

# Petaluma Gap A Region Rich in History

## A REGION RICH IN HISTORY

- 1830s** ♦ General Vallejo plants the **GAP'S FIRST VINES** near Petaluma Adobe
- 1884** ♦ **FIRST WINERY** established by G.V. Fischer
- 1893** ♦ James G. Fair's (of San Francisco Fairmont Hotel fame) winery hit 600,000 gallons, making it the **LARGEST WINERY** in CA
- Early 1900s** ♦ Over **1,000 ACRES OF VINES** planted in Petaluma
- 1920-1960** ♦ Prohibition and phylloxera reduce the industry to near wreckage
- 1987** ♦ Sonoma Coast AVA Established
- 1990s** ♦ **RESURGENCE** of interest in planting premium grapes in the Petaluma Gap
- 2000** ♦ 1,000 acres of vines back in production
- 2005** ♦ **Petaluma Gap Winegrowers Alliance** established
- 2011** ♦ A Petaluma Gap Pinot Noir named *Wine Spectator's* **#1 WINE OF THE YEAR**
- 2012** ♦ Gap's Crown becomes the first Sonoma County vineyard to sell for **\$100,000+ per acre**
- 2013** ♦ Media Tasting featuring **50+ wines that are 100% produced from Gap fruit**
- 2014** ♦ The Petaluma Gap **begins process to establish itself as an AVA** (American Viticultural Area)
- TODAY** ♦ 4,000 + acres of vines, predominantly Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Syrah are currently grown in the Gap.

## OUR REGION'S HISTORY

The Petaluma Gap has a 150-year tradition of growing grapes and producing wine. Petaluma's first winery was founded in 1884 by G. V. Fischer, who took over an abandoned brewery to handle his first crush. There were also two wineries in the Lakeville area at that time. The largest was owned by James G. Fair – a U.S. Senator from Nevada, a famous silver baron, and the man who built the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco. Fair's winery was located in General Vallejo's old brick armory on the Petaluma River, now part of Hendricks Ranch. By 1893, the winery had a 600,000 gallon capacity, making it one of the largest in the state.

The other Lakeville area winery was on the Marcucci Ranch nearby. By the early 1900s there were at least 1,000 acres of grapevines.

Then came the dark ages of Prohibition made worse by our own battle with phylloxera – a root-born aphid that slowly kills grapevines. By the time Prohibition ended in 1933, what had been a rapidly growing industry was reduced to near wreckage.

## THE GAP TODAY

But that was the past, and slowly the vines have crept back. Today's Petaluma Gap is a grower-focused region shaped by our rich agricultural history, with vineyards often nestled in the valleys and hillsides with cattle, sheep, chickens and fruit trees. Most plantings that have propelled Petaluma Gap wines to their current levels of fame have taken place since the early 1990s. With vineyards ranging in size from backyard plots to hundreds of acres, Gap growers are dedicated to farming sustainably and many are devoted to organic viticulture. All see themselves as stewards of the land, confident that the vineyards they've planted and nurtured will endure for many generations.

