

WINE



PRESS

Carmichael Vintners

Gold Medal Wine Club Newsletter: Vol. 19 No. 8



CARMICHAEL'S DARINGLY DIFFERENT MEDITERRANEAN INSPIRED BLENDS REFLECT PREMIUM FAMILY-OWNED VINEYARDS THROUGHOUT NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.



Carmichael's grapes are sourced from carefully chosen vineyards with long-term relationships to ensure consistent quality from vintage to vintage.



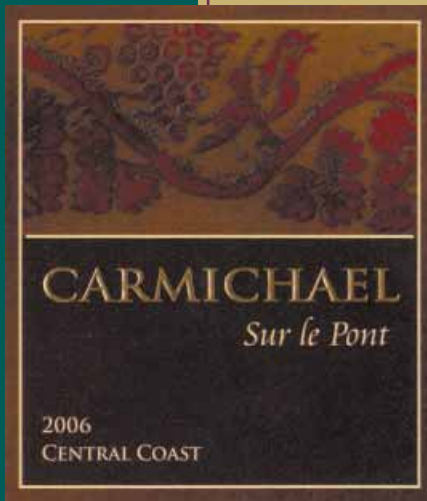
The winery's exquisite new tasting room offers a deluxe setting to sample the unique portfolio of award winning wines.



Carmichael wines are produced in handcrafted, high quality, small production lots.



A tribute to the town of Avignon, France, the Carmichael 2006 Sur le Pont is a Rhône-style cépage comprised of Syrah, Grenache, Viognier and Petite Sirah, sourced from a selection of Central Coast vineyards in California. This unique red blend is a *Gold Meda Wine Club Special Selection* and showcases its old world Mediterranean influences while achieving the characteristic fruit-forward varietal style that thrives in California. Red raspberry aromas are pertinent on the nose with background notes of dried herb and earthiness, verifying that Syrah is the major player in this delicious 2007 Sur le Pont blend. Peppery notes come from the warm weather Grenache that also makes up a good portion of this red wine. In the mouth, cherry fruit and strong vanilla flavors come into play and these seemingly sweet components marry beautifully with the tannins in the finish, leaving a smooth, lingering impression long after the wine is gone. Try pairing the Carmichael 2006 Sur le Pont with grilled meats, robust tomato-based pastas, and big juicy steaks. Enjoy now until 2010.



2006 VINTAGE: *GOLD MEDAL WINE CLUB SPECIAL SELECTION!*

LEGACY:

WITH JUST 800 CASES PRODUCED, THE 2006 VINTAGE WAS BLENDED ESPECIALLY FOR *GOLD SERIES* MEMBERS AND UPHOLDS CARMICHAEL'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO PRODUCING PREMIUM, PROPRIETARY BLENDS.

Just the facts:

pH.....	3.87
Alcohol.....	13.8%
Total Acid.....	0.63 g/100 mls
Cases Produced.....	800
Drink Now or Up to Year.....	2010

CARMICHAEL VINTNERS

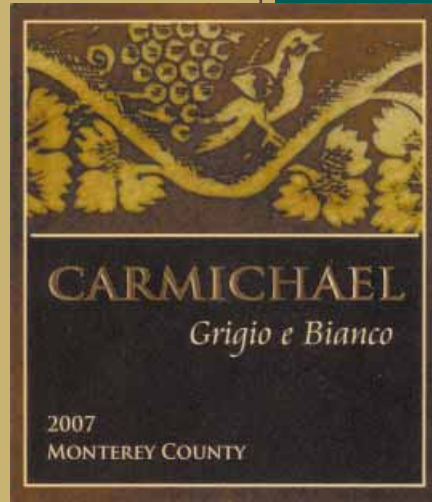
Carmichael Vintners was born out of a desire by its original owner to produce a number of blended wines that were European by design and Californian by nature. Owner Michael Levin sourced grapes from different parts of California and made the winery name a combination of his wife Carmen and his own first names.

Carmichael Vintners was sold in 2003 to Richard Spencer, who immediately built an imposing 20,000 square foot winery in Madera, California, a city that is known industry-wide as the home of the incredibly successful (and large) Gallo Brothers Winery.

“Since we were buying a great deal of our fruit from both the Central Coast and also the Sierra Foothills region,” informed Debra Morris, general manager of Carmichael Vintners, “the selection of Madera as a home for the winery was a natural since Madera is practically in the middle of everything. The location is also quite cost efficient, and that makes a big difference to our bottom line.”

2007 VINTAGE: GOLD MEDAL
WINE CLUB SPECIAL SELECTION!

LEGACY: THIS ONE OF A KIND BLEND WAS PRODUCED ESPECIALLY FOR GOLD SERIES MEMBERS AND PAST VINTAGES HAVE GARNERED 89+ SCORES, BEST OF CLASS AND BEST OF REGION DISTINCTIONS.



“Grigio e Bianco” simply means “Gray and White” in Italian, and refers to the grape varieties used in this 2007 white blend from Carmichael Vintners. An unusual assemblage of Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, and Chardonnay, Carmichael’s 2007 Grigio e Bianco continues the brand premise of creating one-of-a-kind blends from Northern California, based on varietals native to the Mediterranean basin. This blend plays up the melon and herbal notes of the Sauvignon Blanc alongside the fruity and floral qualities of the Pinot Grigio, making a fresh and exotic wine. The addition of barrel-fermented Chardonnay also lends sophistication and harmonizes the blend. A *Gold Medal Wine Club Special Selection*, the 2007 Grigio e Bianco hails from the ultra-premium Arroyo Seco appellation and exudes fresh and delicate aromas of mango, sweet pea, lavender and lanolin. On the palate, the wine is rich with full-bodied, balanced flavors of exotic floral nuances and a distinct lemon peel tang comes through on the persistent finish. This fresh, tantalizing blend is a very versatile wine, well suited to patio sipping or paired with simple, light pastas, fish, and chicken dishes. Enjoy now until 2012.

Just the facts:

pH	3.5
Alcohol	13.4%
Total Acid	0.51 g/100 mls
Cases Produced	600
Drink Now or Up to Year	2012

Carmichael Vintners made its debut in the wine business with a smallish production of around 500 cases sometime in 2001. It has grown slowly and will produce just over 3,000 cases this year.

“We’re in no real hurry to grow,” Morris added, “in fact, our five year plan calls for us to be around the 8,000 case level, and that just happens to be our ultimate goal. By staying small, we will be able to control our own destiny and to us that means quality.”

Morris and the small staff of eight at Carmichael Vintners are truly excited at the future prospects of the Central Valley boutique

winery. Morris pointed out that the winery has already enjoyed an uptick in grape quality with some recent purchases and new contracts.

“In Napa Valley, for instance, we have already bought some Cabernet from Chalk Hill and have several other top vineyards under contract for this coming year. It’s much the same story around the state, where we are starting to really pick and choose our sources. This sort of quality direction is great for the staff and also for the winery.”

Debra Morris is a wine industry veteran for more than two decades and has had a major hand in



The Carmichael wines are produced at the extravagant Mariposa Wine Company facility in Madera, California, located in the Central Valley

developing the marketing aspects of Carmichael Vintners.

In her own words, "We are aiming for an old world feel for our wines, a feel that also includes a fruit vibrancy that the wines might not enjoy were



Carmichael's Mediterranean style wines are blended from French and Italian style varietals that thrive in Northern California vineyards.

She explained further, "California, in my opinion, really doesn't have bad vintages. It's true that some are better

"We are aiming for an old world feel for our wines, a feel that also includes a fruit vibrancy that the wines might not enjoy were they made in Europe."

than others, but due to the excellent growing conditions California vintners always enjoy the luxury of being able to produce wines with great vibrancy. We want our wines at Carmichael

Vintners to be very drinkable but also to be able to stand a bit of bottle and cellar age."


Carmichael Vintners is also expressing the winery's continued development with some new packaging that will tend to reflect the patina of something old, well worn and also tied to the earth. A chocolate brown theme with earthy color palates highlighted by a modern edge complete the new packaging.

Carmichael Vintners seems poised to join the growing number of smaller, well-priced wineries that are carving out specific niches for themselves in the incredibly difficult wine industry of today. With more consumers feeling the pinch of the extended recession, Carmichael Vintners might just be in the right place at the right time.

"We have been fortunate that our wines have always been well received," concluded Debra Morris. "It has always provided us with a good consumer base to draw from. I feel that with our new emphasis on high quality fruit, the upside looks very bright. Our new owner has provided us with all the tools we need, and now

it's up to us to make things happen. It's really a grand time to be around the winery."

From the looks of it, a good deal of what is mentioned is already happening, as proved by this month's Gold Series selections. It's always fun to catch a winery on

the way up when it's small, and then enjoy its wines as it gains notoriety. Such is the case with Carmichael Vintners, a good story and really good wines. 

The Wine Wizard

1) What is a *cépage*?

2) Reducing the grape crop usually does what for the resulting wine?

3) Where does the prominent butter flavor come from in some Chardonnays?

See Page 7 for Answers.

About The Winemaker

Native Californian Winemaker Ken Post, 50, is in his third career. Ken and his family were farmers (alfalfa & grains) until the family ranch was sold. Next, Ken and his father ran a successful building company until it was also sold some years ago. Unhappy with retirement and wanting to spend more time with his family, Post attended Fresno State and got his degree in enology. He first worked for the respected small winery Oak Hollow and joined Carmichael Vintners in time to finish the '06, '07 and '08 vintages.



Richard Spencer

Richard Spencer never thought he would one day find himself in the wine business, much less the owner of Madera-based Carmichael Vintners. The Wisconsin native and long-time resident of Fresno was deeply involved in the construction business. His Harris Construction was extremely visible in North Central California as a builder of hospitals, schools and numerous other large buildings and projects.

At one point in his life, Spencer thinks it was around the age of 40, he began drinking wine as his choice of beverage.

“It was almost like it was the thing to do socially,” Spencer recalled in a recent interview. “Before it was always beer but the more I drank wine the more I enjoyed it. My wife Karen and a couple of our really close friends actually made a number of trips over the next few years to Bordeaux and some of the other great wine areas of the world.”

Spencer also began collecting wine and now has a cellar that numbers over 5,000 bottles. He says he enjoys Bordeaux a great deal but is equally at home with a number of top California wineries.

A little less than a decade ago, an unusual event occurred that ultimately thrust Richard Spencer into the wine industry.

“I had a friend who owned a winery that wasn’t doing very well,” he recalled. “He wanted to get out of the business and I wanted to help him out so I wound up buying some of the used equipment. The idea at the time was to move the equipment somewhere else or maybe sell it. Well, one thing led to another and we finally decided to do it ourselves. We located a nice 19-acre piece of land in Madera with an empty building on it and agreed to do it up right.”




THE WINE REGION



Since the major focus at Carmichael Vintners is on blends, it is almost of necessity that practically all of California’s top wine-producing regions are utilized in sourcing fruit for the Carmichael selections. Fruit from Napa Valley as well as the entire Central Coast is used, depending on the palate affect winemaker Ken Post is seeking.



Carmichael creates unique blends by marrying grapes from different Northern California vineyards to accomplish the desirable flavors and structure in the finished wines.

“Since we are looking for specific fruit nuances as well as freshness on the palate,” Post related, “it’s quite possible to see grapes blended together from entirely different regions to produce a desired taste and appeal. This process tends to give us our own special niche in the marketplace, which is the desired effect.” 



*Grilled Lime-Cilantro
Scallops with Mango Salsa*

*Blue Cheese
Lamb Burgers*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Pair with Carmichael 2007 Grigio e Bianco

Ingredients:

4 Tablespoons Olive Oil
3 Tablespoons Lime Juice
2 Teaspoons Grated Lime Peel
8 Tablespoons Fresh Cilantro, chopped
2 Mangos, peeled and diced with its juice
2/3 Cup Vidalia Onion, diced
1/2 Cup Chopped Red Bell Pepper
1/2 Teaspoon Cumin
1/2 Cup Fresh Pasilla Pepper
Salt, Garlic Powder and Freshly Ground Pepper
2 Pounds Sea Scallops
Canola Oil for brushing on grill

Preparation:

Prepare barbecue or gas grill, clean grates and oil them with canola oil. Heat grill to medium-high. Whisk first three ingredients in a medium sized bowl to blend. Add 2 tablespoons cilantro. Transfer half of the mixture to a second medium bowl and add remaining cilantro to this second bowl. Reserve alternate half in first bowl for scallop marinade. Mix in mango, onion, pepper and cumin into remaining dressing in bowl two; season it to taste with salt and pepper and garlic powder. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Marinate scallops for about 10 minutes in the lime cilantro mixture then place them on the grill. Cook until a crust forms, about 3-4 minutes, then turn and cook on the other side until cooked through and a crust forms on the other side, about 4-5 more minutes. Transfer scallops to plates. Spoon mango salsa alongside and serve with a glass of Carmichael 2007 Grigio e Bianco.

Pair with Carmichael 2006 Sur le Pont Red Blend

Ingredients:

1 1/2 Pound Round Lamb
3 Tablespoons Parsley, chopped
2 Teaspoons Rosemary, chopped
Salt & Pepper, to taste
Spike Season Salt
Cracked Pepper
6 Ounces Blue Cheese, divided into 4 small disks

Preparation:

Light the grill and bring the coals to a hot, lightly ash coated fire. In a bowl, mix the lamb, parsley, rosemary and salt and pepper. Divide the lamb and seasonings into 4 balls. Make a dent in each and add a disk of the Blue Cheese. Cover and flatten.

Season the outside of the patty with Spike season salt and cracked black pepper and barbeque for 4 to 5 minutes per side. Serve on fresh Brioche or Ciabatta bread buns with fresh tomato slices and arugula.

*Find these recipes and all of your favorites online at www.GoldMedalWine.com/recipes.
We have a delicious collection of entrée recipes to pair with your favorite Gold Medal wines.*

Results

2005 Vina Robles Cabernet Sauvignon

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
93%	4%	3%

2005 Iron Horse Estate Chardonnay

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
96%	3%	1%

2006 Mission Trail Syrah

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
94%	4%	2%

2007 Mission Trail Sauvignon Blanc

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
94%	5%	1%

The above wines were recently featured.

To see our current inventory, reorder online, and Judge the Wines, visit us at www.GoldMedalWine.com/member.

Richard Spencer

Spotlight, continued from page 5

That was in the early 1990s and today's modern Carmichael Vineyards winery and tasting room serve as a jewel in the Central Valley, where smallish boutique wineries are the rarity rather than routine.

"We wanted to do everything first class," Spencer added. "With my background in construction, I was there to see it all through."

Spencer admits to being a hands-off owner and had chosen to employ a top-notch management team for Carmichael Vintners. He did however, have a hand in deciding to separate Carmichael Vintners from others in the Central Valley who relied on Central Valley grapes for their wines.

"We wanted to utilize grapes from a number of sources that would provide us the ability to make our Euro-style blends. We have managed to stick with that philosophy and it seems to have worked out quite nicely," added Spencer.

While Spencer's passive management approach is relatively unique in the wine business, he and Karen officiate at the winery's quarterly events that showcase new releases. The events are designed for their club members and take the form of all day parties.

"It's all great fun," confided Spencer. "They are actually long and wonderful events and are an enjoyment to everyone involved. They make us feel like a part of the winery even if they only last a day."

Richard Spencer has the best of all worlds and is smart enough to truly enjoy what he has.



1) A *cépage* is a French term that describes wines made primarily from a single grape variety. In the case of the Carmichael 2006 Sur le Pont, the dominant varietal is Syrah, which makes up 77% of the finished wine.

2) Reducing the grape yield usually intensifies the flavor of the finished wine. If there are too many grapes on the vine, the flavor can become diluted, and with fewer grapes, the flavors tend to be more concentrated. Many wineries promote a 'low yield harvest' since it can greatly improve the wine.

3) The butter flavor is a result of a secondary fermentation process called malolactic fermentation. Diacetyl, which is a by-product of this secondary fermentation, produces a creamy, buttery flavor and its occurrence is a stylistic choice made by the winemaker. Chardonnays that skip this process are usually crisper with lighter flavors.

THE ART OF FINE WINE



Grapevine was painted by artist Ronald Raasch, who enjoys working with

watercolors, pastels, and acrylics. Raasch is also the political cartoonist for the Central Oregonian newspaper and a licensed architect.

THE GRAPEVINE

"This is a fantastic 50th Birthday gift!"

– Cindie Hubiak

"We find that the wine selection is of very good quality. This is a fun club to be a member of. We truly enjoy the wines, GOOD JOB!"

– G. Graton

"I always expect the best, and you deliver every time."

– Robert Gilburg

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with Free Wine when you refer your friends and family to the Gold Medal Wine Club! Many of our members enjoy sharing the fun and unique GMWC experience with others, and we'd like to show our appreciation by sending you an extra bottle of wine. We'll send your friends and family information on our five exciting wine club series, and for each person who joins, we'll send you a FREE Bonus Bottle in your next shipment. Multiple referrals mean multiple bottles – so tell everyone you know! Just have them mention your name when they order, or visit us online at www.GoldMedalWine.com/referral and we'll contact them on your behalf. There's no limit to the number of referral Bonus Bottles you can receive, and you must be a current club member to receive referral bottles. Go ahead, enjoy a Free bottle of wine on us – it's our way of saying... "Thank You!" Call us at 1-800-266-8888 for more 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

Carmichael Vintners embraces the incredible diversity of California's viticultural areas and varietal flavors through their specially produced 2006 Sur le Pont and 2007 Grigio e Bianco. Stylistically, these unique proprietary blends are structured for immediate drinkability and their attractive prices make them exciting selections for our Gold Series members this month.

**Save up to 30%
off Winery Direct**

CARMICHAEL VINTNERS	Retail Price Winery-Direct	Club Price 2-Bottle Members	Club Price 4-Bottle Members And Multiple Series Members
2006 Sur le Pont*	\$20.00/btl.	\$15.00/btl. Save 25%	\$14.00/btl. Save 30%
2007 Grigio e Bianco *	\$18.00/btl.	\$14.00/btl. Save 22%	\$13.00/btl. Save 28%

2 bottle min. order

Reorder Online: www.goldmedalwine.com

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

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If you are also a 2-bottle member of another Series, you are now eligible to receive the 4-bottle member prices above!

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