



BOOMERANG CLUB NEWSLETTER

FALL 2020

FALL WINE CLUB RELEASE

WINEMAKER'S SELECTION

2018 CHARDONNAY, HAWK HILL VINEYARD (RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY)

2017 ZINFANDEL, SONOMA HILLSIDE VINEYARDS (SONOMA VALLEY)

2016 SYRAH (SONOMA VALLEY)

2013 SYRAH, ROSSI RANCH, CELLAR RELEASE (SONOMA VALLEY)

2016 CABERNET SHIRAZ, GRANDFATHER'S CUVÉE (SONOMA VALLEY)

2016 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, RANDOM RIDGE (MT. VEEDER, NAPA VALLEY)

OPTIONS FOR CUSTOM ORDERS

ALL WINES FROM OUR WEBSITE ARE AVAILABLE, BUT THE FOLLOWING ARE PARTICULARLY HIGHLIGHTED

SONOMA REDS - LOT 14 (SONOMA COUNTY)

2018 LRW (SONOMA COUNTY)

2019 LATE HARVEST ZINFANDEL, CASA SANTINAMARIA VINEYARD (SONOMA VALLEY)

2015 PORT (SONOMA VALLEY)



Our team after the first Estate pick of 2020

Dear Club Member,

I write this newsletter just as the 2020 harvest starts. It's a milestone one, the 25th vintage for Loxton Cellars. This seems hard to believe and just as I thought I should give myself a pat on the back I realize that dad retired at 85 with almost 70 harvests under his belt, so I'm not even halfway! That's something to reflect on. One thing that perhaps has inspired him, and certainly keeps it fresh for me, is that it has never become rote. There is always something to learn, something new to react to, and since there is just the one harvest a year it takes a long time to build experience. How wonderful that every year we start afresh with another cycle of growing and wine making, hoping for that perfect wine!

All harvests present their challenges, but this one will take some beating. Obviously one of the big issues is the virus and making sure that we can safely do all the picking and processing with the right protocols. I almost need a full-time person just to read all the emails from the trade and government agencies pointing out what I need to do. It's also an early harvest and we went from bottling right into harvest, despite my plan of bottling, vacation and then harvest. Harvests just seem to be getting earlier and earlier. On top of this there have been fires again, and while previous fires have been late in the season, this time they arrived just as we begin.

There is much to keep us positive though. The Estate fruit looks in outstanding condition, in no small part due to the fact that the tasting room was closed for 3 months so we were able to focus on our vineyard work. I'm also super excited to be getting a little more of the Pinot noir from the Hawk Hill vineyard in Freestone which has replaced my Griffin's Lair Pinot. We are continuing to fine tune our vineyard and winemaking practices so that I feel our best wines are still to come.

Another reason to be positive is that I'm really excited about the new releases. They include a Chardonnay that should compete with the 2001 and 2013 versions for being the favorite white wines that I've made. Additionally the Cabernet wines show just how good the 2016 vintage was for California Cabernet and the Mt. Veeder wine in particular is about to play a big part in my personal cellar. Our aged release is a Syrah from the Rossi Ranch, a vineyard that has gained a lot of attention from the wine press since its rehabilitation more than a decade ago. There is also a wonderful Pinot-Syrah blend as an optional wine that shows the best of both grape varieties and the Late Harvest Zinfandel has been getting excellent reviews as we continue to do tastings in our outside areas. Although visiting the winery is now a different experience than before, there is a certain intimacy in tasting wines from outside tables just feet from where the grapes were grown. We welcome you to visit and experience with us!

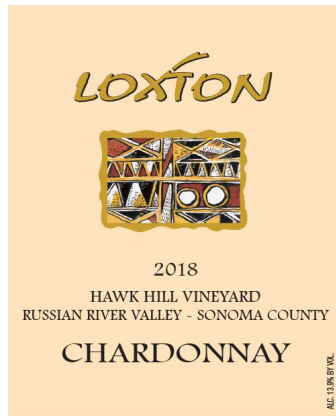
Finally I have a positive outlook because of the generosity of my club members and the dedication of my staff. The support we have received since Spring has meant that I've been able to retain all my employees throughout this difficult period and without them, this journey would not be possible.

Thank you,



Chris Loxton

2018 CHARDONNAY - HAWK HILL VINEYARD



Appellation: Russian River Valley

Blend: 100% Chardonnay

pH: 3.34

Alcohol: 13.9%

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 242 cases

Bottled unfiltered & lightly filtered July 22, 2019

Release Price: \$32.00

I've been using the "Russian River Valley" appellation on my Hawk Hill Chardonnay label ever since the first vintage in 2001. Hawk Hill is in the most extreme south and west part of the appellation, able to be called "Sonoma Coast", "Green Valley" or "Russian River Valley". Sonoma Coast is a very big area covering most of the western half of the County and is so diverse that it is hard to find a unifying quality in its wines. Green Valley is confusing as I know several areas that are called Green Valley all here in northern California. Hawk Hill is also quite far from the Russian River and has quite different soils and is more moderated by the proximity to the Sonoma Coast than the river. The coastal influence is most readily seen in the colder temperatures and higher fog and humidity than vineyards along the river area.

In the last few years there has been an initiative to make this area around Hawk Hill a separate appellation, perhaps as the area called "Freestone". My Chardonnay has always been from this area, so I don't have a point of reference so much, but I'm seeing the difference more so now as I've done 4 harvests of Pinot noir from Hawk Hill. My Pinot noir program has been associated with Petaluma Gap (Griffin's Lair 2011-2017), the "true" Russian River (Archer vineyard 2008-2010) and Hawk Hill (2005, 2007, 2018-) and the differences in the wines are dramatic.



The coastal fog rolling in toward Hawk Hill

I hope this area gets its recognition as a separate area and I'd be delighted to present this new vintage of Hawk Hill Chardonnay as a wonderful example of the Freestone Appellation. It has the bright acidity that balances the great depth of flavor and the oak influence is at a minimum thereby allowing the grape and region to be the focus of the wine. 2018 is an outstanding year for the region, and I expect this wine will continue to improve for the next 3-4 years and hold for much longer than that. What I find so interesting is that the wine builds in bottle, becoming richer and more rounded so if you have a few bottles hidden away for an extra year or two you will be richly rewarded!

2017 ZINFANDEL - SONOMA HILLSIDE VINEYARDS



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 100% Zinfandel

(70% Rossi Ranch, 30% Estate)

pH: 3.87

Alcohol: 14.0%

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 271 cases

Bottled unfined and lightly filtered August 21, 2018

Release Price: \$28.00

Zinfandel is a rather thin skinned grape and can easily start to turn to a raisin in hot weather. The problem is, raisins might be fine in muffins, but the flavor of raisins should not be in wine. Over the Labor Day weekend in 2017 we had temperatures that approached 112 degrees for several days with my Zinfandel from the Estate and the Rossi Ranch still about a week away from picking. Sunburn damage and raisins became an issue and if it was my first harvest I'm sure I might have panicked!

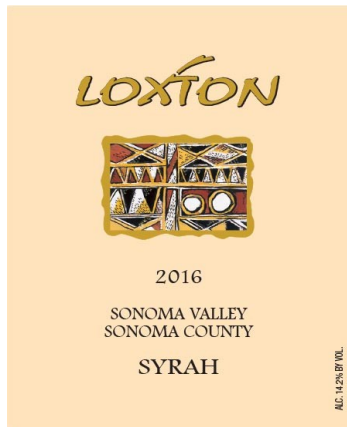
Fortunately, I've been working with Zinfandel since 1992, and for my own wines since 1996, and I have learned two valuable things. Firstly, when walking in the vineyard we see the berries that face outward and these are the ones that see the sun and get fried, even when the rest of the bunch is fine. So the first lesson is not to panic. The second thing is that the affected fruit dries up like a tiny marble making them easier to eject during the process of removing the berries from the stems. My destemming machine has the ability to change speeds (it should, it was way more expensive than my car!) and by running at high speed we lose a little of the good fruit, but get rid of most of the dried raisins. Experience has its rewards.



An extreme example of sunburn damaged Zinfandel on the outside of the bunch.

This 2017 Zinfandel combines fruit from the Rossi Ranch and Estate vineyards, with the Rossi Ranch giving red fruit notes and structure and the Estate giving some black cherry and roundness. It is an excellent example of the importance of experience to bring out the best of the vintage. Ready to enjoy now, it should also be lovely drinking for the 3-4 years and is at its best with grilled foods and pasta dishes that have bright flavors.

2016 SYRAH



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 100% Syrah (75% Estate, 17% Rossi Ranch, 8% Shumahi)

pH: 3.72

Alcohol: 14.2%

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 179 cases

Bottled unfined and lightly filtered August 29, 2017

Release Price: \$25.00

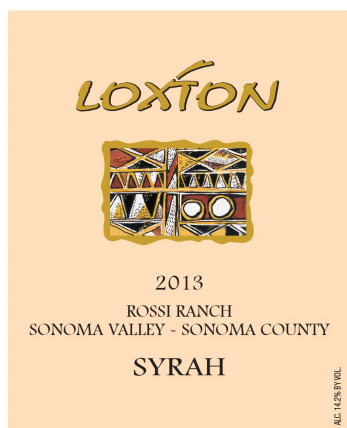
The year that I spent at UC Davis studying winemaking happened to be the year when the son of one of the most renowned winemakers in France was also there attending classes. His family were from the northern Rhone Valley and made famous and expensive Syrah from the hillside of Hermitage. I was taken aback when he mentioned that the family didn't tend to drink the Hermitage wine that much, finding the wine too big for many meals and that they preferred to drink the lighter and less famous St. Joseph wine that they made. His comment has stayed with me over the years as I find that I also sometimes reach for a wine to have with dinner and then stop because it might overwhelm the food. I'm not wanting less flavor, just a lighter bodied wine. Although I usually make my wines in a similar manner, sometimes wine from a certain part of the vineyard just *is* a little lighter and this reflects the soil and growing conditions. I've also picked a little earlier for some lots and have done less extraction in the fermentation process to accentuate a slightly less robust style. For the past few years I've chosen some of these components for what I call my "Sonoma Valley Syrah" and some for my Shiraz program. I want the same flavors and intensity, but in a more medium bodied and less heavy style, thus making it a little more versatile with food.



Handmade with care and attention. Each berry is shovelled

This 2016 version uses 75% Estate fruit, 17% from the Rossi Ranch and 8% from Shumahi vineyard all here in Glen Ellen, Sonoma Valley. The Estate lots are from the picnic block and from the 174 clone, picked a little earlier for freshness and red fruit, while Rossi Ranch gives us color and tannin structure and Shumahi offers roundness. While the wine is ready to drink, I've been surprised at how well they have aged, with the first of this series (I called it the Ellen Syrah in 2007) still being an excellent wine. The key is balance.

2013 SYRAH - ROSSI RANCH



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 100% Syrah

pH: 3.73

Alcohol: 14.2%

Closure: Screwcap

Production: 200 cases

Bottled unfinned and lightly filtered July 13, 2015

Library Release Price: \$35.00

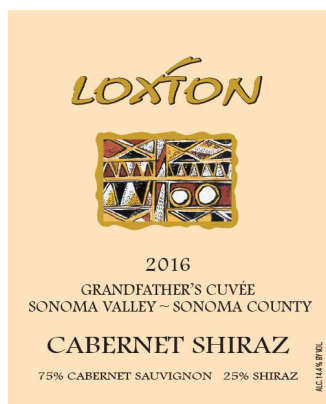
Harvest is 2 months of intense and back breaking work, mostly cleaning and shoveling and tasting grape juice and cloudy, partly fermented wine. After I've recovered from harvest (which seems to take a bit longer than it did 25 harvests ago), I like to celebrate by opening an older wine. While the chemistry of wine aging is complex and has been understood to some extent since the days of Pasteur, my interest is purely hedonistic. Older red wines lose some of the fresh fruit characters but compensate by picking up complexity with secondary aromas of leather and dried flowers and the tannins soften and mellow. The wine just seems to meld together and become a whole unit, not just the sum of separate parts. Wines that improve like this are generally wines with good tannin structure and good acidity as these are the elements that hold the wine together. Every year I choose one wine with these attributes that I think will benefit from aging and put aside 100 cases for the wine club to re-release as an cellar aged wine. This year's version is once again from the Rossi Ranch here in Glen Ellen and it's the 2013 Syrah.



Evaluating the small vines & fruit at Rossi Ranch

At first release I recommended having this wine with brawny foods, but it has mellowed with age and is starting to take on some flavors of leather and chocolate to go along with the original red fruits. It is still youthful in many ways so satisfies those that like fruit flavors in their wine, but has the complexity and roundness to appeal to those that appreciate older wines. The best part is I think its going to continue to improve or hold for many years yet. We have been offering 3 vintages of the Rossi Syrah as a set and they have been so well received, and the best part is I'm not sure which one I like the most! Try this with cassoulet or sturdy winter dishes.

2016 CABERNET SHIRAZ - GRANDFATHER'S CUVÉE



Appellation: Sonoma Valley

Blend: 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Shiraz

pH: 3.75

Alcohol: 14.4%

Closure: Cork Finish

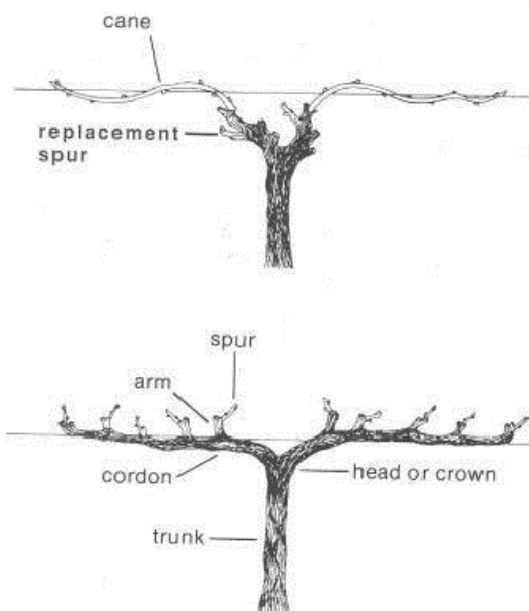
Production: 198 cases

Bottled unfinned and lightly filtered August 22, 2018

Release Price: \$35.00

Many people don't realize that as they drive around wine country about half of the vineyards they see are privately owned with a business model just to sell grapes. Furthermore, within each vineyard there may be several winery contracts and individual areas may be farmed slightly differently and with a different contract price per ton. I love this "a la carte" way of doing business as it means that I can have the vines farmed just the way I want and picked when I want, but the grower also is reimbursed for extra effort with an up-charge for each additional service.

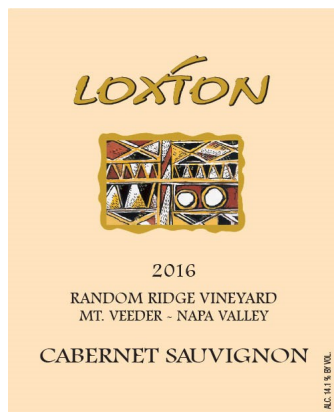
My Sonoma Cabernet grapes come from the McGraw vineyard here in Glen Ellen and I buy them under a similar contract. While most of the vineyard is pruned with shoots coming up off a permanent vine arm (a cordon, thus cordon pruned), my block is set up where each spring a cane is left and tied down to become a temporary arm for that year (cane pruning). It requires much more expertise from the pruner, but the theory is that each vine can be individually tailored for its vigor. We set this up in 2003 when I first started to work with the McGraws as they were establishing their vineyard. While I can appreciate the science, a part of me wondered if Jim, the vineyard manager, was just showing off how skillful he and his crew was. After all, even I can quickly master the rules of cordon pruning when I count one bud, then 2 buds and cut. Pretty easy! Whatever Jim's reason really was, sometimes the smart thing to do is have an expert and just let them do their job.



Cane vs Cordon Pruning

Although Jim has long since retired, my block is still pruned that way and I have to say he might have been right. The proof is in the grapes and wine and here I've started with the base Cabernet wine (6 barrels were kept as Cabernet and released as the vineyard designate wine in Spring) and the remainder blended with Estate Syrah to add a little more middle palate weight and balance the acidity to make this Cabernet Shiraz. It is ready to drink now or can age for up to 10 years.

2016 CABERNET SAUVIGNON - RANDOM RIDGE



Appellation: Mt. Veeder, Napa Valley

Blend: 90% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc

pH: 3.72

Alcohol: 14.4%

Closure: Cork Finish

Production: 147 cases

Bottled unfiltered and lightly filtered August 22, 2018

Release Price: \$45.00

To many, Napa Valley Cabernet sauvignon is the pinnacle for California red wines. Now I enjoy many different red wines from many countries but Napa Cabernet still has a certain allure, even though I have to admit I haven't been drinking many of them in the last decade. They just got too big and heavy and I found that they weren't a good match to the foods I was eating. Every now and again I get to try an older wine though and it forces me to stop and think about how I liked those wines that were a little lighter that tasted of a place and of Cabernet grapes. Some really stand out and I wish I'd bought more back in the 90's when that style was in vogue, but the 90's were a time when I gave up a paying job to follow the passion of wine-making and buying wine wasn't really an option.

At a friend's 50th in 2015 I was able to try a 1994 Mt. Veeder Cabernet that made this kind of impression. It was the wine made for the grape grower Bill Hawley from his Random Ridge vineyard and I'd helped Bill hand bottle that wine way back in 1996. In business it often is "who you know" and it didn't hurt that Bill and I and a few of his other friends had been backpacking to the "Matterhorn" in Yosemite Valley many years ago. So it didn't take long for me to get a few tons of grapes for my first Napa Cabernet which was released last year. I also started making Bill's own wine and one of the perks was being able to get access to a small amount of his Cabernet franc as well. That '94 was a blend of Cabernet sauvignon and Cabernet franc and I've done the same here with the addition of the franc lightening the Cabernet sauvignon and adding to the aromatics. The 2016 vintage had a little more winter rain than the drought year of '15 and as a consequence I find the wine a little more supple and approachable than the '15 while still showing the backbone of Mt. Veeder Cabernet. I expect this wine to have a very long enjoyment window and think it is ready to open now but should be able to be cellared for at least 10-15 years under good conditions. This is the best Cabernet I've made to date.



Hiking the "Matterhorn", Yosemite Valley, 1999

SONOMA REDS LOT 14

**Sonoma County • 39% Zinfandel, 37% Syrah, 19% Cabernet sauvignon, 5% Others • pH: 3.78
Alc: 14.0% • 224 cases • Screwcap**

Bottled unfinned and lightly filtered, August 24, 2020 • Release Price: \$19

Our perennial offering of a “anytime” wine gives all the flavor but at an affordable price. I put together various wines left over after making my vineyard designated wines, then relaxed the blending options to give a multi-variety and multi-vintage wine. Lot 14 has a base of Estate Zinfandel for its fruit flavors, Syrah for its roundness and middle palate and then smaller amounts of Cabernet to add structure and fruit flavors. The overall blend shows some spice and vanilla from the oak program and shows intensity of flavors with being heavy and a lovely long cabernet dominated finish. It’s a wine that should be ready anytime over the next few years.

2018 LRW

**Sonoma County • 55% Pinot Noir, 45% Syrah, • pH: 3.64 • Alc: 13.0% • 40 cases • Screwcap
Bottled unfinned and lightly filtered, March 16, 2020 • Release Price: \$35**

One of the legendary Australian wines is the line of Pinot noir/Shiraz blends made in the ‘50’s by pioneering winemaker Maurice O’Shea. While there are rumors of Syrah being used to “improve” Pinot in Burgundy and elsewhere, these were deliberate blends and labelled as such. In proving what is old becomes new again, I’ve recently seen versions in Australia and in Oregon as a Lighter Red Wine (hence my LRW label). Here I’ve used an aromatic and lower alcohol Pinot from Hawk Hill in Freestone and a lighter bodied and very floral Syrah from Griffin’s Lair in the Petaluma Gap, all aged in well used oak barrels so that there is little oak influence. It still reminds me of a Pinot in aroma and flavor with the Syrah only becoming apparent by adding more to the finish. This is an excellent wine to have with salmon or chicken dishes.

2019 LATE HARVEST ZINFANDEL, CASA SANTINAMARIA VINEAYRD

**Sonoma Valley • 100% Zinfandel • pH: 3.35 • Alc: 15.5% • Residual Sugar 9.3% • 102 cases
Screwcap • Bottled by hand, June 15, 2018 • Release Price:\$28**

A field blend of primarily Zinfandel planted in the early 1900’s. The grapes were left on the vine for several weeks past normal picking time to get to very high sugar content. A little past the halfway point of fermentation the wine was filtered to remove the yeast leaving the final wine with medium alcohol yet still with 10% residual sugar. The high natural acidity we get from this vineyard site stops the wine from being excessively sweet and it is a wonderful after dinner wine that makes a great match with bittersweet chocolate. It lasts 1-2 weeks once opened.

2015 PORT

**Sonoma Valley • 100% Syrah, Estate • pH: 3.70 • Alc: 18.2% • Residual Sugar 9.3% • 297 cases
Cork Finish • 500mL • Bottled unfinned and unfiltered, August 29, 2016 • Release Price: \$30**

Port can be a very traditional way to finish up the meal with dessert or cheese but many are too sweet. I have always used Syrah for my ports but have always tried to have enough acid and tannin in the wine to keep it all balanced. Its still a wine to have in smaller quantities, but the great thing is that the wine keeps for up to a month once opened. Try this with chocolate desserts or with a sharp cheese.

Wine Club Weekend Pickup Days!
Every Weekend in November 11:00-5:00

While we would love nothing more than to celebrate the end of harvest with our annual Fall Release Party, we will unfortunately not be able to host a large event. To give you a chance to taste the new releases and make in-person changes before taking your order home, we have decided to make every weekend in November a Wine Club pickup day! We will have the new lineup of fall releases available to taste outside in our picnic area where groups will be socially distanced allowing you to relax and enjoy the new wines while looking out at the incredible views of the Mayacamas.

To make sure we can plan for proper social distancing and ever-changing county regulations please let us know when you plan to pick up your wine by contacting us at winery@loxtonwines.com or 707-935-7221



With potential ash issues on grapes in the smoke affected 2020 harvest, we used a leaf blower to remove ash debris with positive results!

SHIPPING RATES

To help bring Loxton to you, we will continue our flat rate shipping program:

CA, NV, AZ, ID, NM, OR and WA shipping is **\$10 per case up to 15**

All other states, shipping is **\$20 per case up to 12**

Additional charge will apply if address is incorrect or package is undeliverable resulting in redirection or return

Wine Club Order For:				
PLEASE MAKE ANY CUSTOMIZATIONS OR UPDATES TO YOUR INFO ONLINE, VIA E-MAIL, MAIL OR PHONE BY 10/21				
STANDARD ORDERS WILL BE BILLED 10/26 AND SHIPPED 11/2, PICKUPS AVAILABLE STARTING 11/1				
CUSTOM ORDERS WILL BE BILLED AND SHIPPED SHORTLY AFTER THEY ARE RECEIVED				
Standard 6 <input type="checkbox"/>			Custom <input type="checkbox"/>	
QTY	PRICE	THE WINES	QTY	TOTAL
1	\$32	2018 CHARDONNAY, HAWK HILL VINEYARD		
1	\$28	2017 ZINFANDEL, SONOMA HILLSIDE VINEYARDS		
1	\$25	2016 SYRAH		
1	\$35	2013 SYRAH, ROSSI RANCH		
1	\$35	2016 CABERNET SHIRAZ, GRANDFATHER'S CUVÉE		
1	\$45	2016 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, RANDOM RIDGE		
OPTIONS FOR CUSTOM ORDERS				
0	\$19	SONOMA REDS - LOT 14 *25% DISCOUNT ON A CASE		
0	\$35	2018 LRW		
0	\$28	2019 LATE HARVEST ZINFANDEL 500ML		
0	\$30	2015 PORT 500ML		
6	\$200	SUBTOTAL	#	
-\$40		LESS 20% WINE CLUB DISCOUNT *SONOMA REDS CASE DISCOUNT IN PLACE OF OTHER DISCOUNTS	-20%	
\$160.00		PRE-TAX TOTAL		
CA	Out-of-state	8.25% SALES TAX (PICK-UPS, CA SHIPMENTS ONLY, 8% SALES TAX NH)		
\$13.20	\$0			
\$173.20	\$160.00	WINE TOTAL WITH TAX (IF APPLICABLE)		
		SHIPPING CHARGES (SEE TABLE ON OPPOSITE PAGE)		
		TOTAL		
MAILING ADDRESS			SHIPPING ADDRESS	
Phone:			Phone:	
Email:			Email:	
CREDIT CARD INFORMATION				
NEW VISA/MC:			EXP:	
SIGNATURE:				