Platinum Wine Club

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

Crux Winery | Sonoma County

If a real rags-to-riches story interests you, the saga that is Crux Winery might be up your alley.

It all started in 2005 when Brian Callahan bought some property in the prestigious Russian River Valley growing area. His next-door neighbor was Steve Gower and the pair soon became fast friends. Not only were they both involved in different aspects of the health care industry, but they soon learned they shared mutual interests, wine, winemaking and the pursuit of the noble grape.

"The Russian River Valley was already famous for its great Pinot Noirs and Chardonnay, and it seemed quite natural that we would be interested in wine," explained Brian Callahan. "It seemed like a no brainer, so we decided to make some wine."

Steve Gower's garage became the winery and several years were spent in making wine for their consumption and any friends who were willing to try.

Fast forward to 2012 and Callahan and Gower decided it was time to take the next step. "We then owned some two and a half acres between us, and had begun experimenting with Rhone varietals," Steve Gower informed. "We both held full time jobs in health care, but decided it was time for us to see if we could make it in the wine business. We believed we could make good wine and had received a number of compliments on our early wines. "Besides, my wife wanted her garage back so she could park her car."

Both friends loved the area but admitted they had little formal wine training. No wine courses, no apprentice work in existing wineries, just a tool called the Internet to help them along their bumpy road to success.

"It is amazing what you can find on the Internet," Gower informed. "There are plenty of people out there who are willing to give you advice. You just Google what you need, and you get a number of replies."

Then, the neighboring grape community of Sonoma County's Russian River Valley's North End started chipping in with advice and hands-on help. Equipment was loaned when needed to help the winemaking process at Crux Winery and a formidable home was found at the end of a country road to house the operation. Well, maybe not exactly formidable, but definitely workable.

According to the winery's owners, "Crux Winery is two guys in a warehouse making wine. That warehouse is one of a cluster at the end of a narrow road; if you want a picture to illustrate 'the middle of nowhere,' you could do worse than use this building. The tasting room is just a corner of the said warehouse, surrounded by barrels and equipment."

Since its first wines were commercially released in 2014, the sage of Crux Winery has continued to unfold. Rather than pursue the Pinot Noir course, Callahan and Gower made a somewhat unique (for the Russian River Valley) decision to plant and produce an array of Rhone varietals that included Mourvedre, Syrah and Grenache. That decision has proven to be most fortuitious and the brand has soared in both popularity and acceptance.

"We tend to buy our fruit from small, family owned and operated growers that range from five to twenty acres," stated Steve Gower. "We feel that the fruit is better controlled by small growers and incredibly consistent from year to year. To be successful in this business, you must first have great fruit to work with and our location in the warmer end of the Russian River Valley seemed a good fit for the varietals we wanted to work with."
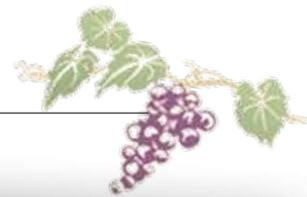
Gower has been particularly pleased with the Grenache grape, a workhorse varietal that is seldom given its due. "The Grenache is incredibly diverse and can produce a huge wine with excellent scent and bodily characteristics. In France, the grape is utilized in hundreds of wines, but rarely receives the credit it deserves. We have been delighted with its acceptance by our customers. The same goes for the Syrah, the principal red grape of the Rhone Valley. It has become a favorite for restaurants and a top performer in tasting events and competitions."

The name 'Crux Winery' points to a crossroads of sorts where several of the Russian River AVA's meet, a point quite close to Crux Winery's own vineyards around the town of Windsor. The compass-style label accents the concept and is one of the classiest labels around.

Kudos to Brian Callahan and Steve Gower for bringing their wine passion to a place where everyone can enjoy their product. Cheers!

Crux | 2013 Syrah, Russian River Valley, Sonoma County

93 POINTS
+ CELLAR SELECTION
+ GOLD MEDAL
— *Tastings.com*
(Beverage Testing Institute)

90 POINTS
— *Wine Enthusiast magazine*

104 cases produced

The Crux Winery 2013 Syrah is a blend of 85% Syrah, 10% Mourvedre and 5% Petite Sirah from the Russian River Valley appellation of Sonoma County. The fruit was sourced from top-notch properties including Atoosa's Vineyard, Windsor Oaks Vineyard, and Crazy Run Ranch, which is Crux's estate vineyard in Windsor. This 2013 Syrah does an excellent job of reflecting the growing season - a warm, sunny year that in turn produced a big, rich Syrah with excellent structure for aging. Earthy, elegant aromas and flavors of blueberry compote, vanilla nut brittle, and freshly turned earth are supported by a full body, silky tannins, and a sleek, complex finish with notes of allspice, berry, and moderate oak. A luscious, sophisticated wine that would pair beautifully with a number of dishes. Aged 20 months in oak. Enjoy now until 2023.

Dear Platinum Wine Club Members,

We are pleased to introduce Crux Winery and share our 2013 Syrah with you. Crux, established in 2012 is a two-man farming and winery operation in the northern Russian River Valley. Our focus is Rhone varietals. We make about 1,000 cases (total production) using Old World techniques and exquisite Sonoma County fruit.

This Syrah is approaching three years in bottle; it's drinking beautifully now and will continue to age gracefully for at least another 5+ years. Pop the cork a few hours before serving or give it a quick decant. The nose is plush with dark red fruits and earth, and both carry over to the palate. The acid and tannins balance with the moderate alcohol (14.1%) and the finish is smooth and lingering. This wine drinks well on its own and is an excellent pairing for duck, lamb, and anything with mushrooms.

We hope you enjoy the wine and we would love to hear from you. If you are ever in Russian River Valley, we invite you to visit us and taste through our whole portfolio of wines including Grenache Blanc, Viognier, GSM Rose, GSM Red, Grenache, and Petite Sirah.

Cheers to you,

Steve Gower
Proprietor, Winemaker
steve@cruxwinery.com

Brian Callahan
Proprietor, General Manager
brian@cruxwinery.com

SMALL LOT RHONE WINES FROM THE RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
CRUXWINERY ON THE WEB, FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM AND TWITTER

INSTANT
Membership Rewards Pricing*

Winery Retail Price $38.00/btl.	2+ btls.	6+ btls.	12+ btls.
2-Bottle Members:	$32.00	$30.33	$29.50
4-Bottle Members:	$32.00	$29.50	$28.25

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$39-$49 per delivery

The *Plus!* Program automatically adds on one special wine to each regularly scheduled wine delivery, or as often as you like! *Plus!* wines are all highly-rated, very small production wines with availability too limited for all regular club members to receive. For more information, visit: **GoldMedalWineClub.com/plus**

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

Vineyard 1869 2015 Zinfandel, Amador County

95 Points + Double Gold Medal - *CA State Fair*
Double Gold Medal - *American Fine Wine Comp.*

437 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.