

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.

stay in it. So if it breaks even, I'm happy."

Partying in paradise

Although the winery distributes in 12 states, Dean says that he'd like to sell 90% in California, and he's well on his way with half of the production sold directly from the winery. Dean's sister Sheryl and his daughter Debby coordinate events, most of which are weddings, although corporate events are picking up again, Dean says. Between the upstairs suite with hardwood floors, fireplace, beam-ceilings, spacious decks, and panoramic views, the barrel room below, the wine cave, and depending on the season, outdoor terraces and picnic and barbecue areas, people can party in



Dean (right) poses with his sister Sheryl and their father Bill.

He recently purchased 234 unplanted acres, surrounded by vineyards, in Paso Robles, which like Santa Cruz, has a growing reputation for fine wine.

paradise. Most wineries now offer their facilities for events, and not only do events generate significant income, but the winery sells its wines for these occasions.

So what has Dean learned from the wine business? First, he's learned that the adage is correct. In the wine business, it takes a large fortune to make a small one. Second, they knew nothing about the wine business when they started, and the learning curve surprised them. Third, once you drink good wine, you can't turn back to the cheap stuff. "When I was younger, I could drink a cheap bottle of wine and think nothing of it. I can't do that anymore. If I wasn't in the wine business, I might still be drinking cheaper stuff.

I can't drink Two Buck Chuck at \$1.99, but I can understand how a lot of people can. When I was younger, I probably would have poured it and thought nothing of it." ■

SEND A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION

to family, friends, business associates, and clients for any number of months that you prefer.

CHOOSE:

- California Artisan Series \$29.50/mo.
- California Winemaker Series \$59.50/mo.
- Italian Artisan Series \$32/mo.
- Italian Winemaker Series \$62/mo.
- Italian Collector Series \$112/mo.
- Or select from "Pick & Choose" above & write here:

Prices include 2 bottles of glorious wine, the newsletter, and CA sales tax. We include a gift card with your personal message. Shipping extra.

Send this form to: Celebrations Wine Club
75 Pelican Way G1
San Rafael, CA 94901

Or call 1-800-700-6227 or fax this form to 1-415-457-3362
Or order from our website at www.celebrationswineclub.com

Anna Maria, please send a gift subscription to the following person:

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone no. _____

Message _____

No. of months _____ Please bill me monthly. Please bill total.

My name _____

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Please charge my Visa Mastercard Discover

Card number _____ Expiration ____/____/____

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YOUR ACCESS TO OUTSTANDING WINES FROM CALIFORNIA AND ITALY

Winery of the Month



What's in a Name? Byington Vineyard & Winery



CelebrationsWineClub.com

Anna Maria Knapp, Owner
75 Pelican Way G1
San Rafael, CA 94901

1-800-700-6227

celebrate@
celebrationswineclub.com

September 2003

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The Byington name is on two signs about a half hour apart, one in Santa Clara in the heart of Silicon Valley, the other in the Santa Cruz mountains due east. The two signs couldn't mark two more dissimilar places. To get to the Santa Cruz site, the driver takes Bear Creek Road off of Highway 17 and winds almost to the top of the mountain at 2000 feet above sea level. The road threads its way through an evergreen forest with a smattering of oak, turned brilliant red, orange, and yellow for the season, fallen leaves piling like snow drifts at the sides of the road. At the top of the mountain a road sign points ahead, "Byington Vineyard and Winery." The 95-acre estate slopes down from the road, and a huge chateau rises from the ground like a mirage. Its stone exterior is covered with ivy, and second-floor balconies extend beyond French doors, a red tile roof enclosing the building. On this particular early November day, the hillside vineyards were visible, but the air was solid gray with rain, obscuring panoramic views of redwood forests, the Pacific Ocean, and Monterey Bay. ➤

Cut 1.5 inches exactly off this side of the sheet.

Cut 1.5 inches exactly off this side of the sheet.

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Each month we send to your table, two or more different bottles of hand-crafted California or Italian wine made by gifted wine makers who are passionate about producing outstanding wines.

Select wine options from the "Pick & Choose" menu on the back page.

Prices include our newsletter and California sales tax, shipping extra

Call toll free 1-800-700-6227 or email celebrate@celebrationswineclub.com



Dean Byington now runs the family businesses.

In an industrial section of Silicon Valley in Santa Clara, a large but modest white sign with black letters reads Byington Steel Treating, attached to the front of what seems to be a typical industrial warehouse. Offices are in front of the building, consisting mainly of cubicles, except for founder Bill By-



ington's office, paneled with the kind of material that covers the inside walls of trailers. It imitates dark wood but would never have passed for elegant, even in its early days. At 80, Bill is now retired, as is his oldest son Tom. Middle son Dean now runs the company, which hardens or softens steel, softening it so that it can be machined or hardening it, like scissors or knives so that they will hold an edge. The

real work takes place behind the offices. Although I didn't go back there, I imagine an expanse of space with concrete floors, machinery, furnaces, random piles of materials stacked here and there, workers concentrating on the task at hand.

Back and forth

Several times a week, Dean goes to the winery for meetings and then returns to the plant. But every day, Byington Steel Treating CFO Rod Bravo begins his day at the plant and then drives west to the winery, where he is the general manager. Both men love these opposite worlds. Rod says that when he's at the steel plant, a door in his mind closes, and he forgets the winery. Not true for Dean. Although he goes to the winery only a couple of days a week, Rod gets a regular stream of phone calls at the winery. At 59, Dean says he has no desire to retire. "I don't know what I would do with myself. I don't mind getting up and going to work during the day. I like it."

The founder of these two worlds is Bill Byington, who was born on an Idaho farm, served in World War II, learned the heat-treating trade and, at 26-years old in 1950, came with his wife Mary to northern Cal-

ifornia and founded Byington Steel Treating with \$800. The company is among the largest of its kind in Silicon Valley, servicing aerospace, government, technology, and construction industries.

Beginning to love wine

But his Idaho farming roots didn't wither and die in this new world. In 1958, Bill purchased the mountain-

ous Santa Cruz property for a family retreat. But a funny thing happens to people who migrate to California. They begin to love wine, some more, some less. His 30-year wine evolution eventually led to his planting the only part of the estate that wasn't too steep with three different clones of Pinot Noir, and he released his first vintage in 1987. By 1990, Bill had completed the 18,000 square-foot winery chateau. He recently purchased 234 unplanted acres, surrounded by vineyards, in Paso Robles, which like Santa Cruz, has a growing reputation for fine wine.

Finding out the hard way

These were the hopeful, roaring nineties, and the winery was built to accommodate a 20,000 case production, so eight years later, they were there. Dean says they grew way too fast. "The trouble is that when you produce 20,000 cases, you have to be able to sell them. We didn't realize that quite quick enough. We found out the hard way. You have to build it slowly and let it sell itself.... It's a lot of work trying to sell it, a lot of marketing. Customers want to see family; that's just the way the business is. But none of us had the time to do it with all the other stuff we had to do."

"We didn't get into this business to make money. We got into it because we love wines. So I would just as soon stay small, make better wines..."

—Don Blackburn

Cutting back

So like a lot of wineries in this current

economy, they cut back production to 8,300 cases. "I hope to keep it that way. I'm not into going back to where we were. We didn't get into this business

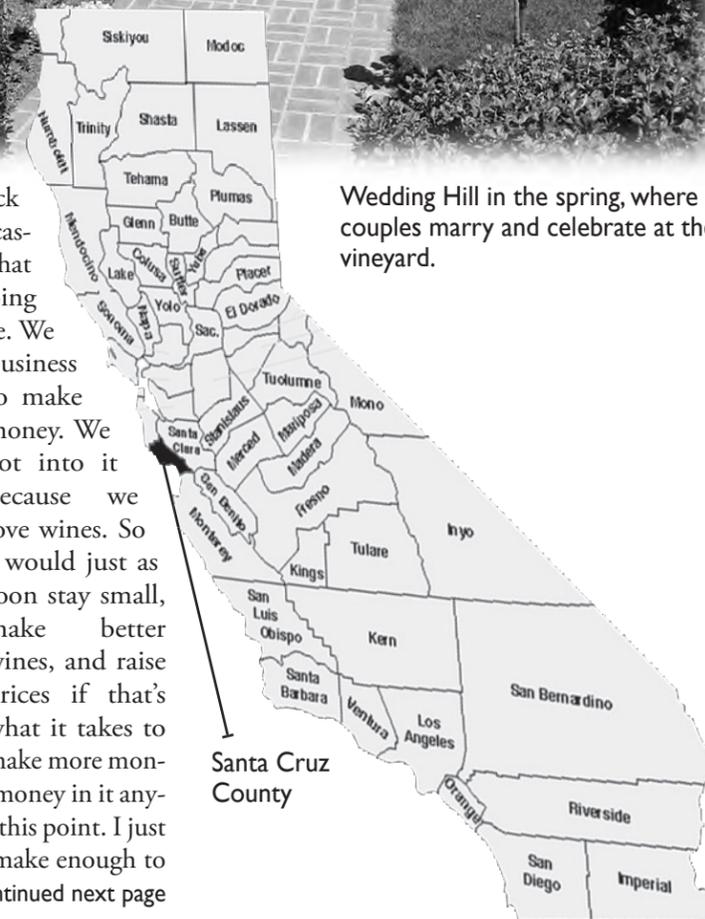
to make money. We got into it because we love wines. So I would just as soon stay small, make better wines, and raise prices if that's what it takes to make more money.

But there's no real money in it anyway that we've seen at this point. I just want to enjoy it and make enough to

continued next page



Wedding Hill in the spring, where couples marry and celebrate at the vineyard.



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