

PLATINUM SERIES

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

There are many extraordinary reasons behind the existence of a number of Napa Valley wineries, but none more compelling than the story of Rutherford's Martin Estate Winery. While the actual estate dates back to 1870 and covers a slice of Napa's early history, the saga of Martin Estate began sometime in 1996.

Greg and Petra Martin were frequent visitors to the Valley for many years before discovering an almost neglected property in Rutherford that bordered the iconic Caymus Vineyards. The building was an old two-story stone building, not unlike the much-admired Christian Brothers Winery just up the road in nearby St. Helena.

"We were thrilled by the old site and once we learned its history, we knew it was the place for us," recalled Greg Martin in a recent interview. "We were looking for a country home for our family, and weren't really interested in getting into the wine business."

The Martins went about the business of restoring the old chateau to its former elegance, a task that required ridding the place of its large bat population. At the road that leads into the property, the Martins decided on erecting a suitable entrance for the estate, including a huge 16-foot iron gate that gave the house a sense of privacy.

"That's when everything took a turn for the worse," added Martin. "The county decided that the fence violated their eight-foot height requirement for residential fences that was the existing law. We thought about it for a while and decided we all liked the bigger fence. Our only option was that we go into the wine business and plant some vineyards that would take us out of the residential category."

For the record, the old building's history is incredibly important to the early history of Napa's wine industry. It was built in 1887 by former Napa County Sheriff Henry Harris, on property he bought from the estate of Napa Valley pioneer George C. Yount (Yountville). The property was part of a Mexican land grant in 1836 and Yount was the first person to plant grapes in the Napa Valley.

Henry Harris was one of the leading growers of his time and broke ground for his new winery in 1887 and functioned as a first class winery until Prohibition.

In 1909, Harris leased his winery to Georges de Latour who upgraded the winery's facilities and produced a first crush of 50,000 gallons that would become the initial release of the heralded Beaulieu Vineyards or BV as it is known today.

In 1941, the estate was renamed Puerta Dorada, and transformed into an elegant country chateau. Financial problems eventually plagued the owners and the house gradually fell into a state of disrepair.

Fifty years later, Greg and Petra Martin stumbled upon the place and were taken by its awesome majesty and potential. "We call it the baby Greystone, after the Christian Brothers Winery," Martin added. "We thought it would be a truly wonderful place to live in."

Martin made his fortune by a most unusual method. As a youth of 13, he began collecting guns and old arms and began actively trading with other collectors. The business grew into an auction company that became the largest in the world that traded guns, armor and anything pertaining to firearms.

He and Petra maintained a home in San Francisco and were frequent visitors to Napa Valley. As a youth, Martin had also worked at his parent's restaurant in San Martin and became interested in wine and winemaking. He also spent several summers at a friend's chateau in Bordeaux where he learned the fine art of French winemaking.

"Even though I really hadn't contemplated being in the wine business, the step wasn't all that difficult for me," he finalized. "Petra urged me to go ahead and we planted several Cabernet clones and a small amount of Merlot."

The Martins did all the work themselves and produced a small amount (400 cases) of the 2000 vintage as Martin Estate's first release. Production has grown and is between 1500 and 1800 cases depending on the yield of each vintage. Every drop of Martin Estate is estate grown and the winery does not sell grapes to any other winery.

Tastings are done by private appointment and Martin Estate Winery does not have a sign to designate its presence. It simply relies on the 16-foot gate at its entrance, a landmark everyone recognizes.



The road to great wine begins at your door.

TASTING NOTES





Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

We are pleased to bring to you the Martin Estate 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon. I have always believed that the fruit in the vineyard determines the quality of a wine. No viticultural or scientific advances can replace natural elements like soil and climate.

All of the grapes for Martin Estate Cabernet Sauvignon come exclusively from my eight-acre Puerta Dorada Vineyard surrounding the 1887 stone winery, and what you are tasting is a site specific Rutherford Estate grown wine. When the term "Rutherford Dust" was created by Andre Tchelistcheff in the 1940s, he was surely referring to sites like Puerta Dorada.

The 2004 Martin Estate 100% Cabernet Sauvignon is a blend of the three distinct clones on the Estate, with a production of only 300 cases. Each lot was treated as a unique and separate fermentation to focus the specific flavor and character of every single picking. It is a lush wine, exhibiting complex flavors of black cherries, currants, blueberries, tobacco, and a hint of chocolate with a long finish.

Martin Estate's quest for quality is uncompromising: organic farming, selective harvesting plus hand sorting and de-stemming of the fruit. The wine is exclusively fermented in custom French oak tanks, and winemaker Frederic Delivert uses a small basket press as well as extended barrel aging in select French and American oak to achieve the balance we seek in our Cabernet.

My philosophy at Martin Estate is to make a wine that complements a meal without overpowering it, a wine that reflects its origin and shows true personality. I think you will enjoy and appreciate the 2004 Martin Estate.

Sincerely,

Gregory M. Martin
Proprietor

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TASTING NOTES

302 Cases Produced

Since the first vintage in 2000, Martin Estate has earned itself a position among the top California Cabernet producers, and this engaging, flavor-packed current release makes it easy to see why. The extremely limited production 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon possesses a restrained elegance while still delivering the power and finesse we've grown to love from Napa Valley's Rutherford wineries and vineyards. Although this gem was not sent out for review, the reputation alone of the winery and vineyard sets this Cabernet on a pedestal all its own. The wine's soft-edged but focused aromas of sweet cherry, black currants and earthy "Rutherford dust" lead into bright fruit flavors, vanilla toffee notes, and subtle hints of cassis and tobacco spice. A soft, balanced mouthfeel makes it delightfully food-friendly and its distinctive flavor profile is true to its Rutherford origin. Try pairing the 2004 Martin Estate Cabernet Sauvignon with filet mignon, braised short ribs, or pork tenderloin with a rich sauce. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Enjoy now until 2015.

REORDERS

Martin Estate's 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon is a classic representation of the caliber of wines coming out of Napa's famed Rutherford District. Produced from the Puerta Dorada Estate Vineyard, which has provided fruit for several benchmark Napa Valley producers over the years, this wine is the consummate Napa Valley Cabernet and a true hidden gem.

The Martin Estate 2004 Cabernet Sauvignon retails winery-direct for \$70.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

2-Bottle Members \$58.00 /bottle*
4-Bottle Members &
Multi-Series Members \$55.00 /bottle*
*2 bottle min. order [Plus shipping]

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