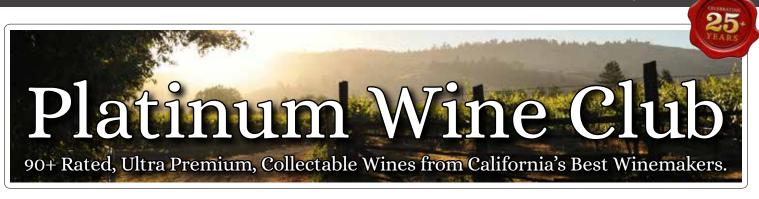
GOLD MEDAL WINE CLUB'S Volume 27, Issue 28



Ampère Wines | Pine Mountain - Cloverdale Peak

His father was an attorney in Saigon in the early 1960's who foresaw the tumultuous events that were in store for his country. Along with his wife, the couple moved to Lyon, France to provide a peaceful environment for their family. After some time, they moved back to Vietnam, only returning to France to visit their children and relatives.

That is the story of Hien Nguyen's father, Vinh Van Nguyen. The son, Hien Nguyen, and his siblings attended a high-caliber secondary school in Lyon named Ampère. There, the young student experienced traditional French cooking and was offered a choice of beverage at the meal, water or wine.

From that point on, Hien Nguyen admits he cradled a fascination for wine that he has recently turned into a passion with the advent of Ampere Wines.

Before we get into Ampère Wines, let's learn more of Hien Nguyen's unqualified success both in the educational world and also in terms of his business accomplishment.

After Ampère, Nguyen graduated from Paris' Ecole Polytechnique and soon thereafter he traveled to the United States to study for his masters in mathematics at MIT. That was in 1972 and three years later, he moved to the University of Montana where he taught mathematics. Later, he founded a software development company that further expanded his business expertise.

His infatuation with wine continued and soon after the turn of the century, he happened upon a parcel of hilly terrain that changed his entire life.

"I was actually looking for some property as a recreational spot," recalled Hien Nguyen, now an incredibly active 68-year-old. "I wanted something near the ocean and in the mountains and I eventually stumbled on Pine Mountain in Northern California. It was lovely and exactly what I was looking for. And, it already had a planted vineyard."

Nguyen's long-term interest in wine and his budding business expertise made Pine Mountain Vineyards an extraordinary opportunity for the former college professor. He set about creating a winery vehicle that could showcase the exceptional fruit that he was told was of remarkable quality.

The new vineyard owner promptly hired one of the most celebrated California winemakers, Thomas

Rivers Brown, to create the wines of Ampère Wines. What happened next could be the material for a Hollywood movie, a thoroughly romantic one.

Ampère Wines' initial release of around 300 cases was met with incredible critical acclaim and the new winery was off to a running start. It has continued to receive high marks and has developed a passionate following in the ensuing years. Production has remained on the boutique-ish side of between 400 and 500 cases, but should increase in the future.

Hien Nguyen is also keenly interested in developing additional high altitude vineyards on his property. Several blocks of different clones are already in their second year and will produce usable fruit in the near future.

Part of this interest stems from the recently awarded (in November 2011) Pine Mountain-Cloverdale Peak AVA, considered one of the smallest area, highest altitude appellations in California. For the record, the new AVA is at the extreme northern end of Sonoma's Alexander Valley AVA and

> to the west. It has been compared favorably to Bordeaux in terms of climate, temperature and light and has seen industry giants Jackson Family Vineyards and Francis Ford Coppola Vineyards begin development of estate vineyards of their own.

"I believe the future of my company, Ampère Wines, lies in the development of these high altitude vineyards," added Nguyen. "I have planted several Cabernet Sauvignon clones at 2,600-foot elevations, several hundred feet higher than my present vineyards. If these vines mature as Thomas (Rivers Brown) and I expect, the resulting fruit and wines will take Ampère Wines to the next level."

Considering the fact that the tiny Pine Mountain-Cloverdale Peak AVA already houses some twenty winegrowers and wineries, such elevated anticipations are definitely within the realm of possibility.

The fact that Ampère Wines and Pine Mountain Vineyards are already highly successful operations leads one to believe that the attainment of higher goals will definitely occur. It is our pleasure to introduce this winery to our *Platinum Wine Club* members. Enjoy!



Ampère Wines | 2012 'High Elevation' Cabernet Sauvignon





590 cases produced

until 2022.

As *Antonio Galloni* so aptly puts it, "Cloverdale Peak isn't exactly the first place that comes to

mind for top flight Cabernet Sauvignon, but

here, in these high altitude mountain vineyards

in Mendocino, planted at about 2,600 feet

above sea level, proprietor Hien Nguyen and

winemaker Thomas Rivers Brown are on to something special." The Ampère 2012 'High

Elevation' Cabernet Sauvignon is from Hien's

Pine Mountain Vineyards and is a gorgeous

example of this region's and property's

potential. Racy and voluptuous in style, this

Cabernet Sauvignon offers notes of dark red

cherry, plum, smoke, menthol, and spice, with soft tannins that linger on the finish. Aged in

oak. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Enjoy now

93 POINTS — Antonio Galloni's Vinous

Dear Platinum Wine Club Members.

It is a pleasure and an honor for me to share our 2012 Ampère Cabernet Sauvignon with you.

Attending school in France at a very young age, I learned to enjoy wine, most often paired with amazing meals and stimulating conversation. When I was able to realize my dream to own a vineyard, I was not sure what I was stepping into. I had a special connection with Pine With influence and support from an amazing group of professionals, Ampere Wines became a reality and a continuing journey.

Pine Mountain Vineyards sits high on the Mayacamas Mountain range at 2,400+ feet with natural springs and steep hillside vineyards. The soil is shallow and the weather is more intense than in lower growing areas. This combination makes for typically smaller clusters, late harvest, and shows through in the wines with more intense flavors and colors. Pine Mountain is rich with history both in winemaking and in some infamous residences. It is reported that in the 1800's, grapes were brought down the mountain by mule or horse. Also, the notorious stagecoach robber and bandit Black Bart and the Mystic Healer Madam Preston had taken residence on Pine Mountain in the past.

Our winemaker is the accomplished Thomas Rivers Brown who has received two perfect 100 point scores from Robert Parker and was *Food and Wine* magazine's **2010 Winemaker of the Year**. He believes that the unique terroir of a property should come through in the wine and he provides an expert hands-off approach with minimal manipulation.

In his prestigious modern-day wine publication *Vinous*, Antonio Galloni provided reviews that echoed what we were hearing from our peers and we are grateful to the wine industry for accepting us at a level of merit that validates what we are doing. Mr. Galloni's comments on the different vintages show the distinction from year to year while recognizing the consistency of excellence throughout.

Fate may have played a hand in many facets of our success, from my discovery of Pine Mountain Vineyards to being introduced to our winemaker; however, we are not resting on our laurels. We will continue our path of discovery and working with the land to bring forward its best potential. If you are ever in the neighborhood, please reach out; I would love to share our property where the Ampère wine is grown.



Hien Nguyen

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Winery Retail Price \$69.00/btl.	2+ btls.	6+ btls.	12+ btls.
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4-Bottle Members:	\$55.00	\$52.50	\$51.25

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This month's Platinum *Plus!*Featured Wine:

Pegasus 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon

92 Points - SD Int'l Wine & Spirits Challenge 91 Points - Wine Enthusiast magazine

411 cases produced



Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in above prices.
*Effective per bottle prices after Membership Rewards discount is applied at checkout. Membership Rewards does not apply to Sale or Special-Offer Wines.