



TASTE OF WINE

*By Frank Mangio
Week of Dec. 17, 2017*

Falkner Winery at the Pinnacle of Wine & Food

Shortly after 2005 when I first picked up a blank sheet of paper and wrote TASTE OF WINE on it, I journeyed up to Temecula Wine Country from my base in San Diego County and did a story on Falkner Winery, operated by the dapper Ray Falkner and his lovely and talented wife, Loretta.



Falkner was founded in 2000 and after some years of fashioning high quality Mediterranean style wine, the excitement of the day was the Pinnacle Restaurant and the winery's beautiful wedding venue on the grounds and in the restaurant, with its spectacular 1500 foot elevation views.

Owner Ray Falkner of the Pinnacle Restaurant with Executive Chef Jason Barradas, display a luscious T-Bone steak with Fingerling herb roasted potatoes and asparagus.

“With chef Barradas’s arrival, we have strengthened our great Mediterranean styled menu to add to our legendary Wine Country Burger and other big meals of the day at lunchtime,” Falkner remarked.

“We are a lunch only restaurant serving main course meals 7 days a week from 11:30 to 3:30pm. Chef Jason has introduced Seared Ahi and Cucumber, Spicy Catalan Shrimp Pasta and Beet Noodle Salad to the lineup.” Falkner has also added a specific wine recommendation for each item. With my pick being the occasional special in the menu of a T-Bone steak with herb roasted Fingerling potatoes and asparagus, I tasted the Falkner Super Tuscan Amante, a blend of Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cab Franc 2014 (\$55.) This wine has for the past 7 years, walked away with gold medals at the San Francisco competitions. 2014 was the first full growing, harvest and barreling experience for winemaker Duncan Williams who also created the blend for the Meritage, a 2014 Bordeaux style wine of Cab Sauvignon, Merlot, and Cab Franc.(\$55.) Falkner was the 15th winery to arrive in Temecula in 2000, and now there are nearly 40 diversified wineries, attracting visitors from 5 counties, none more than an hour and a half away in the Southern California metro area. See more of Falkner at falknerwinery.com.

Frank Mangio is a renowned wine connoisseur certified by Wine Spectator. He is one of the leading commentators on the web. View his columns at <http://thecoastnews.com>. Go to menu then column. Reach him at mangiompc@aol.com. to comment or unsubscribe.