

THE WINE PRESS

Gold Medal Wine Club Newsletter: Vol. 11 No. 2

Edgewood Estate Winery Edition

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"With Gold Medal Wine Club,
The Road to Great Wine
Begins at Your Door."

www.goldmedalwine.com

EDGEWOOD ESTATES: A CORNERSTONE IN NAPA HISTORY

The factual history that Edgewood Estate Winery possesses is one that many Napa Valley wineries would give their *eyeteeth* to own even a portion of. The history is also a reminder that many winery operations are quite cyclical in nature and at this point in its evolution, Edgewood Estate is well back on the road to *vinous* competition and even superiority.

It all began back in 1873 with William Peterson, a successful New England sea captain, who departed New England's harsh winters and settled into a more tranquil existence in Northern

California. He immediately purchased a 40-plus acre parcel in Napa Valley that is the site of today's Edgewood Estate Winery. It is recorded that the vineyards began bearing fruit in 1879 and by 1885 the fully operational Peterson Winery produced a total of 11,350 cases, quite a respectable number for that period of time.

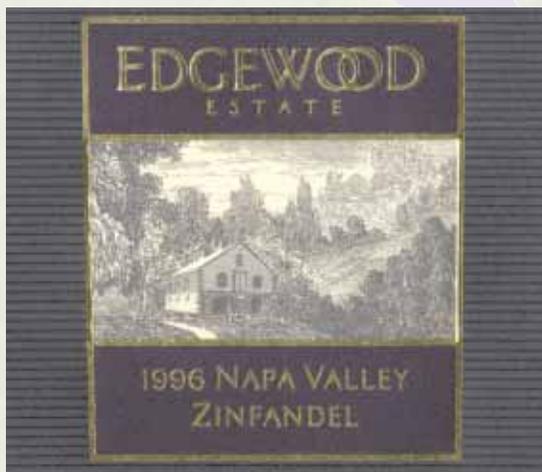
Unfortunately, a series of personal and professional tragedies befell Peterson until he was finally forced to sell his winery. History records that in 1891, William Peterson sold the winery and its contents

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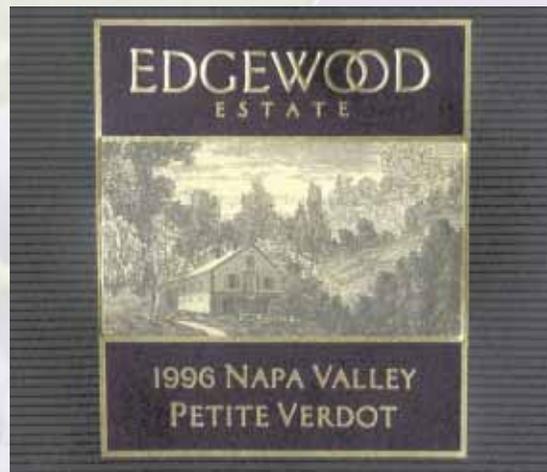
Edgewood Estate Winery, located in St. Helena, has remained in continuous operation since 1885.

Gold Medal Wine Club features two wines each month from only the best small wineries of California. Featured wines include those which have earned medals in the top wine-industry competitions or have been highly rated by a respected national wine publication. On occasion we feature a wine which is of high medal-quality, but due to its very limited availability or by preference of the wine producer, may not be submitted to these venues for review. Each and every selection is a superb wine made in small quantities and with limited distribution. There are over 1,000 wineries in California producing thousands of different wines. Only wines fitting the above criteria are considered in choosing the featured selections each month.



1996 ZINFANDEL

A highly awarded Napa Valley Zinfandel with over a dozen medals, including 3 Golds and a *Best of Class* distinction. “A plush, concentrated Zinfandel with a supple mouthfeel; lots of sweet berry fruit, excellent spice and purity; and a long, luscious finish,” touts industry publication, *Beverage & Food Dynamics*, giving this wine a stellar *93 Point* rating. “Like an English breakfast, with toast, black tea, and berry jam commingling in a pleasant whole. Fruity, clean and solid all the way through,” says the *Wine Enthusiast* magazine. A Zinfandel that opens and develops in the glass. Ripe, berry, plum, and spice fold into a chocolate richness. Soft and luscious wild berry, anise, and sage with brushes of white pepper are present throughout the wine. An enchanting and delicate finish. 100% Zinfandel, 100% Napa Valley.



1996 PETITE VERDOT

Petite Verdot is one of Bordeaux’s classic black grape varieties. This rich and age-worthy varietal ripens on the vine even later than Cabernet Sauvignon, a detriment that caused many grape farmers to abandon growing it altogether. In the 1990s Petite Verdot has enjoyed a revival of sorts in both Bordeaux and in California. The wonderful *Gold Medal*-winning Edgewood 1996 Petite Verdot ranks among the best available in California. “A nice crimson-red color bursting with a vibrant cherry-berry mixture. A lavish mouthful of berries and dried cherries that extends into a nice, supple finish,” the winery tasting notes report. Try with hearty beef stew or grilled lamb chops. 100% Petite Verdot, 100% Napa Valley.

WINE CREDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

1996 VINTAGE: *Gold Medal and Best of Class*—Los Angeles County Fair Wine Competition; *Gold Medal*—Long Beach Grand Cru Wine Judging; *Gold Medal*—West Coast Wine Competition; *Gold Medal*—Taster’s Guild Wine Competition; *96 Points*—Global Vintage Quarterly; ★★★★★ (5 stars out of 5) & *93 Points*—*Beverage & Food Dynamics*; *87 Points*—*Wine Enthusiast*; *87 Points*—The Beverage Tasting Institute.
LEGACY: A perennial Gold Medal winner.

Just the facts:

pH	3.60
Total Acid58 g/100 mls
Alcohol	13.5%
Cases Produced	3,298
Aged in French & American Oak ...	24 Months
Drink Now or Up to Year	2005+

1996 VINTAGE: *Gold Medal*—Taster’s Guild Wine Competition; *Silver Medal*—Los Angeles County Fair Wine Competition; *Gold Medal*—Long Beach Grand Cru Wine Judging; *Bronze Medal*—Riverside International Wine Competition; *Bronze Medal*—New World International Wine Competition; *Bronze Medal*—San Diego International Wine Competition; *Bronze Medal*—Dallas Morning News Wine Competition.
LEGACY: A Bordeaux classic and one of Edgewood’s limited production specialty wines.

Just the facts:

pH	3.69
Total Acid69 g/100 mls
Alcohol	12.8%
Cases Produced	1,249
Aged in French & American Oak ...	18 Months
Drink Now or Up to Year	2006+

GOLD MEDAL SPOTLIGHT

Jeff O' Neill

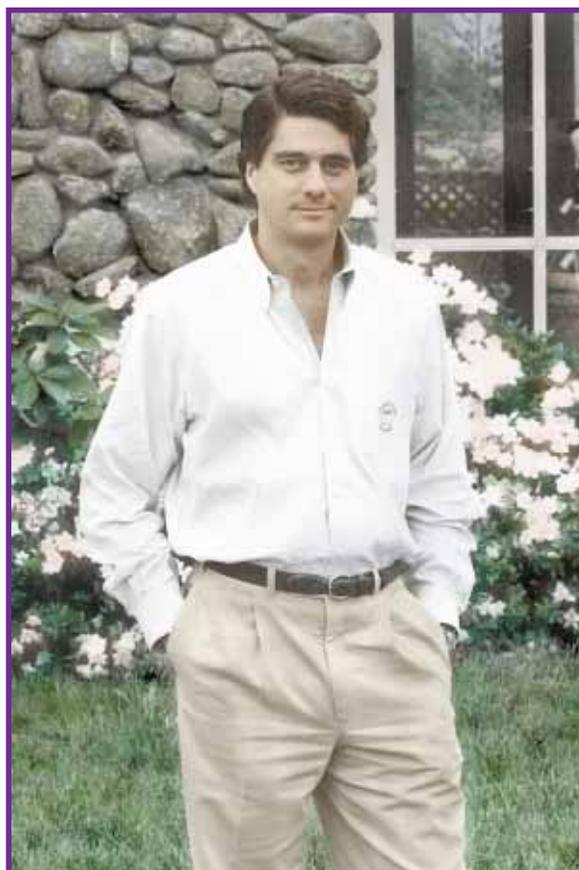
Practically everyone associated with Jeff O' Neill is firmly convinced he is a visionary in the strictest sense of the word. At 44, he is the President of Edgewood Estates, and is purposefully positioning his winery to compete with the top wineries in Napa Valley.

O' Neill grew up in neighboring Marin County (Kentfield to be exact) and discovered his interest in wine while he was an underclassman at the University of the Pacific. First, he found that he enjoyed drinking wine and later helped pay his college bills by selling wine on a door to door basis. It's also possible the inspiration for his efforts started a bit earlier in his family. In the post-Prohibition era around 1936, his Armenian grandfather originated a wine cooperative in the small Central Valley town of Cutler, California and began producing wine. Jeff remembers the stories around his house when he was young and agrees that such an earlier historical influence made his decision to enter the wine business all the easier.

Today, Jeff O' Neill is determined to turn Edgewood Estates into a world class production facility and at the same time insure that the higher segment of the buying

public takes note of its flagship brand. O' Neill carefully selects the fruit that is used for each wine.

"Because the former company was a co-op and therefore has many sources of grapes, we felt it necessary to develop a system for what we bought. Even though most of the fruit was really high quality, we were only able to buy from a small percentage of our former growers," he confided. "That decision represents our dedication to be the best of the best, and we've managed to stick to it so far."



Jeff O' Neill is President of Edgewood Estate Winery.

The entire process of restoring and building Edgewood Estates has been a labor of love for O' Neill. First, he decided to move and then transplant some sixty sycamore trees that were scattered about the property to create what is now a picturesque alley to the winery. Next, came a second assessment to turn another section of the property that served as a lawn into its former usage as vineyard rows. Through it all, Jeff O' Neill has doggedly kept Edgewood Estates heading in an upward direction. He is convinced that the moves he is making with regard to the physical plant will make it one of the real showcase facilities in Napa.

Fifteen acres at Edgewood Estates are planted in mostly Bordeaux varietals with Cabernet Sauvignon serving as the predominant type. The total production runs at an annual rate of just over 12,000 cases, a level O' Neill feels perfectly suits his operation at this stage of its development.

"The hardest thing to find in Napa is sources of truly top class grapes," he added. "Most of the great vineyards are already under long term contract to other wineries, and it's practically impossible to make a quality statement without great fruit as a basis for your wines."

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WINE WIZARD

- 1) What do the terms *vertical* and *horizontal* mean in relation to wine tasting?
- 2) What does the phrase *hang time* mean?
- 3) What does it mean to say that a wine has been *chaptalized*?

Continued from page 1

to Robert Bergfeld for a sum of 6,000 gold coins. It is also noted that phylloxera had destroyed most of the existing vineyards at the winery. In fact, a total of over 15,000 acres were destroyed in Northern California during the phylloxera outbreak of that period. Bergfeld worked and developed the winery for the next fifteen years until the catastrophic earthquake of 1906 forced him to close its operation.

Historical accuracy jumps a bit until 1910 when the winery was again sold, this time to a Theodore Gier. Gier was already active in the Napa Wine business and had already built two existing wineries. In 1904, he constructed a winery on Spring Mountain that is today's Keenan

Winery and, a year later, built a small stone winery which is the modern day Hess Collection Winery. Gier operated the expansive business (he had wine holdings as far away as the Livermore Valley) for a decade until he sold his entire Napa Valley operations to O.J. LeBaron of neighboring Healdsburg in Sonoma County.

Next came Prohibition and its death-like consequences for many wineries. LeBaron's enterprise suffered the same fate as most of his neighbors. The winery finally emerged again in 1933 as the Mt. Helena and Calistoga Wine Company. The company was a giant of its time and produced over 500,000 gallons of wine.

A year later, the economic condition facing independent growers propelled Charles Forni to organize the Napa Valley Cooperative and, in 1935, the Co-op purchased the winery. Forni was a decisive force in Napa Valley for the next fifty years until his death in 1986, a few months short of his 100th birthday. He was responsible for the Co-op he founded rise to the status of largest wine facility in the Napa Valley. As early as 1937, some 8,500 tons were consigned for crushing at the winery, estimated to be around 40% of the entire grape production in Napa.

By 1967, the Napa Valley Co-op was producing around 2,500,000 gallons annually and was at the height of its success. Forni was ever active in matters affecting the wine industry and was one of the original

four founding fathers of the Napa Valley Vintners Association, which controls the policy stance for many of today's Napa Valley wineries.

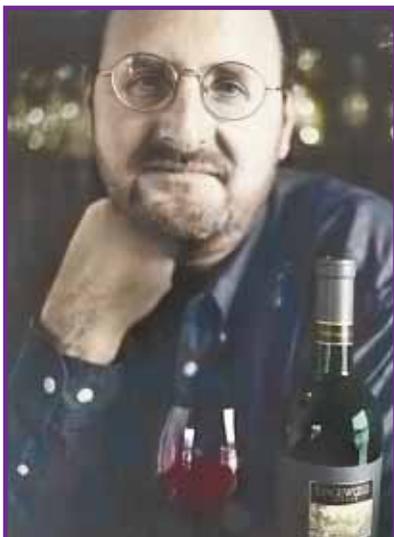
Edgewood Estate bought the property in 1994 and embarked on an immediate course to restore the property to its original usage and statue. An incredible restoration and renovation project is still under way under the direction of Founder/President Jeff O' Neill. O' Neill is dedicated to preserving the winery's natural heritage and has insured that the original winery remains intact in its original location. At some point, Edgewood hopes to be able to open the site to the general public.

Another interesting historical artifact is the original architecture of the 1885 winery that today resides in the middle of Edgewood's barrel warehouse. This ghost winery is

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Edgewood produces wines from some of Napa's best small vineyards.



*Edgewood Estate Winemaker,
Jeff Gaffner.*

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Another seven acres will be planted this year, a fact that will maximize the property from a

growing perspective. Jeff O' Neill intends to continue his search for superior independent growers, and will grow Edgewood Estates as the occasions arise.

He points out with pride that Edgewood Estate wines are sold worldwide (some 30 countries) and fully realizes that his wines are each a handsell. He is also aware of the thin air his competition enjoys in Napa, but that fact doesn't phase him one bit.

He proudly points out that his Estate-bottled Meritage blend is aptly called Tradition. It is grown and produced (about 250 cases annually) exclusively at the winery

and sells in the range of \$35 - \$45 per bottle.

"We at Edgewood want to grow and produce the finest red grapes in the entire valley," O' Neill declared. "We are fortunate to have the resources and determination to see our plan through to its natural fruition. We saw this entire project as an opportunity that was untapped and decided to do something about it."

Napa Valley insiders have watched the transformation of the Edgewood property and the development of its wines. There are few that doubt the project is destined for success. 🍷

ANSWERS TO WINE WIZARD

1) You have no doubt heard the terms **vertical** and **horizontal** in reference to tasting wine. In a vertical tasting, different vintages of the same wine (same varietal from the same winery) are tasted at the same time. This is done to examine how the wine has evolved over time, to note the differences in quality from vintage to vintage, and even to study changes in winemaking techniques. The term horizontal refers to tasting a number of different wines from the same vintage. Horizontal tastings typically cover the same geographic area and/or grape variety. This kind of tasting can be interesting and helpful in demonstrating the impact that differences in region and winemaking techniques allow for a particular wine.

2) In basketball, hang time is measured in mere seconds. In the vineyard, hang time is measured in months and, more precisely, in days. The term hang time is used to refer to the time that the grapes are actually growing in the vineyard after the vines have flowered. This is a crucial period in wine production. In general, the longer the grapes stay on the vine, the riper they will become.

It is often a guessing game as to how long the hang time can be extended before adverse weather sets in that could effect the quality of the harvest. Now if Michael Jordan owned a vineyard, talking about hang time could get really confusing.

3) Chaptalization is a process in which sugar is added to the grape must before or during fermentation in order to increase the alcoholic content of wine. This practice, also referred to as must enrichment, is common in the colder climates of northern Europe, where the grapes' sugar levels are too low to produce wine with the desired alcoholic content. Cistercian monks used this technique back in the 18th century by adding honey to grapes that were insufficiently sweet. However, chaptalization, named after Jean Antoine Chaptal, Napoleon's minister of agriculture, used sugar instead of honey. Although chaptalization is authorized in most of France, including Bordeaux and in Germany, it is illegal in California.





FOOD FOR THOUGHT

PEPPER CRUSTED AHI TUNA WITH SOUR CREAM AND CHIVE POTATO PUREE AND FAVA BEAN SAUCE



"I paired the Edgewood Estate 1996 Zinfandel with the Ahi Tuna as a creative alternative to pairing red wine with red meat. The pepper crust works well with the pepper flavor in the Zinfandel, and the mushrooms in the glazed vegetables enhance the earthiness of the wine as well." —Peter Halikas

FAVA BEAN SAUCE

1 cup shucked fava beans

2 cups chicken stock

1/4 cup picked parsley leaves

Cook parsley in 2 cups boiling, salted water until leaves easily tear, yet are still green. Remove from heat and shock parsley in ice water. Squeeze dry and set aside.

POTATO PUREE

4 large russet potatoes, peeled and quartered

1 stick butter at room temperature

1 cup warm milk

1 cup sour cream

1/2 bunch or 1/4 cup chopped chives

Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Boil potatoes in salted water until done.

Strain. Place potatoes on sheet pan in oven for approximately 10 minutes (to dry them out). Put potatoes through a food mill or ricer. Place hot potatoes in mixing bowl. Begin mixing potatoes with paddle on low speed. Slowly add in butter, milk, sour cream, and chives until mixture is smooth. Salt and pepper to taste.

If possible, prepare the Tuna and the Vegetables at the same time, as they both take only minutes to prepare.

TUNA

4 - 6 ounce tuna steaks, 2 inches thick, cut into long rectangles

2 tablespoons coarsely cracked white pepper

2 tablespoons coarsely cracked black pepper

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Combine white and black pepper. Spread evenly on small tray.

Lightly coat one (long) side of each tuna steak with the pepper mixture.

Do not press pepper into flesh of tuna. Sear pepper side down over high heat in large skillet for 2 minutes. Turn over and cook for 1 and 1/2 to 2 minutes or more, depending on how you like your tuna.

GLAZED VEGETABLES

1 cup cooked, sliced mushrooms (use whatever wild mushrooms are available, such as chanterelles, morels, cepes)

1/4 cup cooked, diced carrots

1/4 cup cooked, peeled pearl onions

2 tablespoons butter

2 tablespoons chicken stock

Combine mushrooms, carrots, and onions in saucepan with butter and chicken stock over medium heat. Stir until vegetables are glazed.

Assembly: Place small mound of glazed vegetables in the center of plate. Pipe potato puree in semi-circle "staircase" from high to low around vegetables. Slice each tuna steak into 4 pieces. Place tuna slices on potato puree staircase with rare side facing up. Heat up fava bean sauce and pour on front of dish. Serve.

GRILLED PORK LOIN WITH BLUE CHEESE AND WARM FRISSE SALAD

Peter Halikas

Four 6-ounce portions of pork loin

4 tablespoons Roquefort or equivalent blue cheese

6 cups frissee

4 slices of bacon cut into small pieces

1 bottle of Edgewood Estate 1996 Petite Verdot

1/2 cup olive oil

1/4 cup dried cherries

1/4 cup chopped shallots

Method: Take the pork loins and make an incision on their sides. Stuff cheese inside and season on the loin with salt and pepper. Place the 4 stuffed pork loins on an oiled grill. It will take about 6 minutes on each side. While they are grilling, begin to sauté the bacon in a large pan over medium heat. When the pork loins are almost cooked, add the shallots. Cook until the shallots are translucent. De-glaze with a half bottle of Edgewood Estate 1996 Petite Verdot and cherries. Reduce by half and add as much oil as needed to make a dressing. Season with salt and pepper to taste and then add frissee. Lightly toss in the warm dressing until slightly wilted. Take the other half of the bottle of Edgewood Estate 1996 Petite Verdot and reduce until syrup consistency. Place frissee in a mound in the center of the plate and place the pork loin against it. Drizzle plate with the reduction.

SEA BASS WITH ARTICHOKE IN A CHERVIL BROTH Wonderful with Chardonnay

CHERVIL BROTH, SERVES 4

1 cup chopped carrot

1 cup chopped yellow onion

3 artichoke bottoms

with stems attached

6 tablespoons butter

1/2 cup chopped, fresh chervil

1/2 cup chopped, fresh chervil, salt & pepper to taste in a saucepan, caramelize chopped carrots, onions and celery in olive oil. Add artichokes, cover mixture with water, and bring to a simmer. Add 5 tablespoons butter; cook on low heat until artichokes are tender (about 30 minutes).

Remove artichokes from liquid and set aside. Strain liquid through a chinois and save — this is your broth. Discard chopped carrots, onions and celery. Cut artichokes into small wedges. Place broth in a clean saucepan; add sliced carrots, julienned onions. Simmer for 5-4 minutes until tender. Add waxed beans and artichoke wedges. Whisk in remaining butter. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Add 6 tablespoons chopped chervil into broth.

SEA BASS

4 4-ounce portions of sea bass (or any white fish)

4 tablespoons olive oil

In a sauce pan, sauté sea bass on high in 4 tablespoons of olive oil.

Heat until caramelized. Remove from heat, flip fish over and place in oven for 5 minutes at 350 degrees.

Assembly: Arrange waxed beans, julienned onions, sliced carrots, and artichoke wedges in the center of a shallow bowl. Sprinkle with remaining chervil.

JUDGE-THE-WINES RESULTS

In this section we publish the cumulative, on-going tallies of the Judge-the-Wines Scoresheets which are provided in each delivery of wine and mailed back in by Club members. We believe it is fun as well as educational to think about and record the different characteristics of the wines you sample. No matter how acute you think your palate is, the person next to you will probably have a different thought or opinion about a certain characteristic of the wine you are sampling. It can also prove beneficial to record your impressions of the wine for reference at a later date.

Below are the most recent tallies of the Scoresheets returned. Gold Medal Wine Club specializes in featuring small-sized wineries and small-production wines. Depending on availability from the winery, all members may not receive every wine that is listed below. The Scoresheet results which are printed in green indicate the wine selections that as of press time are still available for reorder.

Michael Pozzan – 1998 Cabernet Sauvignon

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	95%	4%	1%

Michael Pozzan – 1999 Chardonnay

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	94%	5%	1%

Blue Oak – 1998 Montresor

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	92%	6%	2%

Blue Oak – 1997 Petite Sirah

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	6%	3%

Zaca Mesa – 1997 Syrah

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	93%	5%	2%

Zaca Mesa – 1999 Roussanne

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	7%	3%

Jefferson Cellars – 1989 Brut Reserve

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	86%	8%	6%

Stevenot – 1996 Cabernet Sauvignon

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	5%	5%

The above wines were recently featured. Due to space limitations the entire list of available wines is not listed—please call to inquire about other previous favorites.

■ Indicates wine is still available

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extremely well preserved and available to visitors who know how to ask for the privilege of seeing the original workplace.

Chances are the Edgewood Estate personnel will show you the old winery without many fanfares. They are justifiably proud of their place in the history of Napa Valley and are willing to share it with you. Gold Medal Wine Club is proud to offer Edgewood Estate's wines to our members in much the same spirit. We know you will enjoy this month's Gold Medal selections from Edgewood Estate. 🍷



THE GRAPEVINE

Comments from us and Club members

How did *that* happen!? We somehow managed to get through the year 2000 having featured just one Zinfandel. Many of you have been calling for more Zins, so here you are. The 1996 Edgewood Zinfandel is the first of several great Zins we have lined up this year. In fact, it is so good that we predict it will be one of the years' most sought after wines. However, looking ahead at the upcoming selections, the year 2001 is packed full of unbelievably good wines. So who knows??

For those of you who are new members . . . two to three times a year we feature two red wines in the same month instead of one red & one white. **In the future, if you prefer to receive both red and white wine in each delivery, let us know and we'll reference your account to help make sure that happens.**

[The 1998 Michael Pozzan Cabernet Sauvignon had] Nice, full body. Pleasant aroma and wonderful aftertaste. A very enjoyable red!

—Stephanie Riedel & Todd Schroeder, Score 51

Sharing [the 1998 Blue Oak Montresor Reserve] with friends was so good we purchased a holiday membership for them!

—William Dunphy, Score 46

[The 1997 Monterey Peninsula Doctor's Reserve Chardonnay is] Stylish and well made; full body, beautiful Chardonnay aromas; creamy and smooth on palate, notes of spices on the finish!

—Scott Gunerman, Score 46

[The 1998 Michael Pozzan Cabernet Sauvignon was a] Wonderful mixture of flavors!

—Wes Bolin, Score 54+

[The 1997 Blue Oak Petite Sirah Reserve had] Deep rich color, pleasantly full flavor with an excellent finish!

—Sam DiRaimondo, Score 55

[The 1998 Blue Oak Petite Sirah is] Rich & wonderful; it was fun to sip as it unfolded to a very delightful wine!

—Kathy & Jerry Hicks, Score 50

Maximum score is 55. Members who send in their wine ratings on the provided Scoresheets are eligible to receive a bonus half-case of any Gold Medal Series wine that is in stock if your name is drawn. Drawings are held 4 times a year at the end of each quarter. (Maximum of one Scoresheet per wine per membership)...GMWC

R E O R D E R

Edgewood specializes in crafting small-production, specialty wines from some of Napa Valley's most sought after vineyards. These are incredibly low prices for high quality Napa Valley wines.

EDGEWOOD WINERY	Retail Price		Club Price		Club Price	
	Winery-Direct		2-Bottle Members		4-Bottle Members	
1996 Zinfandel* Napa Valley	Half Case-6	\$108	\$85	(21% Off)	\$79	(27% Off)
	Full Case-12	\$216	\$158	(27% Off)	\$145	(33% Off)
1996 Petite Verdot* Napa Valley	Half Case-6	\$108	\$79	(27% Off)	\$73	(32% Off)
	Full Case-12	\$216	\$147	(32% Off)	\$135	(38% Off)

Reorder Hotline: 1-800-266-8888

Reorder Faxline: 1-800-266-8889

www.goldmedalwine.com

**Availability is extremely limited.*

Note: Tax & shipping are not included in the above prices. Call for details.