

GOLD MEDAL WINE CLUB'S *Pinot Noir Press*



v08i12



FORE FAMILY VINEYARDS

One of the best kept secrets in Napa wine country, Fore Family Vineyards crafts limited-production, critically acclaimed wines from select sustainably farmed vineyards in northern California.



One of Napa Valley's best under-the-radar wineries is this month's *Pinot Noir Series* feature, Fore Family Vineyards. With just over 1,000 cases produced each year, and eight different wines making up the ultra boutique portfolio, Fore Family Vineyards is steadily building its reputation as a world-class (but super limited production) winery in northern California.

Owners Jim and Diane Fore grew up in Napa Valley and have long had a love for premium wines. Their transition into the winery business, although unexpected, has proven to be an exciting new path that challenges them every step of the way.

"We weren't always in the wine business," explains Diane Fore. "I used to be a Kindergarten teacher and my husband was a Piping Designer at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard. When the base closed in 1988, Jim and I moved back to Napa and he decided we should become farmers."

Jim and Diane sought out friend Doug Hill (of Hill Family Estate Winery) who had over twenty-six years of experience growing grapes in Napa, and started acquiring leases on suitable properties throughout the Valley. Jim even started working for Doug's business (Yountville Equipment Company), and began developing vineyards in the area. Today, Jim and Doug have a partnership, Fore-Hill Vineyards, that farms forty-

five acres across five vineyards in the Napa Valley. About fifteen different grape varieties are grown on the various sites, most of which are sold to neighboring wineries, and Jim and Doug share in the vineyard management using only sustainable farming practices.

In 2000, Jim and Diane Fore located a 95-acre mountain top property on Cobb Mountain in Red Hills Lake County - just a couple hours north of Napa Valley. They fell in love with the land, purchased it, and planted 17 acres of it to vineyards. Just four years later, the couple released their first vintage of Fore Family Cabernet Sauvignon from their new property with the help of winemaker Peter Franus. The Fores had been selling fruit to Peter for many years and it seemed like a natural fit that he would become their winemaker.

Over the years, Fore Family has expanded to include Pinot Noir, Grenache Blanc, Merlot, a GSM Blend, Mourvedre, Late Harvest Syrah, and a Late Harvest Sauvignon Blanc, sourced from various vineyards in Napa and surrounding areas. They have garnered a number of first place awards in local competitions, which considering the caliber of their Napa and Lake County neighbors, is an incredibly impressive feat.

The Fores are very happy with how far they've come, and look forward to continued growth in the future. Cheers!



ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Winemaker Peter Franus was initially drawn to California in the late 1960's with high hopes of obtaining a Journalism degree from UC Berkeley - and it was Berkeley's proximity to Napa Valley that led to his fascination with winemaking. In fact, Peter eventually put journalism aside and sought a new degree in viticulture and enology from Cal State Fresno. After graduating in the early 1980's, Peter moved to Napa Valley where he has been involved with grape growing and winemaking ever since. Before joining Fore Family in 2004, Peter was winemaker for Mount Veeder Winery and his own namesake brand, Peter Franus, which can be found throughout the U.S., as well as Canada. Philosophically and stylistically, Peter relies on a minimalist approach to winemaking. His wines from Fore Family Vineyards have garnered multiple awards and consistent recognition from top competitions.

Fore Family 2010 Carneros - Napa Valley Pinot Noir

Medium ruby in color, the Fore Family 2010 Carneros-Napa Valley Pinot Noir offers vibrant and perfumed aromas of raspberry, cherry, and lavender, all woven together with a subtle toasty oak background. Complex, gentle, and balanced, this Pinot Noir has a slightly juicy structure that enlivens the palate and keeps on bringing you back for more. The slight lift of tannins in the finish completes this excellent Pinot Noir experience.

Cases Produced: 287

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GOLD MEDAL

- San Francisco Chronicle
Wine Competition



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