

PALMINA

2008 Tocai Friulano, Honea Vineyard Santa Ynez Valley

We must start out these notes with a humorous (yet frustrating!) story. In 2007, the European Union determined that there might be confusion between the delicate and fragrant Tocai Friulano of Italy's Friuli region and Tokaji dessert wine from Hungary and ruled that the name of Tocai Friulano would need to change. The producers in Italy reluctantly agreed to rename their wine "Friulano", and in an attempt at solidarity with their compatriots in Piemonte, Palmina decided to also call their 2008 release Friulano. However, upon submitting the label for approval to U.S. federal regulators, this new label was declined. "Friulano" is not approved as a grape name here in the United States, and so this innocent bystander of a gorgeous white wine is a victim of bureaucracy at its highest level. And so, we introduce to you the 2008 Palmina Tocai Friulano, aka Friulano.

This is the fourth vintage of Tocai Friulano from the Honea Vineyard, planted entirely to Italian varietals for Palmina. The vineyard enjoys a climate similar to the Friuli region of Italy, the home base and epicenter for this character-lade wine. Fog rolls in each morning from the Pacific Ocean, chased away midday by warm desert air rolling over the San Rafael Mountains to the east, providing warm and sun-filled days for ripening. At night, temperatures drop rather drastically, preserving the natural acidity and zestiness in the grape cluster.

After the greenish-gold clusters are harvested in the early hours of the morning, the grapes are whisked to the winery where they are whole-cluster pressed to cold stainless steel. Kept under cold temperatures throughout the entire, lengthy fermentation period to retain the pure essence of the grape, the resulting wine retains the natural acidity, bouquet and flavor profile that makes this such an enjoyable wine. To showcase the varietal profile of Tocai Friulano, malo-lactic fermentation is inhibited, and the wine is bottled and released in the springtime following harvest.



The 2008 release of Palmina Tocai Friulano is a bit crisper and yet a bit rounder on the palate. Picked earlier than in the past, the wine shines forth with a light, spun straw color with light chartreuse highlights glinting from the glass. A "briny perfume" reminiscent of oceanic waves crashing on rocks is joined by just ripe apricot at first swirl. The wine unfolds with white citrus flower and nuances of springtime delighting the senses. It is no wonder this wine is released in the spring, as it is fresh and sprightly! A round and rich texture brings key lime, nectarine and limestone notes to the palate along with a hint of pineapple core, wild blooming sage and marzipan. The wine lingers in the mouth with a zesty hint of hazelnut and white peach on the pleasant, refreshing finish.