

MONTE RIO CELLARS

‘It is always a treat to taste the Monte Rio Cellar wines. Honesty and authenticity surging through every bottle tell the story of the grape, the place and the people.’



Year Founded: 2018

**Region: Sonoma County,
California**

**Owner/Winemaker:
Patrick Cappiello**

-Organic-

Monte Rio Cellars is the brainchild of longtime sommelier Patrick Cappiello who has enjoyed an immensely successful career in New York City's restaurant world. Cutting his teeth at Tribeca Grill in the early 2000's where he eventually became beverage director before moving on to places like Veritas and GILT. He eventually partnered up to open two highly acclaimed spots in the city, a restaurant/wine bar concept called Pearl & Ash along with a Michelin starred restaurant nearby called Rebelle. Due to a multitude of reasons both spots eventually closed leading Patrick on a bit of search for the next step in his impressive career.



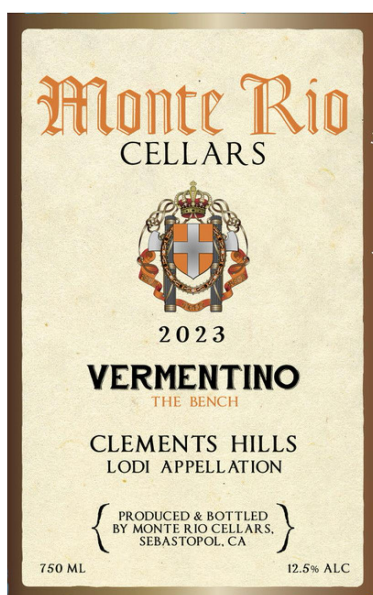
Minimalistic and hands off are two terms that easily sum up the focus here at Monte Rio Cellars. Though like many wineries that tout the hands-off moniker, the reality is that these are very hands on wines, choosing to be very active in the production but eliminating any and all additives outside a small amount of SO2. Patrick's vision is to create the wine he wished he'd had access to from California when he was writing wine lists and running beverage programs in NYC. Wines that speak of a place, are affordable to the masses and are made without loads of intervention and manipulation. They only source fruit from vineyards that are at the very least farmed organically, some are farmed with more in depth environmentally conscious practices.

Named after the town of Monte Rio, which is a small, eccentric spot in Sonoma County that straddles the Russian River. The town was once a booming tourist destination, known for holding outdoor concerts and having a thriving summer cabin vacation layout with plenty of outdoor activities for tourists to enjoy. The town now is made up of mostly year-round residents, but remnants of this once beloved tourist destination remain, including the Monte Rio Theatre which is the backdrop of the Monte Rio Cellars label. The name is twofold, the name itself pays homage to this historic town that thrived in the 30's, 40's, and 50's; and is a bit of a nod to the "throwback" style of wines Patrick & Pax produce under the Monte Rio Label. A style that would have been more commonly found in the area during the same time period that Monte Rio the town was thriving.



Chenin Blanc Gold Hill Vineyard 2025

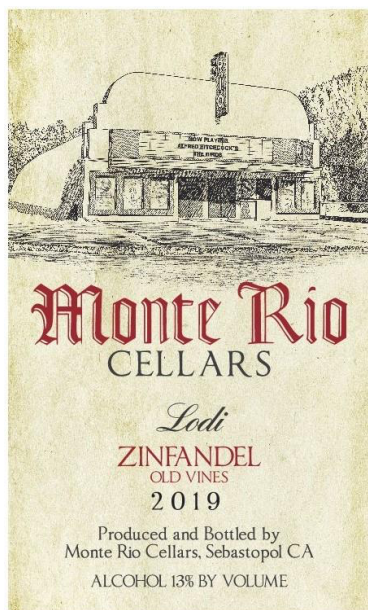
El Dorado County sits in the Sierra Foothills, high above the valley floor, where the Gold Rush happened in the 1840s and 50s. The soil here is granite – blue slate, ancient, mineral-driven. This is a single vineyard, old vine Chenin Blanc, organically farmed, in a place most California wine drinkers have never thought to look. Patrick and Pax Mahle are the only producers working with Chenin Blanc from this site — a monopole in every meaningful sense of the word. 50% fermented in stainless steel, 50% in neutral oak, then 6 months *élevage* in barrel, followed by one month back in stainless before bottling. The result is a wine with the mineral tension of the Loire and the warmth of the California hills. **Organic!**



Skin Contact Vermentino The Bench Vineyard 2025

Wine has been made on skins for thousands of years. Somewhere along the way someone decided white wine should be clear, pressed fast, and taste like nothing in particular. Patrick disagrees. He leaves the skins in contact with the juice for thirty days — that's where the color comes from, the texture, the depth. Every day, twice a day, someone pushes those skins back down into the wine by hand. Then aged 5 months in old wood barrels. No machines. No shortcuts. The grape is Vermentino — Italian by origin, grown along the Sardinian coast, and almost nobody is planting it in California. Patrick found a biodynamic vineyard in Clements Hills that suits it perfectly and he's one of the few people in America making it this way. People try it and ask what it is. That question is your opening. **Biodynamic!**

92 Points – '24 Wine Enthusiast – *“Highly aromatic with nectarine, melon, pink grapefruit, dried chicory, and sedimentary rock on the nose, and the palate is racy minerality, peach, dried apricot, pomelo zest, crushed herbs, and a juicy mouth-watering finish. pair with a scallop crudo, kumquat, and fresh herbs.”*



Zinfandel 'Old Vines' 2023

At 80 to 120 years old, these vines have survived droughts, recessions, and decades of everyone planting something more fashionable instead. Old vines dig their roots 30 to 40 feet into the earth looking for water — they work harder, produce less fruit, and every cluster they give you is more concentrated than anything a young vine can manage. You can't rush that. You can't fake it. It just takes time. Patrick found these vines at vineyards in Lodi, where they're farmed organically, added nothing. He didn't have to. 100% whole cluster for 10 days in stainless steel. Pressed into stainless steel for 12 days. Natural yeast fermentation. Ages 10 months in old wood barrels. Medium to full in body. Classic flavors of blueberry, tobacco and black pepper. This wine is dry and savory with a bright energetic finish. Best paired with steak frites or smash burgers. **Organic!**

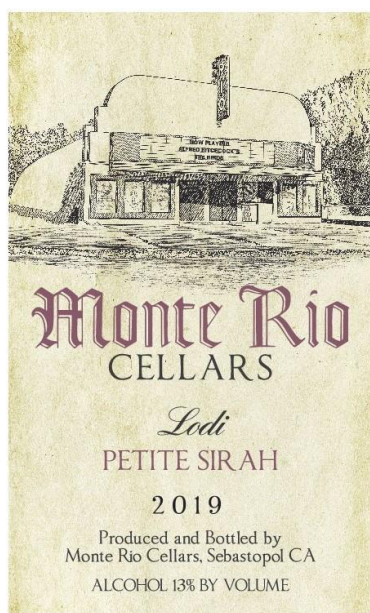
94 Points – Wine Enthusiast – *“While this wine is robust, it is still fresh and bright, with aromas of Boysenberry, dark plum, Tahitian vanilla, and notes of violet on the nose. The flavors on the palate are blackberry jam, coffee beans, molasses, and grilled citrus slices, with simmering spices and grippy tannins on the finish. Aerate and enjoy with smoked brisket.”*



Sangiovese Rivers Edge Vineyard 2023

Sangiovese is Italy's most planted grape. It's what goes into Chianti, Brunello, Barolo's neighbor at the dinner table. Most California winemakers gave up on it years ago — too much work, too much stigma. Patrick thinks that's a mistake. The vines at Rivers Edge are 20-years-old and farmed biodynamically. Hand harvested and 100% whole cluster. Maceration for 10 days in stainless steel. Pressed into a combination of concrete and stainless steel tanks for 9 days. When fermentation was finished the wines were transferred to 8 year old French oak barrels to rest for 10 months. A medium-bodied red with mouth-watering acidity and bright tannins. Black cherry dominates with hints of plum, and baking spice. A perfect wine for spaghetti and meatballs. **Biodynamic!**

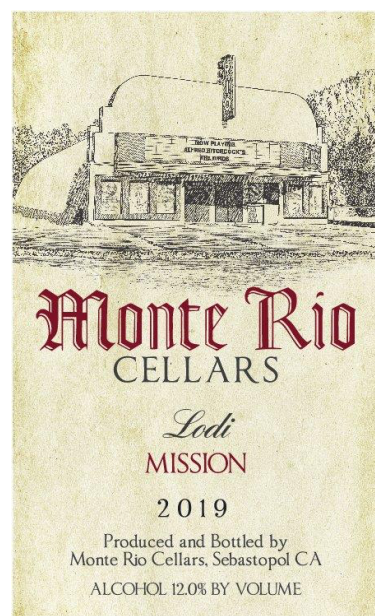
94 Points – '22 Wine Enthusiast – *“Deep, with aromas of blackberry compote, pomegranate, clove, amber, maple, and notes of orange blossom on the nose. The flavors on the palate are lingonberry, raspberry, layered with dried chicory, orange peel, earth, and a dry silky finish. Decant and enjoy pair with braised chicken thighs.”*



Petite Sirah Teresi Vineyard 2022

40-year-old Petite Sirah from Bains vineyard. A full-bodied wine with impeccable balance between tannin and juiciness. Dark-berried fruits dominate, with scorched earth and a salty flavor profile. A perfect companion to game meats. 100% whole cluster carbonic maceration for 13 days in stainless steel. Pressed into a combination of concrete and stainless steel tanks for 9 days. When fermentation was finished the wines were transferred to 8-year-old French oak barrels. Natural yeast fermentation. Bottled after 10 months in old wood barrels. **Organic!**

93 Points - Wine Enthusiast – *“Concentrated, with aromas of blackberry, boysenberry, wild strawberry, spearmint, and notes of mineral on the nose. The flavors on the palate are black cherry jam, raspberry-cranberry coulis, dried tobacco leaf, espresso crema, and a dry mouthwatering finish. Decant and enjoy.”*



Mission Somers Vineyard 2024

When gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in 1848, Mission was the only wine grape in California. By the 1860s the industry had moved on to Zinfandel and never looked back. Patrick thinks that was a mistake. Somers Vineyard sits along a bend of the Mokelumne River in Lodi, planted with 50-year-old Mission vines whose roots dip into the water table. Ten years ago the owners couldn't give the fruit away. Now half a dozen small artisanal producers are standing in line for it — Patrick among the first. He has full control over the pick, the farming, and everything that happens after. All whole cluster, foot tread, 50% fermented in concrete with pump over. Fast, warm, Burgundian approach. The quicker off the skins the better.

92 Points – Wine Enthusiast – *“The zesty aromas of Bing cherry, strawberry, and plum dance throughout the glass, a dash of dried florals for good measure, and the palate is youthful cranberry, rhubarb, and orange zest mingling with dried river brush, and dry, juicy tannins. Serve chilled and enjoy all year round.”*