



Platinum Wine Club

90+ Rated, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers.

Tonti Family Wines | Sonoma County

When Peter Tonti was growing up, his father allowed his family the luxury of enjoying with their meals, three fingers worth of red wine that he had produced with his hand-cranked wine press in his basement. The daily event made a strong impression on Ohio-born Tonti, now the owner of Sonoma County's Tonti Family Wines. His father was originally from Forlì del Sannio, a small village in Italy's Abruzzo region. Residents of the village have extreme longevity and have been examined by the World Health Organization. Tonti's father lived to be 97, and other relatives existed to be 99 and 105. Local residents credit the region's red wines for their prolonged existence.

"Wine has been an integral part of my life since I can remember," recalled Tonti during a recent interview. "My family moved to California when I was twelve and I have been exposed to wine and the wine country since that time."

Tonti's business career centered on real estate development and during his business career, a number of opportunities to enter into the wine industry presented themselves. According to Tonti, none of the proposals seemed to fit his aspirations. At one point, he did a favor for someone in the business, a winemaker named Gus Gamba. The pair met and exchanged ideas about the wine business in general.

"Then, I lost touch for several years with Gus," Tonti further explained. "We reconnected years later and he remembered the favor. We talked and he asked if I was still interested in the wine business. Our talk was productive and that was the beginning of Tonti Family Wines. I was totally impassioned about the fact that I was finally able to be getting into the wine business with someone I respected."

The company's first release came in 2015 with the release of 1,720 cases. After an excellent initial response, Tonti Family Wines continued its progress. Fruit is produced from a vineyard that was planted sometime in the early 1900's. The location is on the eastern edge of the Russian River Valley that features gently rolling bench land just above the valley floor. Zinfandel is the principal varietal and the plot's longevity assures it produces Old Vine Zinfandel status. Yield from these venerable plants is small, ranging from one-half to one ton per acre (normal yields are around two tons per acre or more).

Tonti Family Wines farms the vineyards organically and relies solely on rainwater for irrigation.

"Such action keeps the tonnage low, but actually does the vines a favor," remarked Peter Tonti. "The fruit clusters achieve a wonderful concentration and the meso-climate that exists on the Fulton bench land (the actual location of the vineyard) provides enough heat to fully ripen the grapes and also offers sufficient natural cooling influences for optimal hang time and maturation.

Everyone knows that great wines begin with great fruit and that's exactly what happens here in our vineyard."

Tonti Family Wines is a small operation and Gus Gamba (Gamba Vineyards and Winery) serves as the consulting winemaker. Gamba is the sixth generation of his family to work as a winemaker and has earned multiple plaudits for his wines. Interestingly, Gus Gamba's relatives originated from the small village of Millesimo in the foothills of the Swiss Alps, only 500 miles from Peter Tonti's grandparents.

Peter Tonti has been elated with the success his wines have enjoyed both in trade periodicals and in competitions. "It is significant for a small winery to receive such credit," he observed. "The competition is incredibly severe and all we have going for us is our great fruit and wines. It is truly special when one of our wines gets a great number or wins a medal in competition."

Tonti Family Wines currently produces around 500 cases annually, a figure that appears to be fixed for the present time. An additional label serves a different artisan level of wines while Reserve status is kept for the company's special wines. All wines are made at nearby Pellegrini Wine Company, a Sonoma County facility noted for its excellent facilities and production.

One thing remains for Peter Tonti to accomplish. His daughter Emily is currently a project coordinator for a wedding planning company in California. "I am hopeful that Emily will follow in my footsteps and keep our wonderful little wine operation going for as long as possible. She is extremely capable at what she does and I know she would be very successful. After all, our company is named Tonti Family Wines, isn't it?"





**93 POINTS
+ GOLD MEDAL**

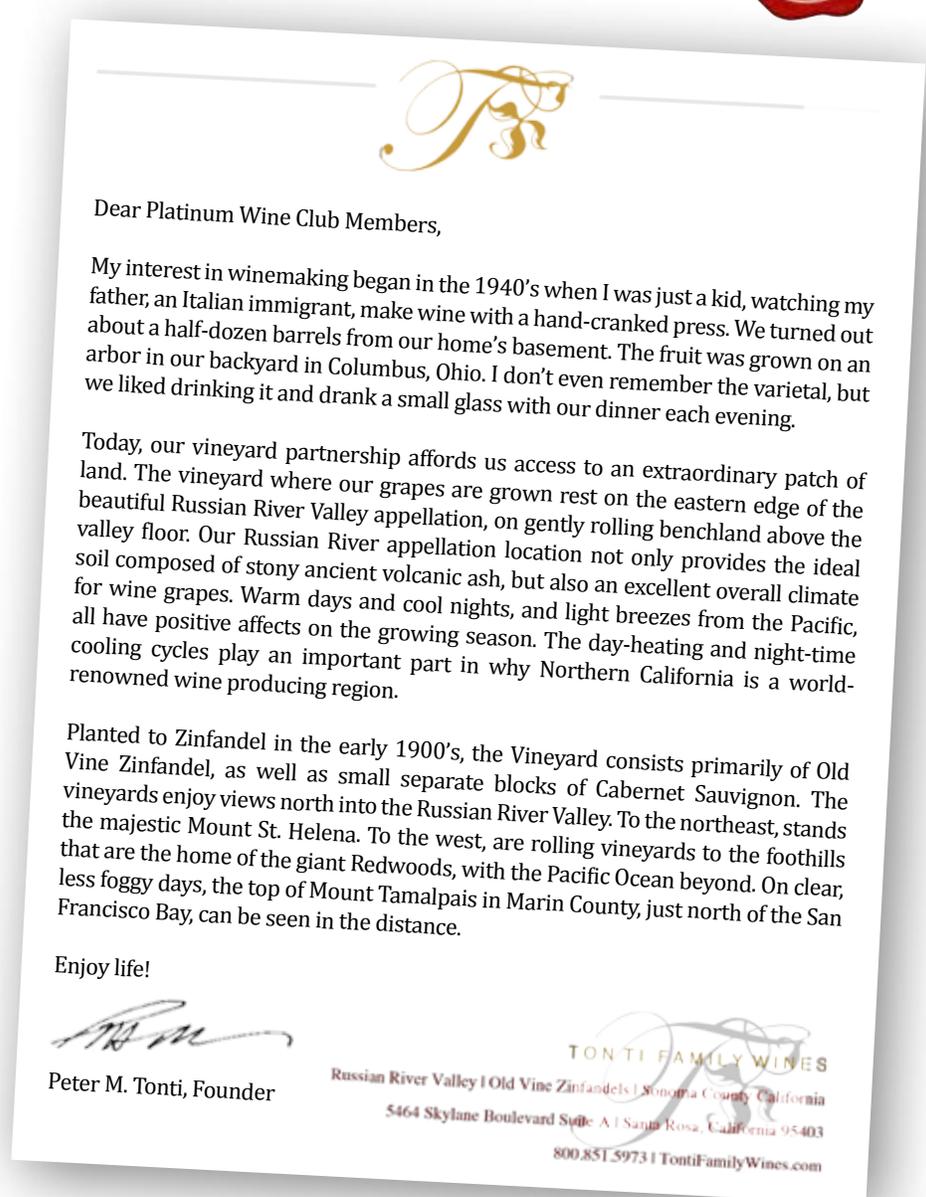
— *Tastings.com*
(Beverage Testing Institute)

181 cases produced

Tonti Family Wines is famously known for its award-winning Old Vine Zinfandels, produced from organically dry-farmed vineyards in the heart of the Russian River Valley. These vines are over 100 years old and give exceptional character to the finished wines. Tonti's Old Vine Zin's are produced in very limited quantities, and very hard to find outside the winery and select restaurants, so we are happy to share this selection with our *Platinum Wine Club* members. This 2017 Old Vine Zinfandel is juicy and fruit-forward with attention-grabbing layers of smoke and spice. Deep purple in color with aromas and flavors of grilled plum, raspberry coulis, tobacco, black pepper, coriander seed, and allspice, this wine is full-bodied, silky, and lively with notes of leather and moderate oak that comes through on the smooth, delightfully long finish. Aged 16 months in oak. Enjoy!

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Napa Valley**

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