



MARSTON FAMILY VINEYARD, LLC

Winemaking

A brief history of wine making at Marston Family Vineyard

The original vineyards at Marston Family Vineyard dated back to the late 1800s, and were planted by horse and plough. Through the early years the vineyard would eventually lay claim to eleven different varietals, including Johannesburg Riesling, Pinot Blanc, Petite Sirah, Zinfandel, and Cabernet Sauvignon. It was immediately evident to the early settlers that grapes and a variety of orchards (apricot, prune, and walnut) would thrive among the natural wilderness of the ranch.

In more recent times of the early 1980's, the Marston Family worked alongside Philip Togni and the late Andre Tchelistcheff to craft small quantities of Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Rhone and Zinfandel. Winemaking techniques at the time represented much more than the finished product; it was the era when the "Wild West" began implementing its blend between traditional Old World methods and New World experiments. Classic, acid-driven wines were complemented with modern cellar techniques that would later come to define the now, quintessential Napa Valley style.

Wine luminary Sean Thackery who produces legendary Petite Sirahs under his Sirius label – notably won "Best Red Wine in the World" with our old vine Petite Sirah in 1993.

The early 1990s began a new chapter for the family when we began replanting certain blocks of the vineyard, and in 1998 we released the first vintage under the current label with winemaker, Philippe Melka. After twelve remarkable years under the tutelage of Philippe and his wonderful team, the 2010 vintage marks an exciting transition to winemaker, Marbue Marke. Continuing in the tradition of excellence, represented by crafting wine that is a balanced expression of our unique Spring Mountain vineyard, Marbue is the perfect complement to the history and future of Marston Family Vineyard.

Marbue Marke

Marbue Marke's long experience in the wine industry continues to take Marston Family Vineyard to the next level. The family is delighted to be working closely with Marbue as a central member of our team. Marbue is continuing our previous winemaker, Philippe Melka's, tradition of excellence, attention to detail, and the focus on crafting elegant wine that truly reflects the unique terroir of our special place on the most southern slopes of Spring Mountain, above the Napa Valley.

Philippe Melka

Bringing new meaning to the phrase “down to earth”, Philippe Melka, quickly built his considerable talents and reputation from, shall we say, the ground up.

When Philippe Melka obtained his geology degree, his research was with an emphasis on soils and their relationship to viticulture. He went from Petrus in Bordeaux to Dominus in the Napa Valley. Lightly applying his skill, experience, and insight, he nudges each wine to accurately and enthusiastically reflect Marston Family Vineyard’s unique terroir. Philippe favors hillside wines, which “are a little wild; they need to be civilized.” But when they are, they are wonderful.

André Tchelistcheff

André Tchelistcheff was America’s most influential post-Prohibition winemaker. Tchelistcheff is most notable for his contributions toward defining the style of California’s best wines, especially Cabernet Sauvignon. Called the “dean of American winemakers”, industry giants such as Robert Mondavi and Louis Martini considered him their mentor.