

PICK & CHOOSE

JUST RED? JUST WHITE?
JUST CALIFORNIAN?
JUST ITALIAN?
HOW ABOUT A
COMBINATION?

CALIFORNIA WINES

Artisan Series –
\$29.50/month, a red and a white
Winemaker Series –
\$59.50/month, 2 reserve reds
Artisan red–Winemaker red –
\$46/month

ITALIAN WINES

Artisan Series –
\$32/month, a red and a white
Winemaker Series –
\$62/month, 2 reserve reds
Collector Series –
\$112/month, 2 collectable reds
Artisan red–Winemaker red –
\$48/month
Winemaker red–Collector red –
\$87/month

CALIFORNIA–ITALIAN COMBINATIONS

CA Artisan red–IT Artisan red –
\$33/month
CA Artisan white–IT Artisan white–
\$29.50/month
CA Winemaker–IT Winemaker –
\$62/month
Alternate CA & IT Artisan Series –
\$29.50/\$32/month
Alternate CA & IT Winemaker Series–
\$59.50/\$62/month

DOUBLE UP

You can also receive more than two bottles per month. California sales tax is included. Shipping is extra.

25%, brings structure, acidity, and tannin, and the Refosco brings a distinctive pepper quality and color that Nebbiolo usually lacks. Every year we have a theme of wine and art for the label. We want to show how wine has been incorporated into art around the world. Our present label is a copy of a mosaic from the San Marco basilica in Venice. The third element of that wine is that we give part of the proceeds to a Santa Cruz area non-profit, and the beneficiary changes each year. Last year, we gave money to a hospice group that helps people here at the end of their lives, and this year we're giving \$5,000 to a group involved with search and rescue. A little over a year ago, my cousin went through a life threatening situation at 10,000 feet in the Sierra Nevada mountains, and a search and rescue team got them out. So we became aware of the important work that they do. In keeping with our tradition of allocating funds locally, we gave to the Santa Cruz team. Around here, people get lost in the mountains; they get lost in the rivers; they get in trouble at the beaches. So our local group is responsible for going out and finding them.

What changes have occurred at Bargetto Winery over time that you consider significant?

If you want to go back 20 years, we've gone from being a California distributed winery to a nationally distributed winery. We also do more exporting than we've ever done before. Mexico has become a good export market for us. We ship to Canada, and we're trying to get our wines to England because it's the number one export market for California wines. Right now, Bargetto is doing zero there, and we don't like that. Our website has been something of a growth area for us, the opportunity for customers around the country to go directly to our website to buy wine. We're still a small premium winery, and

the direct sales that come from the website are an advantage for us. We continue to go upscale and develop our Santa Cruz Mountain program, and that's been important. We're introducing a new line of reserve wines. We've been producing a reserve Merlot for ten years and our reserve Pinot Noir for six years. We have a reserve Chardonnay, and all are from the estate vineyard. But we've never used separate packaging, separate labels. So that is something new. We have two tasting rooms, one here at the winery that we've operated these past decades and one at Cannery Row in Monterey. We've been down there for about 40 years, since the late 1960s. We get people from around the world visiting Cannery Row, probably best described by John Steinbeck. When I was a kid, and my Dad and Mom would take us there, it was a ghost town. They were old run-down, abandoned canneries, mainly sardine canneries. The industry had long since ended, probably in the 1940s, and the present era of tourism had not yet arrived. Moving forward to Cannery Row today, you see a tourist area that's bolted down and boosted by the Monterey aquarium that was established by Julie Packard of Hewlett-Packard. She, with her father's support, established this non-profit institution, the aquarium. They opened it in 1985, and the world of Cannery Row changed as a result. We only had to wait about 20 years for that to happen. It's one of the premier aquariums in the world, and now we have nice hotels and restaurants there. Cannery Row is no longer a ghost town.

Are any of the children interested in the winery?

Our youngest is the one who enjoys coming out to the vineyard. She's nine years old and helps me knock off the suckers. She's the one out of the three who enjoys the taste of wine. She'll drink some red wine. My son, in contrast, will say 'eeew' and chase it with a glass of milk.



YOUR ACCESS TO OUTSTANDING WINES FROM CALIFORNIA AND ITALY

California
Winery of the Month



The Thread That Binds *Bargetto Winery*

Our sense of time is most specifically defined by our own lifespans. Wherever we are on the timeline, from birth to death, defines the past, present, and future. Not so for John Bargetto. The third generation to own and operate Bargetto Winery, he is acutely aware of the continuum that began in 1918 when his immigrant grandfather and great uncle, brothers Filippo and Giovanni Bargetto, purchased the Santa Cruz ranch, where John, his siblings and cousins grew up together. The thread that stretches from that time to the present and beyond, which creates a collective memory and future mandates, is not just the family but the operation of the winery. Through choice and circumstance, certain members of each generation devote their working lives to advancing the business, each building on what the parent generation achieved, continually aware of a collective effort that stretches back and forth in time. The father of three children, John is providing for both the present and future of Bargetto Winery. "I don't care which one of my children gets into the business. The one who is showing the most affinity for it now is our youngest child. Her name is Alisa, and her middle name is Regan, which is our mother's maiden name. It's also the name of our vineyard." At just nine years old, Alisa is aware that she is part of something bigger than herself. Her very name evokes the trajectory of the winery as does John's, the Anglicized version of Giovanni. I repeat our conversation with minor editing for clarity. ➤



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February 2006

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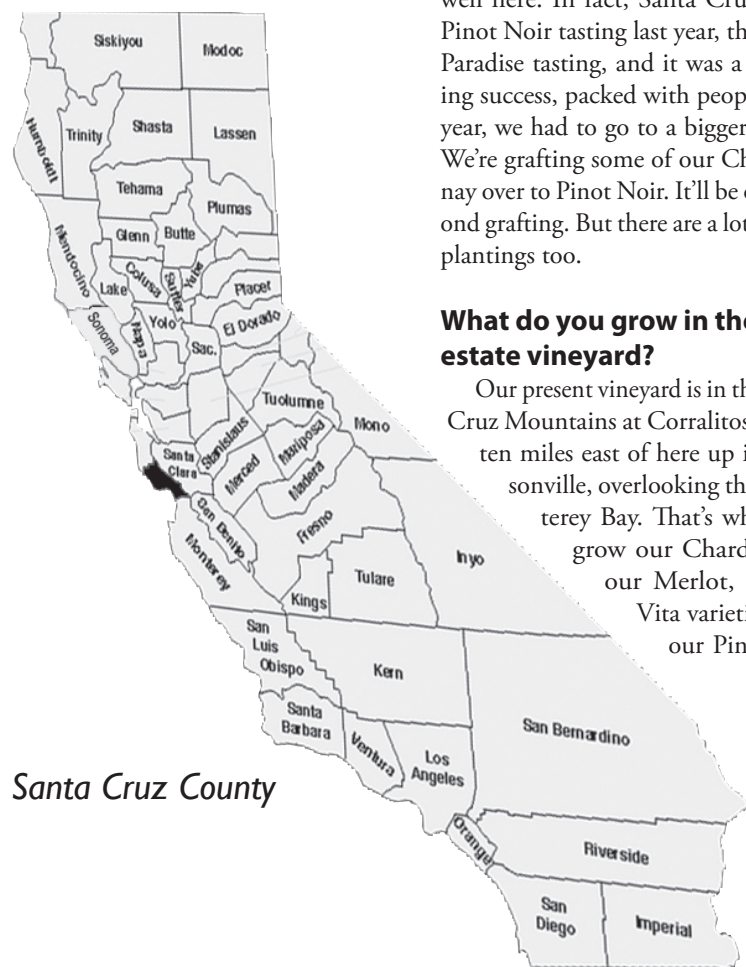
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What distinguishes Santa Cruz from other appellations in California?

Geographically, it's a very large appellation, going from the Watsonville area all the way out to Half Moon Bay, spanning three counties, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and San Mateo. But in terms of vineyard acreage, we're only about 1,500 acres of grapevines. If you contrast that to Monterey County, which is also a big appellation, it has 40,000 acres of planted grapevines. They have all that open land with huge vineyards. Around here a large vineyard is 10 acres. It's wooded, and the topography prohibits large vineyards. At 40 acres, our vineyard is probably in the top three in terms of acreage. You go to Monterey County, and 40 acres is nothing. They have vineyards that are 8,000 acres. We have a lot of mom and pop wineries. Bargetto produces 40,000 cases a year, and we're the third largest in Santa Cruz. The largest would be Ridge, about 80,000 cases, and David Bruce is about the same. Both of those are noted wineries in the Santa Cruz Mountains.



Santa Cruz County

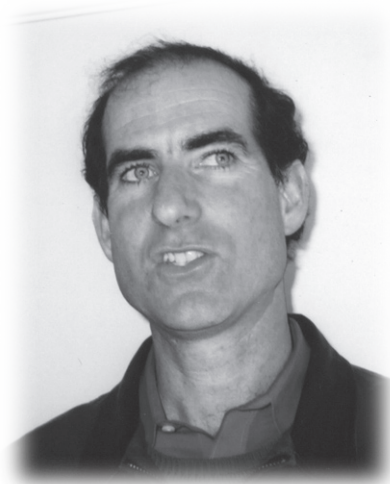
Bargetto produces more different varietals here than anyone we know. We have Chardonnay, two Merlots, two Pinot Noirs, Pinot Grigio, Dolcetto, Nebbiolo, and Refosco. What this region is known for is producing smaller amounts of exquisitely good wine. It's a cool region because of our proximity to the ocean, and it's a mountainous region. So we get the distinctiveness of mountain grapes. Last year the winery just up the road from us, Hunter Hill, produced the number one wine in the whole state of California. Bargetto produced one of the 12 best in the region, but we haven't risen to the top yet. Someday before I'm gone, I'd like us to get that top prize. But that just shows you what this small region can do.

Which grape varieties do especially well here in the appellation?

Cabernet and Merlot is planted here, but Chardonnay and Pinot Noir does especially well. Pinot is one of those varieties that doesn't do well everywhere, but it grows exceptionally well here. In fact, Santa Cruz did a Pinot Noir tasting last year, the Pinot Paradise tasting, and it was a smashing success, packed with people. This year, we had to go to a bigger venue. We're grafting some of our Chardonnay over to Pinot Noir. It'll be our second grafting. But there are a lot of new plantings too.

What do you grow in the estate vineyard?

Our present vineyard is in the Santa Cruz Mountains at Corralitos, about ten miles east of here up in Watsonville, overlooking the Monterey Bay. That's where we grow our Chardonnay, our Merlot, our La Vita varieties, and our Pinot Gri-



"I'm involved in the business from sunlight in the vineyards to candlelight in the restaurants.."

—John Bargetto

gio. The whole piece is 50 acres. Ironically, it's about the same size as our Grandfather's property up the road from us here. So all of our top wines come from that vineyard, not all of our wines but all of our best wines. And then like most wineries, we purchase other grapes from other vineyards. We purchase other Pinot Grigio grapes, our Gewurztraminer grapes, our Syrah grapes and other Merlot grapes. So our tradition is very much tied to the Santa Cruz Mountains. Even though this winery site is in what we call Santa Cruz County, all of our vineyards in the past, all of the grapes that we used to buy, were all in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and now we have our own Santa Cruz Mountains vineyard.

How many family members work at the winery?

Well, my sister works in the administration of the winery. My brother Martin is the president. My mother is involved part time. She's 82 and still involved in our finance meetings and our tastings every week. So at this time, there's the four of us, but a few years ago, my cousins Tom and Paul worked here. When we say the immediate family, we consider both families that were born and raised right here on the property. There were ten in the household right over here and five in ours, so there were 15 kids. We all grew up together like siblings. At one time or another, almost all 15 worked at the winery 15 or 20 years ago when

we were kids. I have two other siblings who are not presently involved with the winery. They both live in San Francisco, a sister and brother, but my brother Richard used to work here. So now three out of five in our immediate family work here. I'm in charge of our estate vineyards, so I'm a farmer part of the week. I went to the University of California at Davis to study enology, so my primary responsibility here is to oversee the production of the wines. I work closely with our winemaker Michael Sones, who's been with us for a couple of years. And then I'm involved with sales as well. Like Martin, I travel out of state to visit our wholesalers. In May, I'm planning a trip to Chicago and then on to Toronto to our importer up there. Then hopefully, I'll go on to London to try to establish an importer there. I'm involved in the business from sunlight in the vineyards to candlelight in the restaurants. So I get to see the whole range of operation, always lots of projects.

Bargetto is the oldest Santa Cruz winery in continuous operation. Who put all of this into motion?

We go back to my grandfather's father, who came here in 1890. He was the first one to take a ship from northern France and travel here. He settled in the Santa Cruz Mountains but then went back to his family in Piedmont, in northern Italy. His son Filippo came here in 1891, and in 1909, his brother Giovanni, my grandfather, came. They bought an apple ranch in the Santa Cruz Mountains in 1913 and in 1918 bought this ranch, the present site of the winery where we grew up. They began making wine out of an old barn on the property. During Prohibition,

between 1919 and 1933, they continued to make wine for family and friends and sold produce to local people. When Prohibition ended, they devoted more time to the wine business and began a wine wholesale business but continued to sell produce. Filippo passed away in 1936, and my grandfather became the sole owner of the business through the 1940s and 1950s. My Uncle Ralph and my father then took over the business, and my father ran it through the 1960s and 1970s. My father's first language was actually the dialect of Piemonte. He learned Italian as he grew older, and then growing up, we learned some Italian around here and studied it in school. None of us are fluent, but most of us are conversational. When we travel to Piemonte, we can engage our cousins. It gets rusty, but we know some Italian songs and enjoy some classic Piedmont dishes, like bagna cauda, a hot garlic oil where we dip vegetables in the winter. It's a neat tradition, and we have a bocce ball tournament here at the winery, those kinds of things.

Bargetto Winery makes several Cal-Ital wines.

We started to make Pinot Grigio about three years ago, and it's become our number one seller. We don't aim to produce an Italian Pinot Grigio or a French Pinot Gris. My assessment of Italian Pinot Grigio is that it's very dry, high in acid, sometimes with a slight bitterness, and a very delicate, subtle flavor. More expensive ones have bigger flavors. But the Italians like their wines like that. We're trying to make a California wine and forge our own style, a California Pinot Grigio. We're picking our grapes ripe, and sometimes the alcohol approaches 13.5%.

We're not looking for high alcohol. We're looking for flavor, for a fruitier style of wine that I think Americans respond to. An Italian who smells our Pinot Grigio, says, 'This is not Pinot Grigio.' Well, it's not Italian Pinot Grigio. It's California Pinot Grigio. We live in California, and we're making wines for Americans. But we don't want an over-oaked wine at our winery. If we have one, then someone needs to complain, because we'd change it. That goes for our Chardonnay too. We want the fruit to stand out. The Pinot Grigio doesn't get any oak. But certainly the Italian production of Pinot Grigio dominates the market. It's become the number two consumed white wine in this country after Chardonnay, surpassing Sauvignon Blanc, Viognier, Gewurztraminer, Riesling, all those other white wines. So that's impressive. Some of that is inexpensive wine that the Gallo's bring in. But Pinot Grigio is sexy now. People think that they are fluent in Italian when they pronounce it. They like to say it in other words, because things Italian are very cool now.

You have another Cal-Ital wine that just won best of class in the San Francisco Chronicle tasting.

That's our high-end blend, our proprietary blend that we call La Vita. In Italian, La Vita means *the life*. In our experience, wine brings life to life. The wine is a blend of three northern Italian varieties, reds that we're growing in our vineyard. Dolcetto is the most important, then Nebbiolo, and Refosco. Dolcetto brings the flesh and the fullness to the blend, good color, and good fruit flavor. Nebbiolo, about

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