gifts are the perfect choice for everyone on your list! With five exciting Wine Club Series to choose from, gift giving has never been easier. To see Gold Medal Wine Club's special wine gift ideas, take a look at the enclosed *Holiday Gift Guide* in this month's delivery or visit us online at www.goldmedalwine.com/wine-gifts. Choose from an exceptional selection of hard-to-find, award-winning wines that all of your gift recipients are certain to enjoy. Also keep in mind that our one-of-a-kind, artist commissioned Wine Country Gift Box is a beautiful way to present your gift, and matching complimentary Gift Cards are always included. Call us today a 1-800-266-8888 and we'd be happy to help with any of your gift giving needs.

This Month's Special

It's champagne season at Gold Medal Wine Club! This year we're pleased to offer the Laetitia Vineyard and Winery's Brut Cuvée, an irresistible, celebratory sparkling wine with a lofty rating of **90 Points** from *Wine News* and **4 Gold Medals**. An excellent selection for holiday celebrations, office parties and any special occasion, save a whopping 27% on all case purchases while available. Visit www.goldmedalwine.com/sparkle for details.

The *Gold Series* features wines from only the best small wineries of California. The selected wines have earned medals in the top wine-industry competitions or have been highly rated by respected national wine publications. On occasion we feature a wine of high medal-quality with very limited availability that may not be submitted to these venues for review.



THE GOLD MEDAL WINE STORE

Reorders

Since their first release in 2003, the Niner team has been producing exceptional Paso Robles fruit and making world-class wines from carefully managed vineyards. One of the newest and most coveted producers of the Central Coast, Niner Wine Estates' portfolio of Italian and Bordeaux-influenced wines are consistent medal winners, and the 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon and 2006 Sauvignon Blanc are characteristic of Niner's truly impressive efforts. These wines have an extremely limited availability and are tasting their best now – enjoy!

**Save up to 35%
off Winery Direct**

NINER WINE ESTATES	Retail Price Winery-Direct	Club Price 2-Bottle Members	Club Price 4-Bottle Members And Multiple Series Members
2006 Sauvignon Blanc*	Half Case-6 \$102	\$76 (\$12.67) Save 25%	\$71 (\$11.83) Save 30%
	Full Case-12 \$204	\$142 (\$11.83) Save 30%	\$132 (\$11.00) Save 35%
2003 Cabernet Sauvignon*	Half Case-6 \$132	\$99 (\$16.50) Save 25%	\$92 (\$15.33) Save 30%
	Full Case-12 \$264	\$185 (\$15.42) Save 30%	\$171 (\$14.25) Save 35%

Reorder Online: www.goldmedalwine.com/member

Toll Free: 1-800-266-8888 Fax: 1-800-266-8889

Gold Medal Wine Club – 5330 Debbie Road, Suite 200 • Santa Barbara, California 93111

*Availability is extremely limited Note: Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in the above prices. Call for details.

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