

PLATINUM SERIES



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

For Gary Farrell, it was simply a case of country over city—or more specifically, a life altering decision where his overwhelming choice was the beautiful Sonoma County landscape of Northern California.

Having grown up in the storied Rose Bowl setting of Pasadena much further south, the then nineteen-year-old Farrell decided to leave the smog and pollution behind to attend college in less populated and majestically appointed Northern California. He arrived in Sonoma on a

particularly idyllic and crisp April day in 1970 and has stayed there ever since. While obtaining a political science degree from Sonoma State, he began experimenting with various types of fermentations, mostly beers, which eventually led him into the wine industry. Farrell was able to support himself during these early, formative years by apprenticing to a number of Sonoma winery luminaries who included Tom Dehlinger, Robert Stemmler, Joe Rochioli and Davis Bynum to name a few.

By 1978, his work so impressed Davis Bynum that he was offered the winemaker position at Bynum's bucolic facility, and where he eventually made the wines for both Limerick Lane and Rochioli wineries. His relationship with Davis Bynum continued to flourish along with his growing reputation as one of Sonoma's premiere winemakers.

By 1982, Gary Farrell decided it was time to produce his own wine and set about to produce his first release. The initial edition of Gary Farrell Wines was a mere 50 cases of Gary Farrell Vineyards *Rochioli Vineyard* Pinot Noir, the first vineyard-designated wines produced from the heralded Sonoma vineyard. For the next fifteen years, Gary Farrell wines experienced what could correctly be called a modest growth rate along with an incredible degree of consumer acceptance.

"What has always been most important to me," Farrell recently stated, "was that my wines have clearly focused on subtlety, balance and elegance. I have never really been interested in high extract or overtly jammy wines, even though a number of the leading wine critics prefer these styles of wine."

Gary Farrell's traditional approach to the modern wine business is quite refreshing in this age of highly stylized and sensory-perceptive wines. His favorite grape of choice is the incredibly difficult Pinot Noir that offers winemakers the ultimate

challenge and which requires the gentlest handling to be successfully made.

A little over four years ago, Farrell, now 51, realized his lifelong dream and completed his new state-of-the-art winery facility located off Westside Road in Sonoma. The buildings occupy a prime ridge side site that looks south over the entire majestic Russian River Valley and directly down towards the engaging hills of neighboring Green Valley. But don't

let the postcard perfect views fool you; Gary Farrell Winery is all about winemaking ease and ultimate quality.

"Our new winery doesn't allow for any compromise with respect of winemaking," Farrell explained. "For instance, we hand sort our fruit at a dawdling 1-1/2 tons per hour, which is probably among the slowest rates in the industry. Then, all our fruit

is placed on a conveyor, rather than screw pushed. It takes a lot longer to do but is extremely gentle on the fruit. Such handling shows up in the quality of the wines."

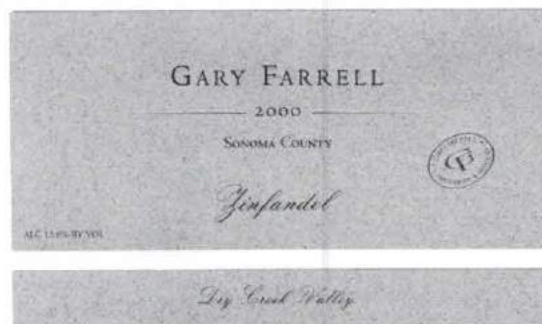
Farrell is impassioned about his wines that are by most standards understated and smacking of cultivated elegance. He credits the vineyards that grow the grapes for the ultimate quality his wines continuously enjoy.

Gary Farrell Vineyards and Winery currently produce around 17,000 cases, a level that was first reached in 2001 and a level with which Farrell himself is completely comfortable. Gary sees no need to increase his production (another refreshing distinction between Farrell and some of his competitors) in the foreseeable future.

"Since we are a 100% hands on winery," he confided, "I still do most of the work without much help. I have no assistant winemaker and can still experiment whenever I feel the need or challenge. I must say it's pretty fabulous."

Such unbounded enthusiasm is most welcome from a man whose reputation in the wine business has always placed the consumer ahead of the wine critic regarding his wines. With his wife Debbie now also involved in the winery, Gary Farrell is that rare, fulfilled winery owner complete with a sparkling reputation among his peers.

It is with the greatest pleasure that we share this month's *Platinum Series* selection from Gary Farrell Vineyards and Winery with you. We know the experience will be most enjoyable!



TASTING NOTES



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2,615 Cases Produced

"No one could be more a perfectionist than Gary Farrell, and few could match his ability to coax the most from the grapes he favors," says the *Wine & Spirits Annual Buying Guide*. Such is the case with Farrell's 2000 Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel. **94-Points** and a **Gold Medal** were handed out at the California State Fair for this delicious Zin. Another **Gold Medal** won at the North of the Gate Wine Competition as well as a **Gold Medal** and an "**Exceptional**" rating from well-known critic, Dan Berger of the *Vintage Experience* publication—"loads of strawberry and raspberry and perfect toasty finish. Hard to put down; enticing." The *Wine Enthusiast* magazine rated this wine a solid **90-Points**—"If purple's your color, then dig in. This is a full but well-balanced cruiserweight with pungent boysenberry and spice-box aromas, developed yet sassy berry, plum and vanilla flavors, and a structured, big-tannin finish. Despite all its power, it dances on your tongue and isn't overstuffed."

GARY FARRELL

VINEYARDS & WINERY

Dear Platinum Series Members,

Zinfandel is often referred to as "the misunderstood varietal," as it is a wine not commonly produced in growing regions outside California. Local advocates take great pride in its origin, and call it "California's Varietal" ... no doubt because they cannot make such a claim about any other important grape cultivars. Nevertheless, I must admit to being a huge admirer of this wine, when made in what I consider a "classic" style from top grape sources.

As with most wines, fruit sourcing is the first (and perhaps most important) challenge to producing classic Zinfandel. Vine age seems important with this varietal, as many of the finest examples are produced from older vines. Interestingly, Zinfandel vines tend to set an uneven crop, and grapes of a particular vine may not ripen uniformly. This is especially true on some of the older "head-pruned" vines. It is, therefore, extremely important to work closely with the grower to assure that steps are taken to control or minimize this tendency.

Our style of Zinfandel focuses on full-flavored and colored wines, which are true to the varietal and favor elegance, finesse and balance, rather than the huge extraction, high tannin and excessive alcohols found in many Zinfandels today. While some of these "over the top" efforts may be interesting to taste (and may stand out in comparative tastings), they typically fatigue the palate quite rapidly and often lose their appeal after the first few sips.

Our 2000 DCV Zinfandel wine was fermented in small, open-topped fermentation tanks and aged for 9 months in the finest quality French oak cooperage prior to bottling. This wine should continue to age gracefully through 2008 under appropriate cellaring conditions.

Sincerely,

Gary Farrell
Gary Farrell Wines Inc.

10701 WESTSIDE ROAD HEALDSBURG CA 95448 TELEPHONE 707 473 2900 FAX 707 473 2901

REORDERS

This is a classic Zin focusing on full-flavor, elegance, finesse and balance with a deep purple color, all characteristics that are true to the varietal.

The **Gary Farrell 2000 Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel** is sold out at the winery, but did retail for \$24.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

Half-Case-\$19.50 /bottle (\$144.00)
Full-Case-\$18.00 /bottle (\$216.00)

Call: 1-800-266-8888

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E-mail: orders@goldmedalwine.com

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