

WINE CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Graziano Family of Wines

FALL (AUTUNNO) 2023

Our **BIG, Fat,** Pinot Gris/ Pinot Grigio Story

Our old-friend, the late Bob Meadows and I have written about Pinot Gris-Grigio and the Pinot family in our newsletter no less than 4 times, and it seems like we never quite got a handle on the truth about where, when, or how this family of grapes came to be. We are learning more every day, thanks to DNA profiling and constant investigation. It seems that if I were to tell you everything that others and myself think we know about Pinot, it would take all the pages of several newsletters to tell the story. So here we go in a short(ish) version.

It appears that the Pinot variety is the offspring of an ancient, barely surviving, probably German grape variety named Gansfusser (meaning "goose-foot" because the shape of its leaves) and an unknown co-conspirator. Pinot went on and had a love triangle with Gouais Blanc and Savagnin, which combined are the parents of no less than 156 distinct grape varieties, which are spread around to no less than 10 countries (and we thought Don Juan got around!) The earliest mention of the name Pinot appeared in 1375 when Duc Philippe le Hardi described his forthcoming trip to Belgium with "ruby Pinot" wine. However, in the 13th century it was also known as the grape variety Morillon. The origin of the name Pinot may have come from one of two hypotheses. First, it is usually assumed that the name Pinot, like Pignolo, Italy, was derived from "pin", Latin for pine, because the clusters resemble a pine cone. An alternative explanation is that Pinos or Pignols could be the name of its place of origin in France. A village named Pignols does in fact exist in the Auvergne, south west of Burgundy, but there is no evidence to support this theory.



The Pinot family is one of the most mutative family of grapes in the world, probably due to the length of time it has been around, which is estimated to be over 2,000 years. Pinot Noir is the original family member, eventually mutating, giving us Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris. We personally have seen this mutation by observing white clusters (Pinot Blanc) on the same vine as the grey (Gris/Grigio) clusters in our vineyard. Sometimes even the color of the clusters can split down

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GRAZIANO



FAMILY OF WINES

Mendocino Wine Growers
Since 1918

WINE CLUB EDITION



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*"Age and glasses of wine
should never be counted."*

— Italian Proverb

grazianofamilyofwines.com

Grower Spotlight

Gordon and Sherise Tournour Bushby



Gordon and Sherise Tournour Bushby

Back in the spring of 2021 we wrote a sad story of the passing of our friend and family member Alex Tournour, who was one of our most important grape growers. He was the brother of Gil Tournour, who married our cousin Lorena Solomon. In 2000, on Alex's property, Alex and Gil planted 2 acres of Zinfandel with a dense 6'x 6' spacing on bilateral cordons. Like many vineyards on the eastern benchlands of Redwood Valley, this is a special site. Shallow, rocky clay soils force the vines energy into growing great grapes, not vegetation. We have been making wines from this vineyard since 2003 and with their dedication and hard work the vineyard has produced better and better wines every year. Today, it is our best Zinfandel vineyard. Since Alex's passing, his niece Sherise Tournour and her husband Gordon Bushby have taken over the vineyard, continuing a family legacy that goes back generations in Piemonte, Italy. Sherise is the oldest of two children but her younger brother Gil Jr. is now also in the business. Gil Jr. is a retired police officer who now owns a small vineyard up the hill from his father's house, planted in Zinfandel, Carignane, and Negroamaro, which we use in some of our wines. Being a grape grower is not a new experience for Sherise as she grew-up helping her dad Gil do chores in the vineyard, especially during harvest time. Because owning a small vineyard is not enough to make ends meet, Gordon and Sherise keep busy with other work. Gordon has been in the trucking business for many years but now owns a taxidermist business and Sherise gets to spend time with our lively school children, driving a school bus. With Gils help, the grapes from this vineyard have been really wonderful, again making our best Zinfandel wines. I am sure Alex is looking down with pride at the next generation's efforts to carry on a long family tradition and we look forward to getting many more years of fine grapes from Gordon and Sherise's vineyard.

— **Gregory Graziano**



SEPTEMBER 2023 Wine Selections



Blend: 100% Pinot Grigio
Cases Produced: 590
Alcohol: 13.5%
Total Acidity:
 0.78 g/100 mL
PH: 3.31
Residual Sugar: 0.3% (Dry)

2022 Monte Volpe Pinot Grigio

Pinot Gris-Pinot Grigio has become one of the most popular white grape varieties in the world. Graziano Family of Wines is one of the oldest producers of this variety in California. My step-father Mike Quillen and I first planted this grey skinned variety, which is a mutation of one of the most mutative varieties, Pinot Noir, in our Redwood Valley vineyard in the mid 1990's. Pinot Gris was first planted in America in Oregon in the late 1960's.

Our Pinot Grigio comes from our Nube Bianco Vineyard, located above the Russian River in the beautiful high elevation Potter Valley. When I first produced Pinot Gris it was under our Saint Gregory label. As the reputation of Italian Pinot Grigio grew, we decided to place our wine under our Monte Volpe label as Pinot Grigio. It soon became apparent that Americans associated the name of the variety as Pinot Grigio more than Pinot Gris. Today, the variety has become so popular that Pinot Grigio from both Italy and California are mass produced and the price has decreased, causing the quality and reputation to become muddled, unlike many Pinot Gris wines from Oregon.

The grapes were harvested at an average of 23.5 degrees brix on September 12th, 2022. The grapes were crushed, pressed, cold settled, then racked into 4-5 year old French Burgundy barrels. The wine was 100% barrel-fermented and surlie aged for 6 months without malolactic fermentation.

These grapes have produced a rich, floral wine with aromas and flavors of tropical fruits, melon, and ripe apples, with a hint of wet stone. A lively mouthful of spicy apple and stony minerality is balanced by crisp acidity throughout the finish.

This wine is excellent as an aperitivo or served alongside seared scallops with Beurre Blanc sauce, grilled swordfish, or Chicken Piccata.



Blend: 85% Dolcetto,
 15% Barbera
Cases Produced: 250
Alcohol: 14.5%
Total Acidity:
 0.69 g/100 mL
PH: 3.58
Residual Sugar: 0.3% (Dry)

2020 Enotria Dolcetto

This is our 20th release of Dolcetto. Dolcetto is native to the rolling hills of the Piemonte region in Dogliani and Alba in northwestern Italy. Like many of the Italian grapes grown in America we were one of the first producers of the precocious red variety. Dolcetto is very productive and needs a green harvest (removing extra fruit) to reach its full quality potential. Our 2020 Dolcetto is 85% Dolcetto from our Vincenzo Vineyard, located in the Calpella District just south of the Redwood Valley Appellation, with the remaining 15% being Barbera, also from our Vincenzo Vineyard. Dolcetto thrives in the western exposed, shallow, white clay loam soils found in this benchland vineyard.

The grapes were hand harvested October 24th - 28th, 2020 at an average of 24.5 degrees brix. The grapes were crushed into open-top stainless-steel fermenters where they cold-soaked for 4 days, then punched-down and pumped-over twice daily for two weeks during its primary fermentation. After pressing, the wine was transferred into a combination of French Burgundy oak barrels, including about 10% new wood, for 32 months. The wine was then egg white fined and rough filtered before being bottled on August 20th, 2023.

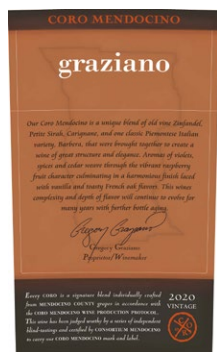
This wine is dark purple in color with garnet edges and has inviting fruit flavors and aromas of blackberries, boysenberries, and dark Bing cherries that mingle with overtones of toasty vanilla oak. The finish is fresh, long lasting, and well balanced with hints of spice. Our Dolcetto is a wonderful food wine when paired alongside roasted meats with dark fruit reductions or northern Italian favorites such as Spaghetti Bolognese or Piemonte style lasagna with chicken livers and béchamel sauce. It is also one of the best wines we produce that pairs well with chocolate.

2020 Graziano Coro Mendocino

Coro Mendocino is a collaborative effort, started by eight Mendocino winemakers in 2001 to create a class of distinctive wines that showcase the rich heritage and unique characteristics of Mendocino County. This is the first time in U.S. history that vintners have set blending and aging parameters for wines distinctive to a region (i.e., the appellation controlee wines of Europe). Each winery creates its own individual blend based on the protocols and each blend is reviewed by a panel of winemakers in four blind tastings before the wine is accepted as Coro Mendocino. All of the fruit must be exclusively from Mendocino County with a requirement that Zinfandel be at least 40% of the blend. Each winery personalizes the common label, which will be recognizable as Coro Mendocino, and bottles the wine in a uniform bottle. Coro comes from the Latin meaning "from many into one".

Our 2020 Coro Mendocino is produced from some of our best vineyards. This Coro is a unique blend of Zinfandel from the Tournour Vineyard, located in eastern benchlands of Redwood Valley on shallow brown and red-clay soils, old-vine Petite Sirah from the Elizabeth Vineyard, located on the eastern hills in Redwood Valley, 85-year-old Carignane from our Vincenzo Vineyard, and a classic Italian grape variety, Barbera, also from our Vincenzo Vineyard grown on the white, clay-loam soils in the Calpella District. These grapes have come together to create a wine that has great structure, elegance, and balance. The grapes were hand harvested from October 5th-12th, 2020, crushed into open top fermenters, cold soaked for 4 days, then pumped over and punched down twice a day for an average of 14 days until fermentation was complete. The wine was then pressed and transferred to barrel and aged a total of 20 months in French Burgundy Vosges Forest oak (30% new), that were heavy toasted with toasted heads. The wine was bottled on July 1st, 2022 and has now received over 1 year of bottle age before its release.

Flavors and aromas of intense plum, black cherry, coffee and spice weave through the full-bodied, complex mouth-feel, culminating in a rich harmonious finish, laced with great acidity, vanilla, earth and toasty oak. The wine's complexity and depth of flavor will continue to evolve with further bottle age for many years to come.



Blend: 49% Zinfandel, 17%
 Petite Sirah, 17% Barbera,
 17% Carignane
Cases Produced: 195
Alcohol: 15.5%
Total Acidity:
 0.73 g/ 100 mL
PH: 3.45
Residual Sugar: 0.3% (Dry)

Accolades



2023 Mendocino County Wine Competition Awards

DOUBLE GOLD



Saint Gregory 2019 Pinot Noir Mendocino County Barrel Aged \$23.00, Pinot Noir 2019 and older, **DOUBLE Gold Medal & BEST OF CLASS**

Enotria 2022 Moscato Mendocino County, \$14.00 Dessert Wines, **DOUBLE Gold Medal, BEST OF SHOW DESSERT WINE**

Enotria 2018 Barbera Mendocino County, Barrel Aged, \$23.00 Italian Red, **DOUBLE Gold Medal**

Graziano 2022 Colombaro Mendocino County, Barrel Fermented, \$18.00 Other White Varietals, **DOUBLE Gold Medal**

Monte Volpe 2022 Vermentino Mendocino County Barrel Fermented \$18.00, Other White Varietals, **DOUBLE Gold Medal**

Monte Volpe 2019 Aglianico Mendocino County, Barrel Aged, \$40.00 Italian Red, **Double Gold Medal**

GOLD



Monte Volpe 2018 Negroamaro Mendocino County Barrel Aged, \$23.00 Italian Red, **Gold Medal**

Graziano 2018 Zinfandel Mendocino County, Barrel Aged, \$23.00 Zinfandel, **Gold Medal**

Monte Volpe 2022 Pinot Grigio Mendocino County, Barrel Fermented, Pinot Gris/Grigio, \$18.00 **Gold Medal**

Graziano 2018 Carignane Mendocino County Barrel Aged, \$23.00 Other Red Varietals, **Gold Medal**

Saint Gregory 2019 Pinot Noir Anderson Valley Reserve, Barrel Aged, \$40.00, Pinot Noir 2019 and older, **Gold Medal**

SILVER



Graziano 2018 Petite Sirah Mendocino County, Barrel Aged, \$23.00 Petite Sirah, **Silver Medal**

Graziano 2022 Chenin Blanc Mendocino County Barrel Fermented, \$18.00 Other White Varietals, **Silver Medal**

Graziano 2022 Carignane Rosé Mendocino County Barrel Fermented, \$18.00 Blush and Rosé, **Silver Medal**

Graziano 2018 Zinfandel Reserve Mendocino County Barrel Aged, \$30.00, Zinfandel, **Silver Medal**

Monte Volpe 2019 Sangiovese Mendocino County, Barrel Aged \$28.00 Italian Red, **Silver Medal**

GFW Order Form

Wine	Reg. Bottle Price	Club Bottle Price	# of Bottles	Total \$
SAINT GREGORY				
Pinot Noir 2019	23.00	17.25		
Pinotage 2018	23.00	17.25		
Pinot Meunier 2021	28.00	21.00		
Reserve Pinot Noir, Anderson Vly 2019	40.00	30.00		
Brut 2014, Sparkling Wine — 8 years on tirage (Release 11-1-23)	60.00	45.00		
MONTE VOLPE				
Primo Rosso Lot-16	14.00	10.50		
Extra Virgin Olive Oil 2022, 375ml	16.00	12.00		
Pinot Grigio 2022	18.00	13.50		
Vermentino 2022	18.00	13.50		
Negroamaro 2018	23.00	17.25		
Sangiovese 2019	28.00	21.00		
Aglianico 2019	40.00	30.00		
ENOTRIA				
Moscato 2022	14.00	10.50		
Arneis 2022	20.00	15.00		
Dolcetto 2020	23.00	17.25		
Barbera 2018	23.00	17.25		
Barbera Riserva 2018	35.00	26.25		
NV Moscato Elevato Fortified dessert wine, 375ml	35.00	26.25		
GRAZIANO				
Chenin Blanc 2022, Old Vine	18.00	13.50		
Colombard 2022, Old Vine	18.00	13.50		
Zinfandel 2018	23.00	17.25		
Carignane 2018	23.00	17.25		
Petite Sirah 2020	23.00	17.25		
100th Anniversary Cookbook	25.00	18.75		
Zinfandel Reserve 2018, Old Vine	30.00	22.50		
Syrah Tawny Dessert Wine 2002 Fortified dessert wine, 375ml	40.00	30.00		
Coro Mendocino 2020	50.00	37.50		
Syrah Tawny Dessert Wine 2002 Fortified dessert wine, 750ml Wooden Box	100.00	75.00		

Subtotal		\$
CA Residents - Add Sales Tax (7.875%)		\$
WI Residents - Add Sales Tax (5.0%)		\$
Add UPS or GLS Ground Shipping, packaging, and handling: — \$30/cs Western States, — \$50/cs Middle America, — \$60/cs Eastern States		\$
Total Amount Due		\$

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Credit Card # _____ Exp. date _____

Signature _____



Come by and see us in Hopland for free tasting!

Graziano Family of Wines Tasting Room

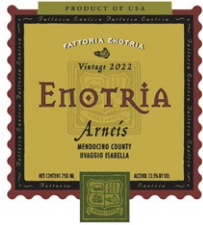
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NEW Releases!



Another stunner from our Nube Bianco Vineyard in Potter Valley. We are America's oldest producer of this Italian icon, which is 100% fermented in neutral French Burgundy barrels and sir-lie aged for 10 months without malo-lactic fermentation. Complex flavors and aromas of Bosc Pears, ripe melons, and fennel weave through this wine. The round, ripe body is balanced by crisp acidity, giving this unique wine great longevity for the variety. A perfect partner for Coq au Vin Blanc, halibut in a garlic butter sauce, or pork scallopini Piccata. We never make a great deal of this wine so don't wait too long to stock-up before it sells out.

2022 ENOTRIA
Arneis



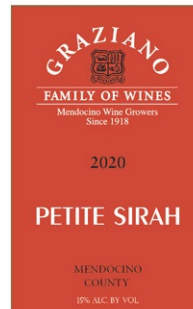
This is our 3rd release of Saint Gregory Brut in the 14 years we have been making sparkling wines. The grapes for our Saint Gregory Brut Cuvee 14 come exclusively from our Nube Bianco Vineyard in the beautiful high elevation Potter Valley at the head waters of the Russian River in Mendocino County. This wine is a blend of Pinot Blanc Pinot Gris, Pinot Meunier and Pinot Noir. This cuvee was laid to rest in metal bins for over eight years on their sides (tirage). This cuvee has incredible depth of fruit and complexity that only time in tirage can give. Great acidity, super complex aromas of fruit and yeast and an incredibly rich mouth filling mousse of tiny bubbles, make this one of the great sparkling wines made in America. There are very few sparkling wines made in America that are ever aged this long. This is a bit of a teaser because it will not be released until November of this year then featured in our December 2023 newsletter, so have patience, it will be greatly rewarded.

SAINT GREGORY
Brut "Cuvee Alexandra" "Cuvee #14



We do not make this wine very often, only when the vintage presents itself. 2018 was a great vintage for Barbera and the extra ageing and extra new French Burgundy barrels really accelerated the qualities of this great wine. This fabulous Barbera is a blend from our Vincenzo Vineyard, grown in the western benchlands of the Calpella district in white clay-loam soils, and from the Burke Hill Vineyard, which we manage, which sits in the western foothills of the southern Ukiah Valley on shallow rocky-clay soils. This is a classic new world Barbera with great acidity and full, rich fruit flavors and round tannins, but with more refined, classic Italian structure. Aged for over 60 months in French Burgundy barrels, of which 30% were new, helps round out Barbera's rich acidity and gives the wine complex toasty oak flavors and aromas with added tannins. This is the perfect wine with grilled meats and rich, meaty ragu pastas.

2018 ENOTRIA
Barbera Riserva



This Petite Sirah is another consistent winner of a wine for the Graziano brand. Mendocino County is one of the best regions in California for this Syrah relative. Also known as Durif, Petite Sirah was discovered in eastern France in the 1860's in the experimental vineyard of Dr. Francois Durif from a natural cross of Syrah and Pelousin. Mainly from the Elizabeth Vineyard in the eastern foothills of Redwood Valley, and with some Syrah blended in, these grapes have produced a rich, dark, full-bodied wine that is jam-packed with deep, dark berry fruit flavors and full of heady aromas of spice, oak, and jammy black fruits. Aged for over 3 years in French Burgundy barrels, of which 10% were new, has produced a wine that is drinking well now but will last for many years in a proper cellar. Petite Sirah is one of my favorite French varieties, one which I have produced off and on for over 45 years.

2020 GRAZIANO
Petite Sirah

Harvest time is here! Invite your family and friends to come catch some Hopland harvest vibes. Big grape trucks. Little grape trucks. Go grapes go! The special fruit arrives at wineries everywhere to be turned into the most complex elixir ever gifted to man. This is the what us winemakers wait for all year.

Then, on to the most favorite time of the year, the Holiday season! While other places charge for tastings and kill the fun of just going wine tasting, Graziano family of Wines remains the last bastion of free tastings whenever you want. Tell all your wine drinking friends and family to enjoy the scenic travel back in time to the good-old-days of free tastings here at Graziano Family of Wines. Taste at your pleasure, try our new releases from an amazing variety of always great quality wines, and take advantage of our ridiculously low prices. — **John Reagh**

News from the Tasting Room



As a frequent traveler, the question I am most often asked is, "What is your favorite place you have visited?" It's a difficult question to answer as each place has its own unique characteristics and it depends on your likes, dislikes, and expectations. Similarly, I get the same question in the tasting room, "What is your favorite wine?" At Graziano, they are all my favorite! However, the same response holds true—each varietal has its own unique flavors and characteristics, and my favorite wine might not be yours.

Whether a seasoned traveler or a first-time sightseer, there are certain sights and cities that people put on their bucket list as must see. For instance, Athens has the Parthenon, a former temple on the Athenian Acropolis; Vatican City has the Sistine Chapel, famous for the ceiling painting of the Last Judgement by Michelangelo; and Dubai has the Burj Khalifa Tower, the tallest structure in the world. These are just a few of my favorite places I have visited.

There are also places that are not as widely known. The tiny island of Antigua in the Caribbean has 365 white sandy beaches with crystal clear waters and the historic Shirley Heights and Nelson's Dockyard. Ushuaia, Argentina, on the Tierra del Fuego archipelago, the southernmost tip of South America, nicknamed the "End of the World." Also, Tallinn, Estonia—the capital has maintained its walled, cobblestoned Old Town. These are some of my favorite places I have traveled that are not well known.

We are all very familiar with the most popular wine varietals such as Zinfandel, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Pinot Noir. However, there are literally hundreds of varietals worldwide that we are unfamiliar with due to geography and the lack of availability outside their regions. Greg Graziano has introduced us to varietals that were previously unknown to many of us, such as Aglianico, Greco Di Tufo, Vermentino, and Ribolla Gialla just to name a few. His passion for winemaking has enriched our wine experience, expanded our knowledge, and allowed us to appreciate the unique qualities of these lesser known varietals.

Whether you want to visit the most popular tourist attractions or venture out to discover the hidden gems of the world, you will find your own favorite. I know many of you have already found your favorite Graziano wine and, believe it or not, there is much more to discover as Greg continues his quest to be the most varied winemaker in California.

Wishing you happy and adventurous travels while sipping your favorite Graziano wine, whether it is a single varietal or one of his unique blends.

— **Eugene, Tasting Room Sales**

Article

Our Big, Fat, Pinot Gris/Pinot Grigio Story *(continued from page 1)*

Statue of Lazarus Von Schwendi

the middle! (Note: Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris/Grigio, and Pinot Blanc are genetically the same [they have the same DNA and cannot be told apart], other than a small mutation in the color code that isn't genetically recognizable.)

Now to dive into our featured grape, Pinot Gris (grey), or Pinot Grigio as it is known in Italy, which is one of the many mutations of the red Pinot Noir (dark or black). Pinot Gris is grown throughout Europe, mostly produced in France (Alsace), Italy (Friuli and Trentino-Alto Adige), Austria (Berglund), and Germany (Ahr), where it is known as Grauburgunder. In France's Alsace it was also called Tokai Pinot Gris, where it produces rich, full wines with moderate to low acidity. In Italy's Northeast areas, Pinot Grigio can produce stellar wines with great character and moderate acidity, especially at high altitudes.

There is a great debate amongst those of us who have interest in the Pinot Gris-Pinot Grigio variety about its origin in Alsace, Hungary, and northeastern Italy, where it is a very important grape variety. Pinot Gris is assumed by most to have gone directly from Burgundy over the mountains to Alsace. History tells us a different story. Pinot Noir arrived in Switzerland by 1300, and Emperor Charles IV, who reportedly favored the grape, imported the variety to Hungary, where it soon developed the name Szurkebarat, meaning gray monk. Fast-forward to 1564 when the Alsatian general, Lazarus von Schwendi, was hired to fight the Turks in Hungary, whom he defeated. Upon his return to Alsace, he brought with him a booty that included 4000 casks of the famed Tokaji wine, made from the grape Furmint along with cuttings of Pinot Gris. To boost the fame of this new grape variety in Alsace, it was called Tokay Pinot Gris. It is also assumed that it came to Italy from France, like many other French varieties in the late 1800's, after phylloxera devastated most of the vineyards there. However, some believe that it also came to Italy from Hungary, as northeastern Italy was once part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As of 2007, since the arrival of Hungary into the European Union, the Alsations and the Friulians can no longer use the term Tokay Pinot Gris (Alsace) or Tocai Friulano (Friuli) for any of their wines (just like the name Champagne from France).

Being an advocate of everything Italian, I have been drinking Italian Pinot Grigio since my earliest days as a wine drinker, when I was studying wine in college at U.C. Davis in the mid 70's. I knew back then that there was something intriguing about this gray skinned relative of Pinot Noir. Absent were the buttery notes and the new oak treatment that was apparent in so many early examples of California Chardonnay. In those early days Pinot Grigio was mainly planted in the Friuli and Alto Adige region of northeastern Italy. There, the great producers like Lageder, Felluga, Jermann, and Schiopetto produce wines with great complexity, intense aromas, full bodies and searing acidity, all of which make this one of the world's great grape varieties. This is a style we sincerely try to emulate. Today unfortunately, in California and Italy, it is grown all over, even where it doesn't make good wine. In places like Sicily, Tuscany and the Valdadige of the Veneto, it is over-produced to make thin, flavorless, vinous white wines (Santa Margarita), consumed by the not so discerning masses. Because of the demand for Pinot Grigio, it is also grown in places like California's central valley (Lodi and Fresno) where it does not belong.

Here in Mendocino, in 1990, I was the first producer of Pinot Gris and one of the first in all of California. However, it was a difficult start. In those early years as a winemaker in this county it was nearly impossible to convince any grape grower in Mendocino to plant anything too new or avant-garde, because what are now seemingly mainstream varietals such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay, at that time were new age varieties for our county. Still, I never gave up trying to secure a supply of Pinot Grigio grapes. In the early 1990's, soon after I started the Saint Gregory brand and while I was also the winemaker for Hidden Cellars, I convinced one

continued on page 10



2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPT

- **September 2nd – Coro Wine Trail Open**, Mendocino County, CA
- **September 9th - Second Saturday**, Hopland CA
- **September 9th – Winesong**, Fort Bragg, CA
- **September 9th – Barbera Fest**, Plymouth, CA
- **September 16th - Wine Club Pick Up Party**, Hopland, CA
- **September 16th - Coro Pick Up Party**, TBD
- **September 22nd -24th : Mendocino County Fair**, Booneville, CA

OCT

- **October 7th - Coro Wine Trail Open**, Mendocino County, CA
- **October 14th - Second Saturday**, Hopland, CA

NOV

- **November 4th - Coro Wine Trail Open**, Mendocino County, CA
- **November 11th - Second Saturday**, Hopland, CA
- **November 23rd - Thanksgiving**, We are closed
- **November (Multiple Days) - Mushroom Fest**, Mendocino, CA

Feature Article

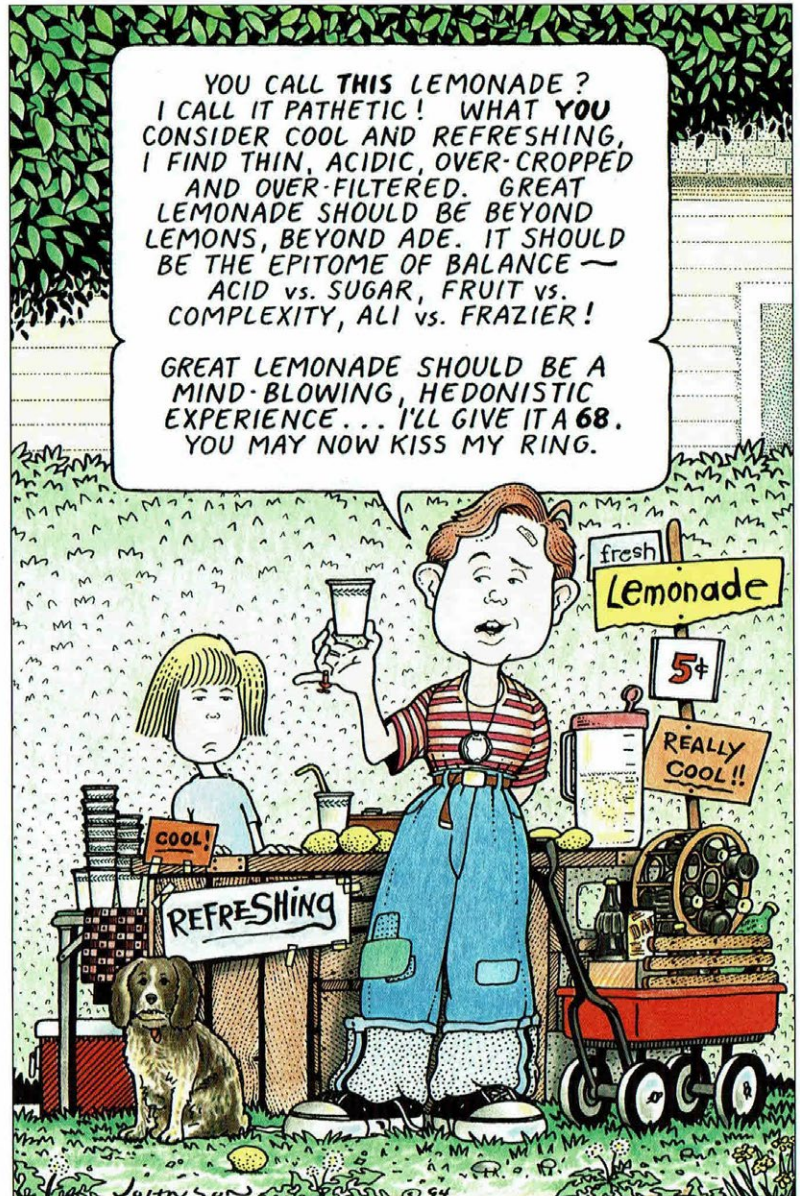
Our Big, Fat, Pinot Gris/Pinot Grigio Story (continued from page 8)

of my grape growers, Skip Lovin, to bud over some of his unsold Pinot Noir (boy have times changed) to Pinot Grigio-Pinot Gris. This was to be one of the very first Pinot Grigio vineyards planted in California. Soon after, in the mid 1990's I also convinced my family to plant several acres in our Redwood Valley vineyard, which was our main source of Pinot Grigio grapes for many years.

For a while we used these grapes to produce both a Monte Volpe Pinot Grigio and a Saint Gregory Pinot Gris. The wines were produced in a slightly different style but it became apparent to me very quickly that Pinot Grigio sold a lot easier than Pinot Gris, so we eventually discontinued the Saint Gregory wine. What a difference a name makes. This vineyard's Pinot Grigio was also a component to one of our greatest white wines called "Sesso". This wine was a blend of Pinot Grigio, Pinot Blanc, and Tocai Friulano. This is a typical blend of some of the greatest wines coming out of Friuli. We have all of these varieties planted in our Potter Valley vineyard so we plan on reintroducing "Sesso" in coming years.

Now of course we use our grapes, which were planted in 2006, in the beautiful high elevation Potter Valley at the headwaters of the eastern fork of the Russian River. We also use it to produce some of our sparkling wine blends, as well as our table wine. As with most of our white wines our Pinot Grigio is barrel fermented and sir-lie aged without malolactic fermentation for 6 or so months in neutral French Burgundy barrels to produce a very high-quality, serious style of dry white wine.

—Gregory Graziano



The **Next Wine Club Shipment** will be in **December 2023** and will feature:

Saint Gregory Brut Cuvée 14 Cuvée Alexandra
2019 Monte Volpe Negroamaro
2020 Graziano Petite Sirah

Please contact us with any address, email or credit card changes.

(Subject to change)

Recipes

TRUDI & ALEXANDRA'S
RECIPE

Sweet Potato Gnocchi with Herb Ricotta Sauce

SERVES 6

BACKGROUND:

It takes some time to roll out gnocchi, so this is a good weekend meal for a cozy night. If you've never made gnocchi, don't be scared. It's fairly easy and pretty forgiving, given the right tools. Please note, this dough is different due to the sweet potatoes, so it takes more flour to make it workable than you would think. If you have a potato ricer, the gnocchi come out more consistent.



METHOD:

Heat oven to 425 degrees F. Cut the sweet potatoes and russet potatoes in half, lengthwise. Place on a sheet pan and drizzle with olive oil. Sprinkle with a few pinches of salt and pepper, then turn cut-side down on the pan. Roast until fork tender, about 30-40 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside until they are cool enough to handle.

Remove the skin from the flesh and run the flesh through a potato ricer or mash with the back of a fork in a medium bowl, until soft and well broken apart. Mix in cheese, egg, thyme, and salt. Once those are incorporated, mix in flour about ½ cup at a time until a dough forms. It will be a little sticky, but keep adding flour until the dough is workable.

Turn the dough onto a well-floured, large surface. Add more flour to the surface as needed. Cut the dough into workable sections (about 10 pieces). Take a section and roll it into a thin rope, about the diameter of nickel. Cut into small, almost ½ inch pieces. Roll each piece on the back of a fork to make round, onto a well-floured sheet tray.

Bring a well salted pot of water to boil. While you're waiting, make the ricotta sauce and sauteed herbs.

In a medium bowl, mix together ricotta, grated Parmesan, red pepper flakes, and lemon zest. Taste for salt and pepper. Set aside. In a small frying pan, heat 3 tbsp. olive oil over medium heat. Once sizzling hot, add rosemary and sage and fry until dark green in color and crispy. Add butter and heat a minute longer, watching to not burn the butter. Set aside.

Add the gnocchi to the boiling pot of water and cook about 5-10 minutes, until they float and are soft and tender. Once they are cooked reserve a cup of salted pasta water, then drain out the gnocchi into a large bowl.

Add the cup of reserved pasta water to the ricotta mixture and mix well. Pour over gnocchi and then top with the crispy herbs.

Enjoy! —Trudi & Alexandra Graziano

INGREDIENTS:

Gnocchi:

- 1 ½ lbs. sweet potatoes
- ½ lb. russet potatoes
- Olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- ¼ cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 large egg
- 1 ½ - 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme, chopped
- 2 tsp. salt

Rosemary Herb Sauce:

- 1 cup whole milk ricotta
- 1 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ tsp. red pepper flakes
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 3 sprigs rosemary, stems removed
- 12-15 fresh sage leaves
- Kosher salt
- Black pepper
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. butter



Dolcetto grapes going through veraison

Greg's Two Cents

Dolcetto, the little sweet one



We are not really sure how Dolcetto came away with its name, but most believe it describes the sweet fruit flavors of the wine. This captivating grape has naturally low acidity and a good ability to ripen, which couples with a sweet finish and flavor. The parentage of Dolcetto was somewhat a mystery until 2019-2020, when Jose' Vouillamoz published research stating that Dolcetto Nero is a spontaneous cross in the vineyard between the white-berried Dolcetto Bianco and the red-berried Moissan. No longer cultivated, Dolcetto Bianco is from south Piemonte, and is not a color mutation of Dolcetto Nero. Moissan is an old, almost extinct variety from western Piemonte (city of Turin, in the Valle di Susa) and Liguria (Riviera di Ponente). The earliest mention of Dolcetto appears in 1593 in the Piedmontese city of Dogliani, Italy. Dolcetto is the 3rd most produced red grape in Piemonte Italy behind Nebbiolo and Barbera, and the 4th overall when you throw in the white grape Moscato.

We are California's oldest producer of this very cantankerous variety, which is one of the most difficult to cultivate. Our first vintage was in 1992 and came from the Fox Hill Vineyard. For several years after, our Dolcetto came from the Cinquini Vineyard, in Talmage (before it was destroyed by marijuana growers). That changed in 2016 when we planted over an acre in our Vincenzo Vineyard in the Calpella District. Our first Dolcetto crop was in 2019, which we used in our Peppolino blend, meaning our 2020 Dolcetto will be the first varietal release from our new vineyard.

As I was saying, this is a very difficult grape to grow. Why is that? First, it is a very productive variety with medium vigor and very large, loose clusters. These clusters can put a tremendous amount of stress on the vine and the individual shoots, so unlike most other varieties, it is imperative that you remove some of the extra fruit, so that the grapes ripen appropriately and normal shoot growth is assured. Dolcetto is a very unique looking variety, with very magenta-green colored shoots and leaves, and it exhibits strange growth in its shoots. In most vines, new shoots, grapes and tendrils come from the nodes on the shoot. With Dolcetto, new shoots with or without clusters seem to be able to originate from the internode, stealing vigor from the primary shoot. Second, as we learned in the winter of 2020, Dolcetto is very sensitive to cold temperatures even when dormant. In November of that year, the temperature dropped below 18 degrees and in certain low spots where cold air drainage is poor, the cold split some of the vine trunks. Those tears caused crown galls to form in the damaged tissues, choking off the water and nutrient flow in the vines, leading to a slow vine death. I had to spend a great deal of time in this vineyard training new shoots (suckers) from the bottom of the vines to regrow them and to replant some where that wasn't possible. Needless to say, this caused a large loss of tonnage and greatly increased costs to reestablish the vines.

As a wine, Dolcetto also has some difficulty. Being low in acid and high tannin, the wine can mature sooner than the tannins soften, so we need to be sure the acidity is in balance to withstand the longer ageing period the wine needs. It has always been my complaint that Italian Dolcettos can be harsh, bitter, and tannic with a short, unbalanced finish because they do not age their wines in barrels for as long as we do, or if at all. Our Dolcetto is one of the best examples of this wine in the world, with beautiful purple color, fresh, jammy berry aromas and flavors with good structure of tannins, acidity, and complex toasty oak.

Enjoy, — **Gregory Graziano**



Dolcetto dead vine



Greg discing vineyard

GRAZIANO

 FAMILY OF WINES
 Mendocino Wine Growers
 Since 1918