

Russian River Vineyards

United States - California

In 2008, fourth generation farmer and aspiring winemaker Giovanni Balistreri, under the tutelage of award-winning winemaker Anthony Austin, set out to reclaim the rich history and enormous un-tapped potential of one of Sonoma County's finest wine-making estates. The estate lies in the heart of the Russian River Valley and thus proudly and appropriately bears the Russian River Valley appellation.

The winemakers understood the potential of this small estate, but even more importantly, they had come to know the special region in which it sits. This was not a place to build a large, corporate winery to produce wine in high volume. It was a place where a careful, patient approach could produce world-class wine. And in the decade since, the venerable estate has been returning to its former glory.

At Russian River Vineyards, they don't mystify the winemaking process. They are farmers, first and foremost. Gio, the winemaker, is a product of four generations of farmers, and he wouldn't have it any other way. To produce great wine, you must first produce excellent fruit. And it is the essential character and flavor of that fruit, when it is harvested, that will determine its potential to become a superior wine. There is no shortcut. You have to be there and manage the crop at every step. They are hands-on farmers, not only with their estate-grown grapes, but they also directly manage the farming of all vineyards from which they produce wine, whether they own the property or not. If they don't farm it, they don't make wine from it.

United States

Chris O'Neil,

Pinot Noir, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah,
Gewurztraminer, Sauvignon Blanc

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