



HIGHWAY 12 VINEYARDS & WINERY

Representing the dozens of world-class vineyards within the Sonoma and Carneros corridors of Highway 12, this rapidly growing winery offers insight into this prestigious growing area with a unique style all its own.



Highway 12 makes use of a number of different wine growing appellations along the legendary roadway, most notably are the sub-regions within Sonoma and Carneros; Highway 12 sources Pinot Noir from some of California's most prestigious growers; Co-founders Michael Sebastiani, Doug Offenbacher, and Paul Giusto in the winery's barrel room.

It's a roadway that is every bit as legendary as Napa Valley's esteemed Highway 29.

Beginning in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, Highway 12 winds and bends its way westward through the vineyards and marvelous landscapes of the Foothills Region, through Lodi and its venerable growths of Old Vine Zinfandel and then further west down through Napa and Sonoma's famed Carneros Region. After its transverse of the entirety of Sonoma Valley, Highway 12 winds up at the bluffs of the Pacific Ocean and the rapidly emerging appellation that covers the Sonoma Coast.

Actually, wine was first planted in the present Highway 12 corridor in 1825 by the Franciscan padres of the Sonoma Mission, the northernmost mission in the series of missions that transgressed California in the 18th and 19th centuries. Commercial vineyards first began appearing in the mid-1800's almost simultaneously all along the current route as far east as the legendary '49er Gold Country.

It took Paul Giusto and Michael Sebastiani, co-founders of the rapidly growing Highway 12 Vineyards and Winery, to embrace this wonderful stretch of highway by naming their

fledgling winery after its legendary stretch of roadway. Giusto is a Sonoma State communications and marketing graduate who formerly worked with Sebastiani during his tenure at the well-respected Viansa Winery.

"To us, it sort of seemed quite simple," noted Giusto, a San Francisco native. "Sometimes, the most opportune facets of a business are those you find right under your nose. All the great wineries that are located on or just off Highway 12 are what have helped make this area so wine-famous. We just decided to dedicate our place to it and show just how wonderful wines made from Highway 12 fruit can be."

Giusto banded together with Michael Sebastiani of the noteworthy Sonoma family to start Highway 12 Vineyards and Winery back in 2003. With Sebastiani as the winemaker and Giusto as the sales and marketing figure, they first produced a smallish 650 cases of their first release to the general public. Production started out slowly and over the past few years really started to pick up, topping out at 45,000 cases for this vintage, a level that Giusto feels is comfortable for the operation.

"We wanted to run a lean business for the first few years," confided Giusto.

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Highway 12's grapes are hand-harvested and hand-sorted from Sonoma and Carneros' top vineyards; Highway 12's grower-partners are all friends who share their pride in this region; The wines are produced and barrel aged at the Highway 12 winery on Eighth Street East in Sonoma, CA.

ABOUT THE VINEYARD



The Highway 12 corridor is home to dozens of world class vineyards, and from the best of those come the grapes for Highway 12's wines. This month's selection, the 2012 Reserve Pinot Noir, was produced from the Sangiacomo Family Vineyards in the Sonoma/Carneros wine region.

Sangiacomo Family Vineyards has been farming land for four generations, since

"We will eventually reach somewhere between 55,000 and 65,000 cases, but the exact date is yet to be established. It is entirely up to our ongoing sales and the confidence the general public has in our wines."

Judging from Highway 12's initial successes, their wines are already held in extremely high regard by the trade press and in the opinion of wine competition judges who have awarded a number of Gold Medals to the winery's first few years of entries.

"It sort of helps that we utilize just about every varietal that is grown in Sonoma," added Giusto. "So many different varietals give us a great deal of flexibility and allow us to do things other wineries that are more restricted regarding their fruit simply cannot do."

They have welcomed the chance to work with many of the same growers Sebastiani first knew through his family's wineries. He has worked with these farmers since his youth and appreciated the work that went into producing world-class fruit suitable for making great wines. Giusto and Sebastiani now consider these vineyards the true foundation of Highway 12 Vineyards and Winery and are dedicated to establishing their mark with this new entity.

Highway 12 Vineyards and Winery has also come full bore with the opening of its incredible tasting room, just a few years old and situated on the southeast corner of Sonoma's famous plaza. Considered the last piece of the puzzle, the tasting room offers visitors to the historic area a glance inside the real character of the winery.

"Our tasting room allows us to be competitive with the other more established wineries," Giusto concluded. "It took us a while to complete, but we think it is on par with many of the other fine wineries. It is the showcase we have been waiting for."

Highway 12 Vineyards and Winery is atypical of other area wineries in that it makes use of a number of different growing appellations to present its portfolio of wines. Its wines offer insight into these various growing areas while maintaining a unique style that sets it apart from other wineries. We congratulate this growing winery and its diverse programs of wine innovation.

1927, and is one of California's most prestigious and respected grower families. According to the Sangiacomo family, Pinot Noir is the premier red grape with everything going for it - bold cherry and berry flavors with an exuberant spark that sends taste buds soaring. It is for this reason that the family is most attentive when growing this varietal. Their superior Pinot Noir fruit is in consistently high demand by top wine producers .

The Sonoma/Carneros AVA is a cool climate appellation situated on the northern edge of San Pablo Bay and is known for its windy, foggy weather. It is a prime growing area for cool-loving varietals such as Chardonnay and Pinot Noir.

ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Michael Sebastiani has performed nearly all jobs related to the wine industry. As the fourth generation of his iconic family, he has worked in the vineyards since he was nine and has been a noted winemaker for more than a decade.

Michael is the product of the Sebastiani/Viansa winery progression that has chosen to go out on his own with the formation of Highway 12

Vineyards and Winery. Even though he left Viansa a few years ago, he waited until the right situation came along to try a new venture.

Like many of the other modern winemakers, Michael Sebastiani graduated from nearby UC Davis with a degree in winemaking. However, Sebastiani explained that while the degree most certainly covers the technical side of winemaking, he feels that the subtleties gleaned from years of family winemaking and the close associations he has had with other winemakers have helped mold the skills that make him a leader in his field.

Michael Sebastiani seems to have found a comfortable niche for his remarkable winemaking talent, a talent he knows can lead Highway 12 in practically any direction.

HIGHWAY 12 2012 RESERVE PINOT NOIR

Highway 12's 2012 Reserve Pinot Noir comes from the celebrated Sangiacomo Family Vineyards in the renowned Carneros winemaking region. Dusty ruby in color, this gorgeous Pinot Noir offers aromas of herbs, honeycomb, mixed berry compote and peppercorns. The palate is silky and supple with soft tannins and a harmonious blend of cedar notes with strawberry, cherry, and violet nuances that linger on the finish. Try pairing the Highway 12 2012 Reserve Pinot Noir with lamb shanks. Enjoy!

Cases Produced: 459
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2012 Reserve Pinot Noir, Carneros	\$38.00/btl.	2-Bottle Members:	\$31.50	\$29.83	\$29.00	\$28.17
		4-Bottle Members:	\$31.50	\$29.00	\$27.75	\$27.33
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Lamb Shanks

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| 4 1-lb. lamb shank | 1 large head of garlic, halved crosswise |
| 6 Tbs. olive oil, divided | 1/4 tsp. cardamom seeds from about 5
crushed green cardamom pods |
| 1 large onion, halved, sliced | 2 cups beef broth |
| 1 large carrot, peeled, sliced | 1 cup low-salt chicken broth |
| 1 cup pitted prunes (about 6 oz.) | |

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Sprinkle lamb with salt and pepper. Heat 4 Tbs. oil in large wide ovenproof pot over medium-high heat. Add lamb in single layer and brown well on all sides.

Transfer lamb to rimmed baking sheet. Add 2 Tbs. oil to pot. Add onion and carrot and saute until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Add prunes, garlic, and cardamom and stir 2 minutes. Add broth and wine and bring to boil. Return lamb to pot, cover, and transfer to oven.

Braise lamb until tender, about 2 hours, checking for liquid levels throughout (adding if necessary). Transfer lamb to rimmed baking sheet. Tilt pan and spoon off fat. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper. Return lamb to pot, turning to coat.



Mascarpone Polenta

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| 4 cups water | 1/4 cup milk |
| 1 cup polenta (Golden Pheasant is a
popular brand) | 2 Tbs. finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano |
| 3 Tbs. butter | 1/2 cup mascarpone |
| | Salt and pepper to taste |

Bring water to a simmer in a 3-4 quart heavy saucepan. Add polenta in a slow stream, whisking until incorporated. Simmer, stirring occasionally with a long-handled whisk or wooden spoon, until liquid is absorbed and polenta is thick and soft, about 30 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in milk, butter, cheese, mascarpone, salt and pepper. Keep warm, covered.



Baby Carrots with Parsley Pesto

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| 2 bunches baby carrots - mix of red,
orange, golden - tops cut to 1/4-inch | 1/4 cup olive oil |
| 1 Tbs. butter | 1 tsp. lemon juice |
| 1/2 bunch of Italian parsley | Salt and pepper to taste |

Boil water in a shallow pan. Add carrots, cook until fork tender (8-10 minutes). Drain Water. Add butter and coat carrots. In the meantime, add parsley, salt, pepper, and lemon juice to food processor. In a slow stream, add oil until a nice green oil forms. Taste for seasoning and acid. Place 3-5 carrots atop each polenta/lamb dish and drizzle pesto over the top.

Recipes provided by Highway 12 Vineyards and Winery.

*Find this recipe and all of your favorites online at GoldMedalWineClub.com/recipes.
We have a delicious collection of entrée recipes to pair with your favorite Gold Medal wines!*



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