

PALMINA

2007 Tocai Friulano, Honea Vineyard Santa Ynez Valley



Tocai Friulano is an immensely popular wine in the Friuli region of Italy and its history goes back at least as far as the late 1700's. Named, obviously, for the region, this grape should not be confused with the Tokaji of Hungary or Tokai of the Alsace, as it is a light, fruit-laden, floral white grape native to Friuli. However, the governing European Union has ruled that Italians will need to drop the name "Tocai" and call the resulting wine simply "Friulano" to avoid confusion in the marketplace. This ruling does not yet apply to wines crafted from this beautiful grape that are not made or exported from Italy. But whatever you call it, "Friulano" is a thoroughly enjoyable wine and a hallmark of Palmina's white wine portfolio.

The grapes for this wine hail from the Honea Vineyard, located in the midst of "the Alamo Pintado Corridor" in the Santa Ynez Valley. Planted exclusively to Italian varietals and solely for Palmina, the Honea Vineyard enjoys a terroir almost picture-perfect for this hardy grape. Easy-draining gravelly, alluvial soils and early morning maritime fogs, sunny afternoons and cool to cold evenings provide an environment that allows perfect ripening without any loss of lively acidity. The long clusters and dusky green-gold berries of Tocai Friulano resemble Sauvignon Blanc, and indeed this Italian grape is related to Sauvignon Vert and Sauvignonosse, all of which shine in a growing region with

warm days and cool nights. Farmed and harvested by hand, the grapes are whole cluster pressed to stainless steel tanks just a few short hours after being picked. A long, cool fermentation under controlled temperatures is designed to capture the pure essence of the grape – astounding aromatics, beautiful balance and an elegant fruit profile. Malolactic fermentation was inhibited to showcase the classic and pure notes of the Tocai Friulano varietal. The wine was bottled in the early Spring of 2008.

A pastel yellow, spun gold color first beckons – like that first morning sunshine in a white room. A subtle bouquet of almond blossom and the first springtime perfume from a mimosa acacia tree mingle with pear and a hint of exotic sandalwood. Delicate, fresh and inviting, a first sip unveils notes of fuji apple, restrained spicy tangs of fennel and French tarragon and just ripe d'anjou pear. Beautifully balanced with élan – elegant, refined, and yet full of verve and personality, this wine finishes with lingering notes of bitter almond.

Tocai Friulano is at ease both in a rustic café or frasca or as a wine at an elegant dinner in a white-table cloth restaurant. Its versatility allows it to be paired with a wide variety of foods – spicy, hearty, savory – and is the only wine that pairs with asparagus! Serve chilled, and in its youth. One of our favorite recipes to complement the 2007 Tocai Friulano is Steve's Asparagus Risotto. Our Wine Club selection is Asparagus and Egg with Pecorino Romano. (Recipes are available on our website.) Enjoy!

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