



Lost Canyon WINERY

Winter 2003 Newsletter



Partners: Bob Riskin, Randy Keyworth, and Jack States.

*Dear Friends,
Welcome to our
kick-off letter for
Lost Canyon Winery.
We have dreamed and
planned for this day
for many years and
now we have the
opportunity to share
our dream with you.*

*Bob Riskin
Randy Keyworth
Jack States*

Lost Canyon Winery: A Start-up Winery that is 20 Years Old

While Lost Canyon Winery was bonded as a commercial winery in August of 2001, we were actually founded in 1978 as a private venture, Lost Canyon Cellars. For over 20 years made we made small lots of ultra-premium wines. The trek from then to now has been one of passion, persistence, and good fortune.

For many professional winemakers like Jack States and Randy Keyworth, being home winemakers was an initiation into the world of wine. The years spent privately honing our craft benefited greatly from the following:

- A community that provided excellent support and training for home winemakers
- Location with easy access to world class quality grapes from Napa and Sonoma
- Proximity to a world class viticulture and enology program at UC Davis
- Friends who had excellent taste and high expectations for the wines they drink

Lost Canyon "Cellars" first vintage was a 1978 Cabernet Sauvignon from Stags Leap Vineyard. Unbeknownst to us, we had stumbled into one of the award winning, premier vineyards of the time. We were off to a very auspicious beginning and made one of our best wines ever right from the start – all 18 cases of it! We also made 10 cases of Pinot Noir from a region soon to be known as one of the premier appellations for Pinot Noir – Carneros.

As Lost Canyon Cellars continued to produce wine over the next two decades, our confidence that we could make world-class wines grew. We made over 500 cases of ultra-premium cabernet sauvignon, pinot noir, and chardonnay. While we became the hit of our social circuit, and colleagues in the food and wine industry who tasted our wines were enthusiastic, we hesitated to take our avocation to the next level and become a commercial winery. But by the end of the 1990's, a decision had to be made.

In 2000 serendipity struck. A number of events occurred in succession that catapulted us into the world of professional winemaking once and for all. First and foremost was connecting with our third partner – Bob Riskin. Bob shared our passion for wine, a commitment to quality, and a willingness to put in the hard work to succeed.



In addition, it turned out he was crazy enough to want to start up a new winery. Bob brought to the partnership a history of successful brand building and product positioning as an executive with Levi Strauss & Co. for over 20 years. He's also a lifelong enophile.

Soon after Bob joined us, we located our facility. A friend of ours was renovating a group of vintage 1900's warehouses along the Bay waterfront south of Jack London Square in Oakland. There we created a custom designed facility and purchased state-of-the-art equipment to match our new winery. We now had the winery we had dreamed of for years close to our homes so that we could be there daily.

Finally, we found the grapes that matched our plans. Again, luck was on our side as we entered the grape market at precisely the right time. By harvest 2001, there was a surplus of high quality grapes on the market and few buyers. This enabled us to secure the highest quality pinot noir and syrah fruit from some of the most desired vineyards in Sonoma County. We took this opportunity to establish long-term relationships with those growers. This guarantees Lost Canyon Winery the highest quality fruit for many years to come.

SPRING WINE RELEASES

**2001
Russian River
Pinot Noir**

**2001
Carneros
Pinot Noir
Las Brisas Vineyard**

**2001
Sonoma Coast
Syrah
Stage Gulch Vineyard**

**2001
California
Syrah**



Lost Canyon's Winema

Becoming a commercial winery is not for the faint of heart. More than one of our new friends in the wine industry began our conversations with the warning, "You know, you are crazy to be doing this." Our mental health aside, our twenty years of experience have helped us develop a clear "vision" of how to make exceptional wines.

Remain Small Enough to Respect the Uniqueness of Grapes and Wine

Wine is a living entity. It is ever changing and among the most individualistic, unique, and enigmatic of all of nature's creations. The choices winemakers have in shaping their wines are virtually limitless. The key to making great wine is to tailor one's decisions to what nature brings you each season.

Grapes are unpredictable, even within the same year and grape variety. Every vineyard is different. Each grower has their own style of tending their vines. Different locations in the vineyard can make an enormous difference to the grapes that are produced; each location receives more or less sun, wind, and water, and can have a different mineral composition in the soil, which will affect drainage patterns,



etc. Believe it or not, the uniqueness extends to the level of each grape cluster, depending on the size of the cluster, the tightness of the grapes within a cluster, or the amount of sunlight that the canopy permits onto the berries. This multitude of variables ultimately impacts the character of the wine we find in the bottle.

There are no "standard formulas" or "recipes" that can be used to control the diversity of issues that need to be considered in making a great wine. Vintners make hundreds of decisions involving timing, yeast, fermentation, chemistry, barrels, blending, and bottling each year, and no two years are the same. All of this requires a dedication to both science and art in order to create a wine you will remember years after you took your last sip.

Staying at a small production is at the core of our philosophy of managing the complex task of making world-class wines. Achievement of our ambitious mission requires that we use all of our senses-taste, smell, touch, feel, and sight-to make

the many decisions that confront the winemaker. Wine is always changing and offering new challenges throughout its life. The same wine will taste completely different depending on the type and age of the barrel, the wine's current stage of fermentation, or the age of the wine. Eventually it all comes together as a finished product when you choose to bottle the wine.

At Lost Canyon Winery, this attention to detail is what makes our wines special, whether it is selecting the right vineyard, finding the correct grape clones, sorting the individual grape clusters at harvest, making fermentation decisions at crush, tracking the progress of the wine in every barrel, or the countless daily decisions the winemaker must respond to throughout the life of the wine. We believe that producing a quality wine means we are on the wine's timetable, and not the reverse. Ultimately we do not control the grape's development, but instead we are there to guide and influence the wine to meet its innate potential. Only at our smaller production size can this be accomplished.

Spare No Expense Obtaining the Highest Quality Grapes and Maintaining Close Partnerships with Great Growers

Everyone has heard the saying, "You can make poor wine out of great grapes, but not great wine out of poor grapes." It couldn't be truer. More and more, fine wine is "made" in the vineyard. This requires that winemakers work with growers to make decisions in the vineyard well before the grapes are harvested and we begin our work.

This year we have inaugurated long-term agreements with some of the best known and sought after vineyards in Sonoma County. Our choice was the Russian River and Carneros appellations for our pinot noir wines. We have contracted with Dutton Ranch to source fruit from their highly desired Morelli Lane Vineyard. Additionally, we have an agreement with the highly respected Saralee's Vineyards for our other Russian River pinot noir. Our other choice for pinot noir was the Carneros appellation of Sonoma County. Carneros is another cool region close to the Bay and these grapes come from the vineyard of one of the pioneers of high quality pinot noir, Francis Mahoney, and his Las Brisas Vineyard.

Our syrahs are sourced from two other Sonoma vineyards that take advantage of the areas special climate. The cool breezes and warm days slowly ripen the syrah fruit and give it a richness and intensity that offers complexity and delights the senses. We have entered into a relationship with Alegria

King Philosophy

Vineyards in the Russian River whose wines have won numerous awards. Our other syrah comes from southern Sonoma County. We are continuing to make syrah from the Stage Gulch Vineyards located in the Sonoma Coast appellation. The grapes from this area ripen later and benefit from the longer hang time that complements our winemaking style.

Specialize in Varietals You Love

Part of our vision was to “make wines that we personally enjoy.” Our first choice, pinot noir, was an easy decision. We have been making pinot noir forever, and have always been seduced by its complexity, subtlety, and delicacy. We also have a proven track record of making world-class pinot noir. Our second choice was syrah. This variety came as a bit of a surprise to all of us. While we had all experienced syrah/shiraz, the wines we tasted were from hot growing regions and were very earthy, with excess fruit, hot, and lacked the complexity we were looking to achieve. Our epiphany occurred when we tasted syrah that had been grown in cooler climates. These wines ‘knocked our socks off.’ Cool region syrah’s have the body and complexity we desired, but also retain the distinctive syrah character that we sought. And, from a marketing perspective, it appears that a growing number of consumers are looking for something new and interesting and are coming to this same conclusion. We are excited about producing these wines and offering them to the wine loving public.

The Lost Canyon Promise

Winemaking is exhilarating, fascinating, and complicated. In the end, what we learned is that winemakers are in the business of furnishing consumers with something more than the purchase of a beverage, we make wine in order to provide the wine lover an extraordinary experience. An experience they will remember for years.



How to get Lost Canyon Wines...

We are a small production winery currently producing 1000 cases of ultra premium red wines. Although small quantities of our wine will be appearing in restaurants and select wine shops in California in 2003, the best way to purchase our wine is directly from the winery. Given the small quantities available from our 2001 vintage (400 cases), we suggest sending your order to us as soon as possible. We will give priority to those who purchase from the 2001 vintage when we are ready to release our 2002 vintages.



The Making of Lost Canyon Wines

The wine starts in the vineyards. Our growers manage their vineyards to ensure that the yields are kept below 4 tons per acre. This provides us with fruit that is intense in flavors and character.

During the harvest, the grapes are carefully harvested to not damage them and to ensure the best fruit is selected for the making of our wines. Early morning harvest keeps the grapes cool until they reach our winery a few hours later. When the grapes arrive at the winery, we go through an additional hand sorting process to remove any remaining material that doesn't meet our standards.

Whole berries along with those that go through our crusher de-stemmer are converted into must and flow by means of gravity to our fermenting bins.

We cold soak the must for up to 5 days, allowing an initial fermentation from native yeasts before the addition of cultured yeasts. In order to extract the maximum color and flavors, we punch down the must by hand several times each day until we are ready to press .

The must is gently basket pressed, and the wine is left to settle for a few days before it is racked to the barrels.

Our Pinot Noir will age in French barrels from Rousseau and Seguin Moreau coopers, half of which is new, and half of which is one-year-old. Our Syrah primarily ages in Saint Martin and Seguin Moreau cooperage. These wines also receive an even mix of new and one-year-old barrels.

Our wines will age for 10 to 12 months before hand bottling. We then allow the wines to rest and age for 6 months before their release.



Lost Canyon

WINERY

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A Winery in Oakland?

You often see a question in people's eyes when they first see the Lost Canyon Winery address: "Your winery is in Oakland?" We understand. Napa, Sonoma, Monterey, and Oakland don't appear to fit together. Oakland may not be listed among the great wine regions of California, but a surprising number of ultra-premium Napa and Sonoma wineries, such as V. Sattui, Taft Street, Cakebread, and Trefethen, began in the San Francisco East Bay area. Moreover, several other outstanding wineries are currently located within ten miles of Lost Canyon Winery, including Rosenblum, JC Cellars, Dasche, and Edmund St. John.

Two factors enable us to create great wine in Oakland: a custom designed, state-of-the-art facility and easy access to one of the greatest grape growing regions of the world. The most important element to the vintner is the quality of the vineyards where the grapes are grown. We have been fortunate to establish long-term relationships with Dutton, Saralee, Alegria, Mahoney, and Stage Gulch vineyards, some of the most respected growers in the Sonoma region.

Our winemaking facility is also a major contributor to our success. We located the winery in Oakland only after finding the perfect location and building. Adjacent to the San Francisco Bay, the cool breezes and fog that come off the water provide an ideal climate. And, because the winery is less than



Transporting grapes to the winery on the morning of the harvest, when the fruit is still cold, is critical to quality of the wine.

an hour's drive from our Sonoma vineyards, we are able to transport grapes to the winery on the morning of the harvest, when the fruit is still cold – a critical factor in the quality of the wine. Finally, the building itself is a renovated 19th century warehouse with a custom interior, designed to meet a unique set of standards that we have developed during our many years of making wine. We invite you to come and visit (open by appointment only).