

Bridge Street Social

March '26 WINE FAM

Happy Spring Fam!

Sorry for the bit of a delay this month! We ran into shipping issues with the Jolie-Laide wine as there was a shipping hold from California.

We head to Sonoma County this month.

Sonoma County is one of California's most diverse and dynamic wine regions, stretching from the cool, fog-laced Pacific Coast to the warm, sunlit valleys framed by the Mayacamas and Sonoma Mountains. Home to 19 distinct AVAs and more than 60 grape varieties, the county's patchwork of microclimates and soils supports everything from benchmark Pinot Noir and Chardonnay to structured Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon and aromatic whites. This breadth of terroir—shaped by coastal influence, elevation shifts, and varied geology—gives Sonoma wines their signature balance, expressiveness, and sense of place. We bring a zinfandel from the iconic Ridge Vineyards along with a stunning cabernet sauvignon from Dry Creek, a lovely Chardonnay, and a little curveball in a gamay from one of our favorite producers, Jolie-Laide.

Next month marks 10 years for us at BSS! Stay tuned for announcements about special events we will be hosting all month long!

Cheers!

Mike Luther
owner/executive chef

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Walter Hansel Winery – Russian River Valley, Sonoma

Estate Chardonnay (2022) 100% Chardonnay

There's a quiet confidence to the wines of Walter Hansel, a family estate that has spent decades refining a Burgundian-inspired vision in the southern Russian River Valley. What began in the 1970s as Walter Hansel's personal experiment with Chardonnay has evolved—under the thoughtful hand of his son, Stephen—into one of Sonoma's most respected small estates. The philosophy has never wavered: meticulous farming, restrained winemaking, and an unwavering belief that great Chardonnay should speak clearly of its place. Sourced from estate vineyards just south of Santa Rosa, the 2022 Estate Chardonnay reflects a vintage of bright fruit, clarity, and balance. Fermented and aged with a gentle touch of French oak, it captures the Russian River Valley's signature interplay of coastal fog, warm afternoons, and deep, well-drained soils.

In the Glass. The aromatics rise with richness and lift: golden apple, ripe peach, apricot, and tangerine peel, layered with subtle notes of chamomile, mint, lemon zest, and a faint crushed-stone minerality.

On the Palate. Medium to full-bodied and beautifully textured, the wine offers creamy stone-fruit depth balanced by bright, refreshing acidity. The 2022 vintage brings a slightly lighter mid-palate, but the wine remains harmonious, open-knit, and precise, with gentle oak spice and a touch of nuttiness adding quiet complexity.

The Finish. Long, warm, and quietly powerful, the finish lingers with notes of honey-nut, citrus oil, and spice, anchored by a clean mineral edge that keeps everything focused and elegant.

Why We Love It. We're drawn to wines that tell a story, and this one speaks of family, patience, and place. It reflects a producer who has spent decades honing a style, a vineyard that thrives in the cool Russian River fog, and a vintage that marries ripeness with lift.

Pairing at the Table. Roast chicken with lemon and thyme. Seared scallops with brown butter and herbs. Mushroom risotto. Soft-ripened cheeses like Brie. Versatile, expressive, and built for the kind of food we love to cook.

Enjoy. Drink now for its freshness and purity, or give it a couple of years to deepen and unfold. Either way, it's a wine that captures the spirit of the Russian River Valley—and we're thrilled to share it with you.

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Blacksmith Cellars – Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma County

Cabernet Sauvignon (2019)

There's a certain honesty to the wines of Blacksmith Cellars—small-lot, hands-on, and crafted with the kind of focus that comes from working vineyard by vineyard, grower by grower. Founded in 2001, Blacksmith has always championed California's overlooked corners and quietly exceptional sites. Dry Creek Valley is one of them. Known more for Zinfandel than Cabernet, the valley's rocky eastern hillsides produce reds of surprising finesse and structure, and the 2019 vintage captures that balance beautifully. This bottling blends 90% Cabernet Sauvignon and 10% Merlot.

In the Glass. The aromatics rise with depth and clarity: black cherry, cassis, and blackberry compote, followed by cedar, graphite, and dried sage. A subtle note of tobacco leaf and warm spice adds dimension, while a faint rocky, mineral edge hints at the vineyard's hillside origins.

On the Palate. Medium-plus to full-bodied, the wine shows dark-fruit concentration shaped by Bordeaux-like structure—refined tannins, savory complexity, and a sense of lift that keeps everything in balance. The Merlot component softens the mid-palate just enough, adding a touch of plushness to the otherwise focused, linear frame. There's a quiet elegance here: power without excess, ripeness without sweetness.

The Finish. Long, structured, and gently savory, the finish carries notes of cocoa, blackcurrant, bay leaf, and crushed stone. The tannins are firm but polished, tapering into a clean, mineral-driven close that speaks clearly of Dry Creek Valley's cooler, more restrained Cabernet style. This is Cabernet built on precision rather than opulence—more hillside than valley floor, more earth and herb than oak and gloss. A wine with presence.

Why We Love It. It's a bottle that tells a story: a region better known for Zinfandel revealing its quieter strengths; a winemaker committed to small-lot craftsmanship; a vintage that marries concentration with freshness. It's thoughtful, expressive, and deeply rooted in place—exactly the kind of wine that sparks conversation at the table.

Pairing at the Table. Grilled ribeye with rosemary and charred onions. Braised short ribs with porcini. Herb-crusted lamb. Aged cheddar or clothbound Gouda. This Cabernet's structure and savory edge make it a natural partner for the hearty, soulful dishes we love to cook.

Enjoy. Drink now with a short decant to let the aromatics unfurl, or hold for 3–6 years as the tannins knit and the savory notes deepen. Either way, it's a bottle that captures the refined, quietly powerful side of Dry Creek Valley Cabernet.

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Jolie-Laide - Sonoma County

Gamay (2024)

There's a certain magic to Jolie-Laide—wines made with a light hand, a curious mind, and a deep respect for the vineyards that shape them. Winemaker Scott Schultz has built a cult following by championing varieties that thrive on nuance rather than power, and Gamay is one of his most compelling canvases.

In the Glass. The aromatics rise with clarity and charm: wild strawberry, cranberry, and pomegranate, followed by rose petal, white pepper, and fresh thyme. A subtle note of wet stone and citrus peel adds tension and brightness. It's the kind of nose that feels alive—pure fruit, gentle spice, and a whisper of earth.

On the Palate. Light to medium-bodied yet wonderfully expressive, the wine glides across the palate with crunchy red fruit, bright acidity, and a silky, whole-cluster-driven spice. There's a fine herbal thread that adds dimension without overshadowing the fruit. The texture is supple but energetic, the kind of balance that makes the next sip feel inevitable.

The Finish. Long, lifted, and quietly persistent, the finish carries notes of red currant, peppercorn, and crushed granite. The tannins are feather-light yet purposeful, tapering into a mineral-driven close that keeps everything refreshing and precise. This is Gamay built on transparency rather than weight—more alpine freshness than California sunshine, more nuance than density. A wine with presence.

Why We Love It. It's a bottle that speaks to craft and curiosity. Jolie-Laide has a gift for capturing the soulful side of California's cooler sites, and this Gamay is a perfect example: expressive fruit, lifted aromatics, and a winemaking style that celebrates delicacy. It's the kind of wine that sparks conversation, invites exploration, and rewards a thoughtful palate.

Pairing at the Table. Charcuterie with cornichons and mustard. Roast chicken with herbs. Grilled salmon with citrus and fennel. Mushroom tart. This Gamay's brightness and spice make it one of the most versatile food wines on the table.

Enjoy. Drink now for its vibrancy and aromatic lift, or hold for 2-4 years as the savory notes deepen. Either way, it's a bottle that captures the spirit of Jolie-Laide—beautiful, distinctive, and quietly captivating.

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Ridge Vineyards – Sonoma County, California

Pagani Ranch Zinfandel (2021)

There's a quiet gravity to Pagani Ranch, one of Sonoma Valley's most storied vineyards, planted in the late 1800s and still tended by the Pagani family today. Ridge has long been one of its most thoughtful interpreters, honoring the old vines, the mixed plantings, and the field-blend heritage that define this historic site. This bottling is predominantly Zinfandel, supported by Alicante Bouschet, Petite Sirah, and other heritage varieties woven naturally into the vineyard.

In the Glass. The aromatics rise with dark, old-vine intensity: blackberry, boysenberry, and dark cherry, layered with anise, clove, cracked pepper, and a touch of violet and warm earth. A subtle bramble note hints at the vineyard's age and character.

On the Palate. Full-bodied yet beautifully balanced, the wine delivers lush dark fruit, vibrant acidity, and polished, confident tannins. The field-blend components bring savory depth—licorice, cocoa, blue fruit—while the Zinfandel core stays focused and energetic. It's powerful, but never loud; generous, but never sweet.

The Finish. Long, warm, and quietly commanding, the finish has notes of black plum, baking spice, and dusty minerality. The tannins taper with grace, leaving a lingering echo of fruit and spice that speaks to both the vineyard's heritage. This is Zinfandel built on structure rather than sweetness, more old-vine gravitas than jammy exuberance.

Why We Love It. It's a bottle that tells a story: a legendary vineyard, a producer known for clarity and restraint, and a vintage that marries richness with lift. It's soulful, expressive, and deeply rooted in place—exactly the kind of wine that sparks conversation at the table.

Pairing at the Table. Smoked pork shoulder. Grilled fennel sausage. Tomato-braised short ribs. Aged Gouda or dry Jack. This Zinfandel's depth and spice make it a natural partner for bold, savory dishes.

Enjoy. Drink now with a brief decant, or hold for 5–8 years as the tannins soften and the savory notes deepen. Either way, it's a bottle that captures the enduring spirit of Pagani Ranch—historic, expressive, unmistakably Ridge.