



SIGNORELLO

E S T A T E

THE STORY OF THE VINE

It was a 10-acre plot of Chardonnay vines that sparked a passion, romanticism and dedication to the land that is home to Signorello Estate. Sitting atop a hill, overlooking the Silverado Trail, a Mediterranean-style winery stands and tells a history of a family tradition that started with this first planting in the 1980's.

Before founding Signorello Estate in 1977, Ray Signorello, Sr. was first and foremost a businessman. A native San Franciscan, he moved to Vancouver to pursue business in the oil and gas industry and raise a family with his wife, Hope. With a long appreciation for good food and wine, Ray Signorello, Sr. was always attracted to Napa Valley by the art of winemaking, the working of the land and the lifestyle of California wine country. Although he was well established in Vancouver, California was never far from his mind. A desire to retire back in Northern California guided Ray Sr. to Napa Valley where he purchased one-hundred acres of land on the Silverado Trail that was the former home for retired race horses.

With little knowledge of the craft, it was his long appreciation for wine and the art of its creation that led Ray Sr. to plant the first Chardonnay vines. After several years of selling grapes to acclaimed wineries such as Cakebread and Caymus, Ray Signorello, Sr. decided to crush and bottle his own since his grapes were among Napa's finest. Under the guidance of some of Napa's most acclaimed winemakers and with his son Ray Signorello, Jr. by his side, Signorello Estate became a fully functioning winery.

The year 1986 saw the building of the winery that still stands on the property and an expansion in wine production. By the end of the 1980's the Signorello family was thoroughly committed to making wine, growing grapes and mastering the French Burgundy style of winemaking known as vigneron. This style involves the winemaker on all stages - from the careful harvesting of the grapes, to the blending and bottling of the wine. This "hands-on" method is one of the most important tenets of Signorello Estate.

As the wine country lifestyle continued to grow, the 1990's saw the first planting of red varieties Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Syrah. These varieties put Signorello Estate on the map as the Cabernet Sauvignon received shining reviews from wine industry leaders such as Robert Parker. Father and son continued to work side by side with Ray Sr. as the ambassador of the wines and Ray Jr. as head of to day-to-day operations. Ray Jr. became the sole proprietor and head winemaker at the vineyard following his father's passing in 1998.

Today, with more than 50 planted acres, Signorello Estate continues to honor the history of the land, traditions of old-world winemaking and passion of its founder. With almost 30 years of history, Signorello Estate maintains its reputation as a producer of excellent, single estate wines that are distinctly Napa Valley.

Visit the winery and you will find the original 10-acre plot of Chardonnay, reminiscent of the vineyards' early days and whose grapes are used in the estate Chardonnay Vieilles Vignes or "old vines". Tall oak trees still run the length of the drive up to the winery where a welcoming staff awaits to tell the story of the winery with specials tours, tastings and interactive culinary arts classes. While visiting the winery, you might find Ray Signorello, Jr. and winemaker Pierre Birebent, a sixth generation winemaker, continuing the art of the craft and never losing touch with the passion for good wine – values instilled since the early days of Signorello Estate.



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OUR VINEYARDS

AN UNCOMPROMISING DEDICATION

The rigorous vineyard program begins with the soil. The Chardonnay vineyards are now more than two decades old; they were planted on rocky, foot hills and the sandy loam valley floor. The red varieties - Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot - are all planted in shallow soil on the rocky hillside; one vineyard benefits from an eastern exposure, the other a western creating widely diverse fruit that help make our wines more complex and balanced. The fruit for the Pinot Noir comes from the Carneros appellation in the cooler Southern part of the Napa Valley better suited for growing this varietal.

Throughout the growing season, the vines are carefully monitored. Shoot positioning and leaf thinning done in June keeps foliage up and away from the fruit. This provides the proper ratio of sun to clusters, insuring ripeness at harvest. The vines are primarily dry farmed, watered only when necessary during the summer months in order to keep the plants healthy. Cluster thinning reduces the overall tonnage to 2 - 3 tons per acre (half the normal average). This is done to concentrate flavor and complexity.

The decision to harvest is based on testing for pH and sugar balance, and most importantly, actually tasting for ripe flavors. The house-style requires ripe fruit, usually picked at 25 and 26 Brix. The grapes are night harvested by hand and sorted early in the cool mornings between 7-10 A.M. The fruit is hand picked into 30 pound trays so that it will not be crushed under its own weight, then sorted twice to insure only quality grapes are fermented. Within an hour after picking, the white grapes are gently whole cluster pressed to minimize skin contact, which reduces the harsh phenolics. The red varieties are de-stemmed and lightly crushed so that 20-30% of the whole cluster berries remain intact. After de-stemming, grapes are sorted a third time for absolute assurance of quality.



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RAY SIGNORELLO, JR. BIOGRAPHY

One of the wine industry's young mavericks, Ray Signorello is a true wine entrepreneur. He is directing the winemaking at his own Signorello Estate in Napa Valley; holding partnerships in Edge Wines and Fuse Wines, Napa Valley; distributing wines in Canada through his Seacove California Selections venture; providing consulting services with his eponymous full-service wine consulting business; and paving new roads for winemaking destinations. Ray's commitment to the best quality grapes and labor intensive vineyard and winemaking practices are core principals that permeate all of his endeavors.

Born in San Francisco, Ray moved to Vancouver at a very young age where his father worked in the oil and gas business. His parents longed for California and in 1977 purchased an estate on the Silverado Trail in Napa, now known as Signorello Estate. The property, formerly a race horse retirement home, was virgin to grapes until Ray's father began to plant Chardonnay vineyards. The Signorellos were soon in the wine business selling their grapes to Caymus, Cakebread and Cuvaision. After a few years, the Signorello family decided it was time to make their own wines since the quality of their grapes were among Napa's finest.

After graduating from University of British Columbia in 1988, Ray began to spend time in Napa and dedicated himself to wine education and training; eventually becoming manager of winery operations. Ray has been fortunate to learn winemaking from a number of Napa's top winemakers including Steve Devitt, previous winemaker for Signorello and now with neighboring Darioush winery.

"Like all serious vintners - for whom winemaking is as much a higher calling as it is a profession - I have dedicated as much time to the craft and aesthetics of winemaking as I have to the science of it. Ultimately, the wine business demands a combination of science and personality," says Ray. Today, Ray is a dedicated vintner and winemaker at Signorello Estate, producing quality grapes and wines from their property in Napa Valley. Under Ray's supervision, The Signorello Estate produces Chardonnay, Semillon, Sauvignon Blanc, Syrah, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, and Cabernet Sauvignon. The winery also produces Pinot Noir and Zinfandel obtained from purchased grapes in Napa. Signorello Estate proprietary wines include Seta, a Semillon/Sauvignon Blanc blend, and Padrone, a Cabernet Sauvignon based blend.

Ray travels frequently between Vancouver and Napa and to important wine markets around the U.S. promoting Signorello Estate.

Ray's Canadian distribution company, Seacove California Selections, specializes in representing the finest California wineries for British Columbia and Alberta. His philosophy is to build a portfolio that represents family-owned wineries that are not only friends, but people he personally respects for their own dedication to making high-quality California wines. He continues to pursue wineries that not only reflect quality but also offer relative value at any price. Ray distinguishes his portfolio by saying "We do not represent brands; we represent family-owned estates that share my personal passion for the artisanship of making great wines."

The Seacove Group has been doing business in British Columbia and Alberta for 15 years and is committed to providing great, personalized service with Ray's team of highly dynamic and knowledgeable staff dedicated to providing expertise in California wines.

Ray also lends his wine savvy to Edge Wines and Fuse Wines, where he is a partner in both. Produced with quality Napa Valley grapes, Edge was founded by Ray and three long-time friends to provide customers with a high quality Cabernet at a reasonable price. Blended and bottled with meticulous care, Edge is a wine that consumers can enjoy directly from the shelf or after several years of aging. Like Edge, Fuse was also founded by Ray and some of his closest friends and strives to produce a high quality Napa Valley Cabernet using fruit from some of the best vineyards in the valley.

Beyond professional commitments that fill up most of the calendar year, Ray takes annual pilgrimages to Burgundy and Tuscany, two places of great influence to his personal palette and winemaking experience.

For more information on Ray's companies, please visit their respective websites:

www.signorelloestate.com

www.seacovecalifornia.com

www.edgewines.com

www.fusewine.com



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PIERRE BIREBENT BIOGRAPHY

Pierre Birebent is a sixth generation winegrower. He grew up on the family vineyard in Corsica, France. Pierre studied viticulture and enology in Macon, Burgundy. In 1985, he moved to California to continue his employment in winemaking. He worked for Costello Vineyards as wine maker from 1992-1993 and 1995-1997 and as vineyard manager for Stag's Leap Winery from 1994-1995 and Kuleto Estate from 1997-1998.

Pierre has been Vineyard Manager and Winemaker for Signorello Estate since 1998. His dedication, hard work, knowledge and passion for wine is a key component in the quality wines that are produced here at Signorello Estate. He is the proud father of son Paul, 9, and daughter Isabelle, 7.



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WINERY ADDRESS: **Signorello Estate**
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Napa, CA 94558

WEBSITE: www.signorelloestate.com

TELEPHONE: (707) 255-5990

FAX: (707) 255-5999

**PROPRIETOR &
HEAD WINEMAKER:** Ray Signorello, Jr.
ray@signorelloestate.com

WINEMAKER: Pierre Birebent
pierre@signorelloestate.com

SALES: Michael Updegraff
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ADMINISTRATIVE: Steve Polinski
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HOSPITALITY: Kathy Wood
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Nicole Kuhn
Hospitality
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MARKETING: Ryan Shenk
Director of Marketing
ryan@signorelloestate.com

TOURS & TASTINGS: Tasting Room hours are as follows:
Monday – Thursday, Enoteca Signorello tastings by Prior Appointment Only
Friday – Sunday, open 10:30am – 5:00pm
Private Food & Wine Pairings daily by Prior Appointment at 11:00am and 2:30pm

WINES PRODUCED: Chardonnay Vieilles Vignes, a Signorello Estate wine
Cabernet Sauvignon, a Signorello Estate wine
Seta – proprietary blend 60% Semillon, 40% Sauvignon Blanc, a Signorello Estate wine
Padrone – Cabernet based Bordeaux blend, a Signorello Estate wine
Pinot Noir - Las Amigas Vineyard, Carneros
Zinfandel - Luvisi Vineyard, Calistoga

ACREAGE: Approximately 100 acres

22 Cabernet Sauvignon
7 Merlot
5 Chardonnay
3 Cabernet Franc
2 Semillon
2 Syrah
1 Sauvignon Blanc
1 Viognier

GROWING REGION: Low 2

SOIL TYPE: Shallow hillside clay and valley floor sandy loam

WINEMAKING PHILOSOPHY

Signorello Estate is focused on elegance, balance and depth in its signature wines, creating a distinguished product that has early accessibility as well as the potential to develop additional complexity as it matures.

In order to provide the most complete product, Signorello Estate employs the “Vigneron” method, a style utilized for winemaking in the Burgundy region of France. This method is at the core of the Signorello Estate philosophy: The winemaker is at the heart of the wine – taking part in each step from the careful selection of the grapes to the blending of the wine.

SIGNORELLO ESTATE AT A GLANCE

- ☞ Cabernet, Chardonnay, Seta and Padrone are entirely estate grown
- ☞ Wines are all estate crushed, fermented and bottled
- ☞ Bought property in 1977; virgin ground never planted to grapes
- ☞ Grapes first planted in 1980
- ☞ Vine age ranges between 14 to 30+
- ☞ Low yields range between 1.5 – 2.8 tons per acre
- ☞ Grapes are hand picked into 30 lb. trays
- ☞ Signorello Estate hand sorts the grapes three times
- ☞ Signorello Estate wines are fermented entirely in French Oak barrels
- ☞ Cabernet, Pinot Noir, Syrah and Zinfandel are unfiltered
- ☞ All wines are fermented with native yeasts
- ☞ Very rocky dense hillside property is sustainably farmed to protect precious top soils and reduce need for invasive agricultural practices

OUR NEIGHBORING VINEYARDS

Chimney Rock, Cliff Lede, Clos du Val, Darioush, Pine Ridge, Regusci, Ristow and Shafer