

Brief History of America's Oldest Winemaking Family

The Mirassou® family's forward-thinking produced numerous notable contributions to the wine industry—the Mirassous were the first to introduce Pinot Noir to California, and the first to realize the potential of the Central Coast (specifically the lush valley just east of Monterey) for the growing of wine grapes. The Mirassou family also led the way on several important innovations such as permanent vineyard irrigation and field pressing. Their contributions to the California wine industry are as much of a legacy as their wines!

In 1854, Pierre and Henrietta Pellier sailed from France with their prized grape cuttings in search of the best California had to offer. When their ship ran short of water, Pierre purchased potatoes onboard and inserted the cuttings, keeping the precious vines alive.



Pierre's daughter, Henrietta, married a young Frenchman and neighboring vintner, Pierre Mirassou. Pierre died suddenly at age 33, leaving Henrietta and their three sons to run the vineyards. Henrietta served as an important link between the generations as she passed the art of winemaking from her father and husband to her sons.

Through challenges such as Prohibition, wars and vanishing agricultural space, the Mirassous remained optimistic and determined to perpetuate the family legacy.



The first Mirassou generations worked together to build a thriving network of vineyards in the Santa Clara Valley that produced some of California's finest early wines. This rich family history and pioneering spirit have helped shape California winemaking and the emergence of the Central Coast as a premier growing region.

Young Norbert Mirassou and his father Peter are shown at right loading wine into rail tank cars. Always innovating, the Mirassou family's numerous winemaking firsts include introducing steel fermentation and mechanical harvesting methods and other innovations that continue to shape the wine industry.



Fourth generation family members Ed and Norbert Mirassou, along with winemaker Max Huebner, shown at left, were dedicated to providing the highest-quality wines possible. This heritage continues today with the newest vintage of Mirassou wines.

Today, sixth generation family member David Mirassou carries on the legacy, lending a critical perspective in his role in producing Mirassou wines.

