

## Diamond Series



### Bialla Vineyards

The story surrounding Napa Valley's Bialla Vineyards' rapid rise to prominence is actually quite simple. It involves owner Vito Bialla's quest for absolute perfection within his winery and also a most fortunate choice of locale for this fascinating project.

For Vito Bialla, this latest triumph in the wine industry is another notch in his successful business career.

Now a youthful 62, Bialla was born in Austria and came to the United States when he was thirteen. He resided in New York, Louisiana and Arkansas and joined the United States Army in 1968. He was on his way to Vietnam when he spent his final week before deployment in San Francisco. He fell in love with Northern California and vowed to return if he survived the rigors of Vietnam. The war was difficult (his unit was the basis for the incredibly popular era movie, *Platoon*) but Bialla survived and returned home and settled in San Francisco.

"The entire area was magnificent. The people were the best I had ever met, friendly and outgoing. I was totally in love with my surroundings," Bialla recalled.

He operated a number of businesses including a high caliber corporate recruiting firm, or a headhunter company as it is widely known. Along the way, Bialla and his wife Linda started making luncheon trips to the nearby Napa Valley.

"Being of European descent, I was used to wine since I was a little boy, having a glass with lunch or dinner," Bialla further recalled. "At one point, we decided to buy a small home in Napa Valley as a getaway from the city. I happened upon a listing on Atlas Peak and was impressed with its location

and the fact that a small one-acre vineyard was already planted and seemed to be doing well."

The Biallas bought the property in 2003 and eventually had a few bottles of wine made for their own use. In 2005, a friend counseled that additional vineyards would increase the place's value so another 3 1/2 acres were planted.

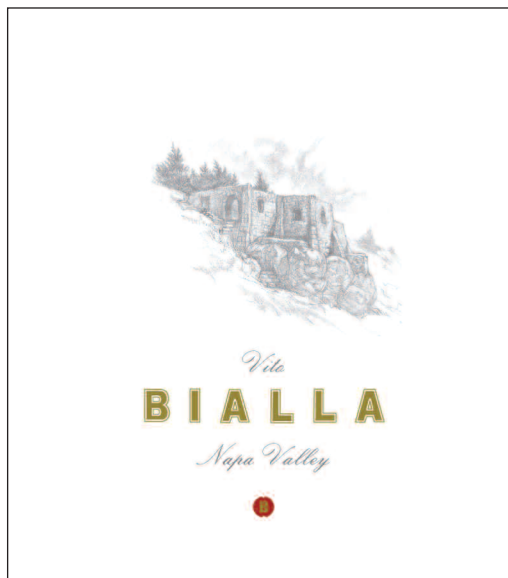
"Then I was told that if I built a winery, the value would increase that much more," Bialla recounted. "We were fortunate to have the money available and we decided to go ahead. Then I was told that, if the winery were inside a cave, the property would appreciate even more, so we went ahead and dug a cave. The rest is history."

The 'rest' referred to above is Bialla Vineyards' meteoric rise to the highest echelons of Napa Valley prominence. The original release of a miniscule 190 cases was met with astounding enthusiasm and marks the tiny winery was on its way.

Vito Bialla added, "I'd like to think I was really smart about the whole thing but that wasn't really the case. I believe I was more lucky than smart.

The original property was on Atlas Peak, which has proven to be a bonanza if you look at who has located here recently. Heidi Barrett, Bill Hill (Hill Family Estate) and Cobblestone Vineyards are here, just to name a few. We were given our own appellation in 2004 and are now recognized as one of Napa's premier growing areas."

Bialla also used his proven business acumen to accomplish his task of making Bialla Vineyards a top winery. "Simply put," he added, "I found the top vineyard supervisor and the

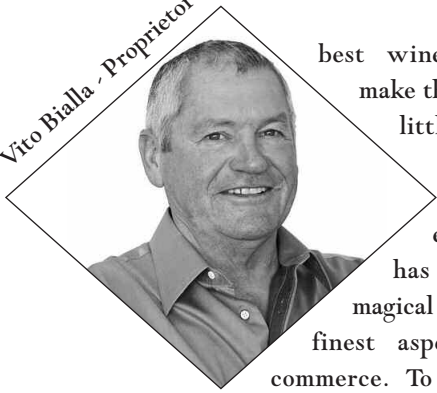


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Vito Bialla - Proprietor



best winemaker available to make the wines. I knew very little about the actual process so I put all that in the hands of experts. Bialla Vineyards has become an almost magical place. It combines the finest aspects of nature and commerce. To me, it is almost a religious experience.”

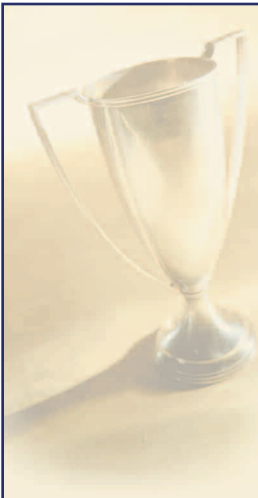
Bialla Vineyards has grown to a whopping 465 cases, and will remain at that level. Vito Bialla feels that the 500-case

production level is where he is comfortable and that is that. He has fended off a number of offers, including one from a Chinese firm who offered him a great deal of money for the property.

“Why would I sell something I truly love?” he questioned. “Life is way too short to give up the things you hold dearest just for the sake of money. With Elaine (Wallingford) running the place, there’s no guesswork to anything we do. We will continue to make great wines for as long as possible.”

Much kudos to Vito Bialla and Bialla Vineyards. More wineries should feel the way they do. The wine industry would be much better off.

## Accolades and Tasting Notes



### Bialla Vineyards 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon

**94-Points**, *Wine Enthusiast* — “A terrific Cabernet that gives all the richness and opulence you expect in an expensive Napa Cab, yet controls it with firm tannins, acidity, minerals and earthiness. Explosive in blackberry and cherry-pie filling and chocolate granola bar flavors that are so delicious, you can’t stop reaching for another glass. The grapes come 100% from the winery’s Atlas Peak appellation vineyard.”

**92-Points**, *Wine Spectator* — “Intense and well-structured ... this offers a mix of rich currant, mineral, iodine, cedar and tobacco. Once this gets some air, it keeps getting better. Full-bodied, ending with firm tannins, yet the flavors flow through. Best from 2011 through 2019. 260 cases made.”

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## Reorder

Perched in the exquisite Atlas Peak Appellation of Napa Valley, Bialla Vineyards is the latest elite producer to emerge from this tremendously well-respected region. With an incredibly sophisticated winemaking style and ratings that seem to get higher with each anticipated vintage, Bialla strives to make the finest cult Cabernet ever.

Winery Direct: \$125.00

**Diamond Series Price:**

2-Bottle Members.....\$99.00 / bottle

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