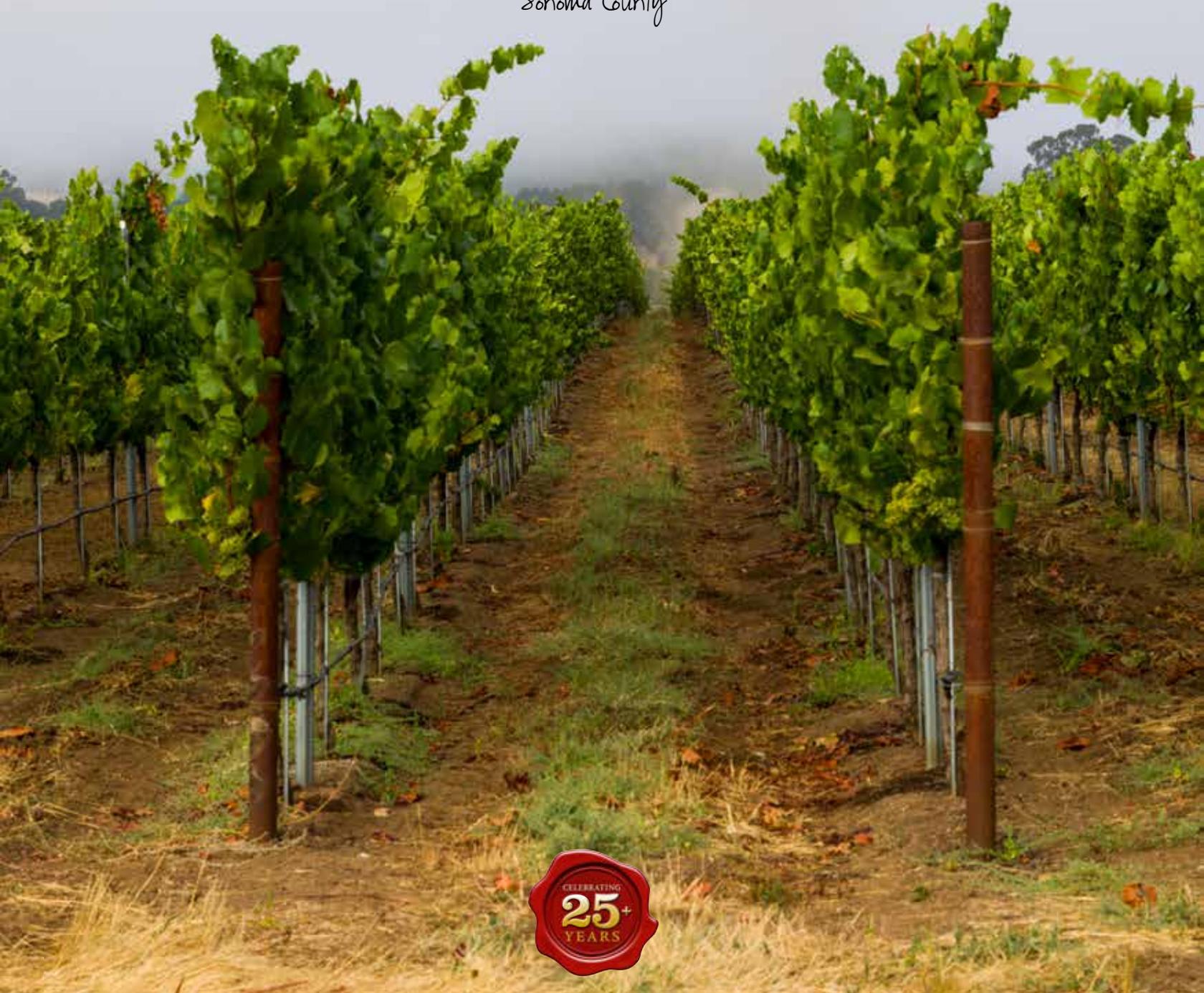




The Wine Press

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

Owl Ridge Wines
Sonoma County





Owl Ridge 2017 "Tyto" Red Blend

Sonoma County, California

475 Cases Produced

The Owl Ridge 2017 "Tyto" Red Blend is named for the Tyto barn owl species, which are great for vineyard pest control - plus, owner John Tracy is very fond of owls and has installed several owl boxes throughout his vineyard. This unique blend is comprised of 32% Grenache, 25% Zinfandel, 22% Tannat, 10% Counoise, 4% Pinot Noir, 3% Syrah, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon and 1% Mourvedre from select vineyards throughout Sonoma County. On the nose, notes of cassis and cherry work together to highlight hints of vanilla and bay leaf, while the palate offers a soft, round texture and flavors of brown spices, sweet tobacco, hints of leather and pronounced red berry fruits. The balanced tannins linger on the long, elegant finish. Aged in oak. Enjoy!

Gold Medal Special Selection



Owl Ridge 2017 Chardonnay

Monterey, California

350 Cases Produced

The Owl Ridge 2017 Chardonnay comes from select vineyards in Monterey County and shows off the distinctive tropical and stone fruit notes that are characteristic to Chardonnays grown in this region. On the nose, look for layered aromas of almonds, graham crackers and bright citrus, while on the palate, focused acidity offsets the rich mouthfeel and flavors of baked apple pie, honey and toasted oak. The underlying tropical and stone fruit flavors give incredible complexity to this deeply structured wine. A distinct nuttiness comes through on the lingering finish. Aged in oak. 100% Chardonnay. Enjoy!

Gold Medal Special Selection

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.



Owl Ridge Wines



Named for the owners' favorite animal, Owl Ridge Wines began as a "retirement project," but has grown into an award-winning boutique winery crafting a range of limited production Bordeaux-style wines from Sonoma County.



Winery owner John Tracy and winemaker Joe Otos work with select growers in Sonoma County, Alexander Valley, Dry Creek Valley and Monterey, sourcing fruit that will produce high-quality, well-balanced, distinctive wines.

Its owner's passion for Cabernet Sauvignon was the prime factor in the establishment of Owl Ridge Wines in 2002. Owner John Tracy had already established Willowbrook Cellars that produced Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, and decided that his infatuation with the great Bordeaux varietal was strong enough to cause him to establish another wine entity, Owl Ridge Wines.

Tracy and his wife Deborah had no trouble in naming their new business. "We both love owls and we became fans of the Sulphur Creek Nature Center in Hayward." Hayward is on the East Bay, directly across from the San Francisco International Airport.

The center is involved in rehabilitating and releasing owls and other animals back into the wild. "We happened to be there the night they released four barn owls that they had rescued. The entire experience was fantastic and we were so impressed by the event and their work that we agreed to become contributors. It seemed quite natural for us to name our new venture after our favorite birds," Tracy asserted.

The first release of Owl Ridge wines occurred in 2002 with a smallish lot of around 500 cases. This year, the company will produce nearly 10,000 cases, a level that is comfortable to its owners.

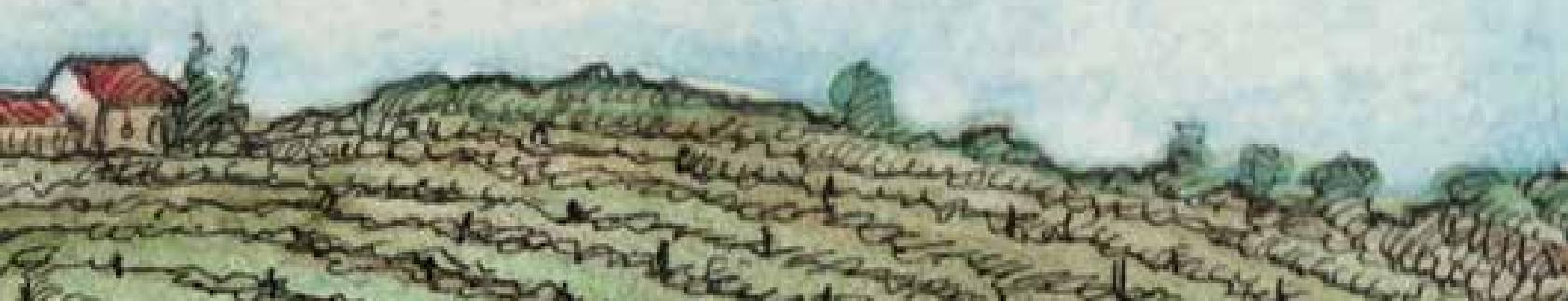
"We have grown steadily throughout our existence," General Manager and Winemaker Joe Otos commented. "It is possible for us to continue growing, but we are happy with where we are. Our owner, John, is pleased with the way we have grown. It is all part of our business plan."

Praise and plaudits have come in bunches for the Sonoma County winery. In 2006, it was named Best New Winery at the Wine Literary Awards Tasting, surpassing more than a thousand new wines. Medals and accolades have also been a prime aspect of the Owl Ridge Wines' development.



For Owl Ridge Wines, winemaker Joe Otos' mantra is "Big, yet - but balanced." To achieve this, he takes advantage of the high quality grapes grown in Sonoma County and uses 100% French oak and winemaking techniques that preserve the intensity of the fruit flavors. His efforts have garnered several awards for Owl Ridge Wines since its inception.

Continued on Page 4





Joe Otos, Winemaker

Joe Otos is a multi-year veteran of the Northern California winemaking fraternity. Originally from Southern California (Torrance), Otos (pronounced *Ah-tas*) graduated from Sonoma State University around the turn of the century. During his stay at Sonoma State, he obtained part-time work at fabled Ravenswood Winery whose reputation was made with marvelous Zinfandels. While there, Otos fell in love with winemaking and the wine industry.

After graduation, Otos joined Chris Loxton at Wellington Vineyards. Loxton taught Joe to control every stage of fermentation closely and to emphasize the consistent flavor profiles that emanate from a very controlled fermentation process.

At the young age of 26, Otos encountered the new owner of vineyards that would eventually evolve into Owl Ridge Wines. His passion for winemaking impressed John Tracy and Otos became Owl Ridge’s only winemaker. Fourteen years later, Otos is still quite fervent about his winemaking.

“I want my wines to literally jump out of the glass,” he professed. “I am a disciple of old world winemaking techniques where crispness and fruit-friendly wines are the marquee features. I want my wine to be big, yet balanced.”

Owl Ridge Wines

Continued from Page 3

“It is wonderful that the judges and writers enjoy our work,” added the owner. “It is very humbling in the ultra-competitive California wine industry.”

Tracy also admitted that “Big Cabs” formed the basis for beginning Owl Ridge Wines. He also admitted that he was a bit skeptical about making Cabernet Sauvignon in Sonoma County. When Winemaker Joe Otos answered, “maybe,” the pair immediately set out to find the best Cabernet fruit available. They settled on vineyards in Dry Creek Valley and Sonoma Valley, both well respected sub regions for growing Cabernet Sauvignon.

Today’s Owl Ridge Wines also produces a superior Chardonnay as well as a distinctive ‘Tyto’ Red Blend that are

this month’s Gold Wine Club selections. Once again, Sonoma County’s wide diversity of grape varieties is visibly apparent.





Food pairings from Owl Ridge Wines



Chicken Mole

Pair with the Owl Ridge 2017 "Tyto" Red Blend

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4 bone-in chicken thighs and legs | 1 tsp cinnamon |
| 1/4 white onion | 2 tsp smoked sweet paprika |
| 1 garlic clove | 1 Tbs dark cocoa powder |
| 1 celery stalk, cut into pieces | 3 Tbs flour |
| 1 small parsley stalk with leaves | 1 Tbs vegetable oil |
| 4 dried pasilla peppers, cleaned & deveined | 1 cup chicken broth (from Step 1) |
| 2 plum tomatoes | Salt and pepper |
| Mole Sauce: | 2 oz dark chocolate, chopped up into small bites for easy melting |
| 1/2 cup white onion, chopped in 1/2 inch chunks | Garnish: |
| 1 garlic clove | 1/2 cup cilantro leaves |
| 2 tsp oregano | Lime wedges |
| 2 tsp ground cumin 2 tsp coriander | |

Place the chicken, onion, and garlic clove in a stockpot and cover with water. Bring to a boil on med-high heat, about 5-6 min., skimming off the foam that forms on the surface with a spoon. Reduce heat and add the celery and the parsley. Simmer until chicken is cooked through, about 20-25 min (reserve one cup of broth for later). While the chicken is cooking, lightly toast the peppers on a griddle or straight on the flame, turning frequently. If they cook too much, they will get a bitter taste from being burned. This step will take seconds. Place in the bowl and cover them with warm water to soak for 10-15 min (or until softened). Lightly oil a skillet and place the tomato, onion and garlic to roast. Stir frequently until they show signs of blistering and have brown spots. Add all the spices (oregano through paprika) and cook until fragrant, 1-2 min. Now add the cocoa powder and flour and cook an additional 3 min. Drain the pasilla peppers and place them in a blender with the roasted tomatoes, onion, garlic, spices and one cup of chicken broth from Step 1. Process until smooth. Heat the 1 Tbs of oil in a sauce pot over med-high heat. Slowly add the sauce from the blender. If sauce is too thick, add more chicken broth to the sauce. Cook for about 5 min. until it starts to boil, then reduce hat to simmer. Cook for another 5 min., stirring occasionally so the sauce doesn't stick to the bottom of the pot. Remove chicken from the pot to cool a little and discard parsley, onion, garlic and celery from the broth. Add the chicken to the simmering sauce, season with salt and pepper, and keep simmering for another 5-8 min. to allow all the flavors to combine. Remove pan from heat and add chocolate little by little. Stir until chocolate is melted. Serve with rice. Garnish with cilantro and put the lime wedges on the table for use. *Recipe provided by Owl Ridge Wines.*



Shrimp with Mango Chutney and Chevre

Pair with the Owl Ridge 2017 Chardonnay

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 lb peeled and deveined 15-20 count shrimp | 1 jar good quality mango chutney |
| 1 Tbs cooking oil | 8 oz mild Chevre |
| 1 Tbs butter | Arugula, washed and ready to use |
| Salt and pepper | Rice and/or your favorite vegetable side |

In a frying pan, heat oil and butter until hot. Add shrimp and stir quickly to coat in the oil and butter; season with salt and pepper. Let side on one side until they turn pink, then turn them over. Let sit on the other side until pink and turn off the heat. Cover pan while you are preparing the plates. On a plate, arrange a bed of arugula and other side you wish to serve with the dish (rice and/or your favorite vegetable side dish). Also, put a spoonful of Mango chutney on the plate. Check the shrimp for seasoning and doneness. If you think they need to cook more, or you want to warm up the shrimp again, do so. Place shrimp on top of the bed of arugula and crumble Chevre on top. Serve and enjoy! *Recipe provided by Owl Ridge Wines.*





John Tracy, In The Spotlight

Owl Ridge Wines’ owner, John Tracy, is now in his mid seventies and still going strong. His storied career in business bears mention at the outset.

A graduate of heralded MIT, Tracy became a technology entrepreneur working in high tech companies and the aerospace industry. In 1992, he went on his own and founded Opto Power Corporation, a producer of high-power semiconductor lasers in Tucson, Arizona. When the company proved to be incredibly successful, Tracy sold the company and retired to a home on Bodega Bay, on the Pacific shore of Sonoma County. The property came with a vineyard and that fact sparked Tracy’s interest.

“I was not very happy while being retired,” Tracy stated during an interview. “I wanted to get back into building a company and I had developed a real fascination with the wine business.”

His interest resulted in the establishment of Willowbrook Cellars, a partnered wine entity devoted to Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. A few years later, his love of Cabernet Sauvignon motivated the creation of Owl Ridge Wines.

“I wanted my own company,” he admitted. “I wanted to make the decisions that affected the business. I had become fond of big Cabernets, so it seemed logical that I start an operation that was aimed in that direction.”

“John has always been a person looking for the next great thing,” offered General Manager/Winemaker, Joe Otos. “I never really know what he will do next. He is fun to be around and he always gets results with his investments.”

Tracy admits that his biggest worry is that the wine business is seasonal. He knows that if the harvest is affected, it could have repercussions on the entire year’s business. He also laments the fact that dealing with an agricultural product

provides a great deal of variation, a factor that cannot be controlled.

Tracy is also an admirer of Edwin Land, the inventor of the Polaroid process and other inventions. Tracy attended one of Land’s presentations while a freshman at MIT and was duly impressed.

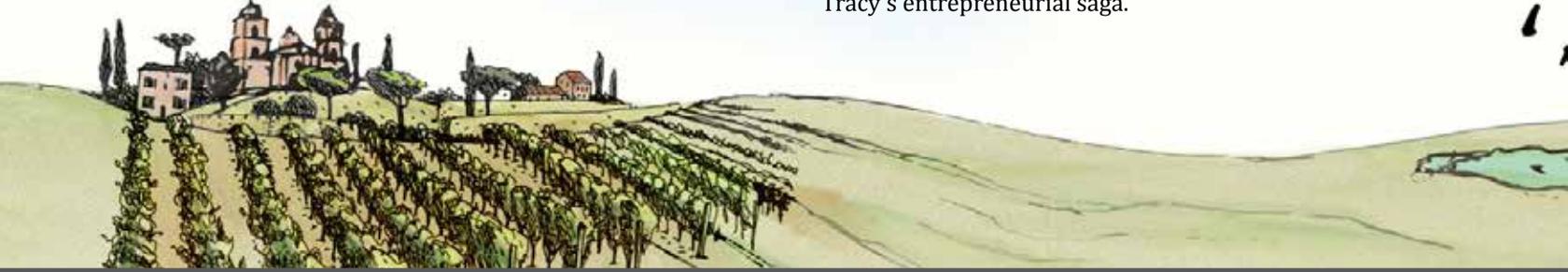
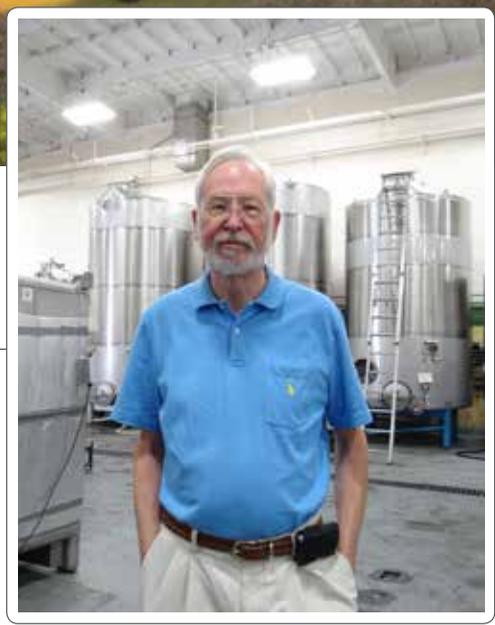
He also admitted that if he experienced a sudden capital windfall, he would immediately look to expansion and acquisitions. He also enjoys working in the vineyards where he works with his hands.

He hikes every weekend with his wife Deborah and spends time listening to music to reduce stress in his daily life. He contends he is still quite interested in technology and keeps himself updated through technical industry journals.

John Tracy is also quite proud of the major accomplishments of his prized winery. A number of Best in Class and Gold Medals has helped make the winery a leader among Sonoma County wineries.

As an adjunct to his winery business, Tracy also operates Owl Ridge Wine Services, a custom crush facility that is home to another thirty-plus Sonoma wineries. The custom facility produces nearly 100,000 cases annually and has been a boon to numerous small production wineries entities.

Interestingly, John Tracy also operates another company out of his Sebastopol location. The company is called Owl Ridge Technical Services and provides plug-in services for electric vehicles. The company is just another chapter in John Tracy’s entrepreneurial saga.





Wine Region: Sonoma County

Sonoma County's vital statistics are incredibly impressive as a grape-growing milieu. More than 70,000 acres are currently under vine and are home to practically every varietal of any consequence. While quietly taking a back seat to nearby

Napa Valley in reputation, Sonoma County produces more than twice the volume of wines as its easterly neighbor.

Microclimates abound within the county, owing to the proximity of the maritime influences of the Pacific Ocean. "What I like most about Sonoma," related winemaker Joe Otos, "is the great flexibility the county provides. Since we buy all of our fruit at Owl Ridge Wines, we are able to pick and choose only the finest fruit. Some wines we only produce every five years or so. When some outstanding fruit comes along, we seize the opportunity and make a truly memorable wine."



The value aspect is always evident in wines that originate in the Sonoma County Wine Region and its eighteen sub-regions. These areas provide a plethora of different soils, slopes and varying degrees of sunshine that equal a host of different varietal possibilities. Grapes grown in relatively close proximity vary greatly due to the presence (or lack thereof) of any one of these features. The local adage, "There's a varietal for every taste," fits Sonoma County perfectly.

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This month's *Gold Club* featured *Plus!* wine:
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Santa Maria Valley**

92 Points - *Wine Enthusiast* magazine
686 Cases Produced

Retail Price at the Winery: \$30.00



Wine Winyard: Test Your Wine IQ!



How many sub appellations are located within Sonoma County?

Sonoma County's large number of American Viticulture Areas (AVA's) - 18! - reflect the wide variety of climate, soil and geographical conditions in the County, each with its own distinctive characteristics that correlate to the wine in your glass. Stretching from the Pacific Coast in the west to the Mayacamas Mountains in the east, Sonoma County is home to several cool climate and warm climate regions, allowing a range of varietals to thrive within its borders. As Master Sommelier, Keith Goldston, has stated, "Sonoma County is an incredible spot to make many different styles of wines - it's almost like a whole country in one county."

When were wine grapes first planted in the Sonoma County region?

Russian colonists first planted grapes at Fort Ross in the Sonoma Coast area in 1812. Not long after, in 1823, Spanish Franciscan Father Jose Altamira planted several thousand vines at Mission San Francisco Solano in what is now the city of Sonoma, in southern Sonoma County. Cuttings from the Sonoma mission vineyards were carried throughout the northern California area to start new vineyards and by the time of the Bear Flag Revolt in Sonoma (and the subsequent annexation of California by the United States in 1854), wine grapes were an established part of agriculture in the region.

When was the Sonoma County AVA established?

Established in 1850, Sonoma County is often named the birthplace of California's wine industry. The first commercial vineyards were planted here early in the 19th century, well before they were planted in Napa Valley. Buena Vista, California's oldest commercial winery, is located here as well.

The Gold Medal Wine Store



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OWL RIDGE	Retail Price at Winery		Gold Medal Membership Rewards Pricing*		
			2+ btls.	6+ btls.	12+ btls.
2017 "Tyto" Red Blend, Sonoma County	\$28.00/btl.	2-Bottle Members:	\$21.00	\$19.33	\$18.50
		4-Bottle Members:	\$21.00	\$18.50	\$17.25
2017 Chardonnay, Monterey	\$22.00/btl.	2-Bottle Members:	\$18.00	\$16.33	\$15.50
		4-Bottle Members:	\$18.00	\$15.50	\$14.25

*Effective per bottle prices after Membership Rewards discount is applied at checkout.

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