



# GENCO GAZETTE

March 2022

**MARCH MEETING: WEDNESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> VIA ZOOM**

**Gio Balistreri – Russian River Vineyards**

Zoom information will be e-mailed to members

**APRIL MEETING: WEDNESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup>**

**Malbec deep dive**

1402 University St. Healdsburg – downstairs in Gruenhagen Hall

**FEBRUARY 23<sup>rd</sup> zoom meeting:**

**John Rodrigues– Home Wine Lab**

John discussed how home winemakers can improve quality and consistency of their wine by testing at critical stages. Testing shortly after crush is important to determine if adjustments should be made, or the need for yeast nutrients. Further testing should be done following fermentation and MLF to accurately determine if pH, TA, RS, and alcohol are in a favorable range, allowing you to make minor adjustments. And testing just before bottling allows you to dial in acid, and SO<sub>2</sub> levels.

John provides free advice to those who use his services, and offered a 10% discount to GENCO members on testing with the Home Wine Lab.

[www.homewinelab.com](http://www.homewinelab.com)

**MARCH 23, 2021 – 6:45 PM Via Zoom**

**Featured speaker: Gio Balistreri – Russian River Vineyards**

Giovanni “Gio” Balistreri is a product of four generations of Sonoma County farmers. Gio was seven years old when he went to work on his family’s dairy farm.

By the time Gio was set to leave for college, he already had ten years of practical farming experience. But Gio’s father Jack Balistreri had realized the potential of the family farm for growing wine grapes. So Gio and his father planted four acres of Pinot Noir grapes in Freestone, CA. With his first wine harvest already pending, Gio attended Fresno State University, where he majored in Agricultural business with concentrations in Winery Management, Wine Marketing, & Wine sales.



In 2008, Gio was tapped by legendary winemaker Anthony Austin to join a team that acquired Russian River Vineyards. Under Anthony’s tutelage, Gio learned the “light touch” approach to winemaking that has become a hallmark of Russian River Vineyards. Since then, Russian River Vineyards wines have won more than 200 medals, 75 of them gold.

Gio took the helm as RRV’s winemaker in 2012. The result has been a steady stream of remarkable wines. In 2014, Gio received the “Best Winemaker” award in the North of the Gate Wine Competition. In 2016, he won the “Best Red Wine in Sonoma County” award at the Sonoma County Harvest Fair. In early 2019, the North Bay Biz Magazine reader’s poll named Russian River Vineyards estate-grown Pinot as the “Best Pinot Noir”. This year, RRV wines have already won at least one gold medal in five different competitions.

Gio has arranged for us to buy 2 wines to try during his presentation. He’s recommended his Classic Cuvee Pinot Noir, and a stainless-steel Chardonnay, both from the RRV appellation, at a 30% discount. I’ve asked him to take us through the winemaking process for each of the wines, and then describe the wines from his perspective. So, this should be rather informative.

If you would like to participate in this portion of the presentation, I’ll need to know by **Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup>** so I can purchase the wine and get them distributed. The **estimated cost is \$69.00** for the two wines.

You can **call me: 707-827-3399** or **text me: 707-548-4983** or **email me: [brucehagen7850@comcast.net](mailto:brucehagen7850@comcast.net)**.

