

THE WINE PRESS

Gold Medal Wine Club Newsletter: Vol. 16 No. 10

Barnwood Vineyards Edition

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

www.goldmedalwine.com

At 3,200 FEET, BARNWOOD IS MAKING FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES

This month's *Gold Series* selection, Barnwood Vineyards, began its existence as somewhat of a lark during the early 1980s. A local gentleman named Larry Hogan, described by some as a "renaissance cowboy farmer," decided to plant vineyards in an extremely isolated area of the Eastern Sierra Madre Mountains chain.

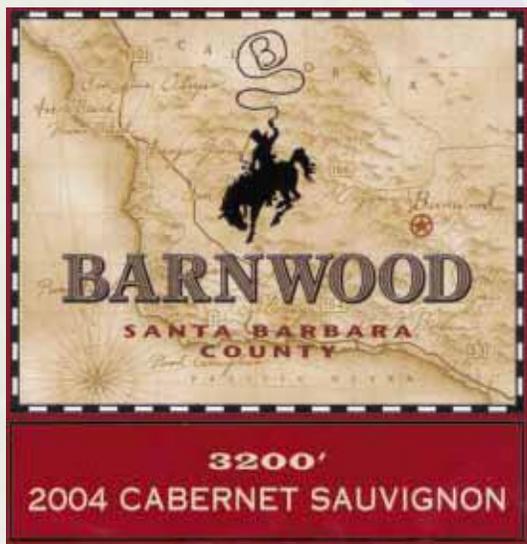
To make things more interesting, Hogan decided to locate his vines at the resolute altitude of nearly 3,200 feet, easily among the highest growing elevations within California. He chose a site high atop some ground in the Southern Santa Barbara Mountains, in a specific area known as the Cuyama Valley, named for the dormant river of the same name that

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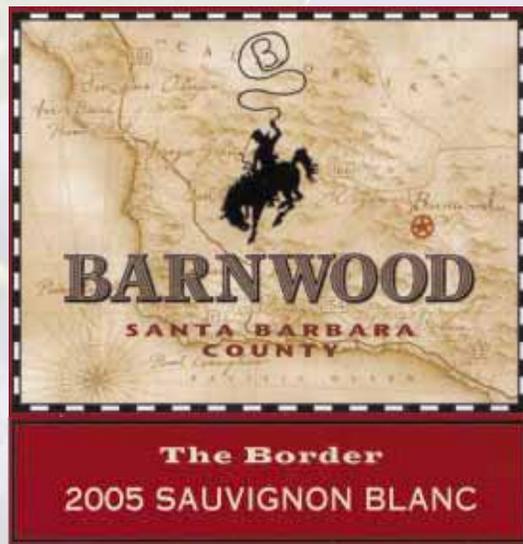
Nestled in eastern Santa Barbara County's Sierra Madre Mountains, the unique soil and climate of Barnwood's estate provide near perfect conditions for Bordeaux and Rhone varietals.

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 1,800 wineries in California producing thousands of different wines. Only wines fitting the above criteria are considered in choosing the featured selections each month.



2004 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

The 2004 Barnwood, 3200' Cabernet Sauvignon is produced from the winery's estate vineyard located 3200 feet above sea level. Right out-of-the-shoot, the 2004 Cabernet is compiling a portfolio of awards equal to earlier vintages. This rich, deep garnet colored cabernet was awarded a **Gold Medal** from the *Critics Challenge International Wine Competition*. Critic's judge and *San Francisco Chronicle* wine writer Linda Murphy comments, "Black is always in style—black cherry, black licorice, tar and peppery spice." And at the well-respected *Beverage Testing Institute* this delightful Cabernet walked away with a solid **88-Point** rating. Ripe, firm tannins frame the fresh black plum and cassis flavors, giving it an excellent balance and soft-mid palate. Hints of cocoa and vanilla come through on the long, rich finish. Aged for 14 months in French Oak. 100% Estate Cabernet Sauvignon.



2005 SAUVIGNON BLANC

Barnwood Winery 2005 Sauvignon Blanc "The Border" is grown on Santa Barbara County's eastern edge, 70 miles east of Highway 101, in the Sierra Madre Mountain range—a location so remote most maps don't even show it. It must be a magical place for grape growing as evidenced by Barnwood's consistent output of medal-winning wines. This delicious Sauvignon Blanc recently won a **Gold Medal** at the *Orange County Fair Wine Competition*, and the *Wine Spectator* rated it an impressive **88 Points**—"Exotic floral aromas, with rich, complex layers of citrus, fig, melon, quince and herbal flavors . . ." Layered flavors of green apple, honeydew melon and grapefruit with mild hints of pear and grass are found in this bright and flavorful wine. The fresh fruit core is balanced with crisp acidity and flinty undertones. 100% Estate Sauvignon Blanc.

WINE CREDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

2004 VINTAGE: **Gold Medal**—*Critics Challenge International Wine Competition*; **88-Points**—*Beverage Testing Institute*; **Silver Medal**—*San Francisco Wine Competition*.

LEGACY: Barnwood's 3200' Cabernet Sauvignon has been a multiple award winning wine virtually every year since the mid 1980s. The winery is a pioneer in the development of high elevation vineyards in California.

Just the facts:

pH	3.72
Alcohol	14.2%
Total Acid	0.648 g/100 mls
Aged in Oak	14 Months
Cases Produced	9,000
Drink Now or Up to Year	2012

2005 VINTAGE: **Gold Medal**—*Orange County Fair Wine Competition*; **88 Points**—*Wine Spectator*.

LEGACY: The vineyard's high elevation climate combined with well-draining gravel and sandy loam soils has provided Barnwood ideal conditions for producing high quality Sauvignon Blanc for over twenty years.

Just the facts:

pH	3.37
Alcohol	13.7%
Total Acid	0.68 g/100 mls
Cases Produced	3,200
Drink Now or Up to Year	2008

GOLD MEDAL SPOTLIGHT

Nadia Wellisz

When she was growing up in London, Nadia Wellisz had no inclination she would one day be involved in the ownership and management of a high-caliber Santa Barbara County winery.

In fact, Wellisz, now 50, considers her early involvement with wine as nothing more than commonplace in London.

“As in most British families,” she retorted with a delightful English accent, “we were given small amounts of wine with our meals whenever we asked. It was just another beverage to us and we soon came to expect it.”

After graduating from London’s University College with a degree in English Literature, Nadia eventually migrated to the United States in 1980 and moved to New York where she worked for Merrill Lynch as an account executive in its international department. She eventually met and married Tazio Wellisz and had two children, Daniela now 20, and Julian, at present 18.

Sometime in 1986, Nadia and her family moved to Los Angeles where she began an earnest career as a full time mother and self described “urban motorist and volunteer.” During this period Nadia and her husband, who had started a medical devices company, also became investors in a number of top rated

and incredibly successful Los Angeles area restaurants, including Lucques, AOC and The Hungry Cat.

When her father Selim Zilkha moved to the United States and began his involvement in the wine industry, Nadia soon became a



For Nadia Zilkha-Wellisz, and her father Selim, success is a team effort.

willing participant in her family’s growing wine endeavors.

“To be quite honest,” Nadia explained further, “I always enjoyed drinking wine but I never had a clue that one day I would actually be involved in a winery. It was my husband Tazio who was really passionate about wine. Along with my father, the two of them developed a really serious interest. Our experiences with the restaurants we invested in was very positive and I soon realized that my children

were growing up and that I would one day become an empty nester.”

Just as the millennium began, Nadia’s involvement with wine became more involved. Conceding that she was tired of volunteer work and was interested in establishing an identity for herself in some form of business endeavor, time and circumstance opted to work together in her favor. When her father Selim took over complete ownership of Barnwood Vineyards, Nadia stepped in and soon became the face of the emerging company.

Calling upon her corporate skills, she decided the company needed a complete facelift in order to, in her words, “represent itself and its wines correctly to the consuming public. The entire effort was a huge challenge for us, that of taking a very special set of wine from a most unique location and giving them their own identity.”

Nadia Wellisz is also keenly interested in Barnwood’s attempt to represent specific terroir in its releases and to that end has championed a movement that would give AVA (appellation) status to Barnwood’s massive vineyards sometime in the near future.

“We are asking to be called Sierra Madre Mountains Appellation,” she explained. “It would definitely differentiate us from the other Santa

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WINE WIZARD

- 1) What *growing practice* is used when vineyard manager relies only on rainwater for irrigation?
- 2) What does “*Bacchus amat colles*” have to do with high elevation vineyards?
- 3) What constitutes a *high elevation vineyard in California*?

Continued from page 1

runs through the middle of the property.

Hogan felt the natural aspects of the location and the separation from the sharp coastal temperatures would provide an incredibly diverse environment in which the grapes would truly prosper. He set about growing his grapes and used a wide variety of local winery facilities to produce the first Barnwood Vineyard releases. The name for the wine was derived from the original house built on the property that was made of seed lot wood, more commonly called old barn wood.

Details of the initial production figures for Barnwood Vineyards are



At 3,200 feet above sea-level, the Cabernet Sauvignon grace the hillside.

sketchy at best, and nearly two decades later, the grape growing-oriented entity changed hands. The new owner was a remarkable European businessman named Selim Zilkha, who had grown up in a normal English environment that had always been influenced by his family’s strong appreciation for wine as an everyday accompaniment with meals. When it came time for university, Zilkha left England and eventually received his degree from Williams College in Massachusetts.

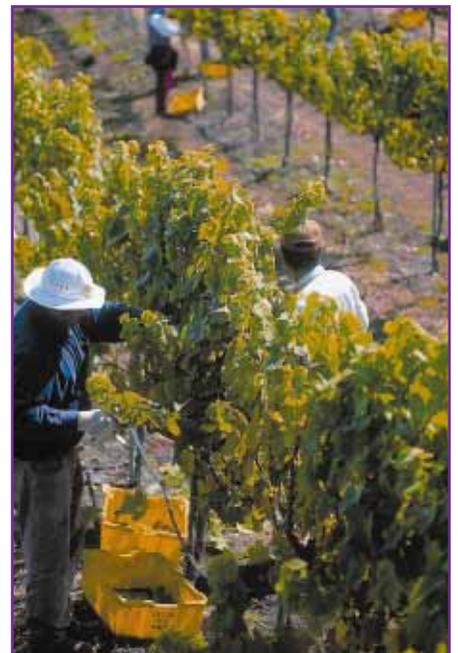
After finishing college, Zilkha returned to England where his family was involved in a number of ventures including the venerable banking business. From the outset, Zilkha was extremely successful in several business ventures, but eventually he grew tired of the banking business. Seeking new horizons to conquer, he made a decision and moved his family back to the United States where he began a number of small ventures within the oil industry.

In 1998, after a particularly effective oil transaction had closed to his advantage, Zilkha decided to become involved in the wine industry and purchased Barnwood along with

a close friend and associate. A French company was brought in as a consultant and soon declared the high altitude location a natural setting for both Rhone and Bordeaux varietals, both favorites of Zilkha and his family.

A highly ambitious planting program was immediately begun between 1998-2001 that resulted in today’s whopping total of over 700 acres under vine. During this time, a loose relationship evolved with nearby Laetitia Winery who assisted in making the more recent releases of Barnwood.

A year or so later, Selim Zilkha bought out his partner in Barnwood and then acquired the well-established and incredibly affluent Laetitia Vineyards and Winery as well. Along with the purchase of Laetitia came a third entity, Avila Winery, a smallish entity that had been established to showcase fruit from



The 2006 harvest at Barnwood is in full swing.

the company's prestigious Arroyo Grande vineyards.

Today, Barnwood has leveled at around 15,000 cases, but has hopes for greatly expanded growth in the not-too-distant future.

"We would be delighted to see ourselves at the 80,000 case level within the next 3 to 4 years," envisioned Nadia Wellisz, Barnwood's Executive Vice President and owner. "To accomplish that goal we have done a bit of revamping with the brand."

The overhaul involves a major change in labels that Wellisz feels provides Barnwood with its own identity and a chance to present the brand in a positive aspect to the

buying public. The label features a cowboy emblazoned across an old map of the region from which Barnwood Vineyards originates.



Private events are hosted on the estate's private patio, overlooking the valley.

The large supply of very high quality grapes available makes all of Barnwood's wines estate grown but

does not allow the estate bottled verbiage on the label due to the fact that the wines are actually made at nearby Laetitia Winery.

The task of achieving such lofty goals is not a certainty for Barnwood Vineyards, but the ingredients for ultimate success are most certainly there. Quality fruit from a truly exotic locale and consistent praise from wine writers and consumers alike made the future road for Barnwood a bit less bumpy.

After all, who would have thought more than two decades ago that anything would ever come of planting vines at the 3,200-foot level? 🍷

ANSWERS TO WINE WIZARD

1) The practice is commonly known as *dry-farming*. Using the *dry-farming* method, newly planted vines are irrigated only until they create an extensive root system. After the roots become established, all irrigation lines are removed and the vines are left to fend for themselves. For future moisture, vineyard managers rely only on natural rainwater and they trust it will create a stronger vine with a deeper, thicker root system. The vineyards practicing *dry-farming* believe it stresses the vines, lowers the grape tonnage and produces smaller berries with more intense varietal characteristics because they are not plump with water.

2) In Europe, high elevation vineyards fall in the path of ancient vineyard sites, due to a long-standing reverence for mountain-side cultivation. The Romans had a saying, "*Bacchus amat colles*," or, "*Bacchus loves the hills*."

Bacchus, the god of wine seemed to bestow special blessings on grapes cultivated on high elevation slopes. Armed with this knowledge, the Romans planted their vineyards throughout Italy, Germany, France, Spain, and Austria— and all the other territories they conquered— on mountain slopes still renowned today for producing excellent fruit.

3) *In California, a high elevation vineyard is anything over 1,200 feet.* Barnwood's Cabernet Sauvignon's vineyard is located at 3,200 feet above sea level and definitely qualifies as a high elevation vineyard. In Argentina's Salentein Vineyard in the Mendoza Valley you will find three *very high elevation* vineyards, ranging from 3,400 feet to about 5,500 feet.

It is rumored that in South America there are two vineyards being planted at 9,000 feet. High elevation vineyards fruit is reported to have tougher skins that add color and smaller grapes with more flavor. "*Bacchus amat colles*."





FOOD FOR THOUGHT

SCALLOP SALAD WITH MANGO DRESSING

Pair with 2005 Barnwood's "The Border" Sauvignon Blanc.

4 First Course Servings

Pinch of crushed red pepper
1 teaspoon high quality curry powder
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 small shallot, minced
1 garlic clove, minced
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 small, ripe mango-peeled, pitted and cut into 1/4 inch cubes
1 pound sea scallops
2 tablespoons peanut oil
6 cups packed arugula leaves (3 ounces)
4 plum tomatoes, quartered lengthwise
1/2 cup jicama, peeled and julienned

In a small bowl, mix curry powder and crushed red pepper with olive oil, vinegar, shallot and garlic. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in mango. Season the scallops with salt and pepper. In a large skillet, heat the peanut oil until shimmering. Add the scallops and cook over high heat, turning once, until browned (about two minutes per side). Transfer the seared scallops to a large plate.

In a large bowl, combine the arugula, tomatoes and jicama. Add half of the mango dressing and toss well. Mound the arugula salad on plates and arrange the seared scallops on top. Drizzle the scallops with the remaining mango dressing and serve at once.

BEEF TENDERLOIN WRAPPED IN PANCETTA

Pair with Barnwood 5200' - 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon - Serves: 6

3 ounces dried porcini mushrooms
2 cups of boiling water
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 large shallots, minced
2 garlic cloves, minced
4 green onions, minced
1 1/2 teaspoons Italian herb blend
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
One, 3-pound center-cut, trimmed beef tenderloin (one piece)
3 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
8 ounces thinly sliced pancetta, chilled
Kitchen string and thermometer

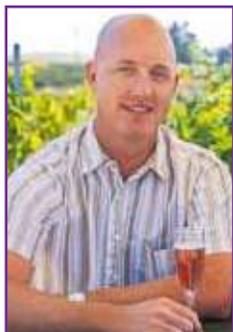
Preheat oven to 450 degrees, Soak the porcini in the boiling water for 25 minutes. Rub the porcini in the soaking liquid to remove any grit; pat dry and chop coarsely. Transfer the porcini to a blender or mini food processor and puree.

Melt the butter in a medium skillet. Add the shallots and cook over moderately low heat until softened. Add the garlic and cook for 2 minutes. Add the green onions and cook until softened, about 2 minutes. Stir in porcini puree. Add Italian herb blend; add salt and pepper to taste. Let cool. Season the roast with salt and pepper.

Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet. Sear the roast over moderate high heat until browned all over; let cool. On a work surface, slightly overlap three 16 inch pieces of wax paper. Arrange the pancetta on the paper in 4 overlapping rows to form a rectangle the length of the tenderloin. Spread the porcini puree over the pancetta.

Set the tenderloin on the bottom edge of the pancetta. Using the wax paper as a guide, tightly roll up the roast in a pancetta. Carefully peel off the wax paper. Tie the roast with kitchen string at 1-inch intervals. Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet and brush with remaining 1 1/2 tablespoons of olive oil. Roast the beef for 25 minutes, or until the pancetta is crisp and the interior temperature reads 120 degrees. Let rest for 10 minutes. Cut off strings and remove. Thickly slice the roast with a serrated knife and serve with garlic mashed potatoes and your favorite steamed vegetable.

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*Eric Hickey—
Barnwood's
winemaker for over
6 years.*

Barbara County AVA's that we really have little in common with. The whole process is a bit difficult, and should take another two to three years."

In the meantime, Nadia has overseen the sales and marketing of Barnwood Vineyards and has watched the winery come full bore to a mostly red production entity. She has also completed the UCLA Vintage Wine Course during 2002 - 2003 to further aid her involvement in her now family business. She was also promoted last March to the title of Executive Vice President for her efforts.

Nadia currently travels to wine tastings and other public events, does most interviews concerning Barnwood Vineyards and its expansion plans and generally performs the duties of an owner/marketer. She is also delighted that her father Selim continues to be concerned with the winery and to follow the numbers involved with the winery's progress "on an intimate basis."

JUDGE-THE-WINES RESULTS

In this section we publish the cumulative, on-going tallies of the Judge-the-Wines Scorecards 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 Scorecards 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 Scorecard results which are printed in green indicate the wine selections that as of press time are still available for reorder.

2004 Bargetto Pinot Grigio

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

2005 Taft Street Chardonnay

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

2005 Incognito Viognier

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

2000 Arbios Cabernet Sauvignon

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	7%	4%

2002 Bargetto Cabernet Sauvignon

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	94%	4%	2%

2002 Taft Street Merlot

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	6%	3%

2004 Incognito Rouge

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	93%	5%	2%

2005 Praxius Viognier

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	88%	7%	5%

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

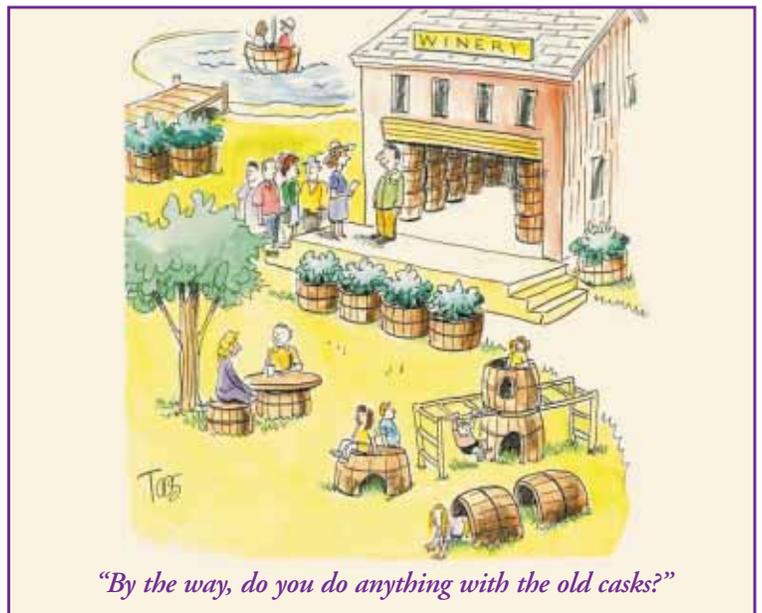
To see our entire inventory and reorder online, go to: www.goldmedalwine.com/member

■ Indicates wine is still available

Nadia is also extremely proud of the fact that both of her children have indicated an interest of following her into the wine business. Both have worked summers at Barnwood; and with Julian soon off to college on the East Coast, Nadia feels that Barnwood will fill the void in her life that will soon be created.

Soft-spoken Nadia Wellisz is atypical of many modern winery owners but seems intensely determined to see her pet project continue to do well.

We at Gold Medal feel it already has. 🍷

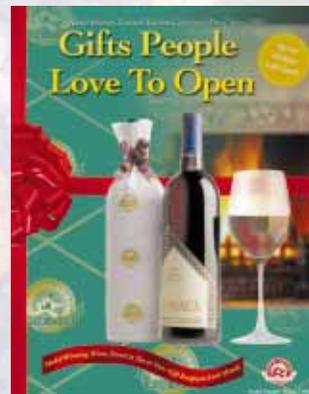


“By the way, do you do anything with the old casks?”

THE GRAPEVINE

Comments from us and Club members

Our annual **Early Bird Holiday Special** is in full swing! Simply place your holiday gift order before November 15th and **Save 15%** on *Gold Series* gift purchases. This and other wine gift ideas are inside our convenient *Holiday Gift Guide*, enclosed in this shipment; or you may view it online at www.goldmedalwine.com/giftguide. And keep in mind that our one-of-a-kind, artist commissioned Wine Country Gift Box is a beautiful way to present your gift. The Early Bird Holiday Special is offered *only* to our current members and previous gift givers—it is NOT available to the general public.



The much-anticipated drawing for *The Ultimate Napa-Get-Away Wine Cruise for Two* was held on September 15th, 2006. The drawing results are posted on our website. The Cruise drawing was hugely popular and we thank everyone who entered. For those of you who entered and did not win, look for a follow-up thank-you-for-participating email with an exclusive special offer.

Members who send in their wine ratings on the provided Scorecards 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 Scorecard per wine per membership)...GMWC

R E O R D E R

Santa Barbara County's Barnwood vineyard was first planted in 1982. For almost 25 years, the winery has delivered big, complex, concentrated wines that capture the essence of their unique mountain location. The proof is in the bottle and soon to be in your glass. Two wonderful selections at terrific prices.

BARNWOOD VINEYARDS	Retail Price Winery-Direct	Club Price 2-Bottle Members	Club Price 4-Bottle Members
2005 Sauvignon Blanc* Santa Barbara County	Half Case-6 \$84 Full Case-12 \$168	\$67 (\$11.17) Save 20% \$125 (\$10.42) Save 26%	\$62 (\$10.33) Save 26% \$115 (\$9.58) Save 32%
2004 Cabernet Sauvignon* Santa Barbara County	Half Case-6 \$132 Full Case-12 \$264	\$99 (\$16.50) Save 25% \$179 (\$14.92) Save 32%	\$92 (\$15.33) Save 30% \$165 (\$13.75) Save 38%

Reorder Hotline: 1-800-266-8888 • www.goldmedalwine.com/member
Reorder Faxline: 1-800-266-8889

*Availability is very limited

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