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Photo Credit: Suzanne Karp



Photo Credit: Suzanne Karp

2018 Winery of the Year

How about some *great* news to start the New Year? Robert Biale Vineyards has just been named a “2018 Winery of the Year” by the American Fine Wine Competition! This national competition annually invites hundreds of wineries, who are recognized as top producers in their categories, to submit their wines for judging by a prestigious panel of sommeliers and wine experts.

“Biale has been bestowed this honor because of the winery’s numerous gold medals, consistently outstanding repertoire of wines, and everything they do for advancing the heritage vineyards of California,” according to Shari Gherman, Co-Founder of the AFWC.

We are proud and flattered to be one of four select wineries to be honored this year. We are thankful to the AFWC for giving us this national recognition among our peers for our long term efforts to grow and produce world class Zinfandel and Petite Sirah.

— THE — BIALE BULLETIN

Preserving the Legacy of Zinfandel & Petite Sirah

Vintage 2016 Goetting Dealt A Full House!

The best vintages are usually characterized by ideal seasonal weather—you know, typical Northern California-style winter, spring, summer, and fall. The **near-perfect 2016 growing season** had good winter rainfall, started budding early, saw ideal summer weather conditions throughout Napa and Sonoma, and wrapped up before the valleys’ first significant fall rainstorm arrived on October 14th. Thanks to a relatively steady and mild July and August and then a series of warm days at the end of the growing season, our vineyards were able to progress to near-perfect ripeness. We are ecstatic and grateful for another **excellent vintage**, and we are chalking up the 2016 Biale vintage as one of our favorite “poker hands” of all-time.

Precipitation: Following three consecutive years of significant rainfall deficits, **rainfall in 2016 returned to Napa normal** with about 24 inches along with a typical dry summer.

Budbreak: It began slightly early around **March 1st** and lasted about two weeks until mid-March. Budbreak is when the vines “wake up” from dormancy and we observe the appearance of new green growth.

Growth: A **moderate growing season** and summer ensued with diurnal swings of chilly nights in the ‘50s and warm days in the ‘80s and ‘90s. A couple of heat spikes in late August and late September were typical, but nothing extreme or dramatic enough to adversely affect the fruit. **Good Crop.** The vines matured the fruit nicely and carried an average crop load.

Fruit quality: Biale began harvesting on August 29th with our Rosato of Sangiovese and culminated on September 29th with our late-ripening Barbera—a fairly compressed harvest time frame. Tonnage added up to average, just as Bob Biale and **Winemaker Tres Goetting** expected. According to Tres, “*My biggest worry was juggling tank space, creating room fast enough in the winery for all the beautiful grapes!*” Tres adds, “*Quality was excellent overall—some years you get dealt a great hand, and I think that the 2016’s are some of the best wines from Biale in a long time!*”

Overall, the wines are characterized by big flavors, fresh acidity, and supple, sexy tannins. Have fun determining your favorites! The smart move: get extra to lay down in your cellar for ye shall be rewarded for your patience!

The New Age of Zinfandel

This is something of a new age for Zinfandel. Time to catch up with the latest! We know now that Zinfandel is an ancient grape whose origin was along the Adriatic coast and dates back centuries in Central Europe. Old vines and historic sites in California have been overlooked and under-appreciated in the past and are now enjoying new celebrity among wine students and wine lovers. Robert Biale Vineyards and our peer group of devout Zinfandel winemakers are **taking this old California classic to new heights**—but you have to get on “winery-direct lists” like this one to acquire them. We all know that Zinfandel vines, when treated gently on proven historic sites, produces **red wines that are loaded with character** that hold their own among the world’s more famous European varieties. And let’s just say it: We think that Zinfandel provides more smiles per bottle than any other red wine! Period.”

2016 Black Chicken Party Lines and Passwords

Included in
Shipments
1, 2, 3 & 4

Aldo Biale's ordering system, code name,
and Zinfandel devotion



Pictured: Aldo Biale

In the Napa Valley, the period following the repeal of Prohibition was relatively quiet. The hundreds of wineries that had dwindled to *only a few*, rose back to over a dozen by about 1960. This was an era of the family grape grower. Dozens of families north to south raised grapes as a crop to be sold to the valleys' wineries including the big cooperative winery in St. Helena. Most commonly the red varieties were Zinfandel and Petite Sirah—the adopted “workhorse” grapes of California.

In the town of Napa during this era of the family farmer, the mother/son team of Christina and Aldo Biale grew not only Zinfandel, but the classic Italian immigrant farming trifecta of prunes, walnuts, and white leghorn chickens. After Aldo lost his father in 1942, he realized that he could earn more for grapes in their fermented state, and he discreetly began putting up extra barrels of Zinfandel in his barn. The

enterprising Aldo became popular among Napans with a yen for Zin and fresh eggs. He delivered jugs of his bootleg Zinfandel on Fridays—in a blue 1940 Studebaker.

However, a situation developed that required a certain level of discretion. How to order Aldo's illicit wine by phone without tipping off nosy neighbors or authorities? They might be listening in on the Biale's home phone service—the *party line*! Aldo hatched a solution: the code name for his bootleg Zinfandel became a “Black Chicken”.

This *party line*-based phone ordering system lasted for decades. For a while, so as not to complicate things for Aldo's Italian bride, Clementina, she didn't even know what callers meant by a “black chicken”. “*We only have the white ones*,” she would tell customers in her newly-learned English.

Today, Robert Biale Vineyards continues the tradition by producing a Black Chicken Zinfandel—although this version from our vineyards in Napa is *completely legal*. Red wine fans of all breeds are sure to flock to this fragrant and plush 2016. Who would have guessed Zinfandel could taste so refined?

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: black cherry, cherry pit, dried fig, pomegranate, wild blackberry, fresh dark flowers, subtle dried herb, toasty brown spices, and fruitcake aromas. On the palate this chicken is textured and supple, with gushing fruit and tempered with fresh acidity.



Included in
Shipment 1

2016 R.W. Moore Vineyard Coombsville's “Zin Preserve”

Bill Moore's spirit of preservation
advances the Zinfandel tradition

Retired orthodontist Bill Moore spent his career preserving smiles. Today, in retirement, it's old cars and boats, and in an interesting twist as a preservationist—old grapevines, too. All hail, Bill Moore—protector of Napa Valley Zinfandel!

Bill Moore's vineyard on Hagen Road in Napa is historically significant in California agriculture. It is listed on the Registry of Historic Vineyards (<https://historicvineyardsociety.org/>) and the vines' plant material is part of U.C. Davis long-term Heritage Vineyard Zinfandel project, which was instituted by U.C. Davis, and supported by ZAP, to identify and propagate California's best Zinfandel vine selections. <https://zinfandel.org/zap/heritage-vineyard-project/>

Incredibly enough, the existing ten acres of vines were planted in 1905 by the family of a merchant seaman named Pleasant Ashley Stevens. Over the next century the property changed hands several times—and once was gifted mysteriously from one woman to another “for love and affection”. Over the decades, the grapes were sold to several Napa Valley winemakers. After Bill Moore purchased it in 1983, the vineyard was rejuvenated through careful farming practices and its reputation rose to fame as a vineyard—designated bottling by our Zinfandel friends and cohorts at Turley Wine Cellars.

A big change happened in 2009. Friends and colleagues Mike and Molly Hendry initiated a plan to produce a Zinfandel under a new label from their family vineyard. Mike and Molly graciously proposed sharing a portion of the vineyard's grapes with Biale. We are delighted and honored to be able to work with Bill Moore, Mike and Molly Hendry and this historic vineyard. (Mike and his uncle, George Hendry, also produce superb estate wines under their Hendry Ranch label.)

Where is Coombsville?

Napa's historic Hagen Road passes west/east through Napa Valley's Coombsville Appellation which lies at the valley's cool southeastern section at the foot of Mount George. The gravelly loam soils in this region, which is basically an extinct caldera, are underlain with volcanic ash. The chilly nighttime summer temperatures produce grapes of elegance and backbone. Henry Hagen made his neighboring Cedar Knoll Winery famous in the 1880s by winning medals in Europe and becoming a wine darling among San Francisco society. The Zinfandels from the R.W. Moore Vineyard site—the oldest vines and the only Zinfandel in Coombsville—yield layers of plush dark fruits, minerals, and spices. 428 cases produced

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: Rich and dense aromas of both black and blue fruits. Dark chocolate, toffee, black tea and fresh herbs are also present. This wine has a graceful texture and is nicely balanced with deep mid-palate fruit and fresh acidity. This is a very age-worthy wine which will continue to improve for the next 5-7 years.

WHO or WHAT IS “Aldo's GEMS?”

Aldo's GEMS are Biale customers who exceed \$1,000 in yearly wine purchases. Aldo's GEMS members will have a monthly opportunity to secure a wine of the month with a special offer. There will be access to low production Robert Biale Vineyards wines—most of which, as you know, are very scarce and sell out quickly!

An additional benefit of reaching Aldo's GEMS status is that you are also automatically enrolled in the GEMS program—a multi-winery referral network. This program gives you enhanced benefits by providing exclusive rewards and opportunities at other celebrated, family-owned Napa and Sonoma wineries.

The idea behind the Napa & Sonoma Valley GEMS program is simple...over the years we have developed special relationships with a handful of our wine country partners. We share an admiration for each other's wines and experiences, and we thought, “If we love these wineries and the wines they produce, why wouldn't our customers love them?” Thus, the Napa & Sonoma GEMS program was created.

2018 GEMS wineries include: B Wise Vineyards, Chappellet Vineyard, Flora Springs Winery, Frog's Leap Winery, Hall Rutherford, La Rochelle Wines, Medlock Ames, Patz & Hall, Robert Biale Vineyards, Robert Craig Winery, VGS Chateau Potelle, Vineyard 29, and Walt Wines.

To purchase: www.biale.com | 707.257.7555 | customerservice@biale.com

2016 Old Kraft Vineyard

St. Helena's Historic Living Landmark

Included in
Shipment 2

Bill and Margie Hart's preservation project to save a piece of Napa history

This living landmark—one of the oldest remaining vineyards in Napa Valley—is a testament to one of Napa Valley's pioneering winemakers and the spirit of preservation.

Franz "Frank" Kraft was one of Napa Valley's founding winemakers. He joined a veritable neighborhood of winemakers, who in the mid 1800s, identified the gravelly benchland west of St. Helena as ideal for planting vines and growing wine grapes. Fine **wines benefit from well-drained gravel soils** as the vines' roots push down in search of water, resulting in fruit with a broad spectrum of flavors and ripe, round tannins. Along with the perfect climate, these ideal conditions have made Napa Valley what it is today—one of the greatest wine regions on the planet.

Kraft originally planted 23 acres of vines in the 1870s then built a classic Italianate-style home and sandstone block winery in 1880 at what is today the iconic Spottswoode barrel cellar and offices. Just to the north of the winery lie four acres of old Zinfandel vines that are from 1890 and are a remnant of Kraft's estate vineyards.

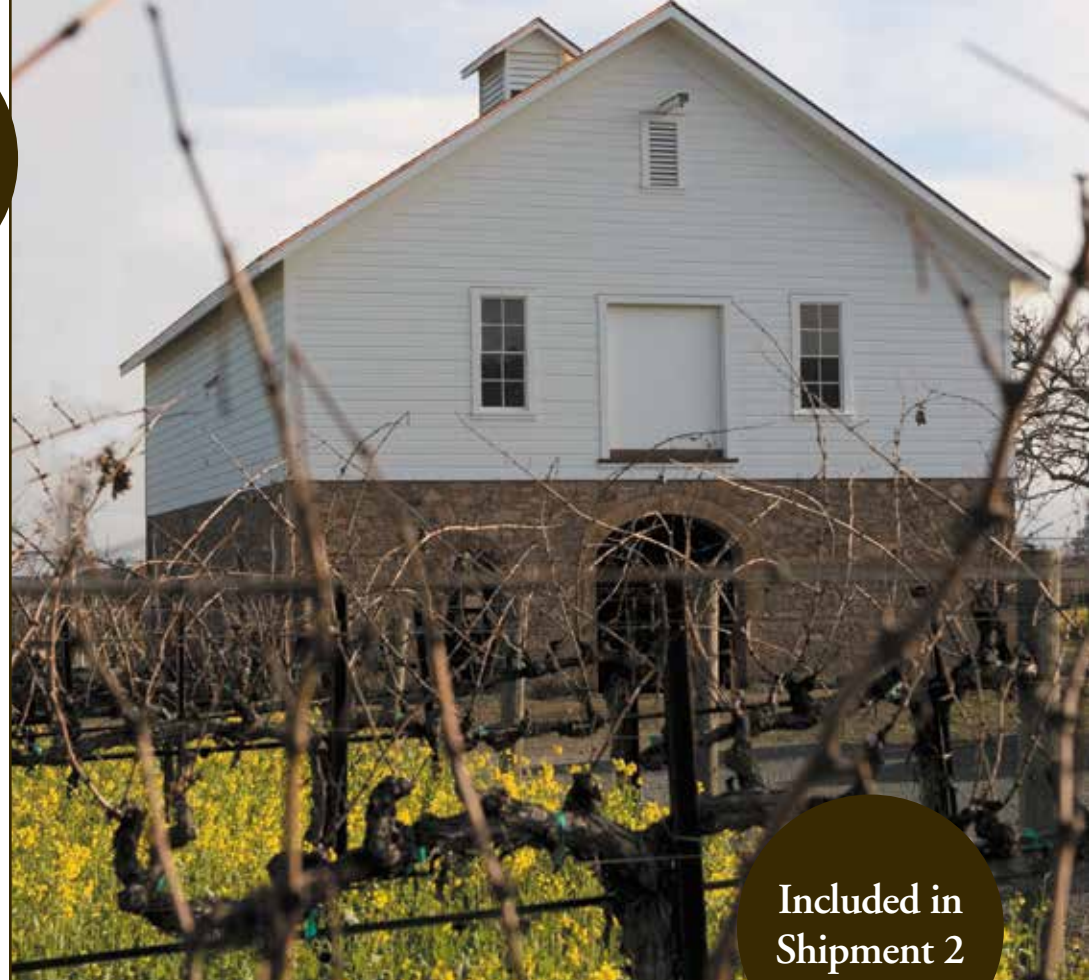
In later years after Prohibition, the vines were parceled off and had been neglected for decades until the parcel was acquired by Bill and Margie Hart as a new location for their residence. Instead of simply ripping out the tangle of old vines to plant new ones, Bill and Margie researched, consulted with winemaker friends and finally committed to saving and restoring one of Napa Valley's direct links to history.

Bob Biale joined Bill Hart and Bill Pease of Madrigal Vineyard Management to rejuvenate the vines. Three years of viticultural intervention including pruning (which involved not just shears but a saw), soil amendments, drainage, and invasive plant removal got the vines back into productive shape. Some vines did have to be replaced. Finally, in 2006, we produced a wine worthy of a special designation, and the Old Kraft Vineyard Zinfandel was born.

Kudos to Bill and Margie Hart for saving a Napa Valley vineyard treasure! 443 cases produced

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: This is a fragrant wine with hints of tropical fruits, peppermint, orange rind, pomegranate, clove and vanilla bean. The 2016 Old Kraft Zinfandel has a luxurious palate with a silky entry and gentle tannins that build into a lengthy finish.

Pictured: Margie & Bill Hart



Included in
Shipment 2

2016 Varozza Vineyard

Tasting History

Third generation Varozza family continues a Zinfandel farming tradition in St. Helena

The Varozza ranch is an iconic St. Helena landmark featuring an old wood and stone winery that dates back to the days when stonemasons and craftsmen built the original winery for Emil Zange in 1885.

Joseph Varozza, who was a St. Helena blacksmith, purchased the property in 1913 and made wine there until his death in 1946. This beautiful property has remained in the Varozza family for the past 104 years!

For decades, Harold Varozza operated the ranch after his father passed, selling the grapes to local wineries. In 1999, Harold's son Jack, and Jack's wife Dianna, took over the ranch and now produce estate grown wines under their own label. www.varozzavineyards.com.

In the exact heart of Napa Valley, just north of St. Helena on Pratt Avenue and next to the restored old winery, **this is an ideal spot for growing grapes—especially Zinfandel**. Planted on stony, alluvial soils between York Creek and the Napa River, the old and mature vines here produce wines that are a little darker with more black fruit than typical of St. Helena with great textural feel and firm structure. 345 cases produced

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: This wine has a dark fruit profile with black cherry, dark plum, black tea, rye bread and earthy tones. It has a plush mouthfeel and a graceful texture. Varozza Zinfandel has a devout following among the "Biale Beloved" and this 2016 will not disappoint. This is a tremendous Zinfandel that is drinking beautifully right out of the gate.

Chef Janet Sheehan's Featured Recipe

Wild Mushroom and Italian Sausage Risotto

6 tbsp butter
1½ lbs wild
mushrooms, sliced
1 tbsp olive oil
1 lb bulk Italian
sausage
7 cups chicken stock
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp butter

½ c chopped leeks
1½ c Arborio rice
½ c dry white wine
½ c grated parmesan
cheese
1 tbsp fresh parsley,
chopped

Melt butter in large skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté mushrooms until tender 5-6 minutes. You may need to sauté the mushrooms in batches. Season with salt and pepper, transfer to a bowl, and then set aside. Drizzle the same skillet with 1 tablespoon olive oil and bring up to medium-high heat, sauté the Italian sausage until lightly browned and cooked through, approximately 8-10 minutes, breaking up the sausage as you go, set aside. Bring 7 cups chicken stock to a simmer in a medium sauce pan, keep warm.

Melt 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1 tablespoon butter in a heavy

large sauce pan over medium heat, add leeks and sauté until tender, 3-4 minutes, season with salt and pepper. Add Arborio rice, and sauté for 3-4 minutes, until rice ends are translucent. Add white wine and stir until liquid is absorbed. Add 2 cups of broth and stir. Cover for 5 minutes stirring occasionally until broth is absorbed. Continue to add broth by ¾ cups until broth is absorbed and rice is tender and creamy, approximately 10-15 minutes. Stir in mushrooms and cooked sausage and parmesan cheese. Garnish with chopped parsley. This will serve 4-6 people. Suggested pairing: the 2016 R.W. Moore Vineyard Zinfandel.

To purchase: www.biale.com | 707.257.7555 | customerservice@biale.com

2016 Bedrock Vineyard

Bedrock Reborn



Morgan Twain-Peterson's project to revitalize a historic Sonoma Valley vineyard

One of the oldest and most storied Zinfandel vineyards of them all is situated in the heart of Sonoma Valley. It dates back to **the Civil War era**, was replanted in the 1880s under the ownership of Senator George Hearst, and came under its new ownership in the 2000s. Father and son, Joel Peterson and Morgan Twain-Peterson, took over what had been known as the Madrone Ranch, renamed it Bedrock, and began the long process of carefully restoring it to its former health and glory. Several top Zinfandel winemakers were invited to share fruit from the various blocks on this ranch. It includes not only old Zinfandel vines, but Carignane, Alicante, Petite Sirah, Mataro, and various other forgotten varieties that the old winemakers loved to plant together in a field blending system called "mixed blacks." Our Bedrock Zinfandel comes from a select block of non-irrigated 1880s vines that kick out some delicious grapes with remarkable flavors and graceful structure. Only 273 cases produced

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: Layers of aromas including red fruits, dried herbs, orange rind, vanilla, cocoa powder, parsnips, and earthy tones. This wine is medium bodied with opulent broad spectrum tannins that hit every corner of the palate. This wine is pleasurable now and will be drinking beautifully over the next 3-5 years.

Included in
Shipment 1



2016 Valsecchi Vineyard

A Cool Old Patch of Sonoma



Biale treasures Ron Mick's grandfathers' very rare old vines in the cool Carneros Appellation

This "**Biale Beloved**" favorite is from a most unlikely site. You could drive by it a few times and never notice a thing, unless you were Bob Biale operating with his built in "old vine detector".

One day in 1995, driving by the vineyard after a warehouse delivery in Sonoma, Bob's "old-vine detector" went off, and he noticed an unassuming patch of thick, old, head-trained vines by the Vineburg post office. Located behind a modest farmhouse, the scant one acre of vines was obviously being well-cared for. Inquiring as to ownership and availability of the vineyard, Bob got talking to owner Ron Mick whose family had taken care of the vineyard since the days of his Swiss grandfather—John Valsecchi (pron. Val-sek-ee). Ron mentioned that nobody was buying the grapes and that he had recently won a silver medal for his homemade wine at the Sonoma County Harvest Fair. Ron agreed to sell us his family's grapes and a little Biale-Sonoma classic was born.

Researching the location further we determined that Valsecchi is not only a century old, but lies at the northern boundary of the especially chilly **Carneros Appellation**, now famous for its world class Pinot Noirs, Chardonnays, and sparkling wines. It is the oldest known vineyard in Carneros and among the few plantings of Zinfandel in the region makes enjoying this seductive Zinfandel a very rare wine drinking experience! Only 95 cases produced

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: This wine makes you want to take a bite out of it! Strawberry, rhubarb, lychee, pastry, turmeric and herbs du Provence are present in the nose of this lovely wine. It has concentrated fruit with a creamy texture and a punch of acidity which makes for a long refreshing finish.

Photo Credit: Suzanne Karp

2016 Founding Farmers

St. Helena Style

Elegance shines in Napa Valley's original sites

This Zinfandel speaks clearly of the historic appellation in which it is grown. Like an hourglass, Napa Valley pinches in its center where the valley narrows, mountains rise, and creeks flow down-mountain to the Napa River. It was these sloping, gravelly deposits of soil combined with sunny climate, cool nights, morning fog, and dry summers that attracted the pioneering winemakers to establish their vineyards here. That group of neighboring winemakers got organized and in 1875 established the St. Helena Viticultural Club, the first ever such vintners group in California. Their intent was to improve the quality and raise national awareness of this special region. Today, Appellation St. Helena (ASH) comprises a who's who of iconic Napa Valley wines.

This Founding Farmers Zinfandel honors the pioneering spirit of St. Helena and exemplifies the plush and luxurious style of wine for which this mid-section of Napa Valley is known. Only 271 cases produced

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: The mature and old vines in St. Helena produce a Zinfandel that is very aromatic with notes of Bing cherries, red plum, red licorice, cinnamon, and rich spices. The wine has a fresh and clean entry with fleshy tannins that envelope the palate. A beautiful oak profile with a lush mouth feel and feminine qualities make this wine very approachable. The finish is long and has a juicy, mouthwatering character.



To purchase: www.biale.com | 707.257.7555 | customerservice@biale.com

2015 Basic Black Dress for Success

Included in
Shipment 1

Back to basics, old-world winemaking method makes for a complex, reserve-level red wine

Blending grapes together—before they become a wine! It’s an old-world idea, kind of like letting all the ingredients of the stew simmer together rather than adding them all at the end. This winemaking method called “co-fermentation” is gaining more and more interest these days among serious winemakers—especially for those working with Zinfandel field blends. For years it has been a goal of ours to find the right proportions of different fruit from different sites in order to produce a new Biale blend that displays the best of everything. This benchmark 2015 wine is a blend of 32% Syrah, 22% Carignane, 15% Early Burgundy, 14% Tempranillo, 10% Zinfandel, 7% Petite Sirah.

Our Basic Black was harvested the first week of September, 2015, and the dry conditions of that vintage yielded robust wines of intensity and complexity. This compelling, old-world style red wine is a fine example. 303 cases produced

Winemaker’s Tasting Notes: The 2015 Basic Black is loaded with complex undertones which interplay beautifully with exploding aromas of blackberry, violets, cocoa, cured ham, cinnamon and wet earth. Flavors of dark chocolate and dark fruits are integrated and proportioned across a foundation of dense mid-palate tannins which lead to a long finish.



Wine Barrel Q&A with Winemaker Tres Goetting

Biale’s Winemaker is Trester “Tres” Goetting. Tres was raised in Napa and started working for a small winery in high school. After graduating college in Forest Sciences, Tres returned to Napa Valley to pursue a career in something he loved and grew up with—winemaking—and developed his skills at some of Napa Valley’s most respected wineries. Part craftsman, part scientist, part farmer, part *artiste*, Tres works closely alongside vineyard guru, Bob Biale, to ensure that he has the best possible grapes to work with each vintage. As they say, “Wine is made in the vineyard” and Tres’s goal is to capture the most pleasurable and balanced expression possible from each of Biale’s rare and historic vineyard sites. Winemakers also do a lot of education and public relations these days. The subject of barrel aging is a crucial topic for Tres and it comes up frequently at the winery, so we asked for his take on how he uses barrels in Biale’s winemaking.

Q: So, basically, why DO you age wine in barrels?

A: Barrels are to a winemaker what spices are to a chef. The oak barrels impart nuances of flavor and aromas into the wine that would otherwise not be present. The oak also helps to put the tannins that are in red wines into balance along with the acidity, alcohol and fruit aspects of the wine. There is also a magical interaction of oxygen that is slowly introduced into the wine through the pores of the wood grain over time.

Q: Can I actually taste the barrel in the wine?

A: Yes. This is why I choose certain coopers (barrel makers) to use for our wines. They each have a specific style and flavor. You can then break it down further when you realize that other factors affect the flavors such as which forest the oak comes from, what toast level is used, how thick the staves are, how tight the wood grain is, what shape and how big the barrel is, etc...

Q: Where does the wood come from?

A: At Robert Biale, we use 100% French Oak. There are several forests in France where these trees are grown for barrel production. Most of these forests are in the center of France. There are also many American oak options for winemakers so it comes down to personal preference or what kind of style you are going for when selecting the barrels. American oak tends to have a more angular profile on the palate and has flavors of dill while French oak is softer and has a vanilla character.

Q: What kind of barrels do you use?

A: I use 100% Burgundy barrels for our wines. This refers to the shape of the barrel and also where these barrels were originally mostly used in France. For example, a Burgundy barrel is shorter and fatter in shape than a Bordeaux barrel and is typically used for wines made in that area, i.e., Pinot Noir. The individual staves of a Burgundy barrel are much thicker than a Bordeaux barrels’ staves which ultimately affects the oxygen interaction with the wine and the aging process.

Q: How much does a barrel cost?

A: The average price for a new French oak barrel in 2017 was 818 euros which is equivalent to \$860 each. The final price is dependent upon the currency exchange rate at the time of purchase.

Q: How much does a barrel hold?

A: A Burgundy barrel holds 228 liters which is equivalent to 60 gallons and a Bordeaux barrel holds 225 liters or 59 gallons. I also use large barrels called Puncheons which hold 500 liters (132 gallons).



Q: How long is the wine aged in barrels?

A: It depends on the wine and the program that the wine is slated for. Our Zinfandels typically age in barrels between 11 months and 14 months while our Petite Sirahs and darker blends are usually aged for 17 months.

Q: Is it possible to age a wine in barrels too long?

A: Yes. A wine can become oxidized or start to lose its color and stability if left in barrel for too long. One of the winemaker’s jobs is to determine when the optimal time is for the wine to be bottled.



2016 Limerick Lane Vineyard Russian River Riches



The Bilbro farming family grows coveted Zinfandel grapes in prestigious Russian River Valley for Biale

This vineyard is located on Limerick Lane near Healdsburg in the northeast corner of the **cool Russian River AVA**. This major Northern California river funnels fog and Pacific breezes directly into the region. **Zinfandel enjoys a rich history here** and in the modern era, Russian River is also deeply associated with Pinot Noir. The Limerick Lane vineyard was first planted in 1910 by the del Fava family, then later owned and operated in the 1970s by the Collins brothers who sold the grapes and gained notoriety for their own expressive and beautifully balanced Zinfandels. Today, the estate vineyard is comprised of historic vines as well as newer plantings, is owned by Jake Bilbro, a longtime grape grower (and Biale fan!) who is producing his own wines under the Limerick Lane label. Jake is sharing small amounts of his **prized Russian River fruit** with top producers who specialize in Zinfandel. The Biale Zinfandel comes from a newer replanted section that climbs the hill that faces the winery. We are tremendously proud and honored to be releasing this-our fourth edition of Zinfandel from the famed Limerick Lane Vineyard. Only 92 cases produced

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: Inky in color with attractive aromatics. Wild blackberry, cola, tobacco leaf, molasses, cinnamon, and graham cracker. A lively entry with the weight of bold fruit and a popping acidity lends itself to a long and mouthwatering finish. This is a very age-worthy wine.

The Black Chicken Society 2018 Billing and Shipping Schedule

Shipment 1

Bill: February 12 • Arrives: Feb 20-28
Pick up: February 13-May 7
2016 Black Chicken Zinfandel
2016 Bedrock Vineyard Zinfandel
2016 R.W. Moore Vineyard Zinfandel
2015 Basic Black Red Wine

Shipment 2

Bill: April 9 • Arrives: April 17-25
Pick up: April 10-May 7
2016 Black Chicken Zinfandel
2016 Old Kraft Zinfandel
2016 Varozza Vineyard Zinfandel
2016 Royal Punishers Petite Sirah

Deadline to pick up spring club shipments: May 7.

Custom Club

Spring Shipment

Ordering Begins: March 5
Order Deadline: March 26

Holiday Magnum Club

Each year our Winemaker, Tres Goetting, puts together a reserve blend that comes in a special magnum with a screen printed label with red wax at the top. The blend is only bottled in magnums and only Holiday Magnum Members receive it. Best of all it arrives at your home in time to grace your holiday table!
To Join: Must be a member of Black Chicken Society (Level 1, 2, 3 or Custom).

Shipment 3

Bill: August 13 • Arrives: Aug 21-29
Pick up: August 14-December 10
2016 Black Chicken Zinfandel
2016 Monte Rosso Vineyard Zinfandel
2016 Stagecoach Vineyard Zinfandel
2015 Like Father Like Son Red Wine

Shipment 4

Bill: October 29 • Arrives: Nov 6-14
Pick up: October 30-December 10
2016 Black Chicken Zinfandel
2016 Aldo's Vineyard Zinfandel
2016 Grande Vineyard Zinfandel
2016 Palisades Vineyard Petite Sirah

Deadline to pick up fall club shipments: December 10.

Fall Shipment

Ordering Begins: September 4
Order Deadline: October 1

2016 Royal Punishers A Petite Sirah Comeback

Included in
Shipment 2

The Carpy Conolly Ranch Petite Sirah vineyard in Rutherford is a boon to the variety's comeback

We now know from genetic research that Petite Sirah is also Durif—a grape that was born in Southern France in the 1880's. The parents were Syrah and Peloursin and the agronomist at Montpellier University that discovered the cross was Francois Durif—who named the new grape variety after himself. O.K., *pourquoi pas? Why not?*

The new grape was avoided—prone to rot and mildew in France—but made its way to California where it flourished beautifully in the sunny conditions and arid climate. It blended extremely well—adding structure and dark fruit to many grape varieties that sometimes need some added muscle, including Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, and blends.

When a new wave of winemakers descended on Napa Valley in the '60s and '70s to produce wines from classic French varieties such as Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, many of the old Petite Sirah vines disappeared. After the legendary *Judgement at Paris*, Petite Sirah's fate was, for all intents and purposes, doomed. Acreage declined precipitously along with many other heritage varieties i.e. Zinfandel, Carignane, Mataro, Riesling, Chenin Blanc, Mondeuse, Napa Gamay and many others. A few P.S. vineyards survived in Calistoga, St. Helena, and Stag's Leap, but Petite Sirah dropped from nearly 25% of Napa to less than 0.5%.

Enter grape (and cattle) rancher Tom Gamble in 1999 with a modest proposal to plant an acre at the C.C. Ranch for Robert Biale Vineyards—a young winery at that time that had already established a track record for Petite Sirah and Zinfandel success.

Budwood was sourced from noble heritage sites and the vineyard was planted—starting to produce in 2002. Since then, the C.C. Ranch Petite Sirah project has expanded to a whopping 3 acres and has become our prime source for this hedonistic varietal. Inky, layered, juicy, and round, this Rutherford red wine shows the character and smooth structure for which the subregion is world famous.

The mystery of the name Royal Punishers is not as ominous as it appears. Rearrange the letters just so and—*voila!*—you have identified Petite Sirah's French parents—Syrah and Peloursin.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: The 2016 Royal Punishers has a healthy deep, dark blue/black color profile. Aromas of plum, quince, violets, figs, molasses, graphite and marbled rye awaken the nose. The entry is viscous and weighty, then builds into a broad mid-palate structure which has layers of ripe, black fruit flavors. The oak profile is balanced and the tannins are mouthwatering and medium-grained which hold the fruit profile and carry a long, lingering finish.

The 2016 vintage is being bottled soon and will be shipped in **April, 2018**.



To purchase: www.biale.com | 707.257.7555 | customerservice@biale.com

2016 Nonna's Vineyard Sangiovese

Proving Them Wrong



A Biale Estate Oak Knoll District Sangiovese breaks the ground rules and wins a following

This wine has always surprised skeptics who doubt the potential of California Sangiovese. Skeptics would also have doubted that a widowed single mother could run a ranch.

Frankly, I'm skeptical about skeptics.

This small Sangiovese vineyard next to Black Chicken on the Biale ranch is named in memory of Cristina Biale, "Nonna", (1896-1999), the Biale family matriarch who kept the farm and vineyards going after losing her husband Pietro at a young age.

Immigrants from Northern Italy, Pietro and Cristina were married in San Francisco and started a small farm in Napa on El Centro Avenue in 1937, where they raised mainly walnuts, prunes, chickens, and Zinfandel. After Pietro tragically died in an explosion at a Napa rock quarry in 1942, Cristina and her 13-year old son Aldo kept their farm and vineyard going through sheer hard work, determination and faith.

In 1995, four years after starting the winery, we decided to test the potential of the Sangiovese as a stand-alone wine and we were frankly impressed and amazed by how good it was. Ever since, the Nonna's Vineyard has built a devout following among the Biale Beloved for its exquisite fruit, gentle strength, and finesse. Only 175 cases produced

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: This wine is full of rustic red fruit aromas including Bing cherries, rhubarb, strawberries and plum as well as hints of chamomile and savory spice. Medium bodied with a clean and bright entry. Full textural tannins with nice acidity make this a perfect wine for pairing with food. Drink now or cellar through 2020.



2017 Rosato

Snappy, crisp, refreshing, and versatile!

Dry Rosé is perfectly suited as a beautiful accompaniment to all foods or just by the glass!

This 2017 edition of our dry Rosato has just been bottled and ready to take on your spring and summer festivities. Some of us keep it in the fridge at all times—like milk, butter, and eggs—ready at a moment's notice to serve with any meal or as a nice "reset button" for the end of a busy, warm day.

Winemaker's Tasting Notes: Vibrant bubblegum color with aromas of guava, watermelon jolly rancher, cherry blossoms, key lime, grapefruit skin, Bartlett pear, saline, chalk dust, and fresh herbs such as lemon thyme and rosemary. There is a pleasing saliva-inducing tartness, and a savory, gentle touch of red wine tannins. Best to drink in its first year of release, these bottles go fast as the season kicks in!

Optimum serving temperature: 46°F–58°F. Only 180 cases produced



Photo: January 2018

To our wonderful supporters and fans, Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!

You are among a dedicated family of Biale fans who appreciate our commitment to producing authentic wines from historic sites and our timeless style of gimmick-free, vineyard-focused winemaking. We renew our pledge to you to provide wines that are benchmarks for their categories and to deliver them with excellent service and good cheer!

We encourage you to share your Biale wines with friends, family and cohorts and let us know or post on social media how you liked them. Following a seeming disaster-filled 2017, we are especially appreciative for all we hold dear. The Napa Valley is now back to being as beautiful as ever, so we wish you a happy 2018 full of fond memories to be made and we are honored to be part of your life's celebrations!

Come visit us!

Dave Pramuk and Bob Biale, Founders

Black Chicken Society Benefit Spotlight

Robert Biale Vineyards presents the "in-home private tasting experience"!

A seasoned Biale Zin expert from the winery will visit your home and lead your guests through some brief Biale history and a tasting of 4-5 Biale wines. We will work closely with the host by suggesting appropriate food elements to accompany the wines featured, supply printed materials, and have special offers towards orders placed at the event. Please inquire to the Biale Wine Club Team for more details.

New Employees

Please join us in welcoming some recent additions to the Biale Crew!



Maura Postlethwait (left), Admin/Events/Marketing Assistant and Rebecca Tschauder (right), Sales and Marketing Coordinator.



Kyle Anderson (right), Cellar Master, and George Urquiola (left), Production Manager.



Photo Credit: Suzanne Karp

The Robert Biale Tasting Room Experiences

Relax amongst the vineyards and savor the Napa Valley’s natural splendor. Revel in the tasting and take advantage of the opportunity to purchase rare and iconic wines that are honored by wine professionals and represent over a century of California winemaking history.

Robert Biale Vineyards Tasting Room Experiences

The Valley Vista. This relaxed and leisurely seated tasting among the vineyards on the winery’s back porch offers one of the great views of California wine country and a tasting selection like no other. Biale’s affable Wine Educators guide you through a personalized overview of Napa Valley, historic vineyards, family farming history, and the fine points of appreciating world class Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, and Biale’s rare blends.

The Zinner Sanctum. For those looking to delve into tasting and purchasing rare wines with the patina of bottle age, the Zinner Sanctum offers a quiet, intimate, and focused tasting environment. Discuss the fine points and advantages of cellaring, review past vintages and the potential of laying down Biale wines in your personal cellar.

The Aldo’s House. Our most elevated experience offered. Warm, homey, and personalized for your small group, the Aldo’s house harkens to the bygone days of rural Napa. This secluded venue on the Biale winery property affords our

guests the chance to gather and carefully taste through a selection of our current Biale wines paired with hand selected artisan cheeses while discussing our Napa Valley vineyards and Biale family history.

The Founders Tour. For small groups seeking an understanding of Biale winemaking, viticulture, and Napa Valley’s history and world renowned attributes, The Founders Tour is the deep dive into all things Biale. Your host (don’t be surprised if it’s Dave or Bob themselves!) will discuss old vine viticulture, lead a stroll through the cellar, explore crush and fermentation protocols, offer a taste of a future wine directly from barrel, and offer a selection of the latest Biale wines to taste.

Reservations are required for all tasting experiences. To book reservations, please call the winery: (707) 257-7555, email: tastingroom@biale.com or book online: <https://shop.biale.com/visit-us>.

“Robert Biale Vineyards is hardly the only Napa winery making Zinfandel. But it’s certainly one of the very few that put Zinfandel front and center... This is Zinfandel at its best... Tastings on the outdoor patio are relaxed; though reservations are required, the experience feels casual, with tasting room hosts attending to you at your table. The pleasure of Biale’s single-vineyard Zinfandels is in their ability to balance rich components—lush, concentrated fruit—with fresh acidity and mineral notes.”

Esther Mobley, The 52 California Wineries You Need To Visit In 2018, *The Press*, San Francisco Chronicle, Jan. 2018.

Spring 2018 Offering

	Price	Society Price
2016 Bedrock Vineyard Zinfandel	Pre-sold out to society members.	
2016 Black Chicken Zinfandel	\$48	\$43
2016 Founding Farmers Zinfandel	\$38	\$34
2016 Limerick Lane Zinfandel	Wine Club Exclusive. Please Inquire.	
2016 Old Kraft Vineyard Zinfandel	\$52	\$47
2016 R. W. Moore Zinfandel	\$58	\$52

	Price	Society Price
2016 Valsecchi Vineyard Zinfandel	Wine Club Exclusive. Please Inquire.	
2016 Varozza Vineyard Zinfandel	\$52	\$47
2015 Basic Black Red Wine	\$50	\$45
2016 Nonna’s Sangiovese	Wine Club Exclusive. Please Inquire.	
2017 Rosato	\$30	\$27
2016 Royal Punishers Petite Sirah (Shipping Commences April 2018)	\$48	\$43

How to order Give us a call at (707) 257-7555 or visit www.biale.com to place your order online.

Are you a Black Chicken Society Member?

Members receive a bottle of Black Chicken Zinfandel in every shipment as well as a selection of our single-vineyard Zinfandels, Petite Sirahs, and proprietary red wines. Ensure access to bottles of Biale’s new vintage releases—even tailor your shipments as you prefer.

Visit www.biale.com/join for a full list of Black Chicken Society Club levels, the complete list of wonderful benefits, and how to join!

Upcoming Events

March 18

Masters of Petite: Petite Sirah Panel, Tasting, & Walk-Around Reception at CIA Copia, Napa

Time: 1-4 PM

Ticket and event details can be found at www.ciacopia.com.

March 24

Spring Wines Celebration at Robert Biale Vineyards Main Event

Time: 1-4 PM

Price: Club \$40 | Non-Club \$55 | 5+ Year Members Free!

Horizontal Vineyard Designate Tasting with Tres, Bob & Dave.

Time: 12-1:30 PM. Seated tasting to be held before main event.

Price: Club \$35 | Non-Club \$50 (additional to main event)

Reservations required for seated tasting and main event.

May 6

Members Only Pick up Party at Robert Biale Vineyards

Time: 1-4 PM

Members only. Reservations required.

May 8-13

GEMs Roadshow in the Northeast

May 11th: GEMs tasting in Greenwich, CT

May 13th: GEMs tasting in Boston, MA

Invitations to be sent to our Aldo’s GEMs members.

June 11-15

Black Chicken Society Appreciation Week

Members will enjoy special pricing on wines and special experiences in the Tasting Room all week!

August 25

Fall Wines Celebration at Robert Biale Vineyards Main Event

Time: 1-4 PM

Price: Club \$40 | Non-Club \$55 | 5+ Year Members Free!

Horizontal Vineyard Designate Tasting with Tres, Bob & Dave.

Time: 12-1:30 PM. Seated tasting to be held before main event.

Price: Club \$35 | Non-Club \$50 (additional to main event)

Reservations required for seated tasting and main event.

September 7, 14, 21, 28, October 5, 12, 19 Harvest Tours!

Price: Club \$30 | Non-Club \$55

Time: Tours begin at 9:30 AM

Reservations Required.

September 29

Al Fresco Harvest Dinner at Robert Biale Vineyards

Time: 6:30 PM

Price: Club \$100 | Non-Club \$125

Reservations Required.

November 10

Cellar Treasures Holiday Dinner at Robert Biale Vineyards

Time: 6:30pm

Price: Club \$150 | Non-Club \$175

Reservations Required.

December 9

Members Only Pick Up Party at Robert Biale Vineyards

Time: 1-4pm

Members only. Reservations required.

For full event details and tickets, please visit www.biale.com/events.