

TRITONO

In 2003, New York restaurateur Joe Bastianich, Argentine winemaker Matias Mayol and California vintner Steve Clifton came together to create *TriTono*. Indeed, the label is aptly named: the three men bring to this Malbec their respective winemaking experiences and traditions, as well as a common love of food, wine and music. The result is the perfect harmony of fruit and spice, and a symphony of flavors that makes the palate sing!

The Wine

TriTono Malbec 2005 is the second release from the trio.

The grapes hail from the epicenter of the world's great Malbec vineyards, the Mendoza province in western Argentina. The 2005 TriTono release is equally composed of grapes from the Mayol's Finca Montuiri and Finca Pircas vineyards. The combination of old vine (planted in 1926) grapes from Montuiri in the Lujan de Cuyo region and younger vines from Pircas in the Vista Flores district adds to the complexity of the wine. Extreme farming practices of early leaf pulling and vines limited to one cluster per shoot resulted in an early and intense harvest and vintage of perfectly ripe grapes.

Delivered in the early morning to the Familia Mayol winery in the Valle de Uco, the grapes are fermented in a combination of open top tonneaux and tanks to add yet another layer of intrigue to the final blend. TriTono is then aged for sixteen months in 220 liter French oak barrels, 20% of which are new before being bottled without fining or filtration. An additional eighteen months of bottle aging prior to release ensures the wine is immediately delectable at the table.

In the glass, the intriguing dark scarlet hues foretell of depth and character. Cinnamon and allspice dominate the nose with hints of plum skin and succulent prune. A first sip reveals a mélange of plum, prune, black cherry and hints of orange zest. Underlying flavors of fresh straw and wild mushrooms mingle with earthy, mineral nuances, nicely complementing the intense cherry and plum finish.

Definitely a food wine, and most definitely a red meat wine. The 2005 TriTono Malbec is delightful with food and friends, and will continue to cellar well for the next 7-10 years.



The Name

A **TriTono** (or tritone) is a musical interval of three whole tones and is the gap between two notes played in succession or simultaneously. In medieval and renaissance music, the interval was seen as dissonant and false, so was banned in music theory. Some writers called it “Diabolus in Musica” probably because it is devilishly difficult to teach singers not to sing it, rather than any work of the Devil, but the “Devil’s Interval” is now often found in music where it gives a sense of tension and intrigue.

Examples include the opening of Black Sabbath’s “Black Sabbath” and the two-note introduction to Hendrix’ “Purple Haze”. Most of the songs in “West Side Story” are underpinned with tritones, and the theme for TV’s The Simpsons uses a tritone in “The Sim-” choral.

The Label

When local artist Bernudez learned of *TriTono*, he immediately created the devilish musical image used on the label.

The Team

The TriTono team brings together Joe Bastianich, Matias Mayol and Steve Clifton.

Joe Bastianich Since those long-ago days of red-checkered tablecloths and fiasco Chianti, Joe has been a part of an Italian wine and food "revolution," much of it ignited by his mother, Lidia Matticchio Bastianich of *Felidia*, and has since been fueled by Joe in an ever-expanding array of projects: restaurants, a retail shop, a winery in Italy, books and much more. Joe ventured into his ancestral Friuli-Venezia Giulia to create the acclaimed wine estate, *Azienda Agricola Bastianich* and into Maremma, Tuscany where he established the wine estate *La Mozza*.

Matias Mayol Matias and his family own the vineyards and produce wine as *Famial Mayol* – a passionate, family-run company with estate vineyards and a state-of-the-art winery in Mendoza, Argentina. “Our wines bear our name, a unique identity. It's our way of reflecting the passion for our land through the cultivation of its fruits; a tradition we have inherited from both our European and Incan ancestors.” The idea for TriTono first germinated when Matias met Joe in Mendoza while Joe was sourcing high-quality Malbecs. He then worked for six weeks at the Bastianich winery in Friuli before being introduced to Steve Clifton by Joe in 2003, when the triumvirate was formed.

Steve Clifton Steve has two wine labels in Santa Barbara, California wine country. With his partner, Greg Brewer, Steve crafts *Brewer – Clifton* Chardonnay and Pinot Noir wines from select single vineyards throughout the Sta. Rita Hills appellation. *Palmina* is a passion project of Steve and his wife Chrystal wherein they produce a range of Italian varietal wines from Santa Barbara County grapes. The Palmina label is “a Californian celebration of the rich, wonderful lifestyle and attitude toward food, wine, friends and family that exists in Italy”.