

Diamond Series



Luna Vineyards

For a majority of years since its inception, Napa Valley's Luna Vineyards has played the role as a loosely kept secret among Napa's more learned consumers and winemakers, known specifically as a top producer of extremely high quality Italian varietals and Cabernet Sauvignon that somehow always seemed to sit a bit below the national radar.

Luna was founded in the mid 1990's by a pair of well-known Napa wine industry veterans, Mike Moone and George Vare. Moone was the former president of the huge Beringer winery, and was largely responsible for the ultimate buyout, from corporate giant Nestle Corporation. George Vare, on the other hand, was a former Schlitz beer executive who had ventured west and became part of the Henry Wine Group of Northern California. The pair became good friends and saw what they believed to be a niche market emerging around the varietals of Italy.

In 1995, the property that was formerly known as the St. Andrews Winery became available along the southern part of the Silverado Trail just outside the city of Napa and the two partners jumped at the opportunity. Moone saw the business advantages of establishing a winery like Luna and Vare saw it as an occasion to showcase the beloved Italian varietals he so respected and admired.

The original release of Pinot Grigio, Sangiovese and Merlot (Luna's original winemaker was particularly interested in Merlot, so the varietal was included in production) occurred in 1997, with about two thousand cases of each being offered. The wines were initially well received and Luna began to prosper.

"Luna's wines were an immediate crowd favorite," stated present winemaker Mike Drash, 38, who was assistant

winemaker at prestigious Far Niente Winery before joining Luna. "Everyone liked them but they somehow continued to be something of a well-kept secret among wine's elite."

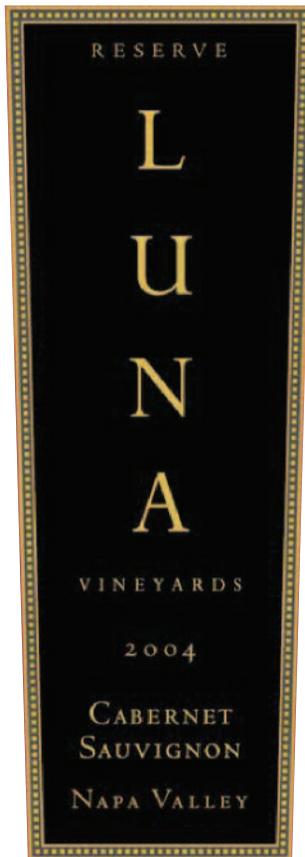
Even so, with the reputations of its founders pushing it forward, Luna continued to increase its annual production and today sells about 40,000 cases, about two-thirds of which is the Pinot Grigio varietal that has taken America by storm.

"I believe it's our approach to the wine that has made it persevere," Drash added. "We definitely took the old school approach and it now seems to be well-received by the consumer.

Both Moone and Vare are still integral parts on the Luna landscape, a company that is filled with a number of ex-Beringer employees. Harvard grad Mary Ann Tsai, who spent a total of fourteen years in marketing at Beringer, serves as Luna Vineyards president and other Beringer alums fill various executive roles throughout the company.

Winemaker Mike Drash is particularly excited about another part of Luna's current business, a joint venture formed a short while ago between Luna and golfing great Arnold Palmer. Palmer and Luna chairman Mike Moone are longtime friends and associates, so when Palmer became interested in developing his own wine brand he chose Luna as the winery vehicle. Luna has developed a chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon for the Arnold Palmer label that has been an instant hit and has sold out within months of its initial production.

"We will eventually make around 40,000 cases of wine for Mr. Palmer," related Drash, "and it's been a great deal of fun for everyone to get involved."



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Mike Drash, Winemaker



A handwritten signature of Mike Drash in black ink.

Drash has hosted Palmer at Luna for a series of tastings during the preliminary production stages and has spent

some time at various Palmer restaurant operations during the last four years.

“It is really fun to be able to hang out with Mr. Palmer,” Drash admitted. “And when the wine is so well received at its outset, then there’s so much more to get excited about.”

It all seems to fit quite neatly for the suddenly mid-sized operation at Luna Vineyards. Even though Luna isn’t a household name for most consumers it possesses a strong customer base and has been critically hailed by a number of periodicals and wine writers. Luna possesses that rare ingredient in the wine business, determination to succeed, and from most accounts is poised at the brink of greatness.

We are delighted to offer this excellent *Diamond Series Selection* from Luna Vineyards for your enjoyment.

Accolades and Tasting Notes



93-Points, *International Wine Cellar* — “Good deep ruby. Bright, mineral nose combines cassis, black cherry, menthol, graphite, meat and bitter chocolate. Sweet, lush, dense and gripping; this is really packed with fruit. An impressively chewy, full cabernet that finishes with ripe tannins and terrific lingering sweetness of fruit. This vineyard is actually on the lower slopes of Howell Mountain. Superb.”

92-Points, *Connoisseurs' Guide* — “There is little about this bold and highly ripened working that speaks to elegance or restraint, but it shows so much richness and real fruity depth that it wins an enthusiastic thumbs-up vote all the same. Intensely aromatic with rich, root-beer-like spice overlying its immense ripe-currant fruit, it exhibits surprisingly good balance to its very long, deeply fruited, impressively layered flavors.”

92-Points, *Wine Spectator* magazine — “Aromas of mint, currant and herb turn supple and harmonious on the palate, with spice, tobacco leaf and fleshy berry flavors. This is a potent young Cabernet, with complex flavors that keep unfolding.”

Reorder

This 2004 Luna Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley is amazingly dark with intensity and opulence. Excellent structure, depth, and richness are deftly balanced with a plush core of currant, spice, black cherry, and blackberry. There is a burst of concentrated flavors on the finish, and ripe, fine-grained tannins. After 2 years in 90% new French Oak barrels, the wine was bottled, unfined and unfiltered. A masterful blend of 90% Estate Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc, 4% Merlot.

The 2004 Luna Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley is plush and decadent wine that belongs in every Cabernet collector’s cellar.

Winery Direct: \$110.00

Diamond Series Price:
3 bottles-\$92.00 / bottle
6 bottles-\$86.00 / bottle
12 bottles-\$79.00 / bottle
(Plus shipping)

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