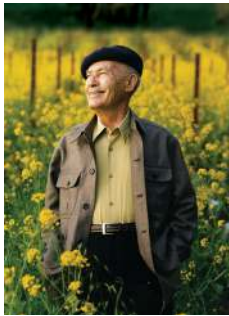


GRGICH HILLS ESTATE



THE SEARCH FOR THE **ORIGIN OF ZINFANDEL**

DISCOVERED IN CROATIA

By Miljenko "Mike" Grgich



In 1958, when Miljenko "Mike" Grgich arrived in Napa and went to work for Lee Stewart at Souverain Cellars, he noticed that Zinfandel looked like his native Plavac Mali, but he read that Zinfandel had an unknown origin. On his trip to Croatia in August 1993, Mike took cuttings of clusters, leaves, and canes of Zinfandel. Mike also discovered a book written by Dr. Peter Maleš describing the similarities between Zinfandel, Primitivo, and Plavac Mali. In his opinion, they were the same variety.

In 1998 Mike invited Dr. Carol Meredith from the University of California, Davis to his home in Yountville to show her the book and translated it into English for her. That same year she went to Croatia and took samples of 150 Plavac Mali vines. Back in the lab at the University of California, Davis, she discovered that none of these were Zinfandel, but they were genetically related. University of Zagreb professors Ivan Pejić and Edi Maletić continued the search for the original Zinfandel. Then, on September 7, 2000 near Split in Kaštel Novi, Professor Maletić discovered an old vine called Kaštelanski Crljenak. Samples were sent to Dr. Meredith for DNA analysis and eight different tests all proved that it was the same as the Zinfandel found in California.

Miljenko "Mike" Grgich is proud to have contributed to establishing that the origin of California Zinfandel is Croatia.