



## ***CASA CASSARA NEWSLETTER***

**CASA CASSARA WINERY**

**FALL 2023**

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Articles of Interest

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**Solvang Chamber of Commerce 2020 Winery of the Year**

## Current Tasting Room Hours

(Labor Day to Memorial Day)

Sunday	Noon - 6:00 pm
Monday	Noon - 6:00 pm
Tuesday	CLOSED
Wednesday	Noon - 6:00 pm
Thursday	Noon - 6:00 pm
Friday	Noon - 7:00 pm
Saturday	Noon - 7:00 pm

\* As a reminder, our Tasting Room will be closed on Tuesdays after Labor Day beginning September 5. This will remain in affect until Memorial Day 2024.



Scan these QR codes and go to our website, Online Store, Wine Club, and hookup to our network when you are in our Tasting Room. They will be available in the Tasting Room as well.

**Note: The Guest Network Connection only works when you are in the Tasting Room.**



Website



Online Store



Wine Club



Tasting Room  
Network Guest  
Connection

### Visit us:

Casa Cassara Winery and Vineyard  
1607 Mission Drive #112

Solvang, CA 93463

[www.ccwinery.com](http://www.ccwinery.com)

[www.facebook.com/CasaCassaraWinery/](https://www.facebook.com/CasaCassaraWinery/)

**Warning:** Drinking distilled spirits, beer, coolers, wine and other alcoholic beverages during pregnancy can cause birth defects.

You must be at least 21 years of age to join any of the Casa Cassara Wine Clubs and live in a state where direct shipment is permitted by law. We check IDs!



Click on SYV Wine Country logo for more information

## From Dan Cassara

Harvest is finally over, our white wines have been pressed and are in barrels and tanks. The winery is full of fermentation bins filled with red wines that need to be punched down daily. Needless to say, Mikael and the crew are getting their workouts in. The smell of fermentation is in the air. The wine presses are getting a rest after pressing the White and Rosé wines but are in for a busy December pressing the Red wines. Hopefully we can get everything into barrels shortly. .

This newsletter finds us right smack in the middle of the Holiday Season, which is always a fun time in the Tasting Room. Thanksgiving is behind us and Christmas and New Years are right around the corner. I hope that all of you had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends. Bridget, Aana, Joel, Melinda, Adrian, and Steve were in the Tasting Room yesterday taking down Thanksgiving decorations and putting up Christmas decorations.



The Casa Cassara Tasting room was open on Thanksgiving Day and Erin served 25-30 different groups of people who came in to celebrate with us. The Tasting Room will be open our normal hours on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Years Eve and New Years Day.

We have two Birthday Specials coming up in December on the 17<sup>th</sup> you will be able to celebrate Grandpa Sam's Birthday with 3 bottles of Dago Red "Sam" for the price of 2. Then on the 23<sup>rd</sup> you will be able to celebrate Brother Robert's Birthday with 3 Bottles of Super Tuscan "Fratello" for the price of 2.

Speaking of Family Collection Labels, the next one to debut sometime in December will be 2021 Arneis "Chiara". This label features my father's only sister Clara. The picture was taken at a family wedding when she was in her early twenties. Today Aunt Clara lives in Illinois and is 95 years old. We will celebrate her Birthday on January 16<sup>th</sup> with 3 bottles of 2021 Arneis "Chiara" for the price of 2.

After the first of the year Mikael and I will go back to the winery to bottle Grenache Noir, Syrah Noir, and possibly the new Vermentino.

The Casa Cassara Family and our Staff would like to wish all of you and your families "buon Natale e Felice Anno nuovo".

Enjoy Life and Drink more Wine!

*Dan Cassara*

## From Our Winemaker, Mikael Sigouin

The Holiday season is upon us but things rarely slow down for us at the Winery.

We are anxiously waiting on Mother Nature to see what hand she deals us this winter with regard to rain. If we have another wet winter / spring like this past year the yields should be much larger next year but it is obviously too far out to see what kind of quality we get.

The small heat wave that we had in October allowed the white varieties to finish maturing but not so for the reds. As I write this article we have yet to harvest Nebbiolo, Barbera, Sangiovese, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Tempranillo, and Grenache so you can see we have a lot of work ahead of us. We will be destemming and crushing, and then punching down in stainless before we move things to barrel.

As of right now we do not have any plans on bottling before the end of the year but after the first of the year we will probably be bottling a few wines.

Customers can expect to see the release of the 2020 Syrah 'Zio', and the 2021 Grenache 'Nonna'. Dan and I have yet to decide on bottling the new Vermentino or Montepulciano so you may or may not see those released in the Spring for your enjoyment.

As we head out of Thanksgiving and into the Christmas season all of us at the Winery wish you and yours a happy holiday season and New Year.

That's it for this newsletter so I will say Aloha and Mahalo and as always it is a pleasure making wine for you!



*Mikael Sigouin*



## *How Winery Incubators Are Making the Industry More Accessible*

Starting a winery requires more than just grapes and a facility in which to ferment them. You need a good name, and one that hasn't already been snagged. If you want to have your wine labels even considered, let alone approved by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau, you need the proper licensing and permits in order to comply with local and federal regulations. You need capital, and a lot of it. An understanding of wine-making and a bit of ingenuity doesn't hurt, either.

"For a lot of people, it's really scary to start a business," says Kelsey Albro Itämeri, who launched her Walla Walla Valley winery itä Wines in 2019. "It's financially really scary and if you're not someone who has super deep pockets to begin with, that's terrifying."

It can cost anywhere between several thousands to millions of dollars to open a winery, depending on a multitude of factors, such as the location, whether you also purchase a vineyard or facility, and if you plan to open a tasting room. This cost of entry keeps many could-be and would-be winemakers and winery owners from getting into the business. But across the U.S., winery incubator programs are working to change that.

### **Fostering New Wineries**

Like any business incubator, winery incubators are designed to nurture new wineries and help them grow and succeed, typically by providing low-cost workspace and mentorship. They sometimes operate in partnership with colleges and viticulture programs. Some also provide access to presses, tanks, and laboratory equipment as part of the lease agreement. In all cases, however, the goal is to give new winemakers a way into an often exclusive and elusive industry.

"Building a facility is capital-consuming, no matter how much money you have," says Joel Goodwillie, the winery manager at the Southern Oregon Wine Institute at Umpqua Community College, which launched in 2010. Having an incubator space takes that out of the startup budget, and makes opening a new winery more palatable to entrepreneurs. "Another advantage of the incubator program is that you can kind of dial in your winemaking style, giving you a focus on what direction you want to go in."

After working as a harvest intern and cellar hand at local wineries while enrolled in Walla Walla Community College's Institute of Viticulture and Enology, Albro Itämeri was eager to open her own winery. But launching a new business so shortly after graduating came with a lot of risks. According to a study conducted in 2005 by the Washington State University Extension, total investment costs for small wineries in the state ranged from \$560,894 for a 2,000-case winery to \$2,339,108 for a 20,000-case winery—those costs are likely exponentially higher today. It was a big investment for the recent grad.

## ***How Winery Incubators Are Making the Industry More Accessible (cont.)***

When Albro Itämeri learned of a vacancy opening up in one of the five buildings leased through the Port of Walla Walla's winery incubator program, she put a business plan and proposal together. A municipal corporation responsible for fostering economic development, the Port of Walla Walla is invested in more than just the airport; they want to see the local wine industry grow as well. These standalone winery shell buildings, built near the airport between 2006 and 2008 with the help of Washington State Department of Commerce grants, are recent developments for the incubator program, which has been in operation since 2000. They're only open to new, first-time, startup wineries and include an outside crush pad, HVAC system, bathroom, small production area, and space for a tasting room. Accepted applicants are charged below-market rent that gradually increases over a six-year period, starting at \$900 per month in the first year and ending at \$1,806 per month in the last.

"The design of the buildings, they are small, but that was done deliberately," says Jennifer Skoglund, the airport manager at Port of Walla Walla. "There is a time frame. [Tenants] need to graduate within a certain time period. The goal is to get them started so they can be financially sufficient, grow their winery, and then move out into the public sector, to move to another property and grow their facility."

Including the current tenants, there have been 17 wineries to move through the Port of Walla Walla's incubator buildings, including successful alumni like CAVU Cellars, Adamant Cellars, Dillon Cellars, and Kontos Cellars. Only two of the tenant wineries have closed. "It has really served a need," says Skoglund.

Similar winery incubator programs exist in California, Oregon, Idaho, Texas, and Kansas. Some, like the RD Winery incubator space in Napa, are born out of necessity. When the winery moved their operations into a 25,000-square-foot winemaking facility in 2019, they realized they had more space than they knew what to do with. "The facility is way too big for everything we need," says Mailynh Phan, the CEO of RD Winery.

So they decided to open it up to other small wineries, cideries, and breweries. Not only has that fostered a supportive and collaborative community of producers all working to launch their own projects, but it's helped RD Winery stay in business. "At the end of the day, it's still very expensive to be in Napa," says Phan. "Having these other avenues of revenue has helped us stay afloat."

## **Creating Wine Communities Where They Didn't Exist Before**

Winery incubators can also play an important role in establishing new businesses in up-and-coming regions. When Tim Harless, the founder of Hat Ranch Winery, signed his lease at the University of Idaho Agribusiness Incubator in 2014, there were around 40

## *How Winery Incubators Are Making the Industry More Accessible (cont.)*

wineries in the state. Now there's close to 70, several of which have gotten their start at the incubator facility.

"The quality of wines coming out of here, with multiple brands winning awards, is a testament to the importance of having this location," says Will Wetmore, the assistant winemaker at Hat Ranch.

In Kansas, Scott Kohl, the director of the Highland Community College (HCC) Viticulture and Enology program, has watched as a local wine movement has blossomed. In 2007, HCC taught its first class on grape growing and winemaking. The interest was so great that the college then decided to begin offering degree and certification programs in 2010, which has served 162 students to date.

By 2015, they saw potential for even more growth. "We were teaching students; we were serving the industry. No one else in Kansas teaches this stuff," says Kohl. "But we kept thinking: What can we do next? How can we help make it easier for people to start a vineyard, to start their winery?"

At first, the idea to launch a winery incubator was a "pie in the sky" dream. Then, in 2016, the college received grants from the USDA and Kansas Department of Agriculture to purchase winery equipment that would be necessary to open the incubator one day. A few months later, the college found the perfect facility. "All of a sudden, the 20-year plan became the 20-month plan," says Kohl. Just before the 2019 harvest, 456 Wineries opened its doors to entrepreneurs, becoming the first winery incubator to open east of the Rocky Mountains.

456 Wineries has space for up to six individual wineries, and provides up to 5,000 liters of tank space to each client, as well as winemaking equipment, a shared tasting room, and guidance during the permit application process. Two prior clients have already moved out of the incubator space to continue running wineries at their own farms.

"When starting a winery, it's obviously important to have someone that knows how to make wine. Beyond that, the hardest part is writing a big check," says Kohl. "You've got to have the building and the equipment and all the marketing that goes into it. If you don't do the marketing, it doesn't matter how good your wine is, because nobody knows about it. Essentially what we're trying to do is take some of the risk out of [starting a wine business]. If it works out, great. If it doesn't, then they haven't spent their life savings and mortgaged the farm."

## How Winery Incubators Are Making the Industry More Accessible (cont.)

Saving people from dumping their life savings into a business they ultimately decide isn't one they want to run, says Goodwillie, is one of the more rewarding aspects of running the Southern Oregon incubator program. "We do have people that have success stories, who move out and run their winery in their own brick-and-mortar," he says. "But I like the success stories where people go through and say, 'That's a hell of a lot of work. I don't want to do that for the rest of my life; we dodged a bullet there.'"

For the winemakers and owners who do stay in the business, coming up through a winery incubator can play a pivotal role. If Albro Itämeri hadn't heard about the opening in the Port of Walla Walla incubator, she says "it would have taken me a long time to get the courage to even start."



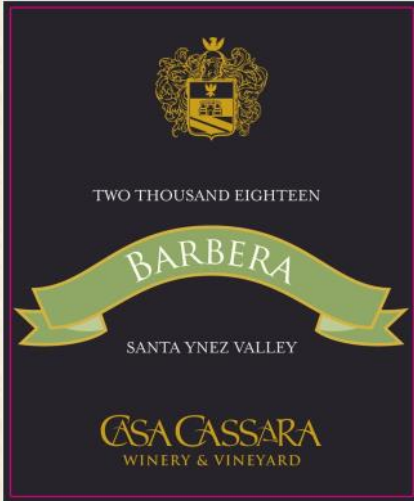
Port of Walla Walla's winery incubator program facilities, located near the Walla Walla regional airport. Photo courtesy of Port of Walla Walla.

written by  
Shelby Vittek

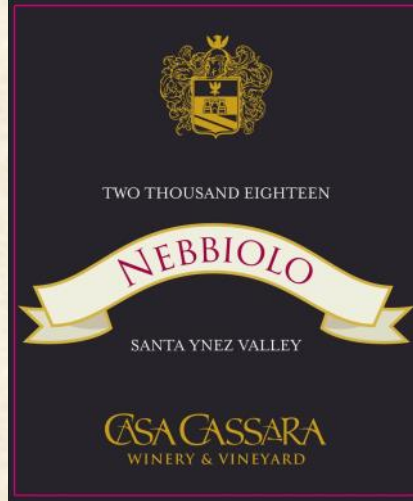
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January 16, 2023



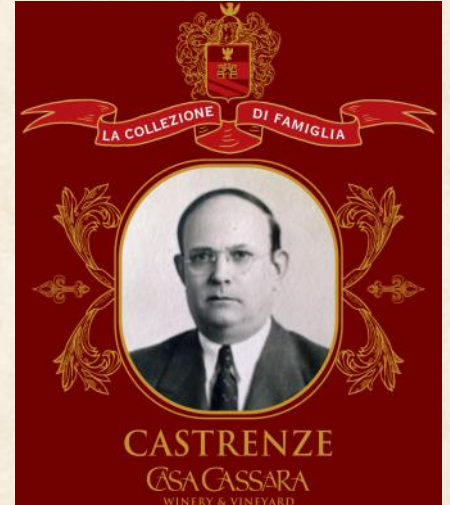
# Current Red Wines



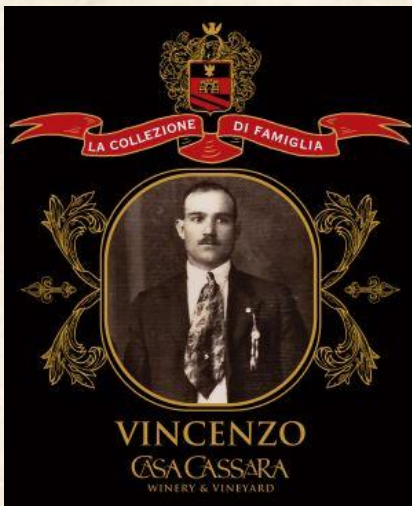
2018 Barbera



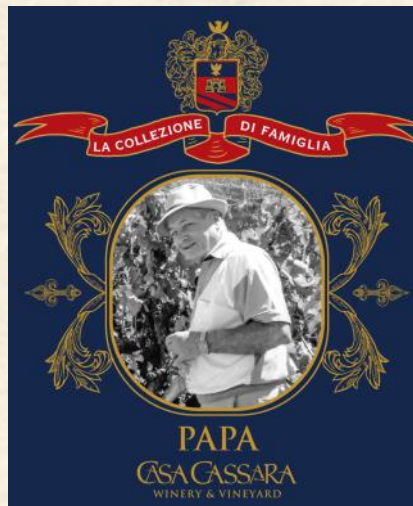
2018 Nebbiolo



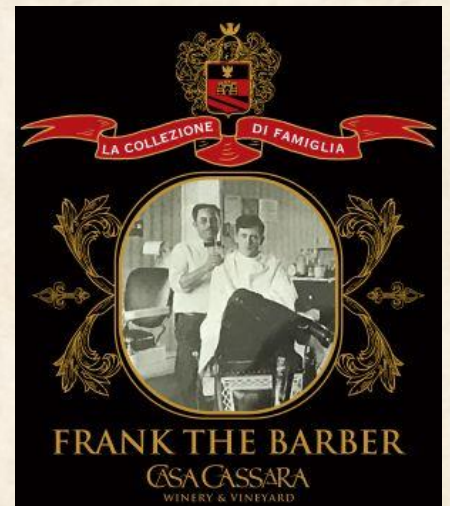
2018 Pinot Noir 'Castrenze'



2019 Nebbiolo 'Vincenzo'



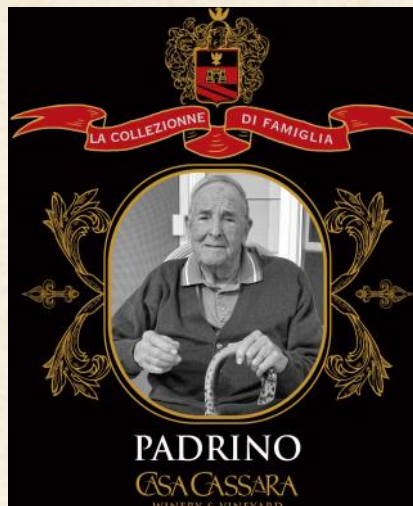
2019 Bennie's Blend 'Papa'



2019 Barbera  
'Frank the Barber'

Double Gold Medal Winner  
2023 Orange County Fair

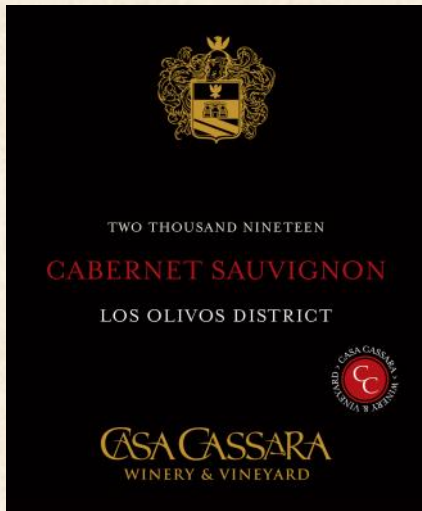
Bronze Medal Winner  
2023 Orange County Fair



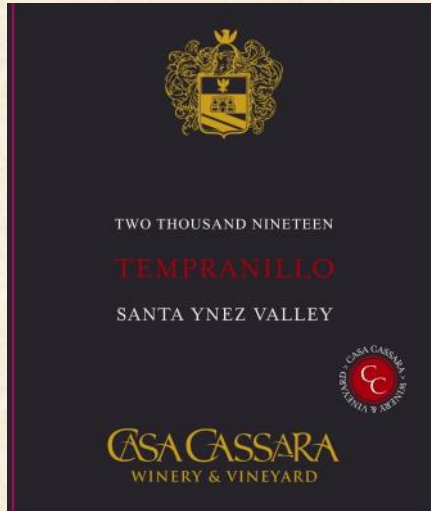
2019 Sangiovese 'Padrino'

Please visit our website at <https://www.ccwinery.com/wine-store/> for tasting notes and more information about each of our wines

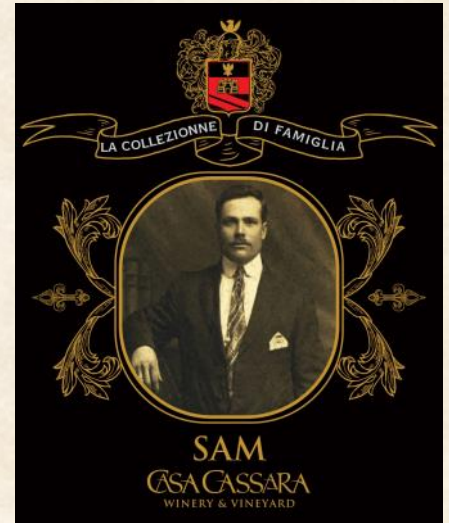
# Current Red Wines



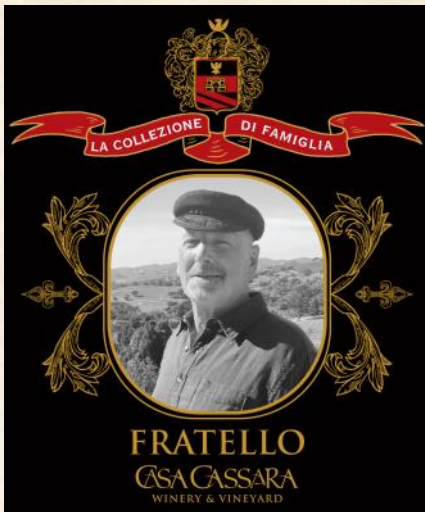
2019 Cabernet Sauvignon



2019 Tempranillo

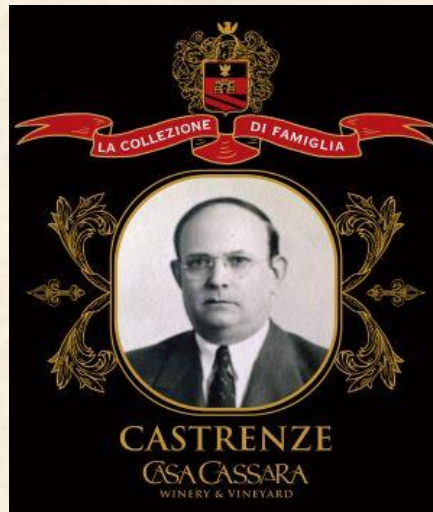


2020 Dago Red 'Sam'

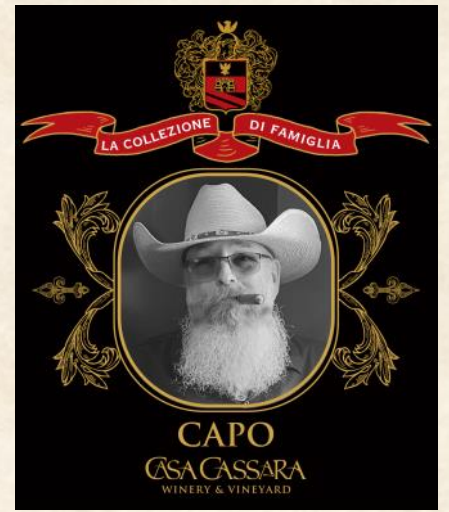


2020 Super Tuscan 'Fratello'

Silver Medal Winner  
2023 Orange County Fair



2020 Pinot Noir 'Castrenze'



2020 Nero d'Avola 'Capo'

Bronze Medal Winner  
2023 Orange County Fair

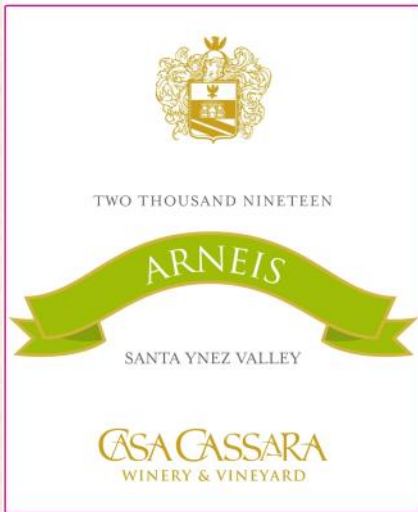
Watch for Family Collection Birthday Specials on our website!

Purchase 3 bottles of the special for the price of 2!

Does not include tax and shipping.

Please visit our website at <https://www.ccwinery.com/wine-store/> for tasting notes and more information about each of our wines

# Current White, Rosé, & Sparkling Wines



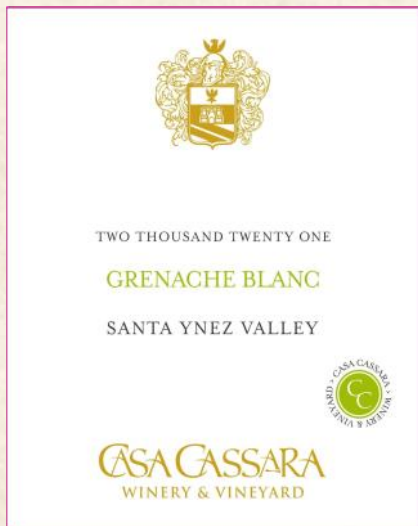
2019 Arneis



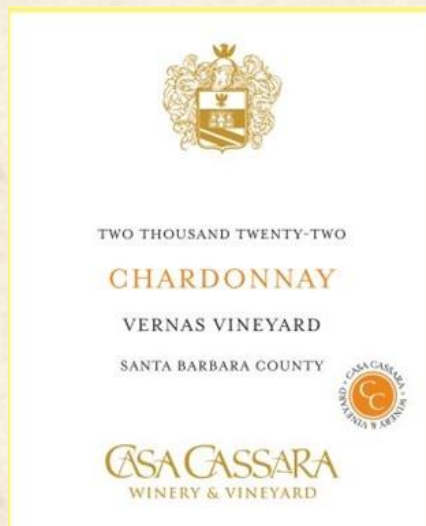
2020 Casa Bianca 'Il Mio Amore'



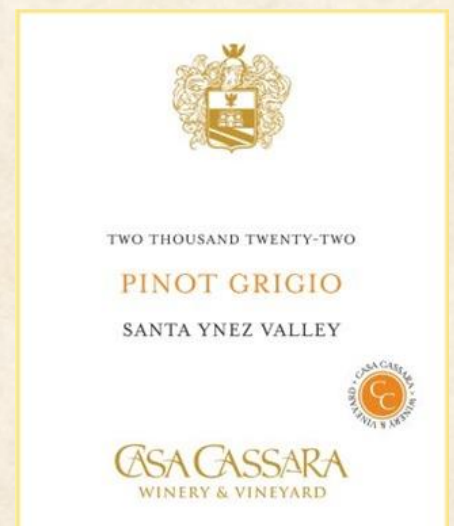
2022 Grenache Rosé 'Mema'



2021 Grenache Blanc



2022 Chardonnay



2022 Pinot Grigio



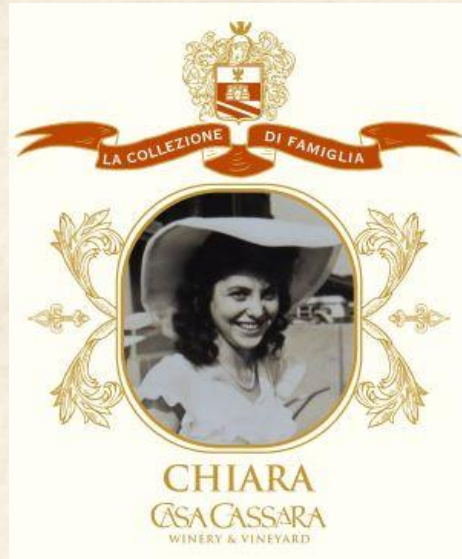
2021 Rose Sparkling Wine

## ***Refunds and Returns***

Casa Cassara stands behind its wines. We are family oriented and we stand by the quality of our wines. We will gladly replace any wine that you the customer find defective.

Please contact our Tasting Room at (805) 688-8691 to discuss your options.

# New Releases Coming Soon



2021 Arneis 'Chiara'

Label Design and Family  
Member Name  
In-work

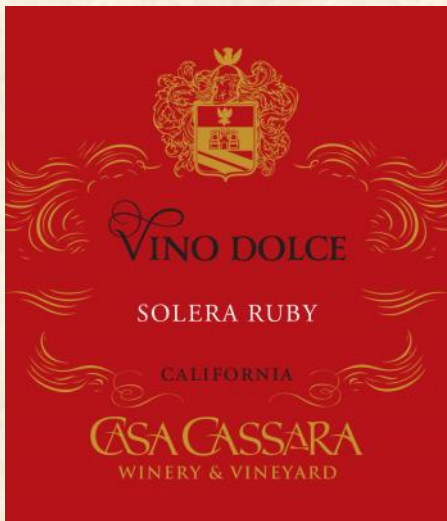
2021 Montepulciano

Label Design and Family  
Member Name  
In-work

2023 Vermentino

We may have new labels for our 'Family Collection' but they are still the same great wines!  
Look for more Family Collection additions in the future!

# Current Port Wines & Brandy Available



Port wines are available in 750 ml bottles

**We can ship your wine!**

**Shipping is available to the following states:**

AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, LA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OH, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV and WY

Due to ABC Regulations we cannot ship our Brandy. All orders placed will be for pickup at the Tasting Room Only!

We cannot allow customers to taste our Brandy in the tasting room. We can legally sell it but cannot even have an open container of it on the premises.



## Wine Trivia Question:

What was the most expensive bottle of wine ever sold?

Answer on Page 16



# Wine Holidays Coming Up!

Wine holidays might not be necessary to get us celebrating our favorite wines like a good bottle of *Casa Cassara* wine, but let's face it, any excuse is a good one. What follows is a list of some of the biggest wine days out there, in chronological order for the next few months.

## November

The year's coming close to an end, but there are still lots of opportunities for wine celebration.

### *Merlot Day*

**November 7th:** Have you ever uttered the words, "I'm not drinking any f@\$!ing Merlot?" Use today to atone! We can't find any mention of this day prior to 2011 and the person who seems convinced that it's on November 7th is [winecellarinsider.com](http://winecellarinsider.com).

### *Tempranillo Day*

**November 9th:** Make some tapas and celebrate Spain's most famous grape: perhaps a little Rioja is in order? Tempranillo Day was started by TAPAS or Tempranillo Advocates in the hopes of getting even more attention on this splendid Spanish grape.

### *Zinfandel Day*

**Third Wednesday of November:** Whether your wine's from Puglia or Lodi (or Croatia), there are countless ways to celebrate Zin! National Zinfandel Day is advocated by ZAP (Zinfandel Advocates and Producers) who also hold a huge Zinfandel tasting in San Francisco every year.

### *Beaujolais Nouveau Day*

**Third Thursday of November:** Whether you see it as a tradition or a clever marketing ploy, this is the day for drinking something truly young and fresh.

### *Carménère Day*

**November 24th:** Carménère might originally be from France, but we'd recommend celebrating today with one of the great bottles from Chile.

## December

Another year down! But never fear: you've got a whole new year of celebrating wine to look forward to!

### *Cabernet Franc Day*

**December 4th:** Not to be outdone by its more famous child: Cabernet Franc definitely deserves some celebration of its own.

### *Prohibition Repeal Day*

**December 5th:** Another holiday where it doesn't matter *what* you're drinking, so long as you *are* drinking.

### *Sangria Day*

**December 20th:** You might think of Sangria as more of a hot weather drink, but any opportunity to mix a pitcher is a good one in our eyes!

# *Wine Holidays Coming Up!*

## **December (cont.)**

### *Champagne Day (aka NYE)*

**December 31st:** There truly couldn't be a more perfect day to celebrate Champagne than New Year's Eve. Cheers!

## **January 2023**

January is the month of starting over (and hangovers), so it's no wonder that we couldn't really find any major wine holidays. Perhaps you should start a keto diet.

## **February**

Winter's still going strong, but the memory of bleary eyed mornings is starting to fade. So the wine holidays are finally on their way!

### *Open That Bottle Night*

**Last Saturday in February:** Have you been sitting on a special bottle of wine, looking for the perfect excuse to crack it open? This is the time to open it up and share with friends.

## **March**

In like a lion, out like a lamb, March's wine holidays are the perfect combination of the chill of winter and the warmth of spring.

### *Mulled Wine Day*

**March 3rd:** It might seem funny to celebrate this cold weather treat in March, but we see it as a final hurrah.

### *Riesling Day*

**March 13th:** Whether you like them dry or sweet, Riesling is a constant crowd pleaser.

## **April**

April might not be flush with wine holidays, but the one it does have is a doozie.

### *Malbec Day*

**April 17th:** Whether you're celebrating with something French or Argentinian, there are no limit of ways to make a toast to Malbec.

## ***Wine Fact***

**Wine Fact:** Wine Doesn't Make You Fat. While beer makes that unaesthetic beer belly, wine does not affect your waistline at all. In fact recent studies showed that “women who routinely drank moderate amounts of alcohol, totaling about one drink per day, carried almost 10 pounds less body fat than women who did not drink at all”. Experts believe that the calories in alcohol are not metabolized in the same way as calories from carbohydrates, fats or protein. So if you are about to start a diet to lose weight, then you should consider having a glass of wine instead of chocolate pudding for dessert.

**Wine Fact:** California, New York, and Florida lead the United States in wine consumption.

**Wine Fact:** Wine testers swirl their glass to encourage the wine to release all of its powerful aromas. Most don't fill the glass more than a third full in order to allow aromas to collect and to not spill it during a swirl.

**Wine Fact:** When tasting wine, hold the wine in the mouth for a moment or two and then either swallow it or, preferably, spit it out, usually into a spittoon. A really good wine will have a long aftertaste, while an inferior wine will have a short aftertaste.

**Wine Fact:** In ancient Greece, a dinner host would take the first sip of wine to assure guests the wine was not poisoned, hence the phrase “drinking to one's health.” “Toasting” started in ancient Rome when the Romans continued the Greek tradition but started dropping a piece of toasted bread into each wine glass to temper undesirable tastes or excessive acidity.

### **Trivia Question Answer:**

**A 1945 Romanee-Conti** was sold in 2018 for \$558,000.



# *Fun Drink and Food Pairing Recipes*

## *Casa Cassara Grenache Blanc Spritzer*

Everyone loves to have an opinion on pretty much every type of drink, and that's true for wines as well as spirits. Whether you're with or against adding soda to your wine, you should know how to make and serve this refreshing drink for the holidays.

It is a lovely holiday wine spritzer recipe, great for hosting as it is so easy. It is also one of our lowest calorie cocktail options, as it's such a light choice. As you might be able to guess from the name, a wine spritzer combines wine (usually white) and soda, with garnishes. For a basic wine spritzer formula, pour 3 ounces of white wine over ice, then top with 1 ounce of your favorite soda. Garnish with an lime slice and you have a nice *Casa Cassara Grenache Blanc* Spritzer.



### **Ingredients:**

Serves: 1

### ***Casa Cassara Grenache Blanc***

Ginger Ale, Soda Water, or 7Up

Slice of Lime or Lemon

### **Method:**

1. Fill a wine glass halfway with the super-chilled wine.
2. Splash in the soda or club soda until the glass is three-quarters full.
3. Then take a slice of lime and put it on the rim of the glass , add ice and serve.

## Holiday Charcuterie Board for Red Wines



With the holidays upon us a Charcuterie board is a great appetizer idea for your guests. One of the best things about a charcuterie board and wine night is being able to prepare everything ahead of time especially during the Holiday Season. **Tip:** meats and cheese are most flavorful at room temperature. I like to assemble my board about 45-60 minutes before serving it. Cheeses and meats are easier to cut when they're cold, so I prep them fresh out of the refrigerator as I build my board, but once it's assembled, I definitely let it warm up a bit before my guests come over. The ideas for a board are endless especially when it comes to the Holiday Season so think outside the box.

### Instructions / Suggestions

A light-bodied red such as ***Casa Cassara Pinot Noir 'Castrenze'*** is one of my favorites to enjoy with charcuterie! Their fresh berry flavors counter salty, nutty cheeses (I love Alpine-style cheeses with lighter red wines).

- Condiments: fig spread, honey mustard, farmhouse chutney, pumpkin butter
- Meats: Prosciutto, truffle salami, duck prosciutto, pork rillettes
- Cheeses: white cheddar, fontina, Manchego, Gruyere
- Fruit: fresh grapes, fresh cherries, fresh figs, dried cranberries, dried figs, red pear
- Nuts: shelled pistachios, roasted almonds, toasted walnuts

With full-bodied red wines, such as ***Casa Cassara Syrah 'Zio'***, ***Casa Cassara Cabernet Sauvignon***, and ***Casa Cassara Barbera 'Frank the Barber'*** are wines that bring on the bold flavors! The firm structure of bolder red wines (tannins) can handle intense aged cheeses and the boldest meats.

- Condiments: plum fruit spread, black raspberry preserves, black cherry jam, cornichons
- Meats: Saucisson Sec, bresaola, truffle pâté, soppressata
- Cheeses: Double Gloucester, aged cheddar, aged Gouda, Parmigiano Reggiano, Asiago
- Fruit: fresh blackberries, dried figs, dried cherries, pomegranates