



# Diamond Wine Club

## WHITEHALL LANE WINERY

### Napa Valley

San Francisco wine merchant, Tom Leonardini, Sr. had just a casual interest in owning a winery. A casual interest, that is, until 1993 when he heard that Napa Valley winery Whitehall Lane was up for sale.

Tom was well aware of Whitehall Lane. The original founders, architect Art Finkelstein and plastic surgeon Alan Steen built the winery in 1980. The two purchased the property in 1979 and completely replanted its 21-acre vineyard that was developed before the turn of the century and not well suited for the growing region. By 1985, they started to blend their new estate grapes into their wines, resulting in a string of impressive Merlots and Cabernet Sauvignons. These two varietals quickly emerged as flagship wines upon which Whitehall Lane's early, high quality reputation was built.

In 1988, Japanese businessman Hideaki Ando approached Art and Alan with an offer to buy the winery at a price they couldn't turn down. Foreign investment in California real estate was still running rampant with many overseas investors buying up everything in sight, while counting on double-digit real estate inflation to justify their top-dollar purchases. As the economy worsened, the all-too-familiar story of not being able to service the debt started to slow things down. To make matters worse, the winery was being managed remotely from Japan, and it languished from lack of attention.

Amazingly, though, the quality of wines produced at Whitehall Lane during this time period did not suffer nearly as much as the winery's cash flow. Between 1988 and 1993, the number of different wines increased, as did overall production. The wines were still very high quality and continued to sell well. The basic problem was that the winery suffered from lack of focus and direction. Tom Leonardini knew this. He was also aware of Whitehall Lane's reputation for great wines. So, when it went

on the block in 1993, Tom jumped at the opportunity.

Immediately, Tom made sweeping changes in both the physical plan and strategic direction. All of the buildings were completely renovated. Virtually all of the old, outdated winemaking machinery was thrown out and replaced with state-of-the-art equipment. New oak barrels were brought in. A sophisticated night air-cooling system to control the temperature inside the winery was constructed. Then, he brought in General Manager Mike McLoughlin, and all new support personnel to run the winery on a day-to-day basis.

In the vineyard, strategic changes also took place. Plantings were shifted around and added in different spots of the vineyard to take advantage of the ideal soil composition for each varietal. Over the next few years, additional vineyard land was acquired to strengthen the already formidable estate Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot programs.

The winery now owns more than 145 acres of prime Napa Valley vineyards that are the cornerstone on which Whitehall Lane's wines are produced. Three wines from these vineyards have been rated among the top five in the world by *Wine Spectator* magazine. The 1995 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon was rated as the **Best Red Wine in America** and **Number Five in the World**, and the 1999 Cabernet Sauvignon was another Top Five finisher. Due largely to the winery's superlative Cabernet Sauvignon program, Whitehall Lane also won **Winery of the Year** honors from *Wine & Spirits* magazine an unprecedented five years in a row from 1996 through 2000. Additionally, *Napa Valley Life Magazine* has rated its tasting room the **Best Tasting Room for Napa Valley**. Without a doubt, Cabernet Sauvignon is the wine that has forever etched Whitehall Lane's reputation into the Napa Valley wine lore.

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TOM LEONARDINI, SR.  
PROPRIETOR

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Winemaker for Whitehall Lane Winery is Jason Moulton, who moved through the ranks of cellar worker to cellar master, assistant winemaker, to winemaker, at such esteemed properties as Long Meadow Ranch in St. Helena, Cliff Lede in Yountville, and Brassfield Estate in Lake County. Jason has spent over 17 years making wine in Napa Valley, Russian River Valley, Canada, New Zealand, Bordeaux, and South Africa, and has had the opportunity to work with renowned winemakers Philippe Melka, David Ramey and Ashley Heisey. His focus on establishing sustainable winemaking practices and crafting ultra-premium, world-class wines has made him a fantastic addition to the Whitehall Lane family.

Whitehall Lane Winery is committed to improving quality even beyond what it is today. We are thrilled to offer their latest achievement to our Diamond Wine Club members. Enjoy!

## Whitehall Lane 2013 'Millennium MM' Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley

517 CASES PRODUCED

93 POINTS — *James Suckling*

“Extremely floral with dried rose petal and blackberry aromas. Full body, ultra-fine tannins and a long and caressing textured finish. Shows tension and form. Very pretty.”

### Winemaker's Notes - Jason Moulton

“The Millennium MM Cabernet is made from grapes grown less than one-half mile from the winery, on the northern edge of the Rutherford AVA. This vineyard produces grapes that have been used in some of Napa Valley's storied wines for the past half-century. Whitehall Lane's Leonardini Family bought the vineyard in the Millennium year, 2000, and brought modern viticulture science to the property, improving on the already impeccable quality. This 2013 wine was made from hand-selected grapes in one small vineyard block.

The aromas of dark cherry, berry and oak are captivating. On the palate, the wine is exquisitely balanced with excellent fruit concentration, mouth-watering acidity and ample structure. The finish is long with lingering fruit flavors and elegant tannins. This offering is enjoyable today, but will also evolve with cellar aging through 2028.”



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Featured Wine:**

RAEN 2016 Pinot Noir,  
Fort Ross-Seaview, Home Field  
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94+ Points - *Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate*

800 CASES PRODUCED



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