



Fratelli Perata 1998 Bambino Grande, Estate

Now we are in for some fun. This wine is named for our maternal grandfather, Bambino Diorio of Belmonte di Sanno, Italia. He worked very hard in his life, coming from Italy to Colorado to work in the lead mines, then on to California to return to farming, as in Italy. When friends got together, it was a different story: he was the original party animal. If no one was dancing when the band started playing, he grabbed a broom and danced with that, then gave the broom to another gentleman, while he took the hand of a lady to dance with. On and on the broom would get passed until everyone was dancing, he made sure of that.

We have made a few wines named for the family. It is fitting that this wine be named for Bambino. It is a 4-way blend of wines, based on Sangiovese, Italian like he was. It is a complicated blend that results in a very drinkable wine, one virtually everyone likes, like Bambino. Also like Bambino, it is a wine you can feel confident about bringing to any gathering. New wine drinkers like it for its fruit, we vintage wine drinkers like it for its complexity. It has been taken to Italian wine tasting parties and, like Bambino, knocked their socks off.

Bambino was proud of his family; we are proud of this wine. Some wineries use leftovers to release some kind of low-end wine. We began with the thought to make a blend to be proud of, especially to be named after our grandfather. It has to be good. It took four hours of laborious tasting, using pipettes and a yellow legal pad, to come up with this wine. That was the 1995 vintage. For fun we entered the new wine at the LA County Fair, where it received a silver medal.

Each year the same wines are used in the blend, with gentle tweaking of the proportions. The blend is made more quickly now that we have the master blend to work from. In 1998, we have a mouth filling fruity wine. We are enthusiastic. Remember, we added the word "Grande" to the name because we didn't want anyone to think this is a rose`.

As a blend of 1998 vintage wines, these have been barrel aged 40 months. This is pretty incredible for the industry, but then we want a good blend. At the price, this isn't a sly business decision; it's done for the wine. It was bottled Valentine's week, 2002.

We recently had this wine served with Tiger shrimp wrapped with prosciutto. With a base of Sangiovese, this wine will pair well with any pork product: ham, pork sausage, and pork tenderloin. It can also be paired with grilled hamburgers as well. Life can be as serious as you want, even how you drink your wine.