

# LEVENDI TIMES

VOL. 4 | SPRING 2023

## SPRINGTIME IN NAPA VALLEY

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NAPA VALLEY

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# FROM OUR FOUNDER

I am grateful for your continued support and loyalty to Levendi Winery. Thanks to your patronage, we are able to share our high-quality wines with the world.

As the owner of Levendi Winery, my passion lies in creating wines that reflect the unique character and beauty of our vineyards. Our latest vintage, the 2022 wines, is a true testament to the skill and passion of our winemaking team. We take pride in using only the finest grapes, handpicked and sorted to ensure that only the best ones make it into our wines.

Whether you are a seasoned wine connoisseur or just starting your wine journey, we invite you to visit us at Levendi tasting room and discover our latest offerings. Our welcoming and friendly atmosphere at Levendi Winery allows you to enjoy our wines, learn about the winemaking process, and relax in the beautiful surroundings. We look forward to welcoming you and thanking you in person for your continued support.

Yassou Levendi!

David Gianulias

## Dear Valued Cellar Club Members,

I hope this letter finds you in good spirits and health. As the President of Levendi Winery, I am delighted to personally reach out to our esteemed Cellar Club members, whose unwavering support and passion for fine wines have helped our winery reach new heights. This year, we have been working tirelessly to craft exquisite vintages that embody our commitment to quality and excellence, and we cannot wait to share these exceptional creations with you.

Warmest regards,

Steve Mensinger  
President, Levendi Winery





# The Passionate Palate Behind Levendi Winery.

Alison Doran's journey to becoming Levendi Winery's winemaker is a story of passion, hard work, and a deep love for winemaking. Her journey began in 1973, where she discovered her love for wine while working as a harvest intern at her father's Simi Winery. During her time there, she met André Tchelistcheff, Simi's consultant winemaker, who became her mentor and friend.

Tchelistcheff recognized Alison's potential and arranged internships for her in Alsace and Hoffman Mountain Ranch, which led to a Fermentation Science degree at UC Davis. This was the beginning of her journey toward becoming a winemaker.

Alison's first winemaking job was at Firestone Vineyard in the Santa Ynez Valley, where she worked her way up from lab tech to winemaker. She held this position for 13 years, honing her skills and building her reputation as a consulting winemaker.

In 2000, Alison and her family moved to Alexander Valley's Hoot Owl Creek Ranch, where she tended the vineyard that now produces a small amount of Cabernet Sauvignon. Her love for Napa Valley's complexity, variability, and family-owned wineries, as well as her focus on site-specific winemaking, has been a driving force in her winemaking career.

Alison's expertise in winemaking caught the attention of David Gianulias, who was starting Levendi Winery. After a quick meeting, Alison became the winery's first employee, and her knowledge and experience of Napa Valley, as well as her unique winemaking style, set the course for every Levendi Winery wine.

Aside from winemaking, Alison enjoys gardening, cooking, traveling, singing in a choir, and hiking in Alexander Valley. She also serves as a trustee on the Alexander Valley School Board, where she plays a vital role in facilitating a love of learning in the youth of her community.



NEW RELEASE



## 2020 SYMPHONIA RED BLEND

### WINE OVERVIEW

Levendi's Symphonia Red Blend is a harmonious and versatile wine, composed of 78% Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, 14% Petit Verdot, and 8% Malbec. This blend offers bold fruit-forward flavors, well-integrated tannins, and a rich, smooth palate with hints of mocha, vanilla, and tobacco. Its elegant and approachable character makes it perfect for a wide range of dishes and occasions.

### TASTING NOTES

Levendi's 2020 Symphonia Red Blend is an alluring wine with bright berry and deep cherry aromas, evolving into mid-palate soft blackberry textures and lively cranberry notes. The finish is moderately long, resulting in a plush, lush, and fruitful Napa Valley blend that perfectly captures the winemaker's vision.

### FOOD PAIRING NOTES

Experience a symphony of flavors with the perfect pairing of lasagna Bolognese with béchamel sauce and our 2020 Symphonia Red Blend. Our velvety Merlot/Cabernet Sauvignon blend perfectly marries with the spices, herbs, and tomato sauce of the lasagna, creating a magical harmony of flavors on your palate. The smooth texture of the wine perfectly balances the richness of the dish, while its bold flavors complement the savory tomato sauce. This pairing is perfect for a cozy night in or a dinner party with friends, and is sure to leave a lasting impression.



NEW RELEASE

# 2022 SAUVIGNON BLANC

## WINE OVERVIEW

The 2022 vintage of Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc arose from a captivating, ever-changing growing season, resulting in a collection of exceptional white wines. Levendi's Sauvignon Blanc is celebrated for its soft elegance and approachable character, highlighting the distinctive citrus essence of Napa Valley's premier Sauvignon Blancs in a sophisticated harmony of flavors.

## TASTING NOTES

This exquisite Sauvignon Blanc reveals a delicate interplay of soft lemon-tart hues, evoking the warmth of sunlight filtering through lush vineyard canopies. The nose offers a subtle bouquet of floral citrus zest aromas, inviting further exploration. On the palate, a delightful fusion of gentle lemon and grapefruit flavors is carried gracefully by Napa Valley's signature moderate acidity. This sophisticated wine pairs beautifully with an array of dishes, from crisp salads to delectable poultry and seafood creations.

## FOOD PAIRING NOTES

The harmonious pairing of Levendi's 2022 Sauvignon Blanc with goat cheese, cured olives, and crackers creates a harmony of flavors on the palate. The creamy richness of the goat cheese accentuates the wine's herbaceous character and crisp apple nuances, elevating the tasting experience. This delightful combination invites a shared moment of indulgence, as each element complements the others in a celebration of taste and texture.





NEW RELEASE

## 2022 ROSÉ OF PINOT NOIR “NICOLETTA”

### WINE OVERVIEW

The 2022 vintage of Nicoletta Rosé of Pinot Noir blossomed amidst a dramatic and unpredictable growing season, delivering outstanding white wines and richly flavored reds. Carefully nurtured in our Estate Vineyards, this refined rosé presents a delicate balance of ripe strawberry notes and refreshing acidity, offering a sublime tasting experience.

### TASTING NOTES

The aroma of this elegant rosé weaves a tapestry of floral geranium, ripe berry, and luscious cherry, reminiscent of a leisurely stroll through a fragrant garden. On the palate, the wine unveils a harmonious blend of sun-ripened strawberry and lively citrus, culminating in a bright, crisp finish that leaves a lasting impression.

### FOOD PAIRING NOTES

Elevate your summer dining experience with grilled watermelon and feta cheese paired with our refreshing 2022 Rosé of Pinot Noir. The saltiness of the feta and the herbaceous notes of basil perfectly complement the wine's medium body and enticing aromas of red fruit. Together, they create a perfect balance of flavors that will leave your taste buds wanting more. This pairing is perfect for warm summer evenings, providing a light and refreshing dining experience.





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*When you appreciate Levendi wines as much as we do, you deserve special access to all the best Levendi has to offer. That's why we provide special member benefits to those who join our Cellar Club and want to taste the best of Levendi – vintage after wonderful vintage.*



BRONZE

- Three bottle allocation
- 20% savings on Levendi Wines



SILVER

- Six bottle allocation
- 30% savings on Levendi Wines
- Shipping discounts



GOLD

- Twelve bottle allocation
- 40% savings on Levendi Wines
- Shipping discounts
- Exclusive benefits for Gold members

### LEVENDI CELLAR CLUB BENEFITS

- Complimentary membership once approved
- Three allocations per year (Feb., May, & Oct.)
- Cellar Club savings apply towards bottle purchases on the website and tasting room
- Invitations and special access to exclusive events
- Early access to new releases
- Member only access to Library Wines
- Three complimentary tastings per year for member and three guests
- Savings on all merchandise
- Exclusive benefits at Chardonnay Golf Club

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Cellar club allocation charges will be processed at the time of shipment. Members will be charged for free tastings if membership is canceled prior to first wine shipment. Cellar Club discounts do not apply towards Library Wines.

## The Gianulias Family Kitchen...Yiayia's

# BAKLAVA



It began in 1928, when my grandmother boarded a ship in Greece bound for New York City with one small suitcase filled with clothes, keepsakes, and recipes from her mother's kitchen. Since she began that fateful journey to meet the fiance arranged by

her parents, her recipes have graced our tables in the United States for over 80 years. A staple of these recipes is Yiayia's Baklava, and our family enjoys this tasty dish whenever we can. Every holiday season, we rejoice in our roots by sharing a meal from our homeland.

You can find the origins of baklava ranging from Greece to all around the Middle East, with variations in flavors and textures that make each recipe a signature to the place. For example, while Turkish baklava uses pistachios in the filling and leans into its nuttier notes, Greek baklava prioritizes sweetness and uses walnuts as the mixture base.

Baklava is a recipe that takes a few steps to prepare, but is an easy undertaking that can allow even amateur chefs to bring a sweet flaky dessert to their table. To avoid the baklava becoming too soggy, Yiayia always told us to prepare the syrup ahead of time and save it in the refrigerator until the last step. The cold syrup over the hot pastry allows the phyllo and nuts to soak up all the nutty, honeyed sweetness while still maintaining that flaky buttery texture that the delight is known for.

So from our home to yours, please enjoy my grandmother's delicious baklava. A dish meant to be shared, we sincerely hope you enjoy it at a table filled with family and loved ones from all generations. We find it is when we learn the most.

### INGREDIENTS

#### For Baklava

16 oz package phyllo dough  
1 pound chopped walnuts  
1 ¼ cups butter  
1 teaspoon cinnamon

#### For Syrup

1 cup water  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1 cinnamon stick  
Zest of 1 lemon or orange  
½ cup honey

### DIRECTIONS

#### Baklava Preparation

Preparing the syrup ahead of time is essential for allowing the baklava to remain flaky while soaking up the rich honeyed sweetness. Combine all ingredients except for honey in a small saucepan and boil until sugar dissolves. Reduce the heat to medium-low and add honey, stirring to make sure everything is fully incorporated. Take off the heat and let syrup cool completely. You may store the syrup inside a refrigerator to ensure the syrup is cold before pouring over the hot baklava.

Thaw phyllo dough according to instructions or leave it in the fridge overnight, and allow it enough time to come to room temperature before assembly. To keep the brittle dough intact, keep the phyllo covered with a damp paper towel while you work to avoid tearing.

Prepare the filling by chopping walnuts and mixing cinnamon in a large bowl until fully combined. You may also use a food processor and pulse until coarsely ground.

#### Baklava Assembly

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.

Butter the bottom and sides of a large baking dish. Lay the first ten sheets one at a time to form the base, sprinkling butter in between each layer.

Sprinkle roughly ¾ cup of the nut mixture onto the base. Continue layering the phyllo sheets, ensuring each is sprinkled with butter, and add the nut mixture between each remaining 5-6 layers. Finish with 6-10 buttered sheets and cut into pieces (you may wish to cool the baklava in the refrigerator for 10-15 minutes to make cutting easier).

Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes, until the pastry is a crisp golden brown. Remove and immediately drizzle the cold syrup all over the baklava. Let cool completely to allow the baklava to soak up all the syrup and enjoy!





# Perfect Pairing

*Indulge in the rich, nutty sweetness of baklava, perfectly complemented by the lush, honeyed notes of Levendi's Late Harvest Chardonnay. The luscious wine elegantly balances the intense flavors of the pastry, creating a divine pairing that elevates your dessert experience to new heights.*



# FUTURE RELEASES

Levendi is pleased to announce the future release of the following premium wines to complement your wine collection. Members of Levendi's Cellar Club receive exclusive pre-release access to all future wines. Yassou Levendi!

## **2022 PERSPECTIVE CHARDONNAY**

This wine has bold aromas of tropical fruit, kiwi, and tangerine that give way to layers of earthy pear and citrus on the palate. The wine's bright and crisp finish is beguiling and sophisticated, with lingering pear notes throughout. Overall, this Chardonnay offers a unique and impressive perspective on the grape, with a well-balanced flavor profile and refreshing finish.

## **2022 ESTATE CHARDONNAY**

This wine has a beautiful bouquet of gardenia, pear and mango, with a hint of toffee-kissed pineapple that adds complexity and intrigue to the nose. The palate is fresh and lively with notes of melon and pear. The oak influence is balanced, with a sleek mouthfeel that's framed by subtle hints of vanilla and chamomile.

## **2020 HILLSIDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

Bold aromas of ripe cassis and an undercurrent of berry entice the senses. Full throttled Napa hillside Cabernet flavors emerge mid-palate, with ripe currant, raspberry and plum tones with moderate structure and tannin. The finish is fruitful and moderately lingering, made for roasted meats enhanced with fresh ground salts and black pepper.

Contact us at [info@levendiwinery.com](mailto:info@levendiwinery.com) to reserve your future allocation of these select premium releases.

# SPRINGTIME

I N N A P A V A L L E Y

**A**s the days become longer and the promise of Spring fills the air, the vineyards of Napa Valley undertake two of the most crucial stages of production: Bud Break and Flowering.

Bud Break generally starts in March but can remain until late April. During this time we see small buds emerge from the vines still dormant from the winter months. Looking out across the vineyards, you may find vibrant rows of mustard lining the budding vines. Beyond bringing a warm yellow color that promises the coming of the summer harvest, the mustard acts as a cover crop, protecting the soil from erosion and pests.

Due to the abundance of microclimates in the region, from the southern Carneros region to northern Calistoga, the flowering period can last for up to two months. It is during this time that the young fragile vines are at the most risk, so important measures must be taken to ensure a successful harvest. Though the worst of the winter chill is over, the nights can drop to perilous temperatures. Vintners employ an array of extensive techniques to protect their crop. Large outdoor fans are used to circulate the air and prevent the vines from becoming too cold. No one wants to wake up to the sound

of a low-flying Cessna in the middle of the night, but it is a proven method to maintain a healthy temperature. Another method employs heaters to elevate the temperature of the vineyard, though they can run a steeper energy bill. The most interesting method is sprinkling water across the vines in the evening, which allows a careful frost to encase the vines and—much like an igloo—insulate them from the outside.

Though the Spring months can drag on, we in the vineyards look forward to the promise of fruit set in May. The self-pollinating flowers will lose their petals and give way to tight green bundles of fruit clusters, which will serve as an important indicator for the overall yield come summertime. The canopies will need to be carefully managed to ensure each grape gets the appropriate amount of fresh air and sunlight, and the danger of nighttime chills isn't yet over. It is the duty of the vintner to know their vines well and keep a vigilant eye during this transformative time, with the understanding that the hard work will pay off greatly soon.

**To learn more about Levendi's Vineyards over a delightful wine tasting, please give our tasting room a call to schedule at (707) 699-2306.**



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