

**Acorn Winery****2005 Sangiovese, Alegria Vineyards  
(Russian River Valley)**

Betsy & Bill Nachbaur's 27 acre Alegria Vineyard is a wine geek's dream. You name an obscure European grape variety, and the Nachbours are more than likely to have at least a few vines interplanted among more mainstream varieties. Take some of these oddities as examples (get out your wine dictionary): Canaiolo, Cinsaut, Freisa, Mammolo, Negrette, Petit Bouschet and Trousseau.

One of the more recognizable varieties grown by Acorn is Sangiovese. The Sangiovese variety is prone to mutation and many different clones of the grape exist. The Nachbours have seven different clones of the grape interplanted in their vineyard. Specializing in field blended wines, the Nachbours harvest everything together and co-ferment the clonal mélange of Sangiovese along with a small amount (1% each) of less familiar Tuscan brethren Canaiolo and Mammolo that share the same vineyard block.

The inclusion of these varieties is a nod to Tuscan tradition, but stylistically, the wine is perhaps a little more modern than traditional Chianti. Even so, this wine is anything but conventional. It definitely leans to the red fruit end of the spectrum with fresh strawberry and cherry notes – and what a refreshing thing to find in a California wine these days. In fact, the aroma and fruit profile here are not the only things that separate this wine from the norm of contemporary Californian winemaking. There's also an unabashed tannic structure – fine and velvety, but well defined and more angular than the gushy soft and round tannins that characterized so many California wines of recent vintages. The departures from mainstream continue in the wine's listed alcohol, a very old school 13.5 percent. This moderate alcohol level, coupled with the more pristine red berry fruit and crisp acid core of this wine are what one might expect of this cooler part of the Russian River. While it's not exactly Chianti, this wine certainly accomplishes the same objective every bit as well – to pair beautifully with a wide range of foods. And what could be more Tuscan than that?

Reviewed March 28, 2008 by [Adam Dial](#).

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**THE WINE**

**Winery:** [Acorn Winery](#)

**Vineyard:** Alegria Vineyards

**Vintage:** 2005

**Wine:** Sangiovese

**Appellation:** [Russian River Valley](#)

**Grapes:** Sangiovese (98%), Canaiolo Nero (1%), Mammolo (1%)

**Price:** \$26.00

**THE REVIEWER****Adam Dial**

Adam Dial is co-founder and Managing Editor of Appellation America. Brought up in a family with winery ventures in both California and Canada, he seeks and appreciates diversity and individuality in wines. He is a Sommelier with more than two

decades of experience in the hospitality and service industry, and is a respected wine educator, judge and industry advisor.