



Gary Farrell Winery – Vineyards And Wines Of Distinction

In the wine world, we hear terms like appellation or AVA, but in the Russian River Valley, they refer to their subregions as neighborhoods. When hearing the term neighborhood, there is an immediate sense of distinction, warmth, comfort and friendship. That is exactly what you find in the Russian River Valley; you have a sense of place, pride, and a feeling of community. The Russian River Valley has six neighborhoods. Gary Farrell Winery produces wines in five of these neighborhoods. They produce wines of elegance and distinction, in a community that takes pride in the uniqueness of its neighborhoods.



Gary Farrell Winery

Gary Farrell is an icon in the Russian River Valley, producing his first wine in 1985 with the 1982 Rochioli Vineyard Pinot Noir. Gary was one of the early pioneers, he saw the potential of the Russian River Valley even before it was an AVA. Gary first started making wine in a collaborative facility at Davis Bynum, where several winemakers were just getting their start.

Gary Farrell Winery has been around for decades, specializing in Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. The brand has always been about site-specificity and working with iconic vineyards. Gary's goal was to craft wines that were focused, food-friendly, acid-driven, and with an expressive sense of place. Theresa Heredia, the winemaker at Gary Farrell Winery shares the same passion and philosophy.

Theresa Heredia – Winemaker

Theresa Heredia grew up in Northern California and was a part of the graduate Chemistry program at UC Davis. When attending UC Davis, she was drawn to the

science of viticulture and transferred into the UC Davis Wine Program. Upon graduation, she was hired by Joseph Phelps Winery. She became the winemaker for their Freestone Project and made new wine from the vineyards in 2002. In her 10 years at Joseph Phelps, she gained tremendous knowledge and experience. Theresa garnered respect as an expert in producing cool-climate, small-lot, single-vineyard wines.



In 2012, Theresa came to Gary Farrell Winery. Theresa says it was an amazing opportunity to broaden her experience, where she now works with 36 different vineyards sites from 5 neighborhoods of the Russian River Valley. She was thrilled at the opportunity to learn about the differences between the neighborhoods, and how site-specificity trumps clones and grower techniques. Theresa believes the site's expression of the fruit is more impactful than the clonal selection. She has found that the site will influence the wine more than the clone selection and the same clone tastes distinctly unique depending on its neighborhood and vineyards site.

Theresa says, "my number one goal at Gary Farrell is to respect these amazing vineyards, respect the fruit, and respect the wines in the end." Her preference is to pick slightly on the lower end of the ripeness spectrum and use winemaking techniques that are respectful of the fruit, such as light toast barrels so the oak does not mask the wines.

Exploring The Five Neighborhoods of The Russian River Valley

The Russian River Valley is renowned for its Pinot Noir and Chardonnays with some of the oldest vines in California. Over the last decade, the Russian River Valley winegrowers have paid particular attention to its neighborhoods. Gary Farrell's Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs tell a special story of the five neighborhoods of the Russian River Valley. Elegance, personality and finesse characterize these wines.



Santa Rosa Plains

The Santa Rosa Plains is exactly as the name suggests, flatlands. The area gets very cold at night and into the morning, where the fog and cold settle in, this allows the wines to hold on to their acidity. The soils are primarily made up of clay, shale and sandstone. The Chardonnays tend to have vibrant aromatics with a mineral quality. Citrus and green apple notes dominate the Chardonnays. The Pinot Noirs produced here are expressive and have bright red fruit.

2017 Gary Farrell Olivet Lane Vineyard Chardonnay -The grapes from Olivet Lane Vineyards are an old Wente selection. The wine has great intensity and concentration in addition to the mineral and citrus notes that are characteristic of the neighborhood. This Olivet Lane Chardonnay is European in style, with its freshness and firm acidity. The wine is perfect with food as it has richness and intensity with ripe fruit flavors.

2017 Gary Farrell Martaella Vineyard Pinot Noir – The Martaella Pinot Noir is deep, dark and sexy. The wine can be put down for a couple of years, as it needs time to open and develop its rich succulent fruit. It is dark with firm tannins. For the Burgundy lovers, the Martaella Vineyard is most similar to Nuits-Saint-Georges Pinots. There is plenty of tart purple fruit on the palate with notes of black raspberries, blueberries, huckleberry followed by bay leaves, star and rose. A wine that will only get better with time in the bottle.

Laguna Ridge

Laguna Ridge is located in the heart of the Russian River Valley, between the Santa Rosa Plains and Green Valley. The temperatures are cool but not as cool as the Santa Rosa Plains. The soils are Goldridge and Altamont, which creates lush, high-quality Chardonnays that are opulent with great concentration. The Ritchie Vineyards in Laguna Ridge is an iconic vineyard that is often referred to as the grand cru vineyard of the Russian River Valley.

2017 Gary Farrell Ritchie Vineyard Chardonnay – The fruit from the Ritchie Vineyard Chardonnay is from an old Wente selection. The Chardonnay is rich and opulent with an oily quality. There is a beautiful backbone to the wine, with great texture, concentration, incredible fruit and nice freshness. This is a beautiful Chardonnay that is a classic expression of this iconic vineyard.

Middle Reach

The Middle Reach is the oldest, the northernmost and the warmest of all the neighborhoods. The defining characteristic of the Middle Reach is the Russian River that cuts through the middle. The soil type is gravel and sand. It gets pretty hot, so the wines are richer, riper and more opulent. For the red wines, the tannins are velvety and softer, compared to Green Valley or Sebastopol.

2017 Gary Farrell Rochioli Vineyard Chardonnay – The Rochioli Vineyard is adjacent to the Russian River, where the fog cools the area. The wine is lush with riper fruit than the previous three Chardonnays. Notes of lemon, apple, honeysuckle and vanilla. A more powerful Chardonnay with juicy acidity and a long lingering finish from a spectacular vineyard site.

2017 Gary Farrell Bacigalupi Vineyard Pinot Noir – The Bacigalupi is a wonderful and rare wine made only in small quantities. It is succulent and juicy and velvety. The Bacigalupi Pinot is earthy with ripe cherries, strawberries, roses and violet. It is easy to drink and fruit-forward.

Green Valley

Green Valley is the most widely known of the neighborhoods since it is also an official AVA. Here the Goldridge soil yields Pinot Noir with ripe tannins, high acids, and luxurious mouth-feel. With its proximity to the Pacific Ocean, Green Valley benefits from cool marine influences. The wines are concentrated, earthy and have silky tannins.

2017 Gary Farrell Hallberg Vineyard Pinot Noir – The Hallberg Pinot Noir has blackberry, black cherries, plum and violet notes. Earthy elements of mushroom and tobacco come through on the palate. An intense and long finish leaves a memorable impression.

Sebastopol Hills

Sebastopol Hills is the coolest sub-region of the Russian River Valley. Its soil type is mostly Goldridge. The marine influences, fog and wind make for lower yields, delivering wines that are more concentrated and structured. The cool climate develops bright acidity which allows for whole cluster fermentation.

2017 Gary Farrell McDonald Mtn. Vineyard Pinot Noir – The McDonald Mountain Pinot Noir is a great wine for acid lovers. A clean and fresh wine that is focused and precise. Fresh fruit notes of strawberry and cranberry follow with exotic spice, cloves and tobacco. An impressive wine with elegance and style.