

## In This Issue

GRAZIANO WINERY  
Page 1

THIS MONTH'S WINES  
Page 2

SPOTLIGHT PROFILES  
Page 5

WINE WIZARD  
Page 4

FOOD FOR THOUGHT  
Page 6

JUDGE-THE-WINES  
Page 7

REORDERS  
Page 8



*"With Gold Medal Wine Club,  
The Road to Great Wine  
Begins at Your Door."*

[www.goldmedalwine.com](http://www.goldmedalwine.com)

## GRAZIANO LAUNCHES NEWEST ADDITION TO GROWING PORTFOLIO OF WINES

The Graziano Family announces their new *Graziano* brand, showcasing several different Zinfandels and Petite Sirah as well as Italian varietal wines, all grown on select hillside vineyards of the Redwood and Ukiah Valleys. This new line of wines broadens the varietal mix and expands the number of wines produced to over two dozen. The history and strength of Graziano Family wines is decidedly Italian, as you will learn in the story you are about to read.

"It just kind of hit me," recalls Greg Graziano who, in 1982, visited family in Italy where his roots go back hundreds of years. "All of a sudden it made sense that I should be making Italian wines. It's a big part of my heritage."

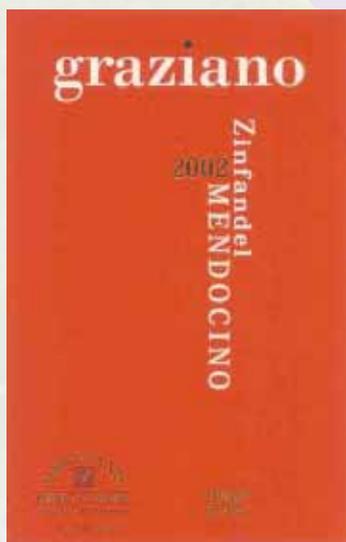
Greg remembers well the stories of his grandfather, Vincenzo, who immigrated to the United States in 1908. Vincenzo left behind famine and depression in Italy in search of a better life, like so many who

*Continued on page 4*



*Greg Graziano inspects one of the ten vineyards specially selected for his new line of Mendocino County Zinfandels.*

Gold Medal Wine Club features two wines each month from only the best small wineries of California. Featured wines include those which have earned medals in the top wine-industry competitions or have been highly rated by a respected national wine publication. On occasion we feature a wine which is of high medal-quality, but due to its very limited availability or by preference of the wine producer, may not be submitted to these venues for review. Each and every selection is a superb wine made in small quantities and with limited distribution. There are over 1,200 wineries in California producing thousands of different wines. Only wines fitting the above criteria are considered in choosing the featured selections each month.



## 2002 ZINFANDEL

The Graziano Zinfandel comes from ten different Zinfandel vineyards scattered throughout the hillsides of Mendocino County. Many of these vineyards are still farmed by 3rd and 4th generation Italian-Americans. This is a wonderfully robust wine that delivers impressive richness and depth. What makes old vine Zin so great is not so much the power, but the elegance and complexity of its wines, with layers of wonderful fruit. The 2002 vintage displays a rich dark purple garnet color; deep aromas of blackberry and spice combine with uplifting flavors of sweet plum and bright raspberry that give this full-bodied Zinfandel a generous mouth feel with a long, lingering finish. Pair this *joie de vivre* wine with everything from roasted garlic & rosemary chicken to a grilled burger with melted Gorgonzola. 86% Zinfandel, 7% Barbera, 7% Dolcetto.

## 2002 TOCAI FRIULANO

Have you had your Tocai [toe´ ki] today? This grape has been grown for several centuries in the Friuli Province in Northeastern Italy and is known as the “brother of the sauvignon” because of the growing characteristics of its vines; however, that is where all similarity ends. Under the artistry of Gregory Graziano, this grape is crafted into a rich, fragrant wine brimming with honey, floral and intense fruit. A bouquet of ripe lemon, grapefruit and honeysuckle are followed with an engaging spicy crispness on the palate wrapped in toasty, creamy oak. Full-bodied and well balanced with a backbone of acidity, this luscious wine unfolds in your mouth with a pleasingly long finish. Enjoy this bottle of Graziano Tocai with friends on a warm summer evening or lazy autumn afternoon paired with east-west fusion cuisine or a bowl of garlic and basil clams.

### WINE CREDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

**2002 VINTAGE: Gold Medal**— Critics Challenge International Wine Competition; **Silver Medal**— Eastern International Wine Competition; **Silver Medal**— Mendocino Wine Competition; **Silver Medal**— Long Beach Grand Cru Wine Competition.

**LEGACY:** The second vintage for the newest brand under the Graziano Family of Wines— dedicated to the production of premium Zinfandels from Mendocino County.

#### Just the facts:

pH .....	3.58
Total Acid .....	.82 g/100 mls
Alcohol .....	14.5%
Cases Produced .....	3,838
Aged in French & American Oak . . .	17 months
Drink Now or Up to Year .....	2010+

**2002 VINTAGE: Gold Medal**— Long Beach Grand Cru Wine Competition; **Critics Award**— Critics Challenge International Wine Competition; **Silver Medal**— San Francisco International Wine Competition; **Silver Medal**— California State Fair Wine Competition.

**LEGACY:** The structure of this supple white cultivar of Friuli is reminiscent of its Italian ancestry and displays a vibrancy, which is a hallmark for other Tocai’s to pursue.

#### Just the facts:

pH .....	3.00
Total Acid .....	.69 g/100 mls
Alcohol .....	13.5%
Cases Produced .....	856
Drink Now or Up to Year .....	2007+

# GOLD MEDAL SPOTLIGHT

## Greg Graziano

“It always seemed like a lot of work,” says Greg Graziano about his days growing up and working long hours on the family vineyard in Mendocino County. “My dad’s passion was grape farming, but he discouraged my brother and me from becoming farmers because he knew how tough it could be at times,” Greg recalls. So, by the time Greg went to college, the titles of Grape Grower and Winemaker were far down on the list of career choices.

At college though, something happened. “There I was at school, not really into it and with no real direction,” he remembers vividly. “The only thing that made sense to me was growing grapes and making wine. That’s what I had been doing most of my life. That’s what I was most comfortable doing. So having a winery was the logical, sensible thing.”

Greg transferred immediately to the University of California at Davis where all the wine gurus get their start. He already knew the basics, having grown up with on-the-job-training. At Davis, he simply wanted to get an academic point of view. After a year at Davis, at the age of 21, he and a friend opened up a winery called Milano.

In 1982, Greg sold his part of the winery and moved on. He had

gained enough industry knowledge by then to offer his expertise to other wineries that were trying to get off the ground. So for several years he consulted, made wine for other wineries, helped in the vineyards, and built a solid reputation within the industry.

Three years later, Greg took the position of Assistant Winemaker at



*Greg Graziano has been a winemaker and winery owner since the mid-1970s.*

La Crema Winery when a friend who was the Winemaker convinced him to come on board. The following year his friend left and Greg took over as Winemaker. He was there for five years until the winery was sold to industry giant Kendall-Jackson. During that time Greg guided La Crema’s production from 10,000 to 100,000 cases.

As winemakers are often allowed to do, Greg started his own label of wines called Domaine Saint Gregory

in 1988 while he was still La Crema’s winemaker. When La Crema was sold, his own brand was not yet mature enough to stand on its own, so he accepted the position of winemaker for Hidden Cellars, one of the operations he helped establish years earlier.

In the early 1990s Greg also took on winemaking duties for two other wineries, Martin Ray and Yorkville. Then in 1991 he and his wife Trudi, started Monte Volpe Winery, specializing exclusively in Italian varietals. And several years ago, he accepted the challenge of producing one of the country’s first *biodynamic* (certified organic) line of wines for a new winery called Fox Brook. He then added a third brand of his own, called Fattoria Enotria, also devoted to Italian wines.

You may have surmised by now that Greg likes to keep busy. “Basically, my strategy has been to make wine for other wineries to help finance and grow my own brands,” he says. Today Greg’s operation is solid enough to stand on its own. But he still has a hard time saying “no” to people seeking his help and advice. “I’m the kind of person who likes to have a lot of challenges,” admits Greg. “I enjoy helping wineries get started and sharing what I know, but every situation also adds to my knowledge and understanding, so it tends to work both ways,” he says philosophically. 🍷



## WINE WIZARD

- 1) How does wood used in the fermentation process influence a wine?
- 2) Why are wind machines sometimes used in vineyards?
- 3) Why is bottle aging important?

*Continued from page 1*

passed through Ellis Island in that era. His goal was to work his way to California's Mendocino County where he heard the climate and terrain was much like that of his native land in Piemonte, Italy. Vincenzo worked the Pennsylvania coalmines for several years before finally heading out west. He landed in Sausalito where he worked as a gardener for several more years, saving enough money to allow his fiancée, Angela who was still in Italy, to join him.

In 1918 Vincenzo and Angela's brother Frank, who immigrated also, bought 100 acres of land near the town of Calpella in Mendocino County. They immediately started planting a vineyard on the property

to Italian varietals, Muscato, Barbera and Carignane. In 1920, Prohibition hit the U.S., but many grape growing operations, including Vincenzo and Frank's, survived the period. They were able to dodge the restrictions by selling to buyers back east who purchased the grapes for "medicinal purposes."

Vincenzo's son, Joseph (Greg's father), literally grew up in the vineyards and dutifully followed the same path of grape growing and winemaking. In 1940, Joseph and his dad founded the Mendocino Grape Growers Coop, creating an important entity among grape growers in the area. Also that year, they purchased 100 more acres two miles down the road at Redwood Valley Ranch.

"I grew up working in the vineyard just like my father and *his* father," says Greg recalling some tough days of hoeing and pruning. "My dad was proud of the work he did, but at the same time wanted my brother Marcus and I to try something different. I think he wanted us to study law or medicine," he continues. "I remember we had basically three choices while growing up: play sports, work on the ranch, or get a job. I chose sports," Greg quips.

In the early 1970s, not unlike most kids fresh out of high school, Greg went off to college with no clear sense where his life was heading. It finally dawned on him that it made perfect sense to continue his family heritage of grape

growing and winemaking. He quickly transferred to wine super-school, U.C. Davis to learn the textbook side of the business. After all, he had already grown up with a lifetime of practical experience.

After a year at Davis, Greg was ready. He and a school buddy boldly started a winery of their own which they named Milano Winery. Conveniently, "Mil" and "ano" was a shortened combination of their last names plus it had an Italian flair to it. A half-dozen successful years later, Greg was ready to move on to other challenges. In 1982, his partner's dad bought out Greg's portion of the business.

During the 1980s, Greg continued making his mark and building his reputation within the wine industry. As a consulting winemaker, he helped establish several wineries, including: Baccala, Tyland and Olson. It was during this stretch of time that Greg decided to visit his grandfather's Italian homeland. While discovering his roots, he made a startling revelation that he too should be making Italian wines and



*On a recent trip to Sardina, Italy, Greg helps with the harvest of a cork tree.*

furthering his family's legacy. However, the idea met with great skepticism upon his return to California. "Everyone thought I was crazy," he remembers. "First of all, virtually no one is growing Italian varietals in California and secondly, who's going to buy them?" they all said. So, logically he put the thought aside for the time being and continued on with his career.

Years later, Greg was driving by a vineyard near Ukiah in Mendocino County, where he spotted a small patch of the Italian varietal, Nebbiolo. It was growing on a tiny outside portion of a 40-acre vineyard called Fox Mountain, owned by local grower Lowell Stone. Sensing an opportunity to finally pursue his Italian wine concept, Greg convinced Lowell to let him use an

old abandoned hop kiln on the property as a makeshift winery. It was perfect. There he could start a new winery and be right at the source of the grapes he needed.

As it turned out, the Nebbiolo grapes needed a few years of care and attention before they up to the standard of quality Greg wanted. As he was bringing the Nebbiolo vines up to speed, Greg pursued another direction using the old hop kiln facility to make Chardonnay and Pinot Noir with fruit that was also growing on the Fox Mountain property. He labeled the wines under the name Domaine Saint Gregory—a Burgundian sounding name with the strategy of keeping the production focus on Burgundian-style wines.



*Graziano's father, Joseph (pictured), was a winemaker as was his grandfather, Vincenzo Graziano who immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1900s.*

As Domaine Saint Gregory was getting off the ground, Greg also searched for additional sources of Italian grapes to supplement what was on the Fox Mountain property. By 1991, the timing was finally right to launch his line of Italian style wines. The first vintage produced a thousand cases of two varietals, Nebbiolo and Muscato which he

*Continued on page 7*

## ANSWERS TO WINE WIZARD

1) If a wine is fermented or matured in a wooden container, many different aspects of that container may shape its character and flavor, apart from compounds that may be directly extracted from the wood and absorbed into the wine as wood flavor. The greatest advantage of holding a wine in wood, rather than an inert material, is that wood encourages natural clarification and stabilization. In addition, the exact choice of wood type can have a powerful effect on flavor and structure. Barrels and tanks have been made from a variety of wood types, although oak is generally preferred.

2) A wind machine is used in the vineyard to stir up and mix cold, dense air that has settled on the land surface with warmer air from above, thereby preventing frosts on still spring nights when there is no wind to do the job. Such machines, introducing an aeronautical look to vineyards, have been used on valley floors that are prone to radiation frosts.

3) Bottle aging is the process of deliberately maturing a wine after bottling, whether for a few weeks as a conscious effort on the part of the bottler to allow the wine to recover from bottle sickness (the unpleasant smell that is sometimes apparent in a wine immediately on opening which dissipates after a few minutes) or, in the case of fine wines, for many years in order to allow the wine to mature. Fine wines are usually vinified expressly so that they will benefit from aging in the bottle, with generous amounts of alcohol, acids, phenolics (a very large group of highly reactive chemical compounds) and flavor compounds extracted from the skins. These can often make wine unattractive when consumed young, but provide the wine with all the necessary ingredients for bottle aging. The exact identification of the compounds produced during bottle aging and responsible for the complex bouquet of a mature wine is yet to be completely understood.





# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## CHICKEN TOCAI

Winemaker Greg Graziano came up with this recipe one evening by using what was available in the house. This dish has the satisfying, melded flavor of a long-simmered stew. Part of the explanation is that the garlic cloves are cooked whole and then mashed into the sauce. You'll always get a mellower flavor from whole cloves than from chopped or crushed garlic.

Olive Oil  
Kosher salt  
Fresh ground pepper  
1 can artichoke hearts quartered, rinsed  
1/2 onion, chopped  
3/4 pound mushrooms, halved  
1/3 cup pitted green olives, halved  
10 cloves garlic, peeled and left whole  
8 - 10 chicken thighs  
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme,  
or 3/4 teaspoon dried thyme  
1/2 bottle of Graziano Tocai Friulano  
1/2 cup canned chicken broth or homemade stock

1. In a large, deep frying pan, heat the oil over moderately high heat. Add the artichokes, onion, mushrooms, olives and garlic and sauté, season with salt and pepper, stirring occasionally, until the onion is translucent, about 5 - 8 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside.
2. Season the chicken thighs with salt and pepper. Lightly coat the chicken with flour. Add olive oil to same pan, then brown the chicken thighs well on both sides, about 8 minutes in all. Remove. Pour off all but 1 tablespoon of the fat.
3. Add the wine and thyme. Bring to a boil, scraping the bottom of the pan to dislodge any brown bits. Reduce the wine by one quarter. Add the chicken stock when wine is reduced. Reduce heat to a simmer. Add chicken back to pan. Cover. Turn chicken every 15 minutes for 1 hour.
3. In last 15 minutes of simmering, return the vegetables, except the garlic, to the pan. Push the chicken and vegetables to the side of the pan and add the garlic cloves and mash them with a fork. Grind in some fresh pepper and finish simmering. Serve with rice. Serves 4.

## ZINFANDEL BRAISED SHORT RIBS WITH GARLIC MASHED POTATOES

This is a combination of elements taken from various short rib dishes that we have enjoyed at restaurants that we have visited in our marketing travels. Preparation for this dish needs to start 24 to 36 hours in advance.

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil      6 pounds individual short ribs  
3/4 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste      1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste  
1 large onion, finely chopped      1 medium carrot, finely chopped  
1/2 cup chopped leeks (white part only)      12 garlic cloves, peeled  
2 celery rib, finely chopped      2 cups Zinfandel  
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour      8 ounces baby-cut carrots  
1 bay leaf      1 3/4 cups beef stock or reduced-sodium chicken broth  
One 14 1/2-ounce can diced tomatoes in juice, drained  
1/2 cup Mediterranean black olives, such as Niçoise, pitted  
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley for garnish  
1 tablespoon herbes de Provence  
(If an herbes de Provence blend isn't available, use a combination of dried thyme, basil, savory and fennel seeds)

### Mashed Potatoes:

2 pounds potatoes, peeled and quartered  
1/2 cup milk      2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
6 cloves roasted garlic      Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 300°F. Heat the oil in a large (at least 6-quart) Dutch oven or flameproof casserole over medium-high heat. Season the short ribs with the salt and pepper. In batches, without crowding, add the short ribs to the pot and cook, turning occasionally, until browned on all sides, about 8 minutes. Using tongs, transfer the ribs to a platter.

Pour off all but 2 tablespoons of the fat from the pot. Add the onion, leeks, chopped carrot, and celery to the pot and reduce the heat to medium-low. Cover and cook, stirring often, until the vegetables are softened, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic, herbes de Provence, and flour and stir until the garlic gives off its aroma, about 1 minute. Stir in the wine and bring to a boil over high heat, stirring up the browned bits on the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. Add the broth, tomatoes, and bay leaf. Return the short ribs and any juices, to the pot. Add cold water as needed to barely reach the top of the ribs and bring to a boil over high heat.

Cover tightly, transfer to the oven, and bake, stirring occasionally to change the position of the ribs, until the meat is falling-off-the-bone tender, about 2 1/2 hours. During the last 15 minutes, add the baby carrots. Note: if you have the time, cooking them at 200° for 10 to 12 hours will result in meat that is so tender it will melt in your mouth.

Transfer the short ribs to a deep serving platter and cover with aluminum foil to keep warm. Skim off the fat from the surface of the cooking liquid, and discard the bay leaf. Bring to a boil over high heat and cook until the liquid is reduced to a sauce consistency, about 10 minutes (the exact time depends on the size of the pot). Add the olives and cook to heat them through, about 3 minutes. Season the sauce with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, prepare the potatoes: Place the potatoes in a large pot of salted water and bring to a boil. Cook for 20 to 25 minutes, or until tender. Drain the water, add the milk and butter to the pot, and bring to a full boil over high heat. Remove from the heat. Squeeze the roasted garlic from the skin and add to the potatoes. Whip the potatoes with an electric mixer or hand masher until smooth, and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Spoon some of the potatoes slightly off center on each plate. Lean the ribs against one edge of the potatoes, and spoon the sauce over the ribs and potatoes and around the plates. Serves 6.

# JUDGE-THE-WINES RESULTS

In this section we publish the cumulative, on-going tallies of the Judge-the-Wines Scoresheets which are provided in each delivery of wine and mailed back in by Club members. We believe it is fun as well as educational to think about and record the different characteristics of the wines you sample. No matter how acute you think your palate is, the person next to you will probably have a different thought or opinion about a certain characteristic of the wine you are sampling. It can also prove beneficial to record your impressions of the wine for reference at a later date.

Below are the most recent tallies of the Scoresheets returned. Gold Medal Wine Club specializes in featuring small-sized wineries and small-production wines. Depending on availability from the winery, all members may not receive every wine that is listed below. The Scoresheet results which are printed in green indicate the wine selections that as of press time are still available for reorder.

## Ledgewood 2002 Merlot

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	92%	5%	3%

## Ledgewood 2002 Chardonnay

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	6%	4%

## Van Ruiten 2001 Zinfandel

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	5%	5%

## Van Ruiten 2001 Cab-Shiraz

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	93%	4%	3%

## EOS 2001 Reserve Petite Sirah

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	94%	3%	3%

## EOS 2002 Sauvignon Blanc

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	87%	7%	6%

## Clos Fontaine 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	6%	4%

## Clos Fontaine 2005 Chardonnay

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	89%	7%	4%

The above wines were recently featured. Due to space limitations, the entire list of available wines is not listed.

To see our entire inventory and reorder online, go to: <http://www.goldmedalwine.com/member>

■ Indicates wine is still available

Continued from page 5

labeled “Monte Volpe,”— Italian for Fox Mountain.

“It was tough starting out back then,” Greg admits. “We knocked on a lot of doors until things finally started to gel,” he adds. Whether Greg was a catalyst or if it was simply fortuitous timing in the marketplace, Cal-Ital wines have mushroomed in popularity during this decade.

Recently, Greg opened his first tasting room in the quaint wine town of Hopland where he showcases all of his labels. His entire production operation is located at the picturesque and historic Fetzer Estate in Redwood Valley. 🍷



“Here’s one I know we had before, but I don’t remember if we hated it or loved it”

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# THE GRAPEVINE

*Comments from us and Club members*

The initial response to our new *PLUS!* Program has far surpassed our expectations. This unique, option to your membership will not be available once all of the limited number of openings have been filled. Please be advised that the *PLUS!* Program is an *upgrade* to the Series of wines you are already receiving. So you need to be a member of that specific Gold, Platinum or Diamond Series club in order to take part in its corresponding *PLUS!* Program. Check out the details on the enclosed flyer and please call if you have any questions.

Winner of last month's Grapevine drawing for a free half-case of wine is **Bruce Kremer!** Bruce has been enjoying his Gold Medal Wine Club membership for almost four years now. "Wow! My wife filled out the Scorecard this time, that's great!" he commented. Guess he's going to have to share the free Rutz Cellars Chardonnay. Congratulations and thanks to the Kremers for participating.

*"This [Trentadue 2004 Chardonnay] is extraordinary! The aftertaste leaves you wanting more! We've loved the Old Patch Red, but this Chardonnay is superb!"*  
—Rose VanHaitisma, Score 55

*[The Trentadue 2004 Chardonnay is a] "Delightful, wonderful Chardonnay!"*  
—Gilbert Sibley, Score 51

*[The Ledgewood Creek 2002 Chardonnay is] "A great summer Chardonnay with grapefruit and kiwi flavors."*  
—Marquis Jones, Score 50

*"A pleasant surprise! I liked it!"*  
*[the Ledgewood Creek 2002 Merlot]*  
—Tom Morris, Score 50

*[The EOS 2002 Petite Sirah is] "Such a wonderful, jammy treat — Petites are a favorite and I just found a new one!"*  
—Kathy Hicks, Score 54

*[The Trentadue 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon is] "A very nice wine indeed!"*  
—William Kirker, Score 51

Maximum score is 55. Members who send in their wine ratings on the provided Scoresheets are eligible to receive a bonus half-case of any Gold Medal Series wine that is in stock if your name is drawn. Drawings are held each month. (Maximum of one Scoresheet per wine per membership)...GMWC

## R E O R D E R

Greg Graziano comes from a long line of winemakers and grape growers, dating back to the early 1900s. His newest line of *Graziano* wines showcases several different bottlings of Mendocino County's best Zinfandel vineyards. In keeping with his Italian heritage, he has also bottled an intense, fruity and rich Tocai Friulano that makes a perfect summer quaffing wine. Both are Gold Medal winners and priced exceptionally well.

GRAZIANO WINERY	Retail Price		Club Price		Club Price	
	Winery-Direct		2-Bottle Members		4-Bottle Members	
2002 Zinfandel *	Half Case-6	\$96	\$75	(22% Off)	\$69	(28% Off)
	Mendocino County	Full Case-12	\$192	\$138	(28% Off)	\$129 (33% Off)
2002 Tocai Friulano*	Half Case-6	\$84	\$65	(23% Off)	\$59	(30% Off)
	Mendocino County	Full Case-12	\$168	\$119	(29% Off)	\$109 (35% Off)

**Reorder Hotline: 1-800-266-8888**

**Reorder Faxline: 1-800-266-8889**

**[www.goldmedalwine.com/member](http://www.goldmedalwine.com/member)**

\*Availability is Very limited

Note: Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in the above prices. Call for details.