



Fratelli Perata 1997 Tre Sorelle, Estate

Fratelli Perata is first most a family who is a winery. From its inception to the actual planting and building, to the harvesting, and winemaking, it is a family project, headed by the brothers, Gino and Joe. We are involved in this as a lifestyle, not just a business. We take immense satisfaction with having brought a 40- acre parcel of barley to a producing winery and vineyard by the work of our hands.

We purchased the land in 1977, Gino and Carol moved here in 1978, after building their home. The vineyard was started in 1980. Children followed in 1983 (Julie), 1985 (Catherine) and 1987 (Joanne). The winery was bonded in 1987. Joanne was born the day our first wine was pressed.

These young ladies have grown up with the winery around them, their little hands helping as only a young child can: happy, energetic, wondering at the little plants growing before them. They see the wine being made: the fruity aromas and the raw juice. They visit with all the customers who come by. There are no secrets at this winery, especially when they were very young! Many have seen our daughters grow up, helping us all along the way, as best they could. Most of all they saw that as a family, with hard work, much could be accomplished.

In honor of these young ladies without whom this winery would not be the same, we name our first Bordeaux styled blend, 1997 Tre Sorelle: "Tre" for three, and "Sorelle" for sisters, Italian of course. With this wine, the whole is indeed greater than the sum of its parts. There is Cabernet Sauvignon Riserva at its core (58%), Merlot for greater depth, not mellowness (29%) and Cabernet Franc for the taste of the soil (13%). They blend together in this fabulous vintage flawlessly.

We knew 1997 held some special wines, complex and fit for aging. Our daughters will someday be able to enjoy this release. It will wait for them, becoming silky smooth. We crafted this wine for them, to remember their roots. Each wine component could stand alone and age to something wonderful. Together they will be incredible. The 1997 Tre Sorelle blend was made by Gino and Joe in the spring of 2000, it was bottled July 29, 2000. It has bottle aged since release in March, 2002. Even at this age it seems a youthful wine. It is a good example of buying one to try now, one for later, and more for later. Good now, we know how much it has developed since bottled .

It did pair wonderfully with grilled lamb with rosemary at the Zinfandel Festival dinner. Many entrees will find complementary flavors in this blend. Beef or lamb, garlic, rosemary, thyme, salty cheeses, chocolate tortes, the list goes on and on.

So in honor of the three sisters you have seen grow up at Fratelli Perata, here's to them, their Tre Sorelle.