

OCCASIO
WINERY

“Something happened here...”

5TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

SOMETHING HAPPENED HERE...

HERITAGE COLLECTION 2011 CABERNET FRANC
FOUNDER'S COLLECTION 2013 SAUVIGNON BLANC

CULTIVATING THE CRAFT

BUTTERED CHICKEN RECIPE

THE COLLECTIONS DEFINED

HOLIDAY EVENTS

FOOD ARTISAN: INNA JAM



POCKETWATCH



In closing her short story *Face*, Canadian author Alice Munro speaks of the power of place.

“Something happened here. In your life there are a few places, or maybe only one place, where something happened, and, then there are all the other places.”

Livermore Valley is such a place. Something happened here in 1889. Against all odds, a Livermore Valley wine took the Grand Prize at the Paris Exposition, besting over 25,000 wines that included all of the first growths of Bordeaux. The shockwaves from this victory continue to reverberate through the world of wine to this day.

Yes, ‘something happened here,’ and from the start I have been searching to uncover this ‘something’ that made Livermore and quality synonymous for its first sixty years. What were the grapes, and how and where were they grown? What techniques did our winemakers develop to craft these historic wines, before Napa, when all they had to work with was their sense

of place and identity with our Valley? And, as important, how did we come to lose this knowledge?

Popular histories of Livermore winegrowing abound; they share a common theme of being first at something. How often do we read that grapes were planted in our Valley as early as the 1700s, or that Livermore was home to some of the first commercial wineries in Northern California? Of course, none of these sensational stories is true. Worse, they detract from the real purpose of history, which is to guide us to betterment. But, uncovering the relevant history is hard. Instead, it is easier to market a nonexistent past while imitating the styles of other wine districts.

The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer believed, ‘to imitate another person’s style is like wearing a mask. However fine the mask, it soon becomes insipid and intolerable because it is without life.’ The quest for wines of life, wines that express the spirit of place, is why I have spent years

researching the wines of this Valley from the earliest days of commercial winemaking though the present. In this process of discovery, I have begun to build a sense of what makes our soils and climates so unique, and why Livermore wines once were so highly prized. Our Heritage Collection is the beneficiary of these discoveries, and I truly hope that this beloved terroir resonates in each glass, with the storied historical narrative delivered in each precious drop.

We begin our 6th year with the release of two very special wines: our Heritage Collection Cabernet Franc and our Founder’s Collection Sauvignon Blanc—both only available to our loyal wine club Members.

... from the start I have been searching to uncover this “something” that made Livermore and quality synonymous...

SOMETHING HAPPENED HERE...



2011 Heritage Collection Cabernet Franc DEL ARROYO VINEYARD

This is a densely layered wine with the richness of cherry and coffee and plum developing into a long finish.

CASES MADE: 75

Harvest Date
October 27, 2011

Brix
24.6

pH
3.4

TA
.65

Alcohol by Vol.
14%



2013 Founder’s Collection Sauvignon Blanc DEL ARROYO VINEYARD

A wine that provides snappy acidity to its succulent citrus and melon flavors. Mineral and grapefruit zest accent the finish.

CASES MADE: 65

Harvest Date:
August 30, 2013

Brix
22

pH
3.3

TA
0.62

Alcohol by Vol.
14%

CULTIVATING THE CRAFT



For me, the crafting of a wine is a cerebral act; it is the extension of a thought. Making the wine is the process by which I render these thoughts into tangible form. I believe a wine should project a powerful sense of place that goes beyond the traditional concept of *terroir* to encompass both the history and culture of a region. It is my expansion of the traditional notion of *terroir* to include these cultural influences that distinguishes my winemaking practices from those of others. It is what allows me to create a true, Livermore style.

With the rise of industrial scale production, we have forgotten that for thousands of years, the crafting of wine was intricately linked to history and culture as much as to climate and soil. This linking explains why the foods and craft wines of a region pair so naturally. It is how a craft wine can conjure image of the locale in which it was grown. Yet, today, with almost 80% of all wine on the grocery shelf

produced by three large corporations, we have lost this sense of place—the soul of the wine has been removed.

Our sixth year opens a new and exciting chapter for Occasio, where historical accuracy and awareness is realized in our Heritage Collection wines. I will use our Pocket Watch newsletter to detail our progress in this transformation, where each quarter I will present a snapshot of a moment in our Valley's past, and provide an example of how we use this knowledge in our winemaking. I hope you enjoy these new features in our newsletter. And please, don't forget to enjoy my blog post on our new website, where news and views will be updated weekly.

...for thousands of years, the crafting of wine was intricately linked to history and culture as much as climate and soil”

RECENT ACCOLADES

90 POINTS

Wine Enthusiast, August 2014

2011 Founder's Collection Petite Sirah

“Restrained and spicy, it offers velvety blackberry and raspberry fruit and a lingering tropical aroma, encased with a morsel of dark chocolate. With well managed tannins, the wine begs to be set on the table...”
Virginie Boone

90 POINTS

Wine Enthusiast, August 2014

2011 Founder's Collection Cabernet Sauvignon

“Juicy with ripe tannins, it tastes lovingly hand-crafted, detailed and focused in black currant, berry and leather. Though rich and luxurious it retains ample natural acidity to buoy its way through a meal or through several years of aging.” Virginie Boone

GOLD

2014 Best of the Bay Competition

2011 Founder's Collection Telos



FEATURE RECIPE

Buttered Chicken

Nello Stile di Corso

My first visit to Corso Trattoria in Berkeley was a rainy November evening. Recovering from a cold, I was looking for a hearty dish that would drive away the chill. My friends recommended the Pollo al Burro (quite simply, buttered chicken), which was brought to the table in a hot iron skillet. Though a simple presentation, it remains one of my favorite winter dishes. Corso's version calls only for chicken and unsalted butter. I like to modify Corso's treatment slightly, making a compound butter by combining garlic with soft European-styled butter. I also eliminate the flour dredging, but only to reduce carbohydrates.

INGREDIENT LIST

4–6oz Boneless Chicken Breasts, skin attached (optional dredging in flour).
Remove the fillet piece and reserve for other use, such as soup.

Salt to Taste

Lemon

Cast Iron Skillet

Unsalted Butter—about 2 sticks

Garlic and herbs (optional)

Heat oven to 425°. Heat cast iron skillet at medium heat, and add a full stick of unsalted butter; when the butter is hot, add the chicken skin side down and cook for about 10–15 minutes. Without moving the breasts, place the skillet in the oven and bake for 10 minutes. Return the skillet to the range and turn the breasts over. Add another stick of butter (or a compound butter of garlic and herbs) and continue cooking on medium heat until the butter turns a nutty brown color (about 5 minutes) and the chicken is cooked through (160°). Plate the chicken, and use the butter to pour over the breasts. Squeeze a hint of lemon over the top, and serve. **Suggested Pairings** Occasio Heritage Collection Cabernet Franc or Founder's Collection Sauvignon Blanc.

THE OCCASIO COLLECTIONS

The Occasio portfolio offers our Founder's and Heritage Collections, each different, yet each crafted to our exacting standards of quality and distinction, while conveying a particular interpretation of our historic Valley.



FOUNDER'S COLLECTION

These wines, in their distinctive white label, offer pure varietal expression, emphasizing fruit and body in ways only select vineyards with their unique soil and climate can produce. We ferment with a large fraction of whole (uncrushed) berries in a temperature and atmospherically controlled environment in order to retain the subtlest nuances of the fruit. The juice is pressed at the end of fermentation; only the free run and the mildest of the press run is retained. (Never more than 150 cases produced)



HERITAGE COLLECTION

This Collection showcases our cultivation of the past, where our heritage varietals are crafted to produce wines of great structure and layered complexity—wines of restraint, focus and above all, elegance. These are wines that possess the soul and knowledge

of a grand Livermore, presented through a modern interpretation of the true, historical narrative.

A larger fraction of the fruit is crushed, but the timing of this crush coincides with critical points in the fermentation cycle. The ferment is in open topped vessels, and the juice is allowed to macerate longer with the skins. The press fractions are continuously monitored for tannin expression, and added to the free run to achieve a classic balance between the tannins, acids, and fruits in wines designed to age gracefully. (50–75 cases produced)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, November 22nd, 2 – 5pm

Occasio at Draeger's Cooking School in Blackhawk Plaza

Learn to make a variety of tantalizing hors d'oeuvres & appetizers for the Holidays

Friday, November 28th, Noon – 5pm

Holiday Store Opens in our Tasting Room—wonderful gifts for Christmas, featuring ornaments & artisan goods

Saturday & Sunday, December 6th–7th, Noon–4:30pm

Holiday in the Vineyards annual celebration

Thursday, February 12th, 2015, 5 – 7pm

Release Reception for new wines

At the Winery | Founder's Collection 2012 Zinfandel and 2013 Chardonnay



LOCAL ARTISAN CORNER

INNA JAM

We love INNA JAM. Founded by Dafna Kory, these fresh seasonal, organic jams are sourced from within 150 miles of her Emeryville kitchen. She sources directly from local organic farmers, ensuring the best possible fruit—picked ripe and absolutely fresh. Each season, Dafna releases limited quantities, and they always sell out. We are featuring two of our favorites this holiday season.

JALAPEÑO is Dafna's most popular, and we love the versatility of this gorgeous jam. With a distinct jalapeño flavor and a sneaky spiciness, it's wonderful with cheese, pairs very nicely with roast chicken or turkey, and adds a nice zing to a classic ham sandwich.

FRESNO CHILI is the red sibling to the Jalapeño green, but has a fruitier, more rounded flavor. Again, perfect with cheeses and meats. This jam is a 2013 Good Food Award Winner!

These delicious jams make great host and hostess gifts!

We are dedicated to the Heritage varietals of Livermore Valley. We devote our efforts to rediscovering the historic expression of our region by focusing on these magnificent varietals, those with more than a century of excellence in Livermore.

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