

# THE WINE PRESS

Gold Medal Wine Club Newsletter: Vol. 16 No. 4

Tulip Hill Winery Edition

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*"With Gold Medal Wine Club,  
The Road to Great Wine  
Begins at Your Door."*

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

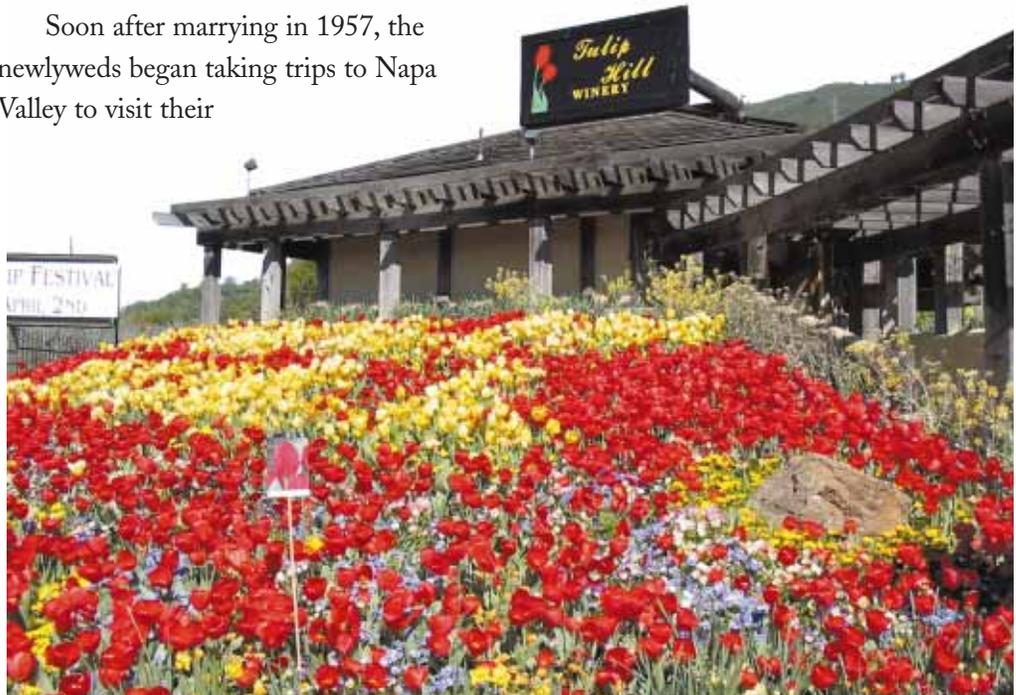
## TULIP HILL WINERY BLOSSOMS AFTER SIX YEARS OF NURTURING

While Tulip Hill Winery is relatively young (year 2000 to be exact) as wineries go, the seeds of its existence were sown nearly a half century before by its founders, Robert "Budge" Brown and his wife Arlene.

Soon after marrying in 1957, the newlyweds began taking trips to Napa Valley to visit their

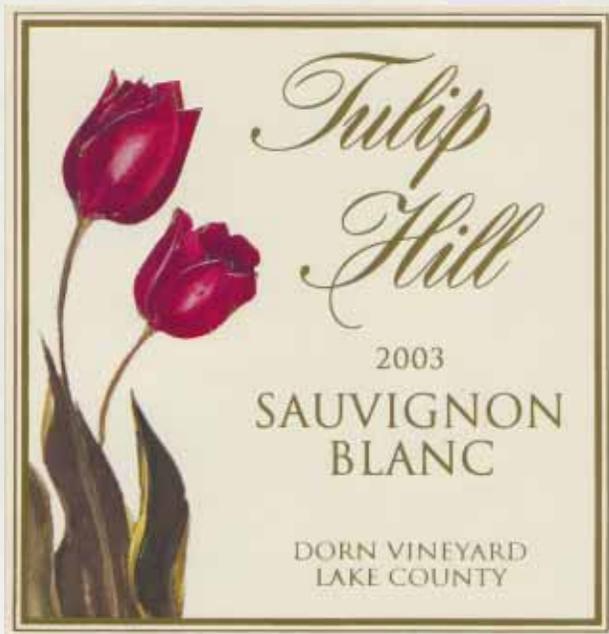
favorite wineries. As their love affair deepened with each other and the allure of grapes, they promised each other that they would one day build a winery if it were at all possible.

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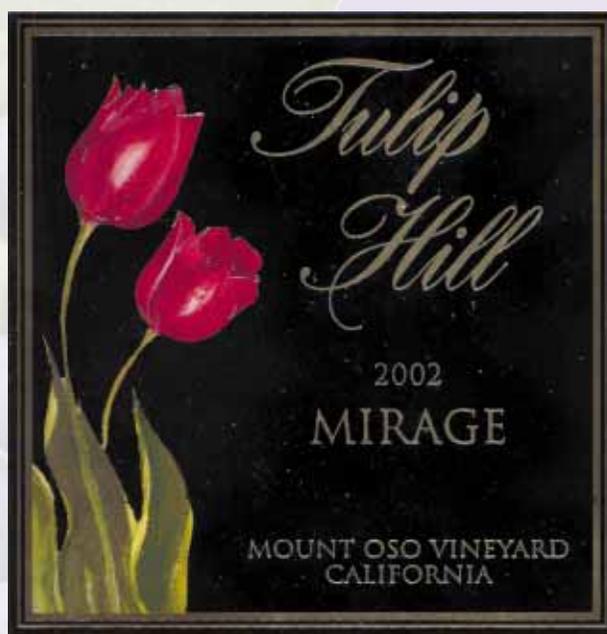
*"The tulip's petals shine in dew, All beautiful, but none alike." — James Montgomery  
— In memory of Arlene Brown.*

Gold Medal Wine Club features 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. On occasion we feature a wine which is of high medal-quality, but due to its very limited availability or by preference of the wine producer, may not be submitted to these venues for review. Each and every selection is a superb wine made in small quantities and with limited distribution. There are over 1,500 wineries in California producing thousands of different wines. Only wines fitting the above criteria are considered in choosing the featured selections each month.



### 2003 SAUVIGNON BLANC

Tulip Hill owns 11 acres of prime Sauvignon Blanc vines in Lake County where some of the best Sauvignon Blancs in California are grown. This wine was fermented cool in tank and aged entirely in French Bordeaux and Burgundy barrels. It underwent no malolactic fermentation. It presents a steely, mineraly nose with the subtle hint of oak and classic Sauvignon Blanc. Gooseberry bush aromas segue to a remarkably soft yet crisp mouthful of grapefruit and pear, green apple and peach. Quintessential Lake County fruit, a delightful wine. Sauvignon Blanc pairs extremely well with oriental cuisine, seafood, cheese and green apples. It is usually best drunk young, as it does not particularly benefit from ageing. Enjoy this wine with a Mandarin Orange Chinese Chicken salad. 100% Sauvignon Blanc.



### 2002 MIRAGE

Tulip Hill Winery's rich, violet red proprietary blend is comprised by combining equal parts of selected clusters of Merlot and Syrah. This unique alliance produced an exceptional balance of the Merlot's gentle up the front fruity characteristics with the hardy and spicy Syrah. A pleasing combination of boysenberry, mint, and plum with layered notes of violets, cedar and roasted coffee beans are present in the bouquet. Flavors of wild berries, eucalyptus, and truffle are followed nicely by a dash of dark chocolate and a juicy burst of blueberry on the finish. An exceptionally food friendly wine, enjoy with game hens, cheeses, and spicy pasta sauces. Enjoy through 2009. 50% Cabernet Sauvignon and 50% Syrah.

## WINE CREDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

**2003 VINTAGE:** **Silver Medal** Los Angeles County Fair, Wines of the World competition.

**LEGACY:** Lake County is perhaps best known for its crisp, clean, and flavorful Sauvignon Blancs.

### Just the facts:

pH .....	3.39
Alcohol .....	13.5%
Total Acid .....	.675 g/100 mls
Cases Produced .....	750
Drink Now or Up to Year .....	2008

**2002 VINTAGE:** **Silver Medal** winner at the Grand Harvest Awards, Santa Rosa California.

**LEGACY:** Merlot and Syrah are Tulip Hill Winery's flagship wines, so why not combine the two? The result—one of the winery's best selling wines.

### Just the facts:

pH .....	3.65
Alcohol .....	13.7%
Total Acid .....	.650 g/100 mls
Aged in Oak .....	12 months
Cases Produced .....	1,600
Drink Now or Up to Year .....	2009

# GOLD MEDAL SPOTLIGHT

## Robert “Budge” Brown

When you first meet Robert “Budge” Brown, you get the feeling that you have known him a lifetime. Anyone who has been quoted as “Attending the School of Hard Knocks, with a degree in Trial and Error and an emphasis on Blood, Sweat and Tears,” can’t be all that hard to take, right?

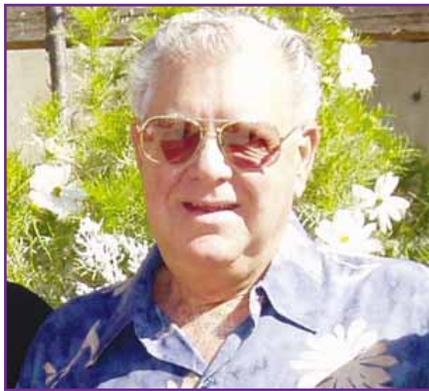
Right, and please be sure to spell right with a capital ‘R’.

It seems that throughout his entire business life, Budge (He has no idea where the nickname Budge originated, only that he has had it since he was two) Brown has outperformed his expectations. He did complete his university studies, at none other than fabled University of California-Davis. His degree was in agriculture, and not oenology-related as were the degrees of so many veterans and icons of the wine industry as documented throughout the years.

Brown’s first calling was to row farming, where the initial crops were oats and wheat. Early on, Budge Brown began leasing small plots of land in the lower San Joaquin Valley and finally, in the late 1960s bought several hun-

dred acres near the sprawling City of Manteca in the Central Valley.

Once there, Budge realized the land he purchased possessed a natural sand and gravel base, so he promptly



*Robert “Budge” Brown –  
Owner, Entrepreneur*

began to quarry sand and gravel from the site. Since the land was next to the San Joaquin River, the quarrying created a natural reservoir that many local people began to flock to for picnics and outings.

Sensing another plausible business opportunity in his own backyard, in 1974, Brown created the first commercial waterslide out of concrete and also put the finishing touches on a complete campground for the site. Next, he upgraded the waterslide with plastic and became the first person to perfect a practical waterslide for mass usage. The phenomena became known as the Manteca Slides and soon became the largest waterslide resort on the entire west coast.

All the time, Budge Brown had not lost sight of his own personal goals, and his long standing love affair with grapes and the wine industry. Whenever practical plots of land became available, he bought these parcels around Manteca and then further south around the city of Tracy. But his long-term goal had always been to find some land in or around Napa Valley.



*Kristi, Jeff, Budge & Arlene Brown - the family behind Tulip Hill Winery.*

“It was a long time before we could afford land in Napa,” Brown recently remarked. “We wanted to create wines that we wanted to drink, and have a lot of fun doing it.” 🍷



## WINE WIZARD

- 1) What does the term “oaky” mean in a wine review?
- 2) What effect does *aeration* have on the wine in your glass?
- 3) What is the best way to cleanse your palate during wine tasting?

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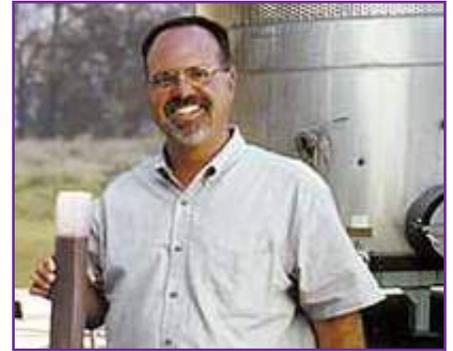
That dream came true in 1995, when the Browns purchased some 1,200 acres in the foothills around Tracy, and named it the Mt. Oso Vineyard. The soils were deep and gravelly and Budge Brown felt were perfectly suited to growing the high quality grapes he has always envisioned. After all, he knew that the location was but 60 miles from San Francisco Bay and easily within the throes of its nightly maritime influence. Vines were immediately planted as the winery project began to take shape. The Browns satisfied another long time passion by naming the new winery Tulip Hill. Long time admirers of the marvelous

flowers, Brown delved deeply into the history of the prized flora. Historically, tulips were so rare that in the 1600s, they were only affordable by the rich. Tulips became a must have for both aristocrats and wealthy merchants. One fine tulip bulb could command as much as \$2,300 in today’s dollars and notarized bills of sale authenticated the bulb’s origin and owner. It seemed quite natural for the new winery to be named Tulip Hill.

When Tulip Hill Winery acquired an additional parcel of 25 acres in Nice (pronounced the same as the French City) in Northern California’s Pope Valley, Budge Brown decided to plant some 30,000-tulip bulbs representing hundreds of varieties of the storied flower. When in bloom in early spring, the area is literally a sight to behold.

Using a rented facility in Kelseyville, the initial releases of Tulip Hill wines were presented in 2001. Tulip Hill began modestly and released a bit over 2,000 cases to the public.

“We started small and have carefully controlled our



*Jeff Brown with “his” 2003 Syrah juice.*

growth,” remarked 38-year-old daughter Kristi Brown. Kristi handles the national sales and marketing. “We have always strived for quality and will always remain a boutique-ish, hand-crafted winery,” she added. “Our ultimate goal is in the area of 10,000 cases, but that level is still a ways off.”

Tulip Hill also employs another Brown sibling, Jeff, 40, who is charged with maintaining the vineyard operations. His specialty is producing intense flavors from Tulip Hill’s diverse vineyards. Much of the



*The tasting room in Rancho Mirage in Southern California buzzes with activity.*



*Kristi Brown...  
learned about wine  
from the best –  
her dad.*

family's grapes production is sold to other wineries, but certain selected lots are designated for use in Tulip Hill's highly acclaimed and frequently medaled award winning wines.

A new state-of-the-art winery was completed in May of 2004 that also includes custom crushing

capability and is the pride of Tulip Hill Winery and the entire Brown Family. Sadly, Budge's beloved wife Arlene passed away last November, but she was able to see her dreams of a completed winery prior to her death.

Tulip Hill's approach to sales and marketing is somewhat unique in that Tulip Hill operates dual tasting rooms at the winery in upstate Nice and also at a lovely location at The River in Rancho Mirage, some 500 plus miles to the south in the middle of the desert.

"We felt the Rancho Mirage location was an excellent opportunity to expose our wines to people in a

different part of the state," explained Kristi Brown. "Everything was perfectly legal and we wondered why other wineries didn't take avail themselves of the chance for increased exposure for their products in areas away from their wineries. And so far, it has worked out wonderfully. Since I live and work out of Palm Springs, it is quite easy for me to keep an eye on things."

Tulip Hill is also the site of an annual tulip festival that is held in early April. Last year's event was actually over attended, causing the Browns to limit attendance at this year's festivities.

*Continued on page 6*

## ANSWERS TO WINE WIZARD

1) Oak has a scent and a flavor most of us can identify easily. If it's the smoke from wood burning or the flavor in meats off the Barbeque, oak is oak. In wine reviews, oaky is a term that describes the influences in the wine's aroma and taste from oak barrel ageing. The size of the barrel (small or large), the source of the oak (American, French, new or old world), if the barrels were "toasted" (charred inside to light, medium or heavy level) and the length of time in the barrel add differences that affect the outcome of the wine. White wines aged in oak often show such flavors as pineapple and tropical fruit and will have a more golden hue compared to being aged in stainless steel tanks. Oaky reds show vanilla, "toasted", herbal dill, spices, and woody characteristics.

2) To fully appreciate a wine's aroma, gently swirl it in your glass. Swirling wine in a glass releases the bouquet and flavor components. Decanting wines will often soften and open up wines as well. These techniques are a simple form of *aeration*.

Winemakers promote *aeration* during the fermentation stage to allow oxygen to mix with the wine (in a controlled way) for the same reasons. During this period, oxidation decreases astringency and increases color and stability. It also evolves the fruit aromas to more complex ones. Aeration also happens during some of the barrel aging which tends to "soften" a wine.

3) Having a good white bread (a French baguette instead of a sourdough loaf) at your next wine tasting as a palate cleanser between wines is an effective answer because its neutral in flavor. Wine buyers, critics and judges will take a piece of bread and a drink of water between wines in order to evaluate each one from the first sip. There are a variety of crackers available too; winemakers suggest plain soda crackers (no salt) and actually the blander variety are the best. At social wine tastings, you will find assorted cheeses, fruits, shrimp, roast beef, meatballs and even pastas. When you're evaluating wines go with the simple neutral items.





# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## THAI GLAZED CHICKEN LETTUCE WRAPS

### APPETIZERS

*Enjoy with Tulip Hill 2003 Lake County  
Sauvignon Blanc  
Yield: 4 servings*

- 1 pound thin cut chicken breast meat
- Grill seasoning to taste
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil with garlic
- 2 tablespoons minced ginger root
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 large red bell pepper, seeded and very thinly sliced
- 1 cup packaged shredded cabbage and carrot mix
- 2 stalks of lemon grass
- 3 scallions, chopped on an angle
- 1/2 cup plum sauce
- 2 cups basil leaves, loosely packed
- 1 tablespoon fish (or oyster) sauce
- 1/2 head iceberg lettuce, cut into half again
- 1/2 seedless cucumber, chopped

*Thinly slice the chicken into strips and sprinkle with grill seasoning.*

*Prepare lemon grass stalks by peeling off the outer husk and placing on a solid cutting board and cutting each into two pieces. Bruise the stalks with the back of a thick knife.*

*Heat a large skillet to screaming hot. Add olive oil, then chicken. Cook chicken 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the ginger, garlic, peppers, lemon grass, cabbage and carrot mix, scallions and stir-fry another 2 minutes. Add plum sauce to glaze the mixture, toss 1 minute, then add basil and wilt leaves. Add fish sauce and turn to coat. Transfer cooked chicken and vegetables to a bowl. Remove lemon grass stalks from mix. Place spoonfuls of chicken into a piece of lettuce with cucumber and fold lettuce over to eat, like small tacos.*

## ROASTED TURKEY WITH POMEGRANATE SAUCE

*Enjoy with Tulip Hill 2002 Mirage*

- 1 fresh turkey, about 16 pounds
  - 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, melted
  - Chopped chives, for garnish
  - 20 fresh sage leaves
  - Salt & freshly ground pepper
  - Pomegranate seeds, for garnish
- Pomegranate Sauce, recipe follows

*Preheat the oven to 450°F. Remove the neck and gizzard from the turkey and discard. Rinse thoroughly with cold water and pat dry. Using your fingers, gently loosen the skin from the breasts and drumsticks and slip the sage leaves underneath. Rub the entire surface with 1/4 cup of the melted butter. Lightly sprinkle the skin and cavity with salt and pepper. Truss the turkey and place on a rack in a large roasting pan. Roast for about 45 minutes, until brown, basting with the remaining butter every 10 minutes. Reduce the temperature to 350° F and continue roasting for another 1 1/4 hours or until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thigh registers 180°F. If the legs or breast brown too quickly, cover them with foil. Transfer the turkey to a cutting board and allow it to rest 20 to 30 minutes before carving. Spoon some pomegranate sauce over carved turkey. Sprinkle everything with the pomegranate seeds and chives. Serve the remaining Pomegranate Sauce on the side. You can reheat sliced turkey over medium heat in stock just to cover. Top with sauce, pomegranate seeds, and chives just before serving.*

## POMEGRANATE SAUCE RECIPE

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 medium yellow onion, finely diced
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns
- 1 cup ruby port wine
- 6 cups home-made chicken stock
- 2 tablespoons pomegranate syrup
- 2 tablespoons light brown sugar
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped chives
- 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds
- 2 cups pomegranate juice (or substitute cranberry juice)

*Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat, and sweat the onion and garlic until the onion is tender, about 3 minutes. Add the peppercorns and cook another 3 minutes. Add the port and cook, stirring, until most of it has evaporated. Add the stock, pomegranate juice, syrup and brown sugar, raise the heat to medium-high, and reduce slowly to a sauce consistency. As the sugars caramelize, the sauce will turn brownish red. Season, to taste, with salt and pepper. Remove from heat and add chives and pomegranate seeds.*

*Serve with mushroom dressing, garlic mash potatoes, and steamed vegetables*

# JUDGE-THE-WINES RESULTS

In this section we publish the cumulative, on-going tallies of the Judge-the-Wines Scoresheets which are provided in each delivery of wine and mailed back in by Club members. We believe it is fun as well as educational to think about and record the different characteristics of the wines you sample. No matter how acute you think your palate is, the person next to you will probably have a different thought or opinion about a certain characteristic of the wine you are sampling. It can also prove beneficial to record your impressions of the wine for reference at a later date.

Below are the most recent tallies of the Scoresheets returned. Gold Medal Wine Club specializes in featuring small-sized wineries and small-production wines. Depending on availability from the winery, all members may not receive every wine that is listed below. The Scoresheet results which are printed in green indicate the wine selections that as of press time are still available for reorder.

## 2004 Contrada Sauvignon Blanc

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	7%	3%

## 2001 Lambert Bridge Merlot

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	92%	6%	2%

## 2001 Dawson Creek Cabernet Franc

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	91%	7%	2%

## 2002 Inheritance Syrah

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	90%	5%	5%

## 2003 Contrada Cabernet Sauvignon

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	93%	5%	2%

## 2002 Lambert Bridge Zinfandel

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	89%	6%	5%

## 2004 Dawson Creek Chardonnay

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	88%	6%	6%

## 2002 Inheritance Petite Syrah

MEDALS:	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
RESULTS:	92%	6%	4%

The above wines were recently featured. Due to space limitations, the entire list of available wines is not listed.

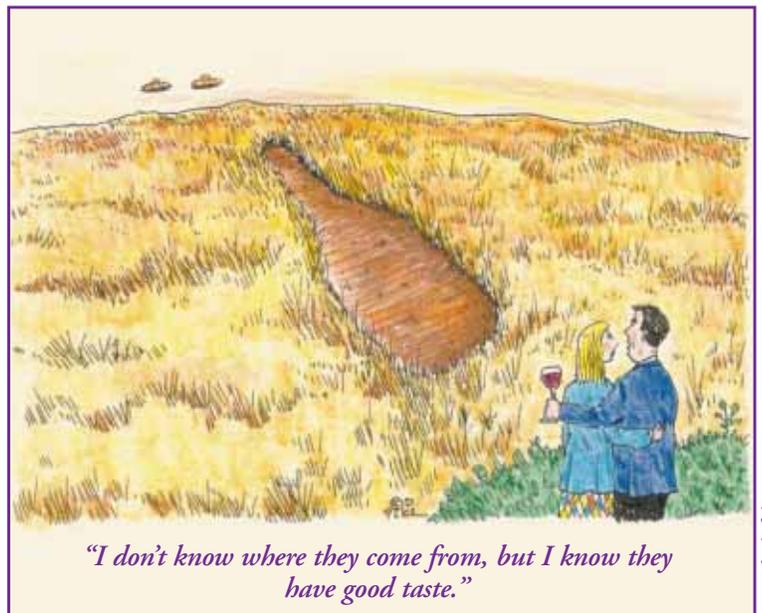
To see our entire inventory and reorder online, go to: [www.goldmedalwine.com/member](http://www.goldmedalwine.com/member)

■ Indicates wine is still available

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Tulip Hill's wines have been on a tear of late and have captured numerous high quality medals and awards in tough competition. It all seems to have come together for the emerging Pope Valley winery and the entire Brown Family.

We hope you enjoy this month's Gold Medal Selection as much as we have enjoyed discovering it for you. 🍷



*"I don't know where they come from, but I know they have good taste."*

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# THE GRAPEVINE

*Comments from us and Club members*

The last three months has been an exciting yet exhausting period of time for our wine buyers. Traveling California's highways, byways and back roads, they have discovered a gold mine of terrific, family-owned wineries ready to share their award-winning, small-production wines with Gold Medal Wine Club members. Great selections ahead!

More wonderful new wines are in store for our new and popular *PLUS!* program too. These are bottlings too good to pass up but do not have enough availability to send to all members. The *PLUS!* program is a perfect add-on for members who want a bit more wine throughout the year.

We also invite you to take advantage of our brand new, limited-time, "*Two for the price of none*" promotion. Watch for the flyer in your next shipment or visit our website to get a sneak peek at this exciting, first-time-ever offer. Visit [www.goldmedalwine.com/twofornone/](http://www.goldmedalwine.com/twofornone/).

*"Great body (in the Contrada 2005 Cabernet) and fruity taste. Very much enjoyed this wine."*

—Randy Uhl, Score 52

*"Crisp apple/pear good summer wine (2004 Serenity Chardonnay) not oaky, not buttery."*

—Gregory Muro, Score 44

*"Superb flavor. Smooth finish. (2004 Serenity Syrah) Holds up very well to aged cheeses with a full body."*

—Joe Ringer, Score 54

Members who send in their wine ratings on the provided Scoresheets are eligible to receive a bonus half-case of any Gold Medal Series wine that is in stock if your name is drawn. Drawings are held each month. (Maximum of one Scoresheet per wine per membership)...GMWC

## R E O R D E R

Tulip Hill is a relatively new winery but quickly making its mark in the wine industry. Their wines are aromatic, flavorful, and very food friendly. Enjoy a glass of crisp, cold Lake County Sauvignon Blanc during Sunday brunch. Embrace a glass or two of their unique Mirage wine with a hearty Italian entrée such as veal parmigiana or meat lasagna. Both wines are attractively priced for an additional quantity purchase.

TULIP HILL WINERY	Retail Price Winery-Direct	Club Price 2-Bottle Members	Club Price 4-Bottle Members
<b>2003 Sauvignon Blanc*</b>	Half Case-6 \$72	<b>\$56 (22% Off)</b>	<b>\$52 (28% Off)</b>
Lake County	Full Case-12 \$144	<b>\$105 (27% Off)</b>	<b>\$95 (34% Off)</b>
<b>2002 Mirage*</b>	Half Case-6 \$108	<b>\$79 (27% Off)</b>	<b>\$72 (33% Off)</b>
Mount Oso Vineyard	Full Case-12 \$216	<b>\$146 (32% Off)</b>	<b>\$134 (38% Off)</b>

**Reorder Hotline: 1-800-266-8888**

**Reorder Faxline: 1-800-266-8889**

**[www.goldmedalwine.com/member](http://www.goldmedalwine.com/member)**

\*Availability is very limited

Note: Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in the above prices. Call for details.