



Diamond Series



Renteria Family Wines

One of the great Mexican-American success stories is that of Salvador Renteria, the heart and soul behind this month's *Diamond Series* feature of Renteria Wines. His story is one of innovation, hard work, and serious love of the land. It is a journey that began in 1962 and today comes full circle as his son Oscar continues the Renteria family tradition as one of Napa Valley's most respected and sought after winegrowers.

Salvador Renteria is a Mexican immigrant from Jalisco, Mexico who followed his older brother north to Napa Valley to work a wine grape harvest in the early 1960's. Salvador had been working as a barber in Mexico, but was tempted by the endless opportunities California had to offer. This trip to Napa Valley seemed to be the start of something better.

Unfortunately, this wasn't quite the case.

Salvador was miserable during his first harvest, with the fall of 1963 bringing unusually wet weather, and he returned home to Mexico after just a few months.

The career opportunities of California and the United States continued to pull at him though, and that same year he moved to Chicago to pursue a future in barbering. Again, Salvador didn't find what he was looking for. He finally decided to give Napa Valley a second chance and took a job as a field laborer at Sterling Vineyards.

This time, the fit was undeniable.

Salvador fell in love with the wine grape growing culture, and took a special interest in nearby UC Davis's vineyard trials for optimizing the technical aspects of vineyards. His talents were quickly recognized and Sterling promoted Salvador to vineyard supervisor where he excelled in his position for the next decade.

With news of Salvador Renteria's innovative grape

management techniques spreading throughout the Valley, a number of wineries approached him to oversee their own vineyards. Before long, Salvador was working with Beaulieu Vineyards, Clos Pegase, Cuvaision and Silverado, lowering their yields and upping the grape quality. His hispanic heritage proved to be beneficial as well, as it helped bridge the often difficult cultural and communication gaps between wineries and vineyard workers. Salvador Renteria was on the fast track to success.

Fast forward to 1987 and Salvador had started his own vineyard management company (Renteria Vineyard Management), one of the first Mexican owned vineyard management companies in Napa Valley, and today, one of the largest in the industry. Current clients include such prestigious estates as William Selyem, Robert Mondavi Winery, Caymus, Rombauer, and Duckhorn.

In 1993, Salvador's son Oscar, who had worked alongside his father for many years, took over the reins of the company and molded it into the successful business it is today.

Renteria Wines became a reality four years later in 1997, completing the circle of the family's involvement in northern California's wine industry. The family winery was Oscar's idea, and he called upon legendary winemaker Karen Culler to consult on the project and help make it happen. Karen Culler is one of the great winemakers of Napa and Sonoma Counties, consulting for a number of northern California's most celebrated estates: Ladera, Rivera Vineyards, Wolf Family Vineyards, Culler Wines (her own label), and Renteria Wines. Culler's talent is unmistakable as she crafts among the most sought-after wines in the state. Together, Oscar and Karen produced the first Renteria Wines vintage in 1997 and that first release (a Napa Cabernet Sauvignon) garnered an impressive 91 Points.



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Renteria Wines is a small operation, producing just about 2,000 cases each year of mostly Cabernet Sauvignon

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Oscar Renteria



and Pinot Noir from various vineyards controlled by the Renteria Vineyard Management Company. With access to some of the most sought after vineyards in Napa and Sonoma Counties, Renteria's wine grape choices are practically unlimited, putting the winery in an unusually flexible and desirable position in obtaining world-class fruit.

Renteria Wines are currently produced at the Michael Mondavi Estate custom crush facility in Carneros and visitors are asked to come by the shared tasting room called Maisonry in Napa Valley. This 'winery collective' offers tastings from a handful of boutique producers and is truly a unique wine tasting experience.

Renteria Wines, and the family behind it, are undoubtedly a special addition to the northern California wine culture and we hope you enjoy the fruits of their labor with this month's special wine selection. Cheers!

Accolades and Tasting Notes

Renteria 2014 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

360 Cases Produced

97-Points & Platinum Medal, *Beverage Testing Institute* — "Opaque violet color. Inviting, toasty aromas and flavors of roasted nuts, dark chocolate mint, and cassis pastry with a satiny, bright, fruity medium-full body and a smooth, complex, long berry-cherry custard tart, melted toffee, and delicate baking spices finish with silky, soft tannins and moderate oak. A plush, juicy Napa Cabernet with bright fruit and seamless balance."

Winemaker Kirk Venge's Notes — "This is a blend of predominantly Cabernet Sauvignon along with Merlot and Petit Verdot added in. The Stice Lane Vineyard fruit contributes jammy, black cherry and currant flavors, while the Rowe Vineyard fruit provides black currant and cedar notes on the mid-palate. The 2014 vintage endured the continuing drought as well as the South Napa earthquake. Still, the ideal weather – dry and temperate with few heat spikes – made for hastened yet predictable growing events. The wine was aged 21 months in 60% new French oak."

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Renteria 2014

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