



This wine is suitable for use in the services of the Orthodox Church. It has no additives.

Our Traditional Chalice Wine is made from heavily ripened, organically grown, Alicante grapes. Known for its medium body and rich thick color, Alicante makes a perfect wine for the Chalice, as it does not lose its body even after adding hot water.

Alicante grapes became popular in the 1920's when the Italian immigrants brought the vines to California from their homeland. During prohibition it became well known as the predominant grape that was used for export to the east coast where getting juice for private wine-making became more and more difficult. Due to its heartiness, the Alicante grapes were able to undergo great changes in environment and temperature in transport, while still maintaining their integrity for creating a delicious wine.

After the prohibition laws were repealed, and other varieties began to be re-introduced to California, Alicante grapes were slowly replaced by other heavily-marketed varieties. However, there are still plenty of vines that remain, and are cultivated by the descendants of the original Italian immigrants in California's central valley.

Currently, Alicante is mostly used as a blending grape for other varieties; however, because of its unique character and rich color, we prefer to use it in its own right as a dessert wine.

While appropriate for use in the Chalice, our Traditional Blend also makes a delicious dessert wine that pairs well with cherry pie or apple tarts.

Our Label, why Fort Ross? The Hamlet of Calistoga, which rests at the northern tip of the Napa Valley, has a special kinship with Fort Ross which is portrayed on the label of our Traditional Blend and lies on the Sonoma Coast about an hour and a half away. Fort Ross was built in the early 1800's and marks the southern-most presence of the Russian Empire in the Americas.



California Chalice Wine Traditional Blend

The building of Fort Ross was sponsored by the Russian American Trading Company; the main purpose of the Fort was to serve as an outpost for fur trappers who came to California to acquire skins of the abundant sea otters that inhabit the waters of the beautiful Sonoma coastline.

The Russians who explored the area and came to California as traders, made their way to the Napa Valley; the highest peak in the region, Mount St. Helena which towers over the village of Calistoga, was named after the wife of the Commander of Fort Ross, whose name was Helen.

In their exploration of the Napa and Sonoma Valleys, the Russians encountered the Spanish missions, then under the protection of Colonel Vallejo of Mexico, which had recently won its independence from Spain.

Even though the Russians and the Mexicans viewed each other with suspicion, one being a monarchy and the other being a republic, each sought to take advantage of the trading opportunities that were offered by the other.

The one area of agriculture that the Mexicans had begun in the Sonoma Valley that was destined for success, was the cultivation of grapes. In the long term, the cultivation of grapes and, as a consequence, the art of wine-making, was a skill in which the Russians showed great interest.

The Russian presence in California was short-lived; after Mexico lost California to the United States after the Mexican-American War, the Russians abandoned their outpost at Fort Ross.

Today, Fort Ross continues to be symbol of cultural heritage and solidarity for the Russian immigrants who have come to this land in recent years.

We, at Calistoga Orthodox Wines, by offering the first Canonical Orthodox Chalice wine to the general public made from California grapes, believe that we are completing one of the original objectives of the founders of Fort Ross; by offering God's finest fruits to the world for His glory.

As a sign of gratitude to those who came before us, we offer back to them the fruits of our labor.

Akim Provatakis, Founder, Calistoga Orthodox Wines