

PALMINA

2009 Tocai Friulano Honea Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley



As Shakespeare so eloquently posed the question; *“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.”* The same could be said of the wine now known as Friulano in the European Union and the traditional Tocai Friulano name here in the United States. Known in Italy for centuries as Tocai Friulano, the name was changed to Friulano in 2008 by decree of the EU courts. Here in the United States, it must be called Tocai Friulano (since “Friulano” is not an approved grape name by our governing authorities). Politics and government regulations aside, “Tocai” is the same enchanting wine no matter what the name!

Tocai Friulano is the quintessential Friulian wine. There is a reason that this is one of the most planted varietals in the Veneto, as this expressive grape rivals many of those white varietals considered to be noble grapes. When grown in the right place, Tocai Friulano produces sharply-etched wines of exceptional character and quality. The Honea Vineyard, planted entirely to Italian winegrapes exclusively for Palmina is such a place. The maritime influence from the nearby Pacific Ocean and the gravelly, alluvial soils provide a near perfect environment for producing Tocai Friulano grapes of distinction. The grapes were harvested at dawn, and delivered to the winery in the early hours of the morning. To preserve the floral and fruit profile, the grapes were whole cluster pressed to stainless steel, where a long, cool fermentation occurred. This method of vinification resulted in an aromatic, elegant wine that is a classic, Italian version of Tocai.

A very pale yellow color with almost clear edges glints with brilliance in the glass. A swirl produces a fresh minerality reminiscent of the nearby sea and acacia mingling with pear blossom. On the palate, the wine is light and lively, bringing zesty notes of green apple, pear and quince to the taste buds on a smooth slipstream of silky texture. Medium bodied, the wine displays an intriguing yin-yang of texture – both a pleasant oily viscosity and a sharp, tangy crispness. The finish is lingering, with classical notes of almond and a hint of spice.

In Italy, Tocai Friulano is ever-present, served in both rustic frascas and elegant ristoranti, as an aperitif and with the meal. The 2009 Palmina Tocai Friulano has the same versatile characteristics, and can be enjoyed on its own, or with a variety of foods. Serve the wine chilled and in its youth, alongside your favorite asparagus dish (trust me!). It is also a gorgeous wine to enjoy simply with a plate of prosciutto!

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