



Platinum Wine Club

90+ Rated, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers.

Carucci Wines | Santa Barbara County

The route taken by owner Eric Carucci to establish his Central Coast winery is most certainly unique among the roles of successful California wineries.

Carucci, now 33, is a San Diego native who is justly proud of his Italian heritage.

"When I was growing up, wine was always around for our family meals and anytime we celebrated something special," he confessed. "It was part of our household and was always fascinating to me."

After attending and graduating from Cal State San Marcos in 2006 with a business major, Carucci related that he became interested in the wine industry and made it his business to learn about the pleasant beverage he had always enjoyed. His efforts eventually led him to a chance meeting with another San Diego resident who happened to own some vineyards in Sonoma County's Dry Creek AVA.

"The more I talked to his person, the more he convinced me to become involved with wine, so I decided to take his advice," Carucci continued. "It was then 2009 and I agreed to buy a half-ton of Merlot grapes and make wine from them in my parents' garage. The wine came out much better than I expected and I decided to get further involved."

This brave decision was incredibly challenging for a person with no real formal training or experience with wine or winemaking.

Eric Carucci went on, "I began by reading everything I could about wine and I started asking questions from professional winemakers I happened to meet. I realized that the learning curve was much bigger for someone with no real experience so I asked more and more questions. I guess this actually helped me, as I did everything from my own gut. By doing so, I managed to develop my own style and I'm told it all worked out quite well in the end."

Carucci Wines' initial release came in 2010, a whopping 75 cases. That number has grown slowly and is currently between 600 and 800 cases annually, depending on the specific vintage involved. Oh yes, for the record, Eric Carucci's wines have been wonderfully accepted and his accolades and scores have been on par with many other boutique wineries.

Carucci has taken another proven route in establishing his winery as one of the Central Coast's premier producers. He has secured exceptional fruit from a number of top growers from vineyards located near the town of Lompoc. These properties are situated on the western edge of the Sta. Rita Hills in an area that is known as the coldest growing area in the state.

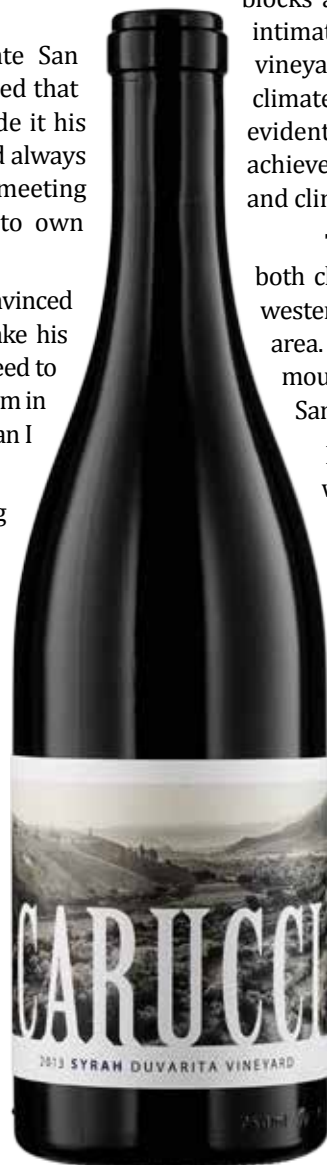
"I have an evergreen agreement with all my growers," Carucci elaborated. "I am able to get grapes from exactly the same blocks and the same rows every year. You might say I am intimately familiar with the fruit I use. I am able to go to the vineyards and oversee any farming necessary. The cool climate makes the expression of terroir that much more evident in my finished wines. I don't think I could have achieved what I have without this combination of vineyards and climate working together."

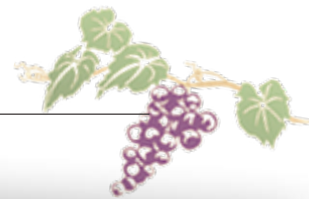
The labeling for Carucci Wines was designed to be both classic and contemporary. The backdrop is the actual western edge of the Sta. Rita Hills, Carucci's prized growing area. Since the area is unique in that it lies east to west, the mountains block the cool air from the ocean and makes Santa Barbara County a valued growing environment.

Eric Carucci is also quite realistic in talking about his winery's future. "I believe that the wine industry is fun, but I know just how difficult it can be. Since I am a bootstrap operation and must use my own resources, I have to take one step at a time. Every dollar I spend must be justified and that makes some choices very difficult," he added. "I really didn't know what I was getting into in the beginning, but I don't regret anything I have done."

A tasting facility is in the future for the small winery operation, possibly as early as next year. At present, Carucci Wines are made at an existing facility located in the Tin City development of nearby Paso Robles.

Eric Carucci and his wife Lindsay have three young daughters and the couple would be delighted if someday they follow their dad into the wine business. "It would be a really cool thing," Eric Carucci finalized. "But, we would never force our girls into anything. We want them to be individuals in every sense of the word."

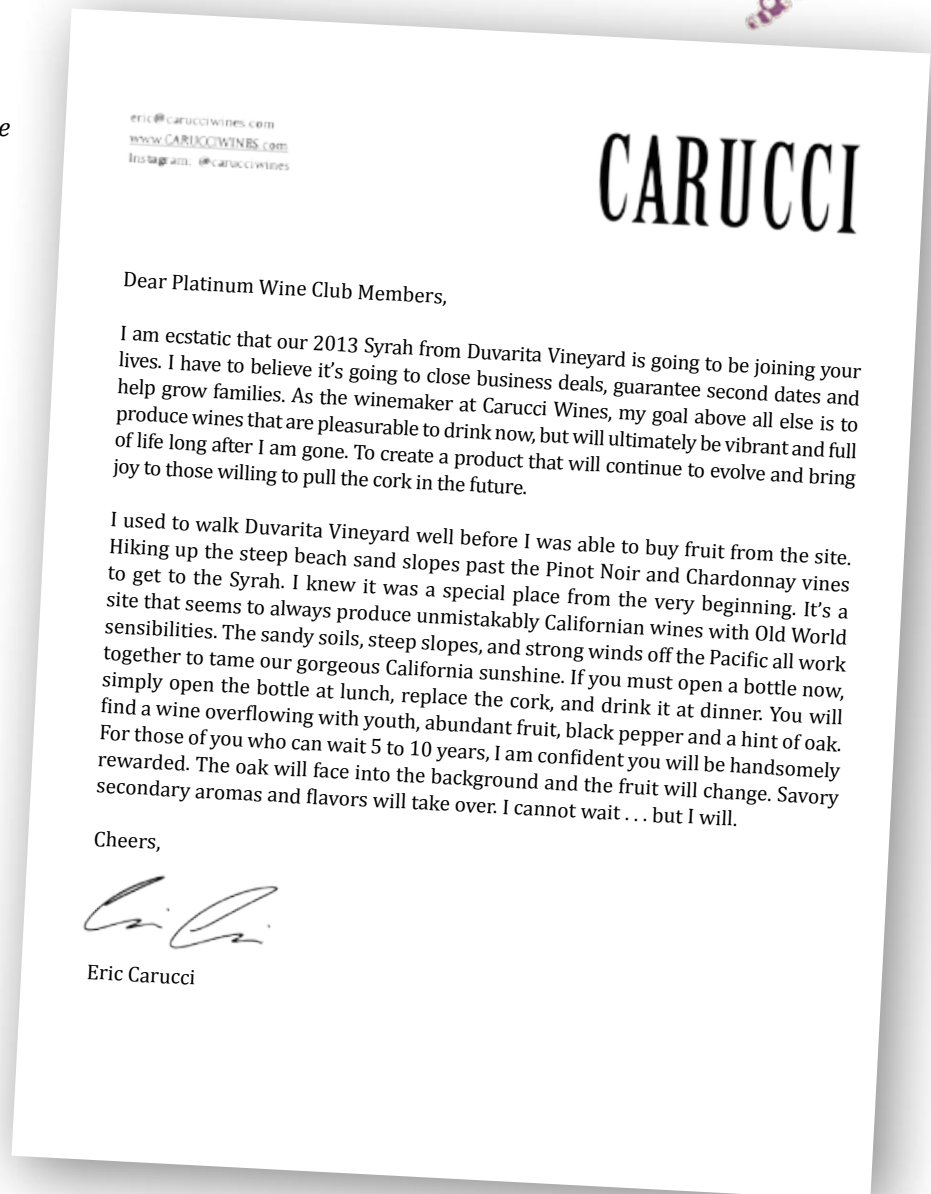




93 POINTS
— *Wine Enthusiast magazine*

185 cases produced

The Carucci 2013 Syrah comes from the Duvarita Vineyard, a biodynamically farmed site located just west of the Sta. Rita Hills boundary. Here, the closer proximity to the ocean makes the Duvarita Vineyard even cooler and windier than properties inside the boundary. This cool-climate site consistently produces wines with great underlying minerality, complexity, and pure 'Old World' style. The Carucci 2013 Duvarita Vineyard Syrah shows great richness, depth and balance with expressive notes of elderberry, cracked black pepper, and bay leaf, with a touch of oak and lavender-rosemary on the finish. Aged 26 months in oak. 100% Syrah. Enjoy now until 2023.



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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



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