

# WINE



# PRESS

White Oak Vineyards & Winery

Gold Medal Wine Club Newsletter: Vol. 19 No. 12A



## HITE OAK WINERY

Poised as One of the Leading Veteran Producers in Northern California, White Oak Delivers Incredible Consistency and Value with Each Anticipated Release.



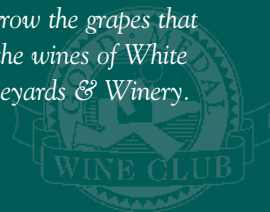
*White Oak's Mediterranean-inspired tasting room and winery is perched amongst the winery's estate vineyards in Healdsburg, California.*



*Established in 1981, White Oak is run by a close-knit, passionate team driven to produce distinguished wines with each release.*

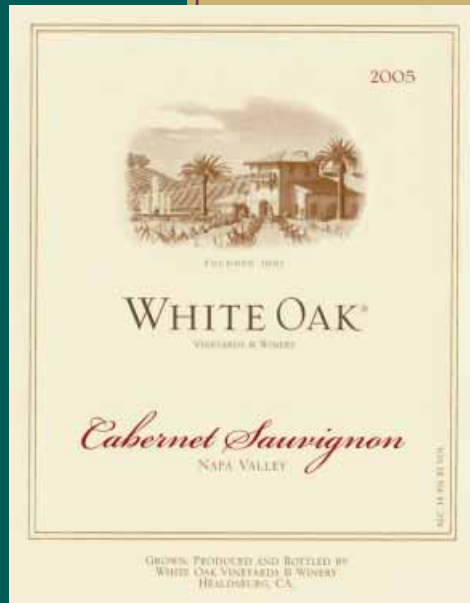


*Nearly 750 acres of vineyards, divided between the Napa, Alexander, and Russian River Valleys grow the grapes that become the wines of White Oak Vineyards & Winery.*



## 2005 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

White Oak Vineyards & Winery's 2005 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is a dark, slightly brooding blend of 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Merlot, and 3% Cabernet Franc from a 1,400 foot elevation vineyard within California's most renowned wine country. This Cabernet has aromas of dark chocolate, cassis and rose hip that lead into flavors of currants, black plum and tea on the palate. Ripe tannins, black fruit and toasty oak combine to form a deliciously lingering finish. *Connoisseurs' Guide* awards this vintage **90 Points** and names it a **Best Buy**: "Very careful construction, fine fruity focus, a dash of briary spice and a generous dollop of very sweet oak make for a most successful Cabernet recipe here. As good as its many parts are, it is the way they are assembled that lifts the wine into high company, there are few among its many noteworthy cousins that deliver this kind of richness, polish and depth at anything approaching the price." Try pairing the White Oak 2005 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon with filet mignon or any rich, peppered steak. Aged 20 months in oak. Enjoy now until 2015.



### 2005 VINTAGE:

**90 POINTS & "BEST BUY" –**

*CONNOISSEURS' GUIDE*

### LEGACY:

WHITE OAK'S NAPA VALLEY CABERNETS ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR CONSISTENT VALUE VINTAGE TO VINTAGE, AND MANY HAVE GARNERED 90+ POINT SCORES SINCE 2002.

## *Just the facts:*

pH.....	3.6
Alcohol.....	14.4%
Total Acid.....	0.59 g/100 mls
Cases Produced.....	6,160
Drink Now or Up to Year.....	2015

## HITE OAK VINEYARDS & WINERY

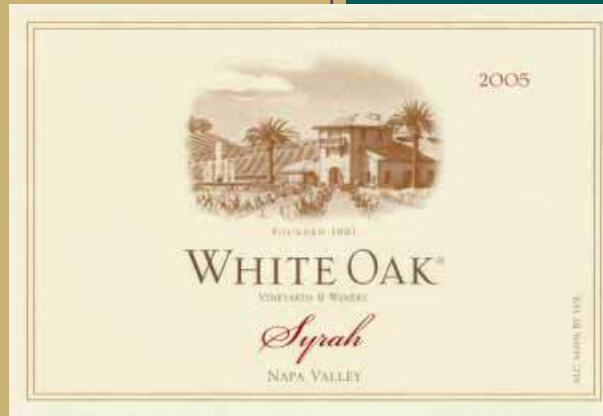
Anyone who spent any amount of time during the late 1980s or early 90s around the town of Healdsburg in Sonoma County was certainly aware of the upscale presence of White Oak Winery. From a rather unassuming tasting room located adjacent to the Old Clos du Bois winery, White Oak successfully established itself as one of Sonoma's principal wineries with a minimum of marketing dollars and with even less observable fanfare. The word on the street was that White Oak's wines sold themselves and that the quality in the bottle was undeniable.

A little more than a decade after its establishment in 1981, White Oak's 1990 Chardonnay won the Sweepstakes (best individual wine out of 654 entries) at the Sonoma Harvest Fair and the still smallish winery (production was around 10-12 thousand cases at that time) was no longer an insider's secret to the area residents around Healdsburg. More recently, the 2004 Russian River Sauvignon Blanc won the Sweepstakes Award again in 2006 and the wine sold out in one day. Since the Sonoma Harvest Fair is considered by Sonoma inhabitants to be the single more

**2005 VINTAGE:**

**90 POINTS** – WINE & SPIRITS MAGAZINE;  
**GOLD MEDAL** – ORANGE COUNTY WINE  
 SOCIETY COMMERCIAL WINE COMPETITION;  
**88 POINTS** – CONNOISSEURS' GUIDE

**LEGACY:** PAST VINTAGES OF  
 WHITE OAK SYRAHS HAVE BEEN  
 "HIGHLY RECOMMENDED" WITH  
 87+ POINT SCORES SINCE 2002.



White Oak's Napa Valley Syrah is a consistent medal winning selection at the winery, and the 2005 vintage is perhaps the most anticipated release to date with its high ratings and smooth, silky flavors. Winemaker Bill Parker has crafted quite the crowd pleaser here, with a dynamic balance of earthy pepper notes, ripe black fruit flavors, and smooth integrated tannins. *Wine &*

*Spirits* awarded the 2005 Napa Valley Syrah **90 Points**: "Brisk with cranberry and mulberry flavors, this has the black peppercorn spice of Syrah that places it with artisanal mortadella (Italian bologna) on a picnic or, more formally, with roast lamb." This Syrah also garnered a **Gold Medal** from the *Orange County Wine Society Commercial Wine Competition* and was awarded **88 Points** by *Connoisseurs' Guide*: "This well defined Syrah very much smells of ripe berries and pepper, and it conveys a sense of concentration that is affirmed by its deep and proportioned young flavors. Full-bodied, but not heavy, with fine fruity acids providing brightness and real lift at the finish, it carries its fine grained tannins effortlessly and finishes with a lively and lengthy cranberry tang." 100% Syrah. Enjoy now until 2015.

*Just the facts:*

pH . . . . .	3.6
Alcohol . . . . .	14.6%
Total Acid . . . . .	0.68 g/100 mls
Cases Produced . . . . .	1,941
Drink Now or Up to Year . . . . .	2015

important competition held in California (or anywhere else for that matter), White Oak Winery was suddenly thrust into virtually every local conversation and the winery's entire production that amounted to over \$300,000 in sales was immediately sold out within the next thirty days.

Even with such fanfare, it took White Oak's laid back owner Bill Myers over five years to affect a change in White Oak's basic setup. Myers gathered together a small group of his friends and some outside investors and together successfully obtained a beautiful piece of Alexander Valley property that contained some sixteen acres of old

vine Zinfandel that had been planted sometime during the 1920s. This unique merger with a grower-oriented base of investors, provided the setting for White Oak's new winery and tasting room, a splendid Mediterranean-inspired villa that Bill Myers designed and built almost by hand. The entire project took Myers nearly five years to complete, and the new winery enabled White Oak to increase its production to its present 22,000 case level, a mark that Myers feels he will hold for some time to come.



*White Oak's Mediterranean-style facility was personally designed by owner Bill Myers and houses the state-of-the-art tasting room and winery.*

"Even though I have been in the business for over 25 years," Myers reflects, "I have taken White

Oak's growth very slowly and have been able to control our quality."

He is also exceedingly proud of his comfortable and attractive tasting room, where he proudly states, "We sell more wine here than we do in the entire rest of California."



*White Oak visitors enjoy a fun-filled afternoon on the patio with delicious food and award-winning wines.*

Another key to White Oak's success is the 325-acre ranch in Sonoma's Russian River Region that is planted entirely in Chardonnay and that produces unusually high-caliber fruit

Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Petite Verdot, Malbec and Syrah. White Oak owns the property in partnership with a San Rafael company called Burdell Proprietaries who in turn has some 200 individual investors involved in the ownership of their combined vineyard land. This appealing alliance gives White Oak a better than normal retail sales base for its wines and also offers to each investor a carrot in the form of a small discount on White Oak wines.

"When all is said and done," Myers adds, "it is absolutely necessary that the winery make money. We figure to do well even in a down economy. We sell a lot of our grapes (Alexander Valley neighbor Jordan Winery is White Oak's largest customer) but we must always insure that White Oak's bottom line is favorable."

In 2002, White Oak focused its marketing attention to the Eastern Seaboard and attempted to break into the attractive Boston and New York markets, today, White Oak is in 36 states as well as being in Japan, Canada, Germany and Austria.

Bill Myers feels that this accomplishment is due to the fact that White Oak's wines are perceived as exceptional values in that national and international marketplace. What's more, he realized that increasing his winery's capacity makes it that much more attractive to national distributors, most of who possess huge portfolios.

Gold Medal Wine Club also considers White Oak's wines a terrific value and is delighted to introduce them to you as this month's *Gold Series* selections. We know they will bring you a great deal of enjoyment. 

that insures White Oak a leg up on other wineries. White Oak also owns an additional 420 acres in Napa Valley that is planted to Cabernet

# The Wine Wizard

- 1) How can barrel fermenting benefit a white wine?
- 2) What affect does barrel aging have on wine?
- 3) What is the life expectancy of the average wine barrel?

*See Page 7 for Answers.*

## About The Winemaker

Bill Parker got his start in the wine industry back in 1974 when he worked for Chateau Souverain in California's iconic Alexander Valley. Prior to joining White Oak in 2004, Parker was cellar master and winemaker at Matanzas Creek Winery for 15 years and then winemaker at BR Cohn Winery for a short time before finding a home at White Oak in the town of Healdsburg in Sonoma County.

Parker shows incredible winemaking talent in his 90+ rated, medal-winning wines and keeps White Oak positioned as the world-class winery it has become.



Bill Myers

Many stories have been written about the varied backgrounds and former occupations of many of today's premier wine industry personalities. White Oak Vineyards and Winery owner Bill Myers lists building contractor and salmon fisherman as his former professions, and it is, the latter that provides him with his most direct correlation to the wine industry.

The Los Angeles-born, San Jose State-educated Myers actually hitchhiked to Alaska in his youth without viable resources, following the footsteps of his grandfather who had made the trek back in 1898. Bill Myers was following his family's stories and began the task of establishing a business for himself in the salmon fishing industry. This occupied the greater part of the 1970s and extended into the middle of the next decade.

During the latter part of this period, Myers became a part-time resident of Healdsburg in Sonoma County and regularly traded some of his prize catch for bottles of wine from his favorite wineries. He became closely enamored with the area and after a while was sufficiently charmed with the wine bug to be convinced that his immediate future lay within the boundaries of the wine industry and Sonoma County.

Encouraged by his close friends and supporters, Myers began the task of establishing a winery operation that would fit his needs. He was extremely fortunate to attract Mary Ann Graf, one of the pioneer female winemakers in the industry who had recently left Simi Winery (with great accolades), into becoming his winery consultant.

Myers immediately sold his salmon fishing boat and invested in his first Alexander Valley vineyards. Since money was certainly a significant factor, White Oak's initial wines were produced in a rented garage that was outfitted to become a small lab and winery.

White Oak Winery started small and can arguably be called a moderate sized winery in today's competitive wine industry.




THE WINE REGION



Nearly 750 acres of vineyards, divided between the Napa, Alexander, and Russian River Valleys grow the grapes that become the wines of White Oak Vineyards & Winery. From the Napa Valley come the reds – Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon, from the Russian River Valley come the whites – Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay, and from the 80-year-old vines on the winery's Alexander



*The world-famous Napa Valley is home to over 45,000 vineyard acres, and produces some of the top wines in the world.*

Valley estate comes their old-vine Zinfandel. As a result, White Oak Vineyards & Winery is drawing from among California's prime grape real estate and has a limited portfolio of world-class, artisan quality wines to show for it. The different microclimates within these three distinct appellations are perfectly suited to their respective varietals and prove to be the perfect home for White Oak's award-winning wines. 



## White Oak New York Steaks with Mushroom Sauce

## White Oak Braised Beef Short Ribs

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*Pair with White Oak 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon*

### Ingredients:

#### Steak:

New York Strip Steaks  
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
1 shallot, minced  
1 clove garlic, smashed  
1/2 teaspoon finely chopped  
fresh thyme leaves  
Freshly ground black pepper  
Kosher salt

#### Mushrooms:

3 tablespoons unsalted butter  
1 pound assorted mushrooms, such as button, shiitake,  
cremini, or Portobello, roughly chopped  
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt plus more  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
2 shallots, minced  
1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme leaves  
1/4 teaspoon finely chopped fresh rosemary leaves  
Freshly ground black pepper  
1/2 cup White Oak Cabernet Sauvignon  
3 tablespoons heavy cream  
1 tablespoon finely chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves  
1 teaspoon finely sliced fresh chives

### Preparation:

In a dish large enough to hold the steaks, combine the olive oil, wine vinegar, shallot, garlic, and the thyme. Season with pepper to taste. Add the steaks and turn to coat evenly. Cover, and marinate the steaks at room temperature for 1 hour, turning once, or refrigerate, for up to 12 hours.

Make the mushroom sauce. Heat a medium saute pan over high heat, add the butter, and when the foam subsides, add the mushrooms. Reduce the heat to medium-high and cook the mushrooms tossing frequently, until browned, about 5 minutes. Season with the 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper to taste. Add the garlic, shallot, thyme, and rosemary, and cook for 2 minutes more. Pour the red wine into pan, scraping up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. Cook until almost all the liquid has evaporated. Add the cream, parsley, and chives and stir to combine. Set aside.

Heat a large grill pan over medium-high heat or an outdoor grill to medium-high. Remove the steaks from the marinade and pat dry. Season with salt and pepper. Cook the steaks for 3 to 5 minutes on each side for rare to medium-rare. Reheat the mushroom sauce if needed and add any accumulated meat juices. Pour the sauce over the steak and serve immediately.

*Pair with White Oak 2005 Syrah*

### Ingredients:

5 pounds beef short ribs, cut into 3 inch cubes  
All-purpose flour seasoned with salt and pepper for dredging  
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil  
4 garlic cloves, chopped  
2 large onions, chopped  
3 carrots, chopped  
3 celery stocks, chopped  
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary, crumbled  
1 1/2 cup White Oak Syrah  
1/2 small can of tomato paste  
1 1/2 cups beef broth

### Preparation:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Dredge ribs in flour, knocking off excess. Heat olive oil in a 6-quart heavy ovenproof kettle over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking. Brown the short ribs in batches in a single layer without crowding. Transfer short ribs as browned with tongs to a large plate.

Pour off all but about 2 tablespoons olive oil remaining in kettle and in it cook garlic, onions, carrots, celery and rosemary with salt and pepper to taste over moderate heat, stirring, until browned lightly. Add tomato paste and sauté for one to two minutes. Add White Oak Syrah, stir. Add the beef broth to the vegetable mixture and bring to a boil, stirring. Return ribs to the kettle, squeezing them to fit in a single layer, if possible, and cover kettle with a lid. Braise ribs in oven until tender, about 2 hours.

Transfer ribs with tongs to a platter and keep warm. Pour cooking liquid through a fine sieve set over a saucepan, discarding solids, and skim fat. If necessary, boil liquid to thicken it slightly, and spoon sauce over ribs. Serve with soft Polenta.

Find these recipes and all of your favorites online at [www.GoldMedalWine.com/recipes](http://www.GoldMedalWine.com/recipes).  
We have a delicious collection of entrée recipes to pair with your favorite Gold Medal wines.

## Results

### 2005 Martin & Weyrich Etrusco

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
96%	3%	1%

### 2006 Martin & Weyrich Chardonnay

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
95%	3%	2%

### 2005 Viansa Sempre Avanti Red Blend

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
94%	5%	1%

### 2006 Viansa "Vittoria" Pinot Grigio

GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
93%	4%	3%

*The above wines were recently featured.*

*To see our current inventory, reorder online, and Judge the Wines, visit us at [www.GoldMedalWine.com/member](http://www.GoldMedalWine.com/member).*

## Bill Myers


Spotlight, continued from page 5

White Oak and Bill Myers' style is pure Burgundian, and according to the personable Myers, seems to be getting more so with each succeeding vintage. He points to the fact that he and present winemaker Bill Parker, Bill was winemaker at Matanzas Creek for 15 years before coming to White Oak, are producing a sur-lies Chardonnay that carries with it a reserve status.

Myers has turned over the winemaking duties to Parker but admits that he still has a great deal to say about White Oak's final blends. Bill Myers seems a happy, fulfilled man that is extremely proud of his winery's staff and their cumulative accomplishments.

His tasting room is one of his proudest endeavors, and he feels his in-house staff's efforts make other things happen for White Oak. The winery enjoys a fiercely loyal customer base and Myers feels this base has been built very patiently, by offering value-oriented wines in a productive environment staffed by really knowledgeable personnel.

He smiles and adds, "When we started in Healdsburg, there wasn't any money for marketing or anything. It was simply word of mouth and most of our customers were from the local area. I realized that if I could make wines that impressed these people who had a whole assortment of wines and wineries to choose from, I might just be able to make it. Over the years I have made some incredible friends and they have enjoyed some remarkable wines."

Such candor is refreshing in a wine industry that has steadily eroded into mega wineries with mega marketing budgets and accompanying marketing techniques. Bill Myers and White Oak continue to be basically the same entities that started in business over twenty-five years ago. Sonoma insiders and winery friends are betting the situation at White Oak won't change much for the next twenty years. 



1) Barrel fermenting is common for white wines since they lack the tannins of red wines, and can instead draw tannins from the wood barrels. Also, barrel fermenting leaves light flavors of butter, spice and oak in the finished white wine, with a rich, creamy texture that is often desirable for Chardonnay producers. Fermenting in steel tanks would instead showcase vibrant, crisp fruit flavors common in Sauvignon Blancs.

2) In barrel aging, subtle flavors are imparted on the wine and different types of oak (French or American, for example) give differing levels of flavor to the wine. As the wine rests in the barrel, it also goes through subtle chemical changes, resulting in greater complexity and a softening of the harsh tannins and flavors present at the end of fermentation. The effect of specific wood on different wines is the subject of great discussion and experimentation among winemakers throughout the world.

3) The average wine barrel has a useful life expectancy of about five years. New oak barrels impart the most flavor to wine in their first year, and less and less each year following. Once the barrel has been termed 'neutral,' the oak has little flavor components left to impart to the wine. At this time, the winery can choose a method to help extend the life of the barrel, or use it as a neutral storage unit.

## THE ART OF FINE WINE



*Vineyard Canter* was painted by award winning artist Ivetta Harte whose paintings can be found in private

collections throughout the world. Her credits include "Lord of the Rings," "Bond 007" and "The Godfather."

# THE GRAPEVINE

“We really enjoyed the Martin & Weyrich wines this month [2005 Etrusco and 2006 Chardonnay]. An excellent choice – keep them coming!”  
– Chris Stuart

“One of my favorites so far [Viansa 2005 Sempre Avanti]! What a unique Italian blend. It paired deliciously with the homemade pizza we had for dinner. We will definitely be ordering more! Thanks!”  
– Carol Lieberman

## Save up to 45% OFF

when you reorder your favorite wines! Our online Wine Store offers incredible values on hard-to-find, award-winning wines and as a wine club member, you receive a **special additional discount** – one of Gold Medal Wine Club’s most popular member benefits. Perusing the Wine Store, you will find a collection of wines featured in each of our 5 wine club series (*Gold Series, Platinum Series, Pinot Noir Series, International Series, and Diamond Series*), but keep in mind that these small production, medal-winning selections don’t last long! We recommend ordering early to secure your allocation...and keep checking back to find new selections!

The online Wine Store also features an assortment of trendy, top-of-the-line wine accessories, and limited edition Gift Baskets filled with gourmet treats and award-winning wines. Whether you’re shopping for great gift ideas or a nice treat for yourself, visit [www.GoldMedalWine.com/winestore](http://www.GoldMedalWine.com/winestore) today, and start perusing our online wine store!



The *Gold Series* features wines from only the best small wineries of California. The selected wines have earned medals in the top wine-industry competitions or have been highly rated by respected national wine publications. On occasion we feature a wine of high medal-quality with very limited availability that may not be submitted to these venues for review.



## THE GOLD MEDAL WINE STORE

### Reorders

For almost thirty years, White Oak Vineyards & Winery has been turning out world-class wines from California’s top wine producing regions. The 2005 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and 2005 Napa Valley Syrah are excellent selections, showcasing the merit and incredible value this winery’s reputation has been built on.

Save up to 45%  
off Winery Direct

WHITE OAK VINEYARDS & WINERY	Retail Price Winery-Direct	Club Price 2-Bottle Members	Club Price 4-Bottle Members And Multiple Series Members
2005 Cabernet Sauvignon *	\$30.00/btl.	\$18.00/btl. Save 40%	\$16.50/btl. Save 45%
2005 Syrah *	\$26.00/btl.	\$16.00/btl. Save 38%	\$14.50/btl. Save 44%

2 bottle min. order

Reorder Online: [www.goldmedalwine.com](http://www.goldmedalwine.com)

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If you are also a 2-bottle member of another Series, you are now eligible to receive the 4-bottle member prices above!

\*Availability is extremely limited Note: Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in the above prices. Call for details.