



# Platinum Wine Club

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

## Kukeri Wines | Napa Valley

It is doubtful that anyone in the California wine industry has a more colorful background than the owner of Kukeri Wines, one Petar Kirilov.

Kirilov, 38, is Bulgarian by birth and holds a master's degree in winemaking (2002) from Bulgaria's premier vinification school, the University of Food Technologies located in the City of Plovdiv.

The following year (2003), California beckoned to Kirilov and the young entrepreneur jumped at the chance and landed in the hallowed grounds of Napa Valley. He was able to secure an internship with the venerable Truchard Vineyards that lasted the next two years. Another opportunity allowed Kirilov the chance to join the high-tech wine company Vinovation, Inc. in Sebastopol, Sonoma County. This job involved a number of research and development projects and was followed by winemaker positions at Meadowcroft Wines (Sonoma) and Foyt Family Wines (Napa and Sonoma).

Fast forward to 2013, and Petar Kirilov decided to venture on his own and the first Kukeri Wines officially saw the light of day.

"I had grown up in a small Bulgarian town and my family had always made wine like many other families in the area," Kirilov recalled. "There was no modern equipment and some of the vintages were better than others. I learned how to make wine at a very early age and have always considered wine to be in my blood."

His numerous successes with Meadowcroft's wine portfolio caused him to think about his own wine label.

"I wanted to do something to honor my native country and tell people about our history and culture," he continued. "I had access to some of the marvelous fruit from Mt. Veeder that I feel produces the finest Cabernet Sauvignon in Napa Valley. I started in 2010 and was finally able to release my first wines (50 cases) in 2013. The Mt. Veeder fruit is so strong and intense that the wine needs 30- 36 months in wood to develop."

The story behind the name Kukeri is worth telling. Kukeri refers to a traditional Bulgarian pagan

ritual that originated as far back as 8,000 years ago to the ancient Thracians. The ritual centered on the God Dionysus who was always associated with wine, fertility and rebirth. It was performed between Christmas and Lent by costumed men who walked around and danced to scare away evil spirits as well as to provide a good harvest, health, fertility and happiness. Kukeri is performed by single men as a way of ending the old year and beginning the new while awakening nature for new life.

Colorful costumes cover most of the body and include decorated masks of animals and large bells are attached to the belt. The masks are scary in nature and imply a protection from the harmful influence of impure powers. The dance moves in special rhythmic steps and the dancers fill the air with sounds of bells and whispered blessings for prosperity. All activity is done at night so as to negate the sun's presence during the day.

The colorful label for the Kukeri Wines 2012 Mount Veeder Cabernet Sauvignon features a variety of these costumes and masks with the dominant bells. "I wanted to show everyone just how fantastic this aspect of my Bulgarian culture is," added Petar Kirilov. "I know the wine inside is really fine and I wanted to tell the great story of our culture to compliment the wine."

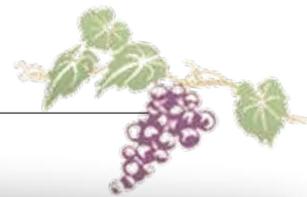
This year, Kukeri Wines will produce around 500 cases of Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir. The company's long term goal is somewhere around 1,000 cases, a level Kirilov feels is in keeping with his idea of quality.

"If I remain small, I can control everything. Quality means everything to me and I am happy being a boutique winery. The fruit from Mount Veeder is usually less than 2 tons an acre, so I will never have much more than I have at this point. I source the Pinot Noir from Sonoma County, and there is some opportunity to grow Kukeri Wines, but it will be gradual when it occurs."

Petar Kirilov is one of a handful of Bulgarians that are involved in the California wine industry and we salute him on his outstanding accomplishments and the unbridled success of his impressive wines.



# Kukeri Wines | 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley



**91 POINTS +  
GOLD MEDAL**  
— *Press Democrat North  
Coast Wine Challenge*

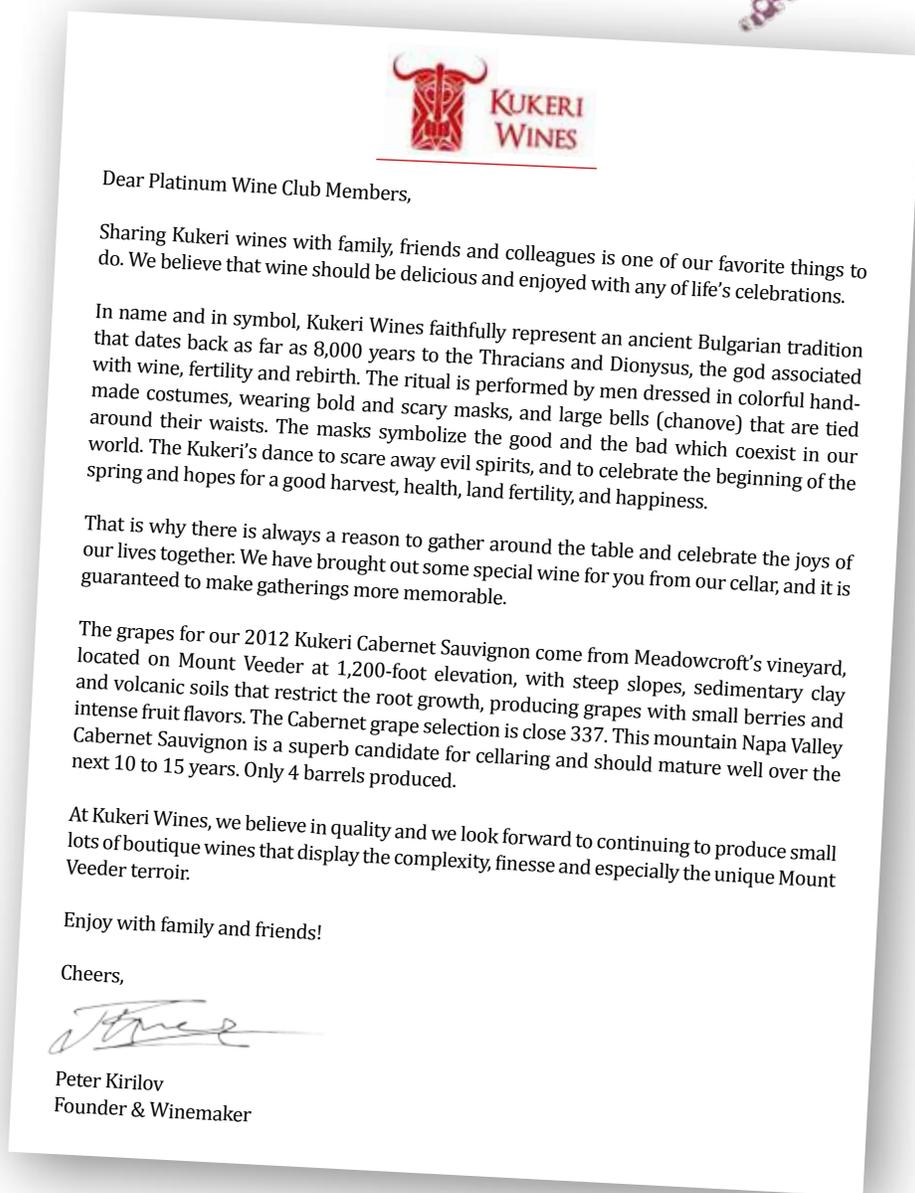
## 112 cases produced

The Kukeri 2012 Mount Veeder Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon comes from a single vineyard (Meadowcroft Vineyard) located at 1,200-foot elevation that produces grapes with small berries and intense fruit flavors (perfect for making rich, full-bodied mountain Cabernet Sauvignon). True to its appellation's character, this 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon exhibits dark, concentrated fruit flavors of mountain blueberry and black raspberry with well-integrated fine-grained tannins. Big, bold, and ultra-ripe, this wine is packed with concentrated black-fruit preserves and blueberry, and hints of crème de cassis, cedar, vanilla, and espresso. A massively rich, mountain Cabernet Sauvignon that is sure to impress. Aged 36 months in French oak. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Enjoy now until 2022. until 2021.



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

**GREGORY JAMES 2014  
Hawk Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir**

91 Points - *PinotFile*  
275 cases produced



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