



The Wine Press

Medal Winning Wines from California's Best Family-Owned Wineries.

*Niven Family Wine Estates
Edna Valley - San Luis Obispo California*





TRENZA 2013 TINTO SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

941 Cases Produced

Two great varietals come together into this Tinto. Tempranillo from Arroyo Grande Valley and Syrah from Edna Valley provide the blend of cool and warm regions that shows the beauty and diversity of San Luis Obispo County. The Trenza 2013 Tinto is comprised of 50% Syrah, 50% Tempranillo and is an interesting combination of New World varietals that is big, bold and silky smooth. The nose features intense flavors of black current, blueberries and a distinctive spice quality that follows through to the palate. The finish is long and lingers for some time. Aged in French oak for 18 months. Enjoy now and until 2023.

GOLD MEDAL - *Monterey Wine Competition*

SILVER MEDAL - *San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition*



TANGENT 2013 GRENACHE BLANC PARAGON VINEYARD, EDNA VALLEY

1,710 Cases Produced

The suddenly popular Grenache Blanc from the Paragon Vineyard in Edna Valley was planted in 2005. The cooling influences of the Pacific Ocean (only 5.4 miles away) provide one of the longest growing seasons in the state along with extended hang-time that favors this evolving varietal. It is also widely planted in France's Rhône Valley and throughout Spain's wine regions. Aromas of apricot, orange peel, apple and stone fruit follow through to the palate blending with lush peach flavors and a note of white pepper. Citrusy grapefruit lingers on the finish which is clean and crisp. 100% Grenache Blanc. Enjoy now and until 2020.

95 POINTS, GOLD MEDAL & BEST OF CLASS OF REGION

- *California State Fair Wine Competition*

HOW WE CHOOSE OUR WINES: Gold Medal Wine Club showcases 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 (see goldmedalwineclub.com/resources/wine-ratings). On occasion, we feature a pair of wines which are newly released by the winery and which medals and reviews are forthcoming. Each and every selection is a superb wine made in small quantities and with very limited distribution. There are over 3,000 wineries in California producing thousands of different wines. Only wines fitting the above criteria are considered in choosing the featured selections each month.



Niven Family Vineyards



Often called the 'Jewel of the Edna Valley', the Niven Family Wine Estates and Winery sets the standard for innovation and quality in many of its celebrated wines led by classical Burgundian native and Winemaker, Christian Roguenant.

The first vines planted in the area were the work of Franciscan Father Junipero Serra in 1783 at his Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, a tribute to the cleric's uncanny ability to identify a naturally ideal grape growing area. Fast forward some two hundred plus years to 1973 when Niven Family patriarch, Jack Niven planted the first vineyards in the Central Coast's now storied Edna Valley. He had sought the advice of two prominent collegiate professors, A.J. Winkler (UC Davis) and Vincent Pertrucci (Fresno State) and made the commitment to plant based on their recommendations.

The rest of the story, so to say, is history. The 547 acres planted more than 40 years ago are the basis for the iconic Paragon Vineyard (currently 1,200 acres), the foundation vineyard of the Niven Family Estate Vineyards. Jack Niven also developed the famous Edna Valley Vineyard in 1981 and his company sold it to Gallo Wines in 2011.

Along the way, Jack Niven championed the effort to



In 2008 Niven's Paragon Vineyard became one of the first SIP Certified (Sustainability in Practice) Central Coast vineyards. The family is dedicated to protecting and preserving the natural environment, treating their workers with care and upholding sustainable business practices.



"The Niven Family, pioneers of the Edna Valley, have been here since day one - living breathing and farming their historic Paragon Vineyard since 1973." Cheers!

establish Edna Valley as an AVA, gaining status in 1982. Niven's wife Catherine was the first to venture into the winemaking business in what was to eventually become Baileyana, the mainstay winery for the Niven Family.

The 3rd generation of the family was responsible for the

company's road to diversity. John H. Niven and his cousin Michal Blaney transformed the winery operation into a series of unique wine-forward brands to highlight the family's sundry vineyard fruit and terroirs.

Two of these distinctive endeavors are the ingredients of this month's *Gold Wine Club* selections.

Trenza (Spanish for braid) Winery is comprised of New World style red blended wines from various vineyards owned by the family. Its label shows interlocking braids similar to the interlocking varietals in the Trenza Winery's red blends. Several varietals are blended together to provide an avant-garde approach that is both mind blowing and exotic to the palate. It is also a meeting of warmer and cooler climates and their resultant effect when intermixed is outstanding.

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Christian Roguenant, WINEMAKER

The native of Burgundy, France decided to be a winemaker early on. A graduate of the University of Dijon, Christian Roguenant is the perfect example of a true Burgundian winemaker. He worked with esteemed French Champagne producer Deutz for 15 years and has consulted for wineries around the world. He even made wine in Korea (sparkling wine for the 1988 Olympics) before finally coming to California's Central Coast where he became winemaker at Maison Deutz in the Arroyo Grande Valley. After Maison Deutz was sold, Roguenant became winemaker at the Niven Family's Baileyana Winery and the association has proven to be brilliant for several decades.

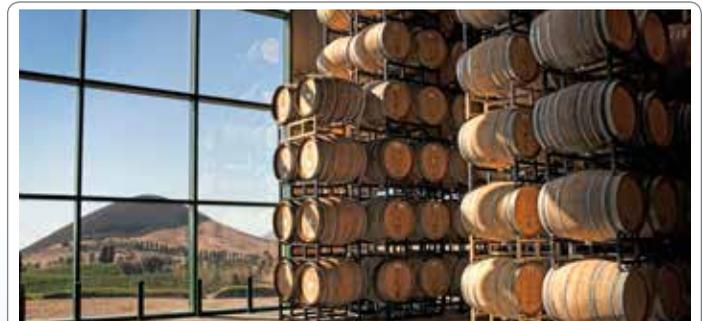
When the decision was made in 1998 to build a new winery, Christian Roguenant was given a blank slate to build the facility of his dreams. The hilltop location is state-of-the-art with a distinctive double-arched green roof that is visible from a long distance. Its design is light-filled and elegantly functional.

Roguenant prefers the classical Burgundian approach to winemaking that employs numerous open-top fermenters and four climate controlled barrel cellars that are used for separate Niven Family wines under maturity.

NIVEN FAMILY VINEYARDS

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Tangent Wines is the white wine equivalent to the aforementioned Trenza Winery. Its existence explores the cool climate effects of several white varietals located in the famed Paragon Vineyard. Paragon has an incredibly special reputation for growing white grapes that produce clean, crisp wines with zesty features. These include Sauvignon Blanc, Viognier and Pinot Gris, along with some less familiar varietals such as Albariño and Grenache Blanc which are exploding in interest in California and elsewhere. The wines showcase individual varietals which are produced in stainless steel tanks and do not undergo any malolactic fermentation. We hope you enjoy these two superb wines from the Niven Family Wine Estates.



The Niven Family winery includes truly innovative equipment ranging from a fruit delivery system to small and large presses and tanks to handle any size lots. The cellars are lined with bay windows allowing sunlight into a traditionally dark and damp environment, which helps the winery stay clean.





Food pairings from Niven Family Vineyards



TRI-TIP WITH PICO DE GALLO SALSA

PAIR WITH THE TRENZA 2013 TINTO

Tri-tip roast – 2.5 to 3.5 pounds	1 whole White Onion,	2 Limes, juiced (to taste)
Salt and ground Black Pepper	finely chopped	1 T. Salt (to taste)
Granulated garlic	1 bunch Cilantro, chopped	1 t. Pepper
1 stick salted Butter	5 cloves fresh Garlic,	1 t. granulated Garlic
French or Sourdough baguette	finely minced	½ t. ground Cumin
Garlic Salt	1 whole Jalapeño, finely chopped	½ t. Chili Powder
5 lbs Beefsteak Tomatoes	(more or less to desired heat)	½ t. Mexican Oregano

Tri-Tip: Start with an untrimmed Tri-Tip roast of the highest quality you can find. Trim off all the connective tissue you can see and trim off the fat to ¼ inch thickness across the back of the Tri-Tip. Season Tri-Tip generously with salt, coarsely ground black pepper and granulated garlic. Grill over medium-high heat, turning every 5-10 minutes, until the internal temperature of the roast is 135°F, usually about 10-15 minutes per pound of meat. Remove from heat and let the Tri-Tip rest for at least 10 minutes in a shallow pan to catch any juices. Cut the Tri-Tip across the grain in slices ¼-inch or thinner. **Garlic Bread:** Place a small pot on the grill and melt a stick of salted butter. Grill a split baguette until crunchy and golden brown. Brush butter on the bread and sprinkle with a small amount of garlic salt. **Pico de Gallo Salsa:** Santa Maria-style Tri-Tip is most authentically served with fresh Pico de Gallo salsa. Make your own with this easy recipe: Dice the tomatoes and combine all other ingredients. Mix well. Enjoy the Tri-Tip with hunks of grilled garlic bread and Pico de Gallo salsa served up on a plate or construct a sandwich. *Recipe contributed by Matt Pearce of Old SLO BBQ.*



SALMON WITH APRICOT JALAPEÑO PRESERVES

PAIR WITH THE TANGENT 2013 GRENACHE BLANC

Salmon:	Asparagus:
Fillets of Salmon (about 3/4lb per serving)	1 bunch of Asparagus
Olive Oil	Olive Oil
Salt and Pepper	Salt and Pepper
Apricot Jalapeño preserves	Lemon wedges

Salmon: Fire up your grill and let it get quite hot. Drizzle olive oil over salmon fillets. Season salmon with salt and pepper to taste. Lower the grill to medium-high heat and grill with salmon skin-side down. Grill with the lid closed for 7-8 minutes. With a fish spatula, remove from heat and set aside on a baking tray. **Asparagus:** Toss the asparagus in a bowl with some olive oil, salt and pepper. Coat evenly. On medium-high heat, grill with the lid closed for 5-7 minutes or until slightly charred and tender. Remove from the grill and place onto the baking tray with grilled salmon. Set oven to broil (450°-500°F). Pour the apricot jalapeño preserves over the grilled salmon fillets. Broil until preserves starts to bubble and get crispy, about 1-2 minutes. Remove from oven; serve immediately with lemon wedges and a glass of Grenache Blanc. *Recipe contributed by Lori Heal of Mama's Preserves and featured in The San Luis Obispo Farmer's Market Cookbook, written by Kendra Aronson.*





John H. Niven, IN THE SPOTLIGHT

According to third-generation family member, John H. Niven, spotlight status should be given to the entire Niven Family and not to himself.

“We are truly a family operation,” he related during a recent interview. “My grandfather Jack started it all and his son John and my uncle James are still active in our company’s development. My cousin Michael Blaney and I are the third generation to take part in Niven Family Wine Estates and I’m sure there will be a fourth and fifth generation to follow in our footsteps.”

For the record, James H. Niven has a law background and serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the family’s wine business. John R. Niven formerly ran the family’s Purity grocery store chain and now is the Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer for Niven Family Wine Estates. His son, John

H. Niven had extensive wine experience with Australia’s Southcorp Wines such as Penfolds, Lindemans and others as well as in the private Real Estate field. Since 1999, he has served as Vice-President of the Sales and Marketing team that has developed the family’s diverse portfolio of brands.

Michael Blaney has been working in the

family’s vineyards since he was a teenager and went on to a career in Las Vegas. In 1997 he moved his family to San Luis Obispo and is currently the Vice-President of Operations.



Michael Blaney, left, with John H. Niven.

“We are a really tight-knit family,” continued John H. Niven. “Most of the decisions we make are a result of a consensus of opinions. The direction we take is always for the good of the family and we are generally in agreement as to the course we should take.”

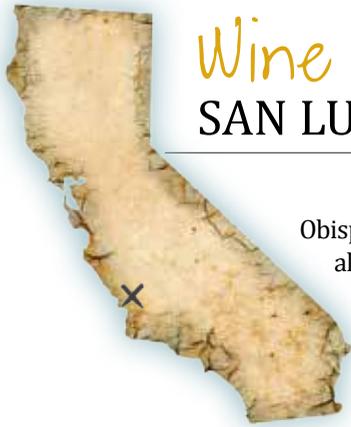
Diversity could be the next brand name the Niven family could utilize should the need arise. “We took a close look at the wine industry and at our vineyards in particular. The idea of cooler versus warmer climates appealed to us and we ventured along that road. The fact that San Luis Obispo County offers an incredible variety of temperatures and soils made our decision all the easier. We always intended to showcase our growing area and Christian (Roguenant)’s experience with numerous grape varietals and an assortment of countries and their winemaking techniques sealed the deal. We went ahead and now feel we are on the cutting edge with many of our wines. The feedback we get from our customers and the scores we receive from the magazines and competitions seem to point out that we made the correct decision to diversify our operation.”

It is easy to see why this company is so successful. The word ‘family’ was never truer than here.



Surrounded by beautiful estate vineyards, the tasting room is located in the historic Independence Schoolhouse built in 1909!





Wine Region: SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY



The vineyards of the San Luis Obispo Wine Growing region unfold along the seafront side of the coastal Santa Lucia Mountain Range that occupies an area almost halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles. In SLO (locally pronounced as "slow") the land exhibits a distinct set of growing

conditions that bind the region's wines. The region is California's third largest producer of wine behind both Sonoma and Napa Counties.

From north to south, the SLO Coast extends from the seaside town of San Simeon to Nipomo. From east to west, it extends from the peaks of the Santa Lucia Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. The geographic orientation of SLO's growing region insures a continuous influence of marine air from the Pacific Ocean.

The area includes two small adjoining AVA's (American Viticulture Areas) - the Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley - and other nearby growing areas. Each of these districts shares a unifying proximity to the ocean, as well as to each other.

Edna Valley AVA

Edna Valley, pictured above, is California's coolest wine-growing area, located in the heart of SLO and just five miles from the Pacific Ocean. The northwest-to-southwest orientation of the Edna Valley creates a direct path for cool marine air to filter into the valley from the Los Osos/Morro Bay area. This climate, combined with the calcareous and volcanic soils results in wines with intensity, concentration and fresh balancing acidity - perfect for Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and other aromatic white wines.

Arroyo Grande Valley AVA

The Arroyo Grande Valley is a predominantly northeast-southwest oriented coastal valley that is recognized as one of the most temperate viticultural areas in the world. These ideal conditions result in a long and mild growing season. Wine-growing in the valley dates to the 1880's when Zinfandel was planted in the warmer eastern part of the valley. The modern era began in the 1980's with plantings of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir on the hillsides of the western end of the valley, closer to the coast.

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What is one process that adds complexity to wine?

The often-used wine word 'tannin,' is the descriptive term for the dryness felt in your mouth after you drink wine. It is derived from the word 'tan,' as in animal skin. This is probably due to the fact that tannin is a result of the wine's prolonged contact with grape skin as well as the seeds and stems. Officially, tannin is a naturally occurring polyphenol found in plants, seeds, bark, wood, leaves, and fruit skins. About half of the dry weight of plant leaves is tannins. With regard to wine, tannin adds bitterness and astringency, as well as complexity. Some wine styles are consistently high in tannins including most red Bordeaux, Barolo and Barbaresco, Vintage Port when young, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon when made as varietals. Other red wines tend to be less tannic. These include red Burgundy, Dolcetto, Barbera, Pinot Noir, Sangiovese and Spanish Rioja wines. Beaujolais and Tempranillo wines are even lower in tannins and are often served slightly chilled.

What constitutes a *light red wine*?

Not an easy question to answer. Most experts agree that the illusive Pinot Noir should be the leader of the category of light reds. Gamay is the predominant grape in Beaujolais, a fruity, light French stalwart that is normally chilled. South Africa's Pinotage is deemed light as is the Austrian varietal St. Laurent and the Rhône Valley's Cinsault and Grenache that are both used as blenders in Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Most of these wines should be served in the mid-60's temperature range for maximum enjoyment. Even the revered Zinfandel can be considered a light red wine when vinified in the Beaujolais-style. Sometimes the growing environment and winemaking techniques that are employed can cause a light red wine to jump categories upward. Zinfandel is a prime example of that phenomenon. Get to know your red before you categorize it as a light or full-bodied red.



The Gold Medal Wine Store

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NIVEN	Retail Price at Winery		Gold Medal Membership Rewards Pricing*		
			2+ btls.	6+ btls.	12+ btls.
Trenza 2013 Tinto, San Luis Obispo County	\$33.00/btl.	2-Bottle Members:	\$26.00	\$24.33	\$23.50
		4-Bottle Members:	\$26.00	\$23.50	\$22.25
Tangent 2013 Grenache Blanc, Edna Valley	\$17.00/btl.	2-Bottle Members:	\$15.00	\$13.33	\$12.50
		4-Bottle Members:	\$15.00	\$12.50	\$11.25

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