



Platinum Wine Club

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

Frias Family Vineyard | Napa Valley

In an era that has spawned a number of Mexican-American owned and operated wineries in California (Ceja, Robledo, Mi Sueno, Gustavo Thrace and others), one particular winery seems to have risen to the forefront in the lofty pursuit of the ultimate wine.

Napa Valley's Spring Mountain-based Frias Family Vineyard has earned the acclaim of both wine writers and industry periodicals for its incredible, full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon. What's more, the future looks even brighter for this limited production winery.

None of this comes as a shock to owner Manuel Frias, a native of Jalisco State in Mexico, who came to the United States in 1951.

"My father was already working in the San Francisco area," Manuel related, "and he filled out the paperwork to get my family admitted to the United States. There were nine of us in our party including my mother and myself. We got to Tijuana and a small mistake was found in our paperwork, so we had to stay in a hotel there for six weeks until it was all straightened out. My uncle finally came and took us up to San Francisco."

The Frias family grew up in San Francisco's storied Mission District and Manuel eventually went to college where he achieved master's degrees in both Education & Administration and Counseling. A third master's in Spanish Literature is also part of his hard-earned educational portfolio.

While student teaching at the age of 30, Manuel Frias' Spanish-Basque roommate invited him to a wine tasting party that was held in a home in Rutherford in the Napa Valley. When he awoke the following morning, Manuel Frias underwent a life-changing occurrence.

"When I woke up and saw how beautiful everything around me was, I thought I was in paradise," Frias recounted. "I knew then if I ever had a chance to buy property, it would have to be in Napa Valley."

Frias developed his career in administration at San Francisco City College and continued his love affair with wine country. At every opportunity, he took his wife and family on outings to Sonoma and Mendocino and poured over every wine-related book and magazine he could find. It would be ten years after his first vision before his dream of Napa Valley property would finally materialize.

In late 1977, Manuel Frias was able to trade three existing homes in San Francisco for 100 acres of hillside land that mostly fell into the prestigious Spring Mountain District appellation. He visited the property often and also started taking classes on viticulture at the Napa Valley College. In 1985, as a hobbyist, he planted a small 5 acre vineyard on the property and created, just for fun, the unofficial first vintage in 1988.

350 cases of the 1991 vintage was the first actual release for the Frias Family Vineyard. Manuel Frias recalls that the first few years of growing were conducted under almost dry farming conditions. Since all of Frias' vines are grown on hillside slopes, Frias feels that nature is allowed to devise her own growth patterns.

"For us, it was necessary to improve our water supply in order for our vines to excel," he stated. "It is a laboriously slow process. Each year, the vines get a little bigger and their yield improves. Since all our fruit is hillside-grown, the fruit is fairly intense. This leads to some really big, monster wines that our customers seem to really identify with."

Over the years, Frias has slowly grown his production to right around 3,000 cases. He has also planted an additional 8 acres. While he plans to continue slightly expanding the vineyard, Frias hopes to preserve the beauty of the property, as the vines are surrounded by native trees and wildlife.

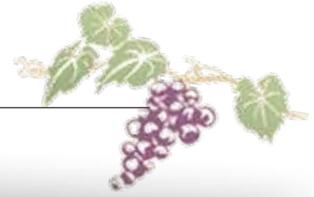
Manuel Frias is excited that two of his sons, Manny Jr., and Fernando, have joined him in the Frias Family Vineyard operation. Manny Jr. is involved with direct sales while Fernando is the general manager and attends the numerous trade shows associated with the winery.

The word around the wine industry is that most of the Mexican-American owned wineries represent solidly made wines that offer excellent price/value relationships. With accolades piling up from a number of sources, Frias Family Vineyard is no exception to that premise.

Manuel Frias is a marvelous example of a dedicated, hard working person who can live his dream and enjoy the fruits of his success. He is very happy with his lot in life and his picturesque surroundings.



Frias | 2015 "Lady of the Dead" Red Wine, Napa Valley



92 POINTS

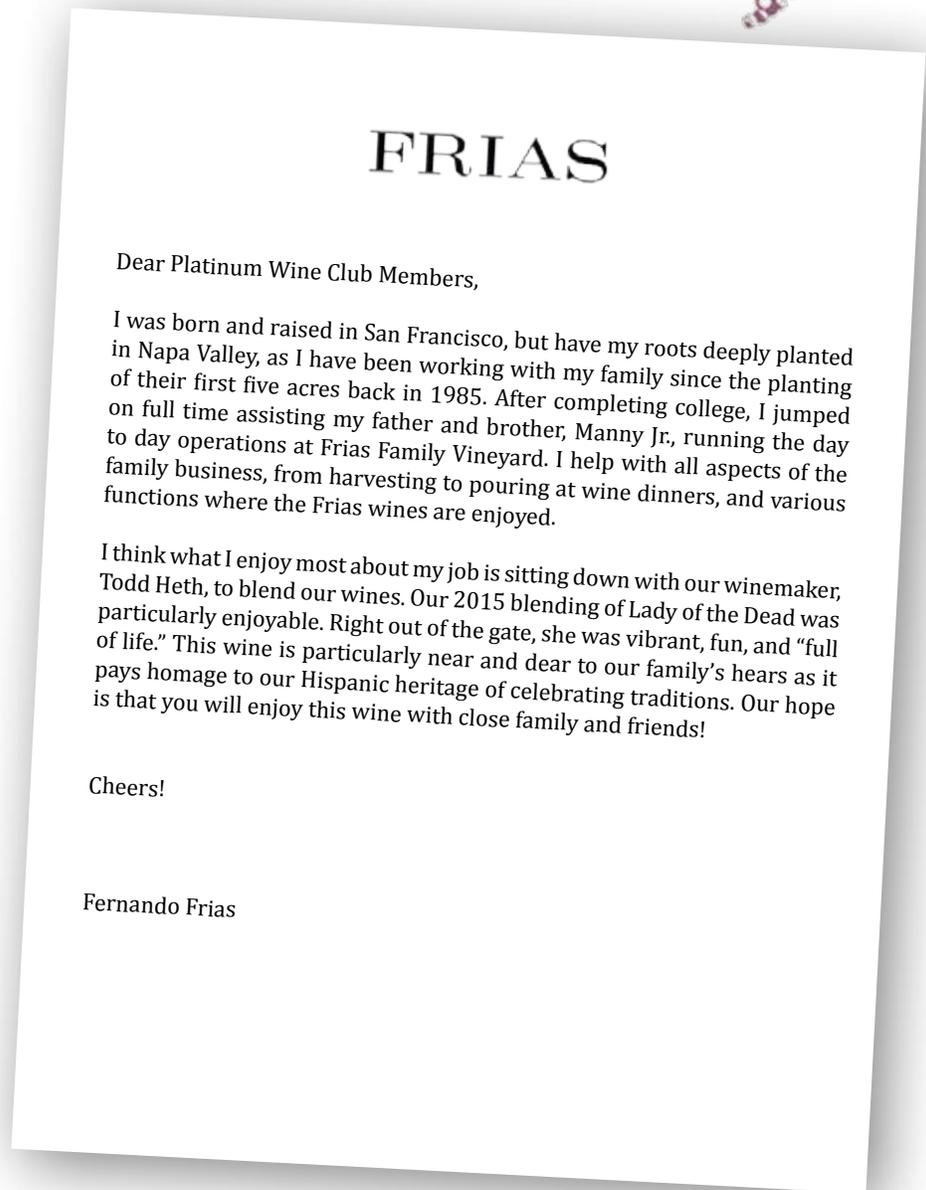
— Robert Parker's
The Wine Advocate

700 cases produced

The inaugural release of Frias' 2015 "Lady of the Dead" is a homage to the Frias heritage and family. This Cabernet-based blend is comprised of 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Syrah, 10% Merlot, and 10% Cabernet Franc, all sourced from the Frias family's premium estate vineyards in the Napa Valley. Ripe, plush and playful, the 2015 "Lady of the Dead" offers aromas of candied fruit, cinnamon and spice with flavors of lush and juicy red raspberries, baked blackberries, mulberries, plums, and exotic spices with touches of damp earth. Soft, velvety tannins linger on the long, spicy finish and make this racy, hedonistic wine an instant crowd pleaser. Aged 18 months in oak. Enjoy now until 2025.

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

Talisman 2013 Pinot Noir
Red Dog Vineyard,
Sonoma Mountain

93 Points - *International Wine Report*
413 Cases Produced



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