



Diamond Series



Gemstone Vineyard

Gemstone Vineyard sits in a most unique location in Napa Valley's heralded Yountville appellation. The vineyard occupies about 17 acres and is considered an alluvial wash of gravel and river-rock deposits layered over sandstone. Gemstone Vineyard is bounded on the south by Screaming Eagle and to the north by Shafer Vineyards. It sits across from Dalle Valle and enjoys the constant sea breezes that affect the unique microclimate that lies between the Yountville and Stag's Leap appellations. All aforementioned properties are considered among the top vineyards of Napa Valley and possibly the entire world. None other than Robert Parker has termed the area "The Golden Triangle" for grape growing.

Gemstone Vineyard was founded in the mid 1990s by Paul and Suzie Frank, who originally hailed from the Los Angeles area. The Franks became hands on vintners and preferred doing most of the vineyard work themselves. Gemstone Vineyard flourished and awards and accolades soon followed. Gemstone Vineyard's first releases came in 1997, a total production of only 775 cases.

"Eventually," recalled Frank Dotzler, 52, currently the President of Gemstone Vineyards and owner of the well-respected Outpost Winery, "the Franks grew older and Suzie wanted to return to Southern California. I was always great friends with the Franks and also with Michael and Carole Marks who bought the property several years ago."

Michael Marks and his wife were St. Louis natives who had prospered in the hi-tech world of Silicon Valley. The couple had always enjoyed Napa Valley and its environs and had formerly indicated an interest in someday being the owners of a really "top-flight" piece of land.

"Their involvement is nearly perfect," added Dotzler. "The Marks were able to infuse some badly needed capital into Gemstone Vineyard and the entire operation was taken to a much higher level. World class wines soon graced the cellars of many wine lovers and eventually found their way to the lists of many of America's foremost restaurants."



Much of the credit for Gemstone's success can be traced to winemaker Philippe Melka, a transplanted Frenchman who had made wine for the likes of Chateau Petrus and Chateau Haut-Brion, always considered among the finest wines in the world. The Bordeaux-native also worked in Australia and Italy to further his wine knowledge. Melka's resume in California reads like a who's who of highly acclaimed wineries and includes the likes of Dominus Estates, Dalle Valle Vineyards, Bryant Family Vineyard, Vineyard 29, Dana Estates, Quintessa Vineyard and Hundred Acre Vineyard. Additionally, *Food and Wine Magazine* named Philippe Melka Winemaker of the Year in 2005.

"Whenever you bring together a spectacular growing locale and top it off with one of the truly great international winemakers, you are bound to have great success," Frank Dotzler continued. "The property has seven different clones of Cabernet Sauvignon, and two clones each of Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot. We are careful to handle each of these clones separately during the winemaking process (they are individually barreled in 85% new oak each year) and then blend them together according to their individual strengths. The process is time consuming and quite expensive, but the rewards speak for themselves. Gemstone is recognized worldwide as one of the great Napa Valley producers and that has always been the aim of the owners."

Today's Gemstone Vineyard produces around 1,400 cases of estate wines, a bit over 500 cases of Cabernet Sauvignon and around 900 cases of Estate Red. As imagined, the wines are sold on a strict program of allocation to a fiercely loyal group of consumers.

"The Marks intend to only produce estate bottlings and we only have the sixteen-plus acres to work with," informed Frank Dotzler. "Given the vine density that exists and the fact that we have tried to do what is best for the wine, it doesn't seem likely that our production will increase. Of course, there might be more wine available if a particular vintage produces exceptional fruit and more volume than usual."

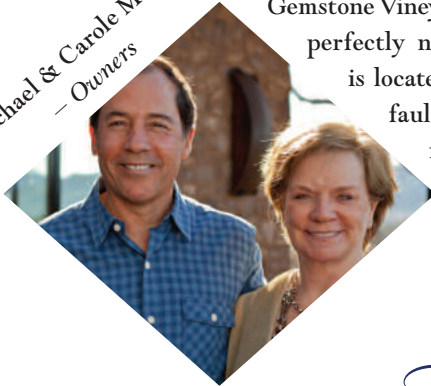


Diamond Series

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Michael & Carole Marks
— Owners



Gemstone Vineyard is the absolutely perfectly named operation that is located in one of the most faultless growing areas in Napa Valley. Its owners have selected experienced

and capable employees to continue their winery's impressive record for the foreseeable future. Gemstone Vineyard, like many other incredible small production facilities, is actually a gift to the wine world that appreciates finesse and quality in its finest form.

It is Gold Medal Wine Club's distinct pleasure to share this *Diamond Series* selection with our members.

Accolades and Tasting Notes

Gemstone 2009 Estate Red

90-93, Points, *Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar* — "Good deep medium ruby. Vibrant aromas of crystallized blackberry and rocky minerality... finishes with substantial tannins..."

91-Points, *Robert Parker* — "The 2009 Red Wine is a gorgeous fleshy offering laced with expressive dark red fruit, flowers, mint and licorice. It shows wonderful radiance and silkiness in a hugely approachable and flat-out delicious style. I especially like the pliancy and generosity of the finish. The 2009 is 68% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc and 4% Petit Verdot that spent 21 months in French oak barrels, 67% new."

Winemaker Philippe Melka's Notes — "Our 2009 Estate Red Blend offers intense aromas of violet, sweet spice and ripe red fruit. These notes mingle with licorice, cherry pit and dark fruit flavors on the mid-palate. The long elegant finish layers cream and vanilla upon the rich fruit tones and smooth tannins. This wine will age for a minimum of twenty years but is lovely and approachable now."

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This month's *Diamond Series* featured *Plus!* wine:
Star Lane Vineyard 2006
'Astral' Cabernet Sauvignon

93-POINTS - *Anthony Dias Blue*

92-POINTS - *Stephen Tanzer's*

International Wine Cellar

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The Gemstone 2009 Estate Red
retails winery-direct for \$80.00 per bottle.

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very special pricing is as follows:

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