

The Francioni's ROAR label is highly respected among connoisseurs of fine wine.

also play a large part. For example, fully 25 to 30 percent of the fruit is "dropped" from the vines during the growing season, forcing the plant to concentrate its efforts on the remaining grapes, resulting in optimum flavors and sugar content.

Grapes from Rosella's Vineyard are sold to about ten producers of high-end wines, typically those with retail bottle prices in the \$40 to \$50 range. Mac McDonald of Napa is one of those winemakers. He bottles Rosella's Pinot Noir under his *Vision Cellars* label. "If you can't make good wine out of Francioni's grapes, you shouldn't be making wine," Mac avers.

Mac is an effusive character, the kind of guy that gives winemakers their reputation for knowing how to have a good time. He learned winemaking from his good friend Chuck Wagner, the proprietor of Caymus, the Napa producer of what many consider California's finest Cabernets. Incidentally, Wagner also grows Chardonnay grapes down the road from Rosella's for the family's *Mer Soleil* label. "Hang around with chuck and get grapes from Rosella's and you can't go wrong," he laughs.

Not just anyone can get grapes from Rosella's. "We want our customers to be devoted to Pinot Noir," says Gary. Each customer is assigned a block of vines from which their fruit comes, year after year. That provides a measure of consistency, allowing



**Go Red For Women Luncheon
Saturday, May 6, 2006
Monterey Marriott Hotel & Spa**

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Mezzanine Level

Special Break-Out Session:
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Sponsored by Community Care &
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10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Champagne & Red Cosmopolitan
Martini Reception.

Wonderful door prizes, Inspiration,
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Memory Photos and Fun!

12:30 p.m. Luncheon
"Heart of a Woman" Awards

\$75 per person
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A handsome grower, Gary shows his son Adam proper vine pruning technique.

because a twist on
an old favorite can
be a cool thing.



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for the vagaries of weather.

The Francionis retain about five percent of the Pinot Noir grapes they grow for use in making wine for their own label. Initially they hired a consultant to come up with a brand name for their wine that would perform well in the marketplace. The consultant delivered a lot of French-sounding, impossible-to-pronounce words—including one that turned out to translate to “jackass”—before the couple decided to go with their own instincts. ROAR refers to “the joyous roar of life, of nature, of a crowded party,” says Rosella. The logo depicts two lions “high-fiving” each other.

ROAR wines have found their way into some of the nation’s top restaurants in New York, Boston, San Diego, Los Angeles and San Francisco. “It’s fun being a country boy in the big city restaurants,” Gary laughs. And that comment reveals a lot about the man who grows the grapes that end up in those fancy restaurants.

Locally, ROAR (and other wines produced from Rosella’s Vineyard grapes) is available at restaurants in Carmel, Big Sur and Pacific Grove as well as Salinas’ Star Market and Rancho Cellars in Carmel.

Over the years—especially in the United States—wine has attained a cachet, an aura of snobbish sophistication that intimidates many and prevents them from exploring the pleasures afforded by fine wines. But it is still at heart an agricultural product, and no matter how it’s dressed up, no matter how much it costs, no matter how many accolades and adjectives are lavished on the product, “it’s just farming,” Gary says. “It really is.” **ce**