

PLATINUM SERIES

Select, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers

Garden Creek Vineyards was born out of its owner's renewed passion and enthusiasm for the wine business, some seven years after he had decided the wine industry just wasn't for him.

Justin Miller, 32, had grown up in the Alexander Valley of Sonoma helping his dad James raise grapes for a number of local wineries. Having started in the 1950's, James Miller was considered a pioneer in planting varietals in the area and numbered among his closest friends was the legendary Robert Young. Content to be growers, the Millers sold their grapes to a number of top Sonoma wineries where the grapes were turned into award-winning wines.

"We actually had an underground cellar where our family made some wines for our personal use," Justin Miller recalled. "But we never made any wines to sell, we were strictly growers."

Justin grew tired of the long hours and dusty surroundings and matriculated to college, in fact to a number of colleges. He studied various subjects and was gone for seven years when he received a phone call from his father.

"Dad told me we had lost the foreman of our ranch," Miller related. "We talked long and hard and he asked me to come home. When I got back, something special happened to me and all of a sudden I realized what I had been missing. If you want to call it a renaissance, then go right ahead. All I can tell you is that it suddenly seemed as if the ranch was the perfect thing for me to do with my life."

Justin Miller had worked with top winemakers most of his adult life. For years, a number of them had constantly told him that his family should make their own wines, that their grapes were that good. At one point in the late 1990's, the message finally sunk in.

Justin and his childhood friend and sweetheart Karin Warnelius fell in love and married. Karin was also in the wine industry and supported his idea that they make a wine of their own. Justin attended UC Davis on weekends and learned the fine points of winemaking. One thing the couple both agreed on is that their new project would remain small and that they

would do all the actual work involved in making the wines.

They chose the name Garden Creek Vineyards to honor the rain-fed creek that crosses their farm behind James Miller's home and eventually empties into the historic Russian River. Since the Miller's main property is also called Garden Creek Ranch, the term 'Vineyards' distinguished the two.

In 2001, the first cases of Garden Creek Vineyards, all 47 of them, were ready for debut. Even though everyone who tasted the wines raved, Justin Miller decided to hold the wine back.

"It was all part of our master plan," he explained. "We are determined to keep our operation really small, and today only produce about 600 cases. We hold back 60- 80 cases each year with the idea of eventually doing six-year verticals. That

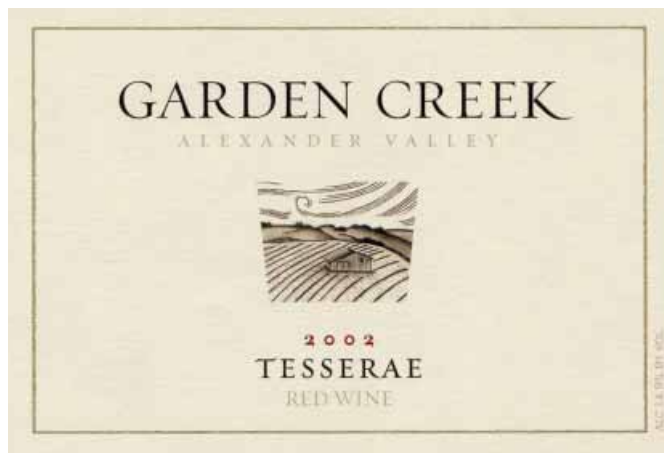
way, those who are really interested can see the differences each vintage causes and hopefully enjoy the experience."

That seems a courageous stand for such a tiny winery. Since Garden Creek's public debut, its wines have gained a great deal of critical acclaim as well as extremely high numbers from wine periodicals. Garden Creek can literally sell every drop it makes.

"Sometimes it isn't all about the money," Miller revealed. "Karin and I feel there is more to making a really great wine than just selling cases. There are others here in Sonoma that feel the same way, who are making some killer wines. Sonoma is unlike Napa in that Napa has hundreds of boutique wineries that make limited production. This tends to elevate quality and the entire valley benefits. Sonoma is just starting along those lines and is really accomplishing a lot. I think this movement of small wineries and limited production will continue and Karin and I will be in the forefront."

Miller also feels the consistency that wine writers and consumers will look for will eventually come.

"If we all keep our size regulated, the rest will follow. In the past, there has been no real pressure on Sonoma to make really great wines. Some wealthy people have recently invested in small Sonoma wineries and that is changing everything. They are making some superb wines and will continue to do so."



The road to great wine begins at your door.

TASTING NOTES





GARDEN CREEK
RANCH VINEYARDS WINERY

Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

We are very pleased to be sharing our Garden Creek 'Tesserae' with you from our family vineyards in the hills of Alexander Valley located in northern Sonoma County. This is our greatest effort and commitment in creating a unique, expressive wine. That said, it's our location of a dozen distinct soil types, our terroir-driven winemaking philosophy, and basically holding true to ourselves which drive our winemaking convictions.

We are both 2nd generation winegrowers – our family has farmed this ranch since the late 1950's – first the prune trees, then cattle. In 1969 it became winegrapes. Justin was born and raised on Garden Creek Ranch and Karin's family had a 200-acre ranch only a few miles away. Both of us have a great passion for the land, open space and nature's bounty. Falling in love one fall while picking 2nd crop Cab in 1997, we knew this was to be our future together.

As a husband and wife team, we are both the winegrowers and winemakers. We create the wine in the vineyard selectively picking vine by vine during harvest. As the wines begin to develop in the winery, we allow the wine to speak to us, to guide us. We believe in 100% nature fermentations, thus the meaning of terroir as it is very specific to our site, our soils, and our ranch.

Our suggestion: Sit back with a beautiful meal, good friends and a bottle of our Garden Creek and savor the evening.

Cheers,

Justin & Karin Warnelius-Miller

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TASTING NOTES

369 Cases Produced

A trailblazing and trend setting newcomer of Sonoma County, Garden Creek Winery is culminating organic and biodynamic farming principles with solar energy, and they're making some killer Cabernet along the way. Garden Creek's first commercial wine and current release is the 2002 Tesserae, a Meritage red blend comprised of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc. The Tesserae, which is a Latin term for the small pieces that comprise a mosaic, is dramatically structured and pure Alexander Valley: soft, herbaceous, and cedary, with the tannic structure to age gracefully for many years. Awarded an outstanding **93 Points** and **Cellar Selection** by *Wine Enthusiast* magazine, the 2002 Tesserae exudes a rich, intense bouquet of crème de cassis, blackberries, and subtle sweet oak mingled with dark mocha and anise. Intense floral qualities of old-fashioned heirloom roses delight the senses and decadent, powerful flavors explode on the palate. A persistence of fruit paired with an expansive texture and ripe velvety tannins melt into a prolonged, flavorful finish that must be tasted again, again, and again. Try pairing with grilled beef or lamb. Aged 19 months in oak. 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc. Enjoy now until 2012.



REORDERS

Sonoma is always reinventing itself with small, ambitious new wineries, and Garden Creek's successful new venture has made it one of the fresh new labels worth paying some serious attention to. The 2002 Tesserae is a superb example of the exciting new quality coming out of Alexander Valley and a beautiful wine that will develop seamlessly in your cellar.

The **Garden Creek 2002 Tesserae Red Wine** retails winery-direct for \$65.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

Half-Case-\$00.00 /bottle (\$000.00)

Full-Case-\$00.00 /bottle (\$000.00)

*2 bottle min. order [Plus shipping]

Call: 1-800-266-8888

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E-mail: orders@goldmedalwine.com

Reorder Web Site:

www.goldmedalwine.com/member