



# MADRIGAL FAMILY WINERY

## *Twenty Years and Going Strong!*

BY JOSH STEIN

The celebration of Madrigal Family Winery's twentieth year proves immigrant dreams blossom with enough time, effort and patience. Chris Madrigal's grandfather came to Napa in the 1930s, planting forty acres of apples, pears, walnuts and vineyards halfway between St. Helena and Calistoga, the future motherlode of California wine. He was a farmer, and he did what he knew best: grew great fruit for others. Chris's father, Jess, went one step further and chose to focus on winegrowing, starting the family's vineyard management company, which today nurtures over 800 valley acres for the family and a range of clients.

Chris and his father, in turn, continued the growth of the family's legacy with the establishment of the winery and its first crush of ten tons of Petite Sirah twenty years ago. The growth since then has helped to cement that legacy as the winery has become well-known for Cabernet Sauvignon, Gewürztraminer, Petite Sirah, Sauvignon Blanc and Zinfandel. Chris puts it best: "Our family history here is a constant source of inspiration and something that guides us in our winemaking. We value the long relationship we've had with the land and people here, believing that the combined wisdom of the folks who have lived here for generations and a deep appreciation of these vineyards can be tasted in our wine."

Petite Sirah is the variety through which Madrigal has made its name, and after three generations, they know which special spots in the vineyards nurture the best fruit, which is why in addition to their widely available Napa Valley Petite, they also produce three reserve bottlings from the north end of the Valley, where the grape does best: the Calistoga estate, Barberis and Saviez vineyard wines. The tasting room, with its stunning views of vineyards, lavender and the peaks of the Palisades mountain range, is the only place these wines can be had, and guests can savor their glasses of wine out on the Brazilian ironwood deck. Something really special is lunch with Chris Madrigal himself, enjoying the Madrigal family hospitality at its finest with a private lunch catered from his favorite local deli with an intimate tour of the property while



*"Our 20th anniversary means the continuance of a dream, of my life goal. The challenge was to get here, and it's an exciting challenge to keep going. 20 years is a testament to the drive we have to continue the dream."*

- CHRIS MADRIGAL



**MADRIGAL**  
FAMILY WINERY

Open Daily from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
3718 St Helena Highway  
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(707) 942-8619  
[madrigalfamilywinery.com](http://madrigalfamilywinery.com)







**Chris Madrigal, third generation founder of Madrigal Family Winery and Ed Sbragia, Consulting Winemaker**

learning about his family's history.

To that end, May 3rd, 2014 marks the official celebration of the winery's Twentieth Anniversary, and it is also the sixth annual Heritage Celebration. Such a doubly auspicious occasion demands a good time, and much is planned to make sure it will be. A slew of new releases created under the guidance of Ed Sbragia, consulting winemaker, will be open to taste, and many won't be publicly available otherwise until later this year: 2013 Mendocino Gewürztraminer; 2012 Napa Valley Garnacha; 2013 Calistoga Estate Sauvignon Blanc, harder to find these days in the Valley than in decades past; and 2012 Napa Valley Tempranillo and Viognier, both very difficult to find in Napa. "Collaborating with Ed is so exciting and enables Madrigal to take advantage of everything the vineyards have to offer," remarks Chris Madrigal.

Additionally, bottlings of the 2011 Merlot and "Nuestra Sangre" Blend, the latter named by a wine club member, will both be open, too. There will also be barrel tastings of several 2012 reds: Über Cabernet, Sonnet #63 and Cabernet Franc. A fiesta without food and music simply isn't done, so popular band LaTiDo will provide the tunes and a special paella by the Cooking Channel-featured Paella Del Reyes will fill the belly. If you can't make the party, don't worry, as the winery already has its next big event on the drawing board: save the date now for September 13th's Harvest Party from noon till four.

Clearly, no matter which number you choose – eighty years, twenty years or six years – Madrigal Family Winery is going strong. With a firm grasp of where they've come from and where they're headed, the three generations of Madrigal winegrowing efforts have mirrored what the best of fine wines always do: only gotten better with age. Do yourself a favor and stop on in for exclusive, small-lot releases which sing the praises of the land and the folks who've been caring for it for quite some time. You'll be glad you did – salud!

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