

11-1-1994

# A Brief History of Markko Vineyard

Arnulf Esterer  
*Markko Vineyard*

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## Recommended Citation

Esterer, Arnulf (1994). A Brief History of Markko Vineyard. *Markko Vineyard Documents*. Paper 6.  
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Markko Vineyard  
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Here along Lake Erie, people have been making vines for over 100 years, so I suppose my partner Tim Hubbard and I can hardly call ourselves pioneers because we had guidance from Dr Konstantin Frank. Yet we have often felt that way since Markko Vineyard's beginning in 1968.

Getting Markko off the ground meant turning my back on a 17 year career as an industrial engineer. Somehow transform myself from a desk-bound paper-pusher into a living, breathing dirty fingernails farmer.

It also meant that those who wanted to work, had to pull together as a family with everyone pitching in to plant the vines, harvest the grapes, do whatever had to be done.

But the real pioneering came with the vines themselves. Because Markko Vineyard represented one of the first serious attempts by an Ohio winemaker to grow European Vinifera grapes on the shore of Lake Erie. Other winemakers had had some success with the hardier French-American hybrid grapes. Now, we were setting out to pour our heart and soul into two of the world's great Vinifera - Chardonnay and Riesling grapes.

Today that pioneering has borne fruit.

The Chardonnay and Riesling wines can hold their heads proudly in the company of America's finest white wines. They're recognized and acclaimed for their fine varietal character by some of the country's leading wine experts.

The Cabernet Sauvignon, an experiment of more recent vintage, is coming into its own as well. Blended with Chambourcin, Cabernet Franc, and Merlot, our Cabernet is a heavy mouth-filling red wine.

And we also make non-vintage table wines. The Covered Bridge varietals, Chardonnay, Riesling and Cabernet, are honest, straight forward wines, made for your everyday table.

We're enormously proud of every one of these wines. They are perhaps our greatest satisfactions, but not our most fundamental. For this venture that has been Markko Vineyard has enriched our lives in other unexpected ways.

It has, for example, given all of us the satisfaction of working together in the vineyard as a family.

It has given each of us the satisfaction of participating in a tradition almost as old as mankind itself - the making of wine, the blood of life.

But most important of all, it has given us renewed faith in the Lord and our purpose for living - meaningful work producing a food, the beverage of moderation.

And thus each year, as we prune the vines, care for them, and watch the grapes turn into wine, we are thankful for the wondrous workings of God's world. We are especially grateful to all of you, our customers, for your support as we have grown up. We could not have done it alone.

Now, our future is with people like you - people who know wine, the good earth that produces it, and the companionship that surrounds it - to come, bring your friends and share these Markko Wines with us.

Arnulf Esterer  
Winegrower

P. S. You can visit Markko Vineyard Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. till 6 p.m.. And while you can order Markko Wines through the mail or by phone, we hope you'll come to the winery - not only to buy your wine, but also to visit with us, roam the grounds, perhaps bring a picnic. If you call ahead, we can arrange bread and cheese for you. (Located north of I90, three miles east of State Route 193 (Kingsville), or three miles west of State Route 7 on South Ridge Road.

Arnie

LAKE ERIE Winegrowers  
in Conneaut Ohio  
Since 1968