

**Zio Tony Ranch**  
**CHARDONNAY**

*The “Zio Tony Ranch” is named after my father’s uncle whom was the first in the Bondi family to be born on American soil. Zio Tony was the son of Paolo Antoni Bondi and Adele Gemma Cardellini, who emigrated from Italy in the late 1800’s, and immediately set up farming potatoes. In one year they saved enough money raising potatoes to purchase the apple ranch on which Tony was born and where he and his sister, Alma, were raised. Zio Tony, Zio meaning ‘uncle’ in Italian and pronounced ‘tseo’, was a very charismatic man with a big booming voice whom loved a good time. His broad handsome smile is still legendary in the old farming community of western Sonoma County. He was the entrepreneur of the family and began buying individual properties and planting apple trees, eventually establishing the largest apple orchard in the county. When Zio Tony passed away in 1971 his nephew, Lee Martinelli, Sr., took over management of the estate. The love of his family’s heritage land was too great for Lee to sell the property and in one short season he went from High School teacher to Apple Farmer.*

*The market for apples in Sonoma County eventually grew unbearably soft and the Zio Tony Ranch has gradually made the transformation from apples to grapes. Keeping with our family heritage we have preserved a large grove of the old thick-trunked Gravenstein apple trees. Bursting with flavor, Gravensteins are the best in the world for baking and eating. Surrounding this acreage of ancient fruit bearing trees Lee Sr., has planted Chardonnay and Pinot Noir which are varietals that glorify in this particular climate’s warm/cool temperatures. The vines are planted on rolling hills, are densely spaced at 2,000 per acre with clones ‘115’, ‘Quail Hill’, ‘548’, and ‘95’, and rootstocks, ‘420’, ‘101-14’ and ‘3309’. This small vineyard is trained on a vertical trellis system with the fruit hanging just 24 inches above the ground. The grapes are thinned down to only 3 pounds of fruit per vine. These practices all insure mature fruit flavors in the wine as well as even ripening.*

*The grapes are picked between 25 and 26 degrees brix to ensure mature ripe fruit flavors. They are hand selected at harvest time by Lee Martinelli, Sr. and Helen Turley who taste the grapes and choose when to pick according to the developed concentration of flavors in the berries. The wine is fermented with wild yeast in 75% new French oak barrels, where it rests in on its gross lees for 10 months. The grapes, juice, and then wine are minimally handled. This Chardonnay is neither heat nor cold stabilized and is unfinned and unfiltered.*

*We began our immigrant farming careers with apples and they will always have a huge place in our family’s hearts and on our tables. They supported our family for generations as an agriculture product. So next time you sip a taste of Martinelli wine, don’t forget the apple pie for dessert.*

*Wine Maker: Helen Turley*

*Assistant Wine Maker: Bryan Kvamme*

*“The buttery 2002 Chardonnay Zio Tony Ranch offers up hints of caramel, hazelnuts, honeysuckle, oily tropical fruit, and forest floor/earth. This terroir-driven offering is made from French Dijon clones. A steely finish reveals notes of white peaches.” ... 94 pts. ~ Robert M, Parker, Jr.*