



# Platinum Wine Club

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

## Heibel Ranch Vineyards | Napa Valley

It's a tiny property located on a piece of land that has been in the same family for more than seventy years. It is called Heibel Ranch Vineyards and is a tribute to the original 1,300-acre ranch that was acquired by George Bennett Heibel way back in 1945 as the Aetna Springs Resort.

George Heibel was a visionary and modernized the existing resort and its excellent golf course that was the second oldest course in California. He realized the resort was the backbone of the property and even included an airstrip for his celebrity clientele. Ronald Reagan used the resort to announce his first run for the governorship of California in 1974. Division of the land into smaller parcels occurred after Heibel's death among his survivors and their families.

Today, Heibel Ranch Vineyards is in the capable hands of Heibel's grandson, Trent Ghiringhelli, 44, and his family. They own 185 acres of land and planted a small portion of it in 2003.

Heibel Ranch Vineyards' setting is in bucolic Pope Valley, a sub-region of Napa Valley, located in Napa Valley's northeastern end. It lies around the more famous Howell Mountain's western side and is rumored to be in the running for Napa Valley's next sub-appellation, but nothing has been finalized thus far.

"We have an ideal growing environment," Trent Ghiringhelli pointed out. "Pope Valley is almost directly east of Calistoga and is warmer in the summer and colder in the winter than other growing areas of Napa Valley. That factor allows for great balance in our fruit and the ability to make truly fine wines."

After the initial 2003 planting (Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel, and Petite Sirah), Ghiringhelli decided to try his hand at making an unconventional blend of varietals. He called the new blend "Lappa's" after his father's longtime nickname. For the record, *Lappa's* means *pumpkin sucker* in the Northern Italian dialect of his forbearers. The three varietals came from his estate vineyards and Ghiringhelli added a fourth varietal, Cabernet Franc, to the final blend. Only 135 cases were produced of the 2006 Lappa's, a minuscule number for the fledgling winery. By the way, Trent Ghiringhelli utilizes both French and American oak in the aging process for his wines, but limits the time spent in barrel. "I feel it is more

important to focus on highlighting the vineyard aspects and fruit character present in the wine rather than the oaken impact the wood produces," he verbalized.

Heibel Ranch Vineyards is owned by Trent's mother, Helen Heibel Nelson and his step-dad, Bruce Nelson. This year's production will total out at just fewer than 400 cases, a figure that Trent Ghiringhelli sees as near perfect for his small operation. "We want to maintain our size and quality and since I am the only employee, 400 cases is an ideal level for me to produce." The University of Colorado graduate added, "I have a master plan that provides for our planting an additional 15 to 20 acres, but that is definitely in the future. We will let demand for our wines lead us to additional plantings and increased wine production."

Ghiringhelli's wines have been met with excellent critical acclaim since their first release and are held in high regard by the winery's growing number of fans. To reach more consumers, Heibel Ranch Vineyards opened a tasting room in nearby downtown Calistoga, near the Calistoga Depot Building. The tasting environment is actually a retired railroad caboose car (Number 12) and could easily be considered Napa Valley's most ambient above-ground tasting spot. If you are in the area, do not miss this one!

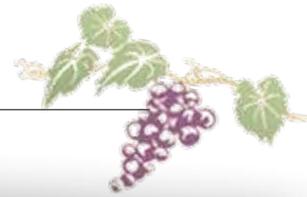
Only the future can know what's in store for this tiny Napa Valley winery that is surrounded by larger, more adequately financed properties and wineries. Sometimes, minuscule operations like Heibel Ranch Vineyards become lost in the ever-changing wine world that exists in California and throughout the world. Through its tenacious approach to the wine industry and the dedicated passion of its ownership team, wine insiders are betting on this meticulous winery and its excellent portfolio of innovative, unconventional wines.

In Trent Ghiringhelli, Heibel Ranch Vineyards has the right person to see it through into fruition. It has always produced world-class wines and should continue to do so for many years to come.

We salute Heibel Ranch Vineyards for its excellent history and well-made wines. Such operations are necessary to produce a balance between large and small producers and the overall quality present in each bottle. Here's to raising our glasses to this significant small winery! Enjoy!



# Heibel Ranch | 2012 "Lappa's" Red Wine, Napa Valley



**92 POINTS +  
GOLD MEDAL**  
— *Tastings.com*  
(Beverage Testing Institute)

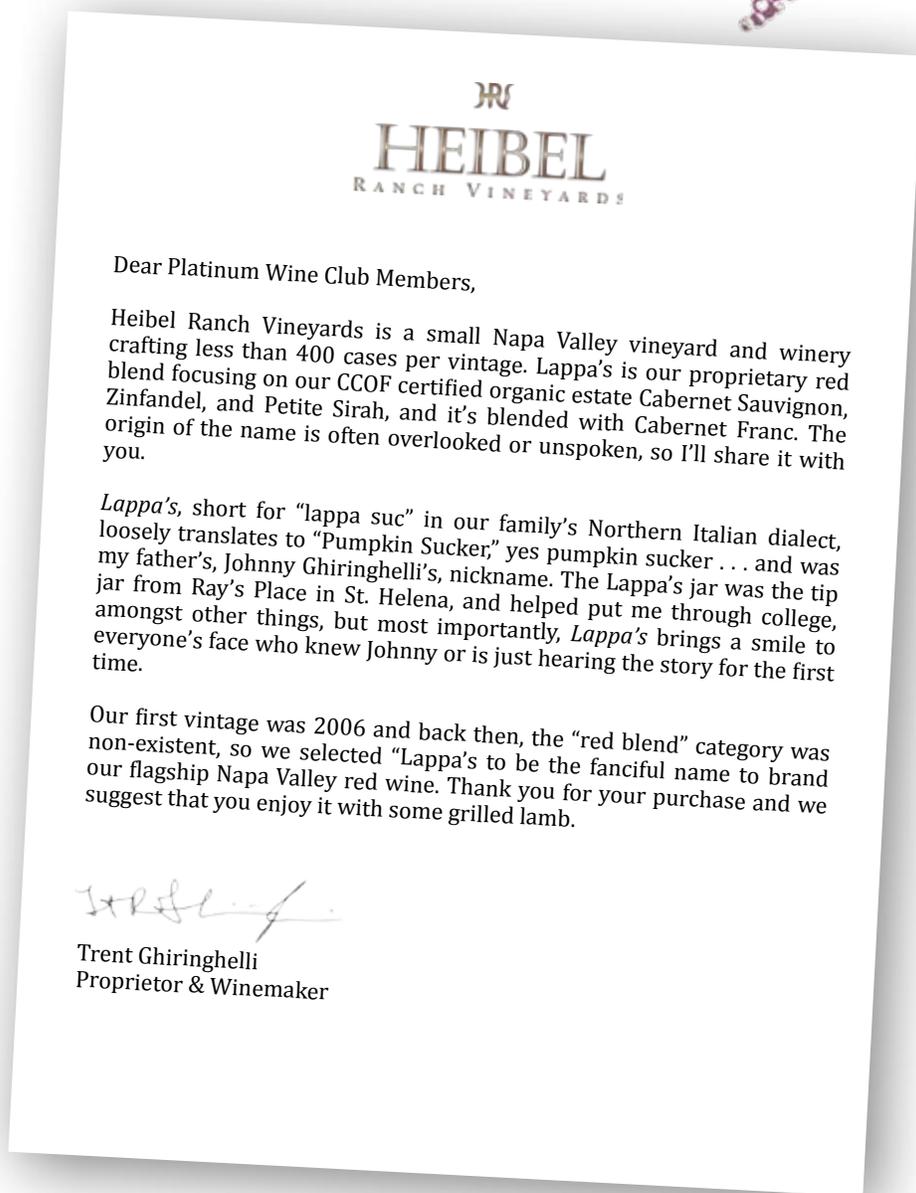
## 217 cases produced

The Heibel Ranch "Lappa's" Red Wine is a proprietary blend that focuses on Heibel Ranch's estate grown Cabernet Sauvignon, Zinfandel and Petite Sirah, all blended with Cabernet Franc. The 2012 "Lappa's" vintage is a classic with a deeper, more brooding persona than its previous bottlings. Unctuous fruit and generous and balanced oak envelope the nose and coat the palate before leading into a long and savory finish. Notes of blackberries, raspberries, sandalwood, mocha, smoke and pepper make this a very complex wine that pairs well with meat loaf or lasagna. Aged 22 months in oak. 36% Cabernet Franc, 28% Zinfandel, 21% Petite Sirah, and 15% Cabernet Sauvignon. Enjoy now until 2022.



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

**Levo 2014 "Into the Static"  
Syrah, Santa Barbara County**

93 Points - *Jeb Dunnuck*  
269 Cases Produced



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