



Casa Nuestra wines honored at San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Riverside competitions.

## Tinto honored at Los Angeles and Riverside

Casa Nuestra's Limited Edition Tinto was awarded bronze medals at both the Los Angeles and Riverside competitions. Tinto is Casa Nuestra's proprietary name for its burgundy style red wine. It is a blend of 72% Napa Gamay, 20% Zinfandel, 4% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 4% Petite Sirah.

The wine is rich and fruity with an appetizing floral aroma. It is like a Beaujolais, but it has more backbone and complexity than would be found in a Beaujolais or a Nouveau. There are 230 cases available. The price is \$54 per case. (See back page for order blank)

## Chenin Blanc takes the Gold at San Francisco

Casa Nuestra's 1983 Chenin Blanc took highest honors in the prestigious national competition sponsored by the San Francisco Fair and Exposition. Considered to be the most important event of its kind in the United States, the San Francisco judging brought a total of 1,868 entries from 373 wineries in 13 states.

The Casa Nuestra Chenin Blanc was awarded the only gold medal in its category. Harvey Steiman, who was the chief judge for the competition, called this wine the "Paradigm" - the model - for Chenin Blancs. Mr. Steiman recently left his post as food and wine editor for the *San Francisco Examiner* to become senior editor of the *Wine Spectator*.

The judging panel which selected the Casa Nuestra Chenin Blanc for highest honors consisted of Jim Laube, editor of *The Wine Spectator*; Harriet Lembeck, author of "Grossman's Guide to Wine" and director of the wine program of the Waldorf Astoria in New York; Jerry Mead, syndicated wine columnist; and Walter Munz, manager and chef at the Pacific Union Club. There are 800 cases available at \$65 per case. (See back page for order form)

## Casa Nuestra Releases 1981 Cabernet Sauvignon

For the first time, Casa Nuestra is offering a Cabernet Sauvignon. This latest release, is 100% 1981 Cabernet from the Napa Valley.

The fruit was grown in the northern part of the valley. The wine aged in small French oak cooperage for 16 months, before bottling in August of last year.

This is a soft, elegant Cabernet with intense varietal flavors, very much in the French style. It is remarkably drinkable now for a wine so young, and it promises to age rewardingly. It is attractively priced at \$81 a case.





## TASTING NOTES

### 1980 Chenin Blanc and Tinto

It has been reported that the average length of time between purchase and consumption of a bottle of wine in California is three hours, but those of you who have had the patience to age your Casa Nuestra wines have a treat in store.

We recently had guests in for dinner, and we served our 1980 Chenin Blanc and our 1980 Tinto. Both wines are in excellent shape. The Chenin Blanc is rich in varietal character. The flavors and the aroma have become more intense. The color has deepened slightly. The rough edges have softened. In all, it is very much like an aged French white burgundy.

The Tinto had thrown a little sediment, and so I decanted it ten minutes before meal time. The striking floral fruity bouquet is still there. If anything, the nose has become more pronounced and appetizing. All the youthful sharpness is gone. The wine is smooth. The varietal flavors have deepened and matured. It was an outstanding glass of wine. I expect that it will continue to improve for many years. I only wish I had saved more bottles for the archives.

Anyone wishing to trade either of these wines for anything in our current stock, please call.

## Searching for a unique Christmas present?

Everyone loves a gift of wine at Christmas time. When you make a gift of wine, you know that it will be used, and it will be enjoyed. You can't get the wrong size or color. Casa Nuestra wines make unique Christmas presents at modest cost.

This year, we are offering two special gift packages, a three-bottle package and a two-bottle package. The three-bottle gift contains 1983 Chenin Blanc, 1981 Cabernet Sauvignon, and Limited Edition Tinto. The price is \$20 plus tax (\$21.20).

The two-bottle gift contains the Chenin Blanc and the Cabernet for \$15 plus tax (\$15.90). All three wines are outstanding and represent exceptional value; and you can't find these wines on every supermarket shelf.

They are packaged in plain white gift boxes with a simple greeting card on the front, as shown in the photo. You may want to personalize the gift with your own card. We require a **minimum order of 12 bottles**, eg. four three-packs or six two-packs. Orders received by December 10 will be delivered to you by December 20, in plenty of time for you to deliver them to all the people on your list. But don't delay. If you have special scheduling requirements, please let us know and we will try to accommodate you. **This offer is limited to Bay Area residents.**

Please note that our gift boxes are not suitable for UPS shipment. If you want to ship wine by UPS, please call, and we can make special arrangements for you.



*The three-bottle gift pack contains Chenin Blanc, Cabernet, and Tinto: \$20 plus tax (\$21.20). The two-bottle gift pack contains Chenin Blanc and Cabernet for \$15 plus tax (\$15.90). Minimum order, twelve bottles.*

## CRUSH OF '84

# Casa Nuestra celebrates Tenth Harvest

The harvest of 1984 was a landmark at Casa Nuestra, marking our fifth commercial vintage and our tenth harvest. It will be remembered by all as one of the most difficult harvests in memory.

It began three to four weeks early and then all of the varieties ripened at the same time. The second week of September began an unrelieved series of 100 degree days, causing the fruit to ripen at an accelerating pace. In the panicky melee to get the grapes in, it became difficult to find picking crews. We had to scrub our plans to harvest our Chenin Blanc on September 9 because the crew failed to show. We harvested instead on September 10 and 11. The fruit has never looked better. Sugar was 23.5 degrees Brix.

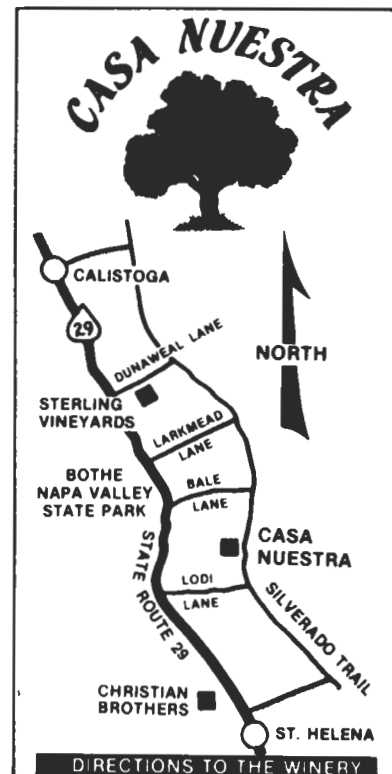
Within the next five days we harvested the Oakville vineyard and our own Napa Gamay. Ordinarily, we do not harvest the Gamay until the end of October! Special thanks go to Mark Larson, John Movius, Gaye Frisk, Kendra Hillis, Rudi Johnson, and Allen Price who worked tirelessly to help us during crush.

At this writing, the Chenin Blanc is fully fermented and is nicely clarifying. The new wine is exceptionally rich in varietal flavors. I think we have another outstanding vintage. It will be ready for you in 1985.

## Sales room open weekends

For many years we have been urging our mailing list customers to visit the winery. Last summer we established a sales room in the little yellow house (formerly a barn) on the southern boundary of the vineyard, on the service road to the winery. The sales room is regularly staffed every weekend from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you like you can picnic under the oak trees. If you are visiting during the week, please call 963-4684, 963-8151, or 944-8444, and we will try to schedule a time for your visit.

The winery is located between St. Helena and Calistoga on the Silverado Trail. If you are travelling north on the Silverado Trail, continue north approximately one mile beyond Deer Park Road (the main road to Angwin). If you are travelling north on Highway 29, take Lodi Lane to the Silverado Trail, then north along the trail approximately half a mile. Look for our purple sign on the west side of the Trail.



NAPA VALLEY

**CABERNET  
SAUVIGNON**

BOTTLED BY GENE AND CODY KIRKHAM • BW 4990  
ST. HELENA, CA • ALCOHOL 12.4% BY VOLUME



NAPA VALLEY

**DRY CHENIN BLANC**

PRODUCED & BOTTLED BY  
GENE AND CODY KIRKHAM AT CASA NUESTRA, BW 4990  
ST. HELENA, CA • ALCOHOL 13.3% BY VOLUME



LIMITED EDITION

**TINTO**

NAPA VALLEY

A BLEND OF NAPA GAMAY (72%), ZINFANDEL (20%),  
PETIT SIRAH (4%), AND CABERNET SAUVIGNON (4%).

350 CASES PRODUCED BY CASA NUESTRA AT ST. HELENA, CA  
BW 4990 • ALCOHOL 12.9% BY VOLUME

# Notable facts concerning The European wine glut

If you drive around the Napa Valley this time of year you will see the sad sight of vineyards with their crop still hanging on the vines. It seems incredible that in this valley, reputed to be the very finest wine growing region in the country and among the finest in the world, some of the fruit simply could not find a market.

According to the American Grape Growers Alliance, subsidized wines from Italy and France are causing annual losses to domestic grape growers of over \$600 million per year.

According to the Alliance, "about 75% of Italian table wines leave their port at less than \$4 per gallon. The average price for that group is \$2.85 per gallon, or about 56¢ per bottle. By the time you add ocean freight, brokerage, duty, and federal tax, the average becomes about 87¢ per bottle. That same bottle sells in the U.S. for an average of about \$3.15 which gives the importer a terrific and unfair spread to work with for advertising, merchandising, distribution and profit in competition with our domestic industry. It is the huge subsidy at the other end that allows their product to leave the country at such a low price - below their actual cost of production." No wonder wine imports to this country are growing at a rate six times faster than the rate of consumption and now account for 25% of the U.S. market.

What is sometimes referred to as a reservoir of surplus wine in Europe is in fact an ocean. In Italy alone the annual production of wine in excess of domestic consumption is three times greater than the

total U.S. production. According to the Wall Street Journal, "Western Europe is up to its collective nose in surplus wine. The 'wine lake' totals about 900 million gallons. It bedevils the government that subsidizes it and embarrasses the European Community which is supposed to develop sensible farm policies." — Support your local vintner!



## The Kissing Bough



Mistletoe, the Golden Bough of legend, has come to be a part of our Christmas celebrations but its roots are deep in pre-Christian custom. The ancient Scandinavians held it in awe as its powerful spirit was supposed to have killed the sun-god, Baldur the Beautiful. But they also called it Allheal, as it was used to cure many ills and was revered as a plant of peace, beneath which enemies were reconciled.

Perhaps it was this last use which led to the custom of kissing under the mistletoe. This pleasant tradition has persisted down through centuries, especially in England. There the kissing bough was, until Victorian times, a center of holiday festivities during the 12 days of Christmas.

A double hoop or wreath of greens, decorated with paper roses, red apples, sweets and candles, would be hung in the center of the hall, just above the heads of the tallest guests. From its center hung the mistletoe, and any girl who stood beneath it could be kissed by anyone present. Gifts were sometimes suspended from the bough on long ribbons.

From "Take Joy" by Tasha Tudor

"Merry Christmas from Our House"

*Lime, Lody, Freeda, &  
Mattie*

### DETACH CARD AND MAIL TODAY

CASA NUESTRA VINEYARDS, 3473 Silverado Trail North, St. Helena, California 94574 • (707) 963-4684 or 944-8444

Print Name, Address and Telephone

List an address where there will be someone present during regular business hours to accept delivery. Include any special instructions:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ cases 1983 Chenin Blanc @ \$65/case ... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ cases Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$81/case .. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ cases Tinto @ \$54/case ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ three-bottle gift packs\* @ \$20 ea. .... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ two-bottle gift packs\* @ \$15 ea. .... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please add 6% sales tax \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Delivery charge if applicable\*\* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send a check or use your credit card:

VISA       MASTERCARD (check one)

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Card No. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

\*Minimum order for gift packs is twelve bottles.

\*\*There is no charge for delivery within Napa, Sonoma, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Alameda, Contra Costa, or Solano counties. Other orders will be shipped UPS at a charge of \$10/case which includes the required styrofoam shipping carton.