

PLATINUM SERIES

Select, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers

When Bill Brinton took stock of his red wines' most recent scores, he was pleased that he had five current releases with a score of 90 or higher, the mark generally considered to convey superior praise on a particular wine. What's more, the elevated scores indicated a change in stature that the co-owner of Sonoma Valley's Charles Creek Vineyard can truly relish.

"When we started all this," the 62-year-old Brinton recently remarked, "my wife (co-owner) Gerry and I made some promises to ourselves. We really wanted to do it right and make some really remarkable wines. It has taken us a while to do this, but I think we have really persevered in style."

Brinton and his wife are both transplanted mid-westerners, from Illinois and Iowa. They met in San Francisco and decided to marry. In the spring of 1984, the Brintons purchased a second home in Sonoma to be able to spend some quality time with their two sons, Charley and Bobby. The house was neatly set in a hilly 10-acre parcel that shouted "plant me" to its new owners.

It took the Brintons another five years to actually plant some vines on the property. By 1995, their grapes produced enough fruit that the first vintages of Charles Creek became a reality. The first vintages were tiny, 75 of the 1995 harvest, 125 of the 1996 and a whopping 225 of the bountiful 1997 crops.

Meanwhile, Bill Brinton was also busy developing a natural product and nutritional beverage firm in San Francisco, a task that occupied most of his available time. Gerry had also secured her Harvard MBA and was employed full time in the accounting business. While the initial acceptance level of Charles Creek Vineyard and its small production could be considered remarkable, the simple fact was that the Brintons did not have the time to produce any further wines and the Charles Creek Vineyard was temporarily suspended. But the idea of a first class producing winery remained foremost in the back of the minds of the Brintons.

By the year 2001, Bill Brinton had sold the beverage company and was prepared to resume operations for Charles Creek Vineyard. With Gerry's aid, the pair carefully gathered together a number

(thirteen to be exact) of long term leases on some of Sonoma's top producing vineyards. With their supply of top fruit guaranteed, Charles Creek next employed noted winemaker Kerry Damskey to produce its wine.

Damskey's first competition wine was the now famous 2002 Las Patolitas Vineyard Chardonnay that captured Best Wine at the Annual Sonoma Harvest Fair. In that single occurrence, Charles Creek Vineyard had established itself as a major player on the Sonoma wine scene.

In the ensuing years, Charles Creek Vineyard has grown to a 10,000-plus case producer. "Depending on the fruit we get," informed Bill Brinton, "we might produce as much as twelve or thirteen thousand cases, but no more. We are completely comfortable that we can handle the quality aspects of our wines at this level, and quality is what we are all about."

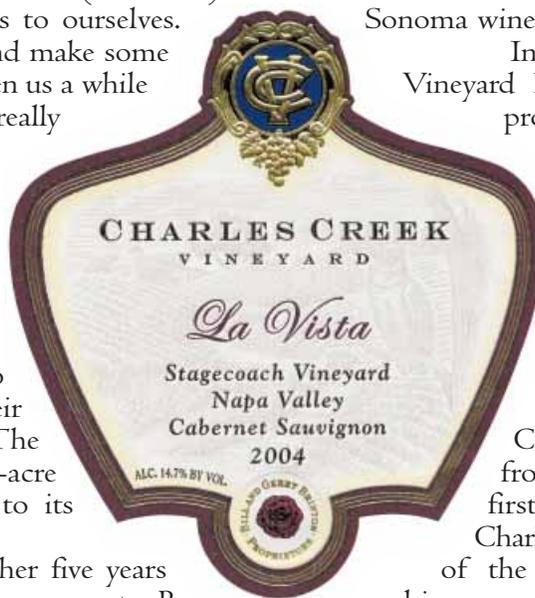
For the record, the name Charles Creek Vineyard originated from the Brintons' oldest son Charley's first name and also Bill's grandfather, Charles Deere Wiman, a direct descendent of the founder of the John Deere farm machinery company.

A beautiful tasting room facility was added recently that is located on the Plaza in the City of Sonoma. "The facility offers us great exposure and also serves as a laboratory for our wines," explained Brinton. "We are able to get a number of our consumers' input into our small production wines and that input is really useful in our making decisions about future wines."

Bill and Gerry Brinton also believe that they are consumers first and winemakers second. They have always viewed the business in that mode and the practice has proven successful.

"When we look at a wine and its price, we both feel there are certain aspects that must be met before we can actually enjoy the wine. If the consumer feels that the wine and its taste are justified as far as its price is concerned, then they will purchase additional bottles and cases and the winery will eventually prosper. If anything is out of line, then the winery will suffer. We are determined not to let that happen."

Judging from the awards and accolades that continue to roll in, there is little chance of that happening.



The road to great wine begins at your door.

TASTING NOTES





Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

We are delighted to bring you our best expression of the noble Cabernet grape in this selection from Charles Creek. La Vista has been recognized in major competitions with multiple gold medals and a rating of 95 from *Wine Enthusiast* magazine.

Our philosophy of wine making is to search for the best location, growers and vines and then allow our winemaker, Kerry Damskey, working closely with Bill, the Co-Proprietor, to develop the best expression possible from that fruit.

The La Vista Cabernet Sauvignon 2004 is just that. The fruit is from the legendary Stagecoach Vineyard that rises to an elevation of 1700 feet above the eastern portion of Napa Valley's Oakville district, stretching from the western side of Atlas Peak to the southern portion of Pritchard Hill. Cabernet grown in this vineyard is prized for its intensity and complexity of flavor.

Wine Enthusiast magazine said: "A deft Cabernet, brilliantly structured, with a firm architecture of tannins and acids, the flavors of blackberries, currants, chocolate, cedar and spice are deeply satisfying." The wine suggests a good decade or more of cellaring, but only if you can resist the temptation to break out a bottle tonight.

We hope you enjoy this Charles Creek selection as much as we do when we open a bottle or two to share with good friends.

Cheers!

Bill and Gerry Brinton

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TASTING NOTES

427 Cases Produced

The Charles Creek 2004 La Vista Cabernet Sauvignon was produced from the legendary Stagecoach Vineyard of Napa Valley. Cabernet Sauvignon grown on this site is prized for its intensity and complexity of flavor, and the La Vista Cabernet from Charles Creek is no exception. This wine received rave reviews including a bold **95 Points** from *Wine Enthusiast* magazine: "This is a deft Cabernet, the opposite of the modern cult style, better defined by what it is not. It's a brilliantly structured wine, with a firm architecture of tannins and acids. The flavors of blackberries, currants, cedar and spice are deeply satisfying." The 2004 La Vista Cabernet was also awarded a **Gold Medal** from the *San Francisco International Wine Competition*, a **Gold Medal** from the *Grand Harvest Awards*, and a **Gold Medal** from the *Houston National Wine Competition*. Deep, saturated purple in color, this intense wine exudes notes of black and red fruits, dark chocolate and backing spices with a dusting of fine tannins in a richly textured package. Try pairing the Charles Creek 2004 La Vista Cabernet Sauvignon with grilled beef or lamb. Aged 23 months in oak. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Enjoy now until 2014.

REORDERS

Since its inception, Charles Creek has garnered numerous awards for its groundbreaking approach to crafting wines, and the 2004 La Vista Cabernet Sauvignon is one of the winery's highest rated achievements. The Cabernet's richly textured structure makes it an ideal age worthy selection and an enticing addition to any enthusiast's wine cellar.

The Charles Creek 2004 La Vista Cabernet Sauvignon retails winery-direct for \$55.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

Half-Case-\$49.00 /bottle (\$294.00)

Full-Case-\$45.00 /bottle (\$540.00)

[Plus shipping]

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