



# PRODIGAL *Wines*

*Quinta Santa Rosa Vineyard*

STA. RITA HILLS APPELLATION

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The name “Prodigal” stems from the career paths that Stephen Russell has taken. As an early (1960) graduate of the UC Davis enology program, but not a member of a wine family, he was the first formally trained enologist to be hired by the Gallos. After discovering that corporate winemaking didn’t offer the future he had envisioned, and after attempting unsuccessfully to raise the money to purchase Freemark Abbey, with a twenty-something’s wisdom he decided to leave the industry. Consternation at the time among those at UCD who had trained him (e.g., Professors M.A. Amerine and H.P. Olmo) was abundantly evident. After returning to school (DVM and PhD) and an academic career in cancer research, he and his wife, Mary, returned to California to found Quinta Santa Rosa Vineyard / Prodigal Wines in 2001. The ‘prodigal son’ had returned!

Steeply sloping Quinta Santa Rosa Vineyard is located on Santa Rosa Road in the southeastern corner of the Sta. Rita Hills appellation. Its four acres are primarily planted to Pinot Noir – the eastern block contains Dijon clones 667 (on 3309) and 777 (on 5C) in equal amounts, while the western block consists of vines grown on their own roots from cuttings obtained from Julia’s Vineyard (Cambria, Santa Maria Valley). The remainder is planted to Pinot Gris (clone 146 on 5C). The vineyard is managed by Coastal Vineyard Care – Jeffrey Newton and his associates.

2005 is the first vintage for Prodigal Wines. Made by winemaker Norman Yost, the wines will be released in the spring of 2007.

The Estate blend of Pinot Noir yielded 187 cases, while the Appellation blend generated 275. In addition to wine from Quinta Santa Rosa Vineyard, the Appellation blend contains wine made from Wädenswil Swiss clone 2A grapes purchased from Rio Vista Vineyard, also in the southeastern part of the appellation. Both the Estate and Appellation blends were aged in a combination of new and neutral French oak barrels for 12-16 months before they were bottled.

Fifty cases of Estate Pinot Gris were produced. The wine was held on its lees in neutral French oak barrels for 6 months and then in stainless steel for an additional six months, also *sur lies*. Yeast autolysates have given it an Alsatian, rather than Italian (‘pinot grigio’), character.

The recent 2006 harvest was almost a month later than 2005. The wines, which are now in barrels, are already impressive – both the Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris. In addition to Rio Vista’s clone 667, the 2006 Appellation blend will contain clone 115 from Kathy Joseph’s Fiddlestix vineyard.

Prodigal’s wines will be available directly from the winery and in selected restaurants and wine shops after their spring release. Prices, which have not yet been set, will soon be posted on Prodigal’s Web site, which can be found at [www.ProdigalWines.com](http://www.ProdigalWines.com). Those on the winery’s mailing list will be given priority access. Private tastings can be arranged by appointment.

*Dedicated to the Essence of Pinot Noir*