

PALMINA

2005 Tocai Friulano Honea Vineyard, Santa Ynez Valley



Tocai Friulano is the quintessential Friulian wine. There is a reason that this is one of the most planted varieties in the Veneto, as this expressive grape rivals many of those white varieties considered to be noble grapes. When grown in the right place, Tocai Friulano produces sharply-etched wines of exceptional character and quality. The dusky green-gold berries and long clusters resemble Sauvignon, and indeed Tocai Friulano is thought to be in the same family as Sauvignonnoisse or Sauvignon Vert.

This is the first vintage of Tocai Friulano from the Honea Vineyard, which was planted in 2003 specifically for Palmina. The vineyard is located in the “Alamo Pintado Corridor”, an area quickly becoming known for the quality of Italian varieties grown there. 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 light gold with greenish hues, like that of newly mown straw, invites you to the glass. Aromas of kiwi and camphor leaf lead to a bouquet of exotic citrus and wildflowers. A first sip reveals classic notes of lemon curd, allspice, white peaches and ripe white plums, followed by nuances of mace and a finish replete with raw almond and a hint of honeycomb. The mouthfeel of the wine is complex and intriguing, with a vibrant acidity on the front of the palate, followed by a creaminess across the mid-palate and a firm, lingering finish surrounded by a pleasant dryness from the soft tannins. The 2005 Tocai Friulano is a crisp, refreshingly pristine wine.

Pleasant on its own as an aperitif, the wine is a glorious food wine complementing a wide range of dishes, but particularly with imported Italian prosciutto and asparagus dishes. Yes, asparagus. Trust me! Our featured recipe, *Grissini with Prosciutto and Rafano*, is courtesy of Chef Lachlan of Frasca Wine and Food in Boulder, Colorado.