

CASTORO CELLARS



CASTORO CELLARS' VINEYARDS

"We continue to raise the bar each year and our goal is for each vineyard to have the distinction to qualify for a vineyard designation on the label every year." – Niels & Bimmer Udsen

Castoro Cellars sources grapes from approximately 20 vineyards, in addition to their own vineyards. Nearly all of their fruit comes from within the Paso Robles AVA, except for their Reserve Pinot Noir, which comes from the renowned Bien Nacido Vineyard in the Santa Maria Valley, and their Tempranillo, which is sourced from Central California. They select their grape sources carefully, matching vineyard location with the grape variety that thrives in that particular setting and employing vineyard techniques that produce the desired characteristics of each varietal.

Regional typicity is captured through Castoro's diverse vineyard resources. Explains Assistant Winemaker, Mikel Olsten, "By sourcing grapes from all the different microclimates throughout the AVA, we are able to pull from all the pieces of the puzzle and create a complete picture that is truly representative of the Paso Robles region."

Outdoor enthusiasts, Niels and Bimmer Udsen are avid stewards of the environment and seek out growers who share their sustainable farming focus. Both Cobble Creek Vineyards and the Bethel Road Vineyard are farmed organically, and are currently seeking Organic Certification. Niels and Bimmer plan to continue transitioning to organic farming in all of their vineyards.

"Growing up in Denmark, there was a strong environmental focus. I have always enjoyed nature and when we planted our organic vineyards, it was for no reason other than it was the right thing to do. We continue this focus in all of our vineyards," explains Bimmer. "Not only is it beneficial for the environment, it is better for our vineyards and for our vineyard neighbors."

All Castoro's vineyards employ sustainable viticulture practices, such as the use of pomace (residue from grape skins and seeds that have been semi-composted) for weed suppression and fertilizer, and predatory insect releases, which greatly reduce the need for pesticides.

These sustainable vineyard practices are carried out in conjunction with the vineyard management team contracted by Castoro Cellars, Mesa Vineyard Management, Inc. The leading vineyard management and development company on California's Central Coast, Mesa Vineyard Management, Inc. are experts on Central Coast farming. Additionally, their participation in statewide organizations provides them with an industry-wide perspective.

Mirroring Castoro Cellars' environmental focus, Mesa Vineyard Management, Inc. is responsible for overseeing daily vineyard operations in all of Castoro's vineyards, as well as maintaining a strong working relationship with Castoro's many growers. "We have very positive relationships with our growers, some of whom we have bought fruit from for over 20 years," says Castoro Winemaker, Tom Myers.

To maintain these mutually beneficial relationships, growers' techniques are monitored through regular visitations and yields and goals for the coming year are discussed. Castoro also initiates an annual growers' meeting at the winery. Castoro provides lunch and the winemaking team hosts a wine tasting to display the grape characteristics desired and how they relate to vineyard practices.

Taking a leadership role in promoting the environmental responsibility of the wine industry, Castoro Cellars and Mesa Vineyard Management, Inc. are both actively involved in the Central Coast Vineyard Team (CCVT). CCVT is a non-profit organization whose mission is to identify and promote the most environmentally safe, viticulturally and economically sustainable farming methods, while maintaining and improving the quality and flavor of wine grapes. It represents a collaborative partnership of growers, wineries, consultants, researchers, and natural resource professionals.

VINEYARD PROFILES

EAST SIDE VINEYARDS

Dos Viñas— *49.5 acres Sauvignon Blanc, 47.3 acres Zinfandel*

Established in early 1980s by the late Paul Hope, this vineyard is located on Cross Canyon Road, four miles east of San Miguel. It is own-rooted (no root stock utilized) and cordon trained on a three wire vertical trellis, and fitted with movable foliage wires to provide the fruit with better light and air exposure. The soil is mostly a silty loam, with some areas of high clay content.

Blind Faith— *20 acres Cabernet Sauvignon, 20 acres Chardonnay, 13 acres Syrah, 8.5 acres Zinfandel, 2.5 acres Pinot Noir, 1.5 acres Chenin Blanc*

Planted circa 1990, this vineyard is located off Hog Canyon Road, adjacent to Hog Heaven Vineyard. This vineyard was named for the blind faith that Bimmer had in Niels when he decided to purchase the vineyard while Bimmer was away in Denmark. Most varieties are own-rooted. This vineyard has the steepest and most varied terrain of all the Castoro holdings. Some of the vineyard is terraced, and varies from hillside to essentially streambed. Soils are very well drained and of low moisture holding capacity. A three wire vertical trellis is employed.

Hog Heaven— *20 acres Cabernet Sauvignon, 25 acres Chardonnay, 2 acres Pinot Noir*

Planted circa 1986, this vineyard is located one mile from the winery, off Hog Canyon Road, and was named for the wild hogs that roam the area. All of the varieties are own-rooted. Cabernet Sauvignon is cane pruned on a vertical trellis with movable foliage catch wires. Chardonnay is cordon/spur pruned on three wires. Generally, the soil is a well-drained, silty loam.

Stone's Throw— *59.4 acres Merlot, 50.6 acres Cabernet Sauvignon, 18 acres Chardonnay, 5.7 acres Petite Sirah, 6.2 acres Viognier, 5.2 acres Cabernet Franc, 9.6 acres Muscat Canelli, 6.6 acres Petit Verdot*

One of the younger Castoro vineyards, these vines were established in 1996 and 1997. The vineyard is contiguous with the winery property on Von Dollen Road, where rolling terrain dominates with a generally silty loam soil. The entire vineyard has been planted on rootstock. This vineyard is currently being transitioned to organic farming, therefore no residual herbicides are used.

WEST SIDE VINEYARDS

Cobble Creek—Home— *5 acres Zinfandel*

This vineyard was established in 1991 on the home property of Niels & Bimmer Udsen, along Bethel Road in Templeton. It is own-rooted and head trained from wood that traces back into the history of Paso Robles Zinfandel. The soil is very shallow and the topsoil is quite high in limestone, broken sedimentary rock and water transported gravels. It is organically grown, head pruned, almost entirely dry farmed, and uses grape pomace as fertilizer.

Cobble Creek—Tasting Room— *8 acres Zinfandel*

Planted circa 1970, this vineyard was a big contributor to Castoro Zinfandel even before the property was purchased in 1994. Surrounding the tasting room, this vineyard is own-rooted and head trained. Although the soil is deeper and richer than the Cobble Creek—Home Vineyard, it is high in limestone and gravel. It is organically grown, using pomace for fertilizer.

Bethel Road— *9 acres Zinfandel-Mendocino Clone, 9 acres Zinfandel-Hambrecht Clone, 11 acres Zinfandel-Primativo Clone, 5 acres Carignane*

The youngest of Castoro's vineyards, these grapes were planted in 2001. It is located on Bethel Road, directly across from the Cobble Creek—Home Vineyard. As of September 2002, this vineyard is in the process of being certified 100% organic. The first crop has an anticipated harvest date of 2003.