

EMBRACE THE TASTE OF THREE GENERATIONS

# LAGO di MERLO Vineyards



*"The Last Love"*

**Founder  
Harry A. Merlo Sr.**



*Winter 2006*

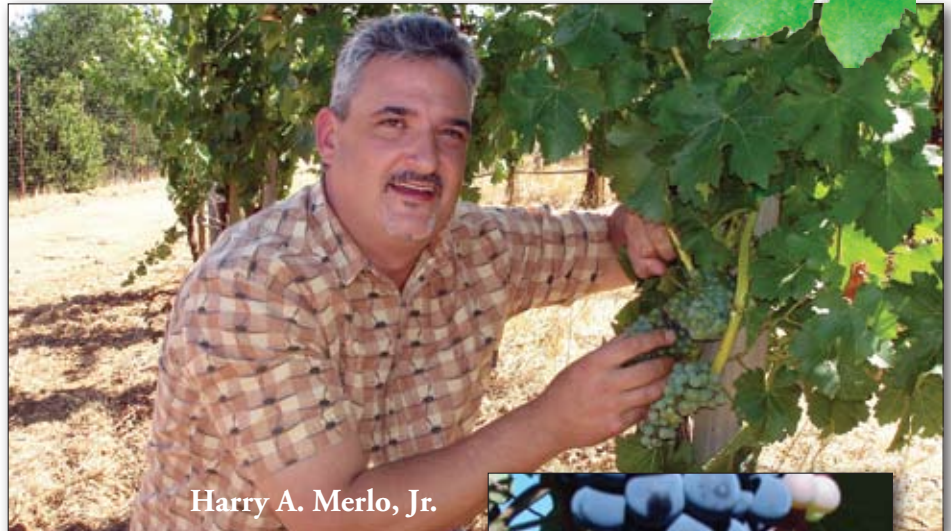
**Grape grower & Winemaker  
Harry A. Merlo Jr.**

I've been growing vinifera grapes on our family farm now for the past fourteen years. This may seem like a long time to many people, but to a farmer and more specifically to a grape grower, fourteen harvests is almost nothing. Compare this to families that go back more than ten generations growing their grapes to make wines that will carry their name on the bottle.

Our family roots go back to Alessandria, Italy, in the Piedmont region dating back several generations. I visit my relatives in Monferrato every year, where they have been growing Barbera for many generations now. We could safely say that one generation is essentially 25 years, so several generations times twenty five years each... well you can do the math and understand that my fourteen years cannot compare to several generations.

What is my point? My point is that every year we learn something new. Yes, we – my wife and my children

## *"Learning To Work With Mother Nature"*



Harry A. Merlo, Jr.

who are an integral part of every harvest. I've walked the 200 acres of our vineyard many times over. I have intimate knowledge of every grape vine, as do my workers, because they touch every one of them four times a year. Without labor my job would cease to exist. I am up before the sun begins to shower the vines with its generous light and warmth, so I know exactly which plants get the first light.



Vineyard View

*Continued on page 2*

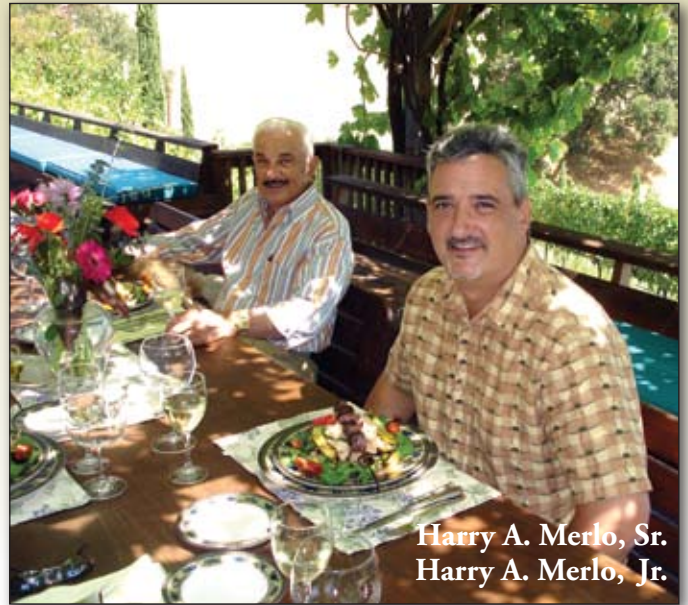
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With the coming of each new harvest, it seems that my respect for nature makes me a little bit more humble. Every year is a bit different, and I am learning to work with mother nature as opposed to getting upset because the temperature or the humidity or the light is not exactly what I wanted. What mother nature gives you is not for us to even try to predict; “the things that are unexpected are the most interesting in this business.” “Irony is the spice of growing grapes”.

As a grape grower, the berries that I will harvest, are truly the fruits of my labor. In the old world, and the mind-set with which I have been brought up, is that excellent wines are grown. We are grape growers, that is the family tradition. If you grow outstanding grapes, then you can make excellent wines. Mother nature is always kind to the vines, not always easy, predictable or timely, but always kind.

I am a happy grape grower, the 2006 harvest is finished and the fruits of

*“Excellent Wines Are Grown”*



Harry A. Merlo, Sr.  
Harry A. Merlo, Jr.

our family labor are outstanding. *Salute to all of you.* This is Harry Merlo Jr., reminding you that wine is food and as such enjoy with family and friends at your table.

## **The Fruits Of Our Labor**



### **2002 Lago Di Merlo Zinfandel**

Strong up front fruit palate with typical Dry Creek Valley raspberry undertones and mild spice from the French oak used for aging. \$26

★ *Gold 2004* –

*Sonoma County Harvest Fair*

### **2001 Lago Di Merlo Merlot**

Lager tannin profile wine with deep color and layers of flavor leaving a dusty mouth sensation giving this Merlot panache. \$23

★ *Silver 2004* – *San Francisco*

*Chronicle Wine Competition*

### **2001 Lago Di Merlo Cabernet**

This is a wonderfully extracted wine following the recognized Dry Creek character. Soft tannins supported by fruit tones of blackberry and cherry. The oak is well integrated, but not the front runner. \$30

★ *Gold 2004* –

*West Coast Wine Competition*

### **2001 Lago Di Merlo Sangiovese**

Wonderfully balanced red. Nice acid component dissolves away to Bing cherry flavors. Great wine paired with “sugo a pomadori” (red tomato sauce) dishes. \$19

★ *Gold 2004* – *Orange County Wine Competition*

### **2003 Lago Di Merlo Syrah**

This wine is full of fruit tones that are characteristic of a great Syrah. Balanced with slight oak embodiment that makes for a very pleasurable glass of wine. \$26

★ *Gold 2006* – *San Francisco*

*Chronicle Wine Competition*

### **2002 Ca’Bella Dry Creek Red/Table**

A blend styled after those who have gone before us in Italy. A singular flavor and structure creating a master blend of beauty and harmony from our mountain vineyards. \$16

### **2006 Ca’Bella Pinot Grigio**

A sophisticated and beautifully crafted wine with subtle tropical fruit and citrus aromas. The absence of oak allows trace mineral and floral elements to perfectly balance the fruit, following with a smooth, rich finish. *Spring 2007*

### **2005 Ca’Bella Sauvignon Blanc**

“Tropical” is the word that comes to mind with this wine as strong pineapple and guava character perfume out of the glass and supple melon and ruby grapefruit dance on your palate. The best characters of Sauvignon Blanc are present in this wine. \$20 – *Limited Availability*

### **2005 Moscato** *New Release*

A favorite of the northern Italian people for its wonderful “sweet floral” characters. Moscato is often served as an aperitif to wet the palate for food and wine courses yet to come. \$15.00

## Just Another Day In The Life



### ▶ **Tractor Sets Sail**

**Here is a good one for you;** Last truck load of the year, last tractor left in the field. Worker driving said tractor. Worker forgets to set parking brake on tractor in the vineyard on a hillside. Tractor begins to set sail out of control down the vineyard row mowing over Cabernet Sauvignon vines, grapes wielding out of the back of the gondola. Tractor crashes to a stop, jackknifed in the vineyard avenue just feet from my position! Worker still standing in vineyard with now perplexed look on face. (*Luckily, no one was hurt.*)

Harry A. Merlo Jr.  
Grapegrower & Winemaker

### ▶ **Through The Eyes Of The Next Generation**

The time of relief for the every day farmer knowing that his/her crop is about to be gathered. A time when it is war between you and your crop. A time of stress and anger. A time of no patience. A time to “*get her done*” no matter what goes wrong. A time when your family is the cheerleading squad. A time when you work all day and all night. A time when the best time is when it is done.

Dominic William Merlo  
Age 11

## Italian Braised Lamb Shanks Recipe

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1/4 c. olive oil  | 2 (16 oz.) cans Italian plum tomatoes, drained, chopped |
| 4 lamb shanks (about 1 lb. each)                        | 1.5 cups dry white wine                                 |
| 1 large onion, sliced                                   | 1 tbsp. grated lemon peel                               |
| 2 large carrots, peeled, cut into 1/4 inch thick rounds | 2 tsp. dried red pepper flakes                          |
| 5 garlic cloves, chopped                                | 1 tsp. dried rosemary                                   |
|   | 1 tsp. dried basil                                      |
|   | 1/2 tsp. salt   |

### Directions:

Heat oil in Dutch Oven over medium high heat. Add shanks and cook until brown, about 3 minutes per side. Remove shanks. Add onions, carrots and garlic. Cook until light brown, stirring occasionally, about 8 minutes. Add tomatoes, wine, lemon peel, red pepper flakes, rosemary, basil and salt. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low. Return shanks to pan. Cover and cook until meat is very tender and begins to fall off bone, stirring and turning occasionally, about 2 hours. Transfer shanks to platter. Boil liquid if necessary to reduce to sauce consistency. Serve with plain rice. Serves 4.

*Drink with Lago di Merlo's 2003 Dry Creek Valley Syrah*

★ *Gold 2006 – San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition*

**In Oregon, visit our warehouse location and purchase wine at Dock Sales.**

#### ■ We are located at:

1001 S.E. Sandy Blvd.  
Portland, OR 97214  
Phone: 503•963•WINE  
Monday – Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

*Cash or check only  
Two Case Minimum*

#### ■ For Oregon Retail & Restaurant Sales call:

**Geof Anderson**  
971•404•9674

#### ■ For Western Regional Distribution Opportunities call:

**Ron Grasty**  
971•404•9394



**Visit Us At Our  
Lago di Merlo Tasting Room  
(Family Wineries of  
Dry Creek Valley)  
4791 Dry Creek Road  
Healdsburg, CA  
[www.familywines.com](http://www.familywines.com)**

## Next Issue Spring 2007

- **New Releases**
- **Easter Recipe**
- **Vineyard Notes**
- **2007 Classic Wine Auction**
- **Wine Club Events**

EMBRACE THE TASTE OF THREE GENERATIONS

# Join Our LAGO di MERLO Wine Club

## Members Receive:

- First Access to New Releases
- Invitations to Exclusive Events

For your convenience, we have included an **Enrollment Form** in this newsletter. *Join our family* and start including our fine wines with your food and wine courses.



*"The Last Love"*

## Congratulations! We Have Another Award Winner! Barbera\*

Our Barbera received the Monferrato Festival Award at the Second International Barbera Competition in Italy.

\*Available ONLY at the Lago di Merlo Tasting Room (Family Wineries of Dry Creek Valley)



## Winter 2006

### Newsletter Highlights

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**LAGO di MERLO**  
Vineyards