

Scotto/ Howling Moon, Old Vine Zinfandel 2005 Lodi

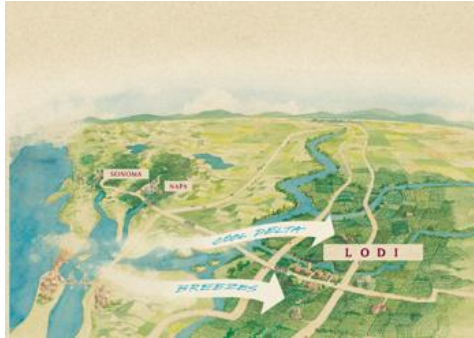
31 Mar 2009 by Jancis Robinson

From £6.89 and \$9.60

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What a pleasure to find such a great value wine from California! This blend of very old vine Zinfandel fruit comes from Lodi, the highly distinctive wine region in the far north west of the Central Valley which benefits, as the graphic below shows, from cooling influences from the west. Lodi has been extremely active in establishing an identity separate from the great baked grape factory that is the Central Valley, and with good reason. (See entry on [Lodi](#) in the online *Oxford Companion*.)



This particular blend was made with some input from UK importers Seckford, who are now selling a wide range of wines under the Lodi family name Scotto. I am assured that the same wines are sold as Howling Moon in the US. Here's what the Scottos have to say about their relationship to wine - a thoroughly American story:

Our family's wine history started in the mid 1800s with my grandfather, Salvatore Dominic Scotto, in Ischia, Italy. Like many in his day, he made wine for the family table and sold the excess. While presenting his wine to a new neighbour, he met his future bride. He taught his first son, Dominic, everything he knew about making wine. In the years ahead Dominic followed in his father's footsteps, making wine for his family in his spare time while he worked as a ship's caulker. In 1903 his family emigrated to New York and eventually settled in Brooklyn, where he practised his trade on the wooden ships docked at ports up and down the east coast. He also resumed his second career as a winemaker and started selling five-gallon crocks of red wine to the neighbours from his horse-drawn wagon.

What gives this **Scotto/ Howling Moon, Old Vine Zinfandel 2005 Lodi** its distinction is surely the age of the vines, about 50 years old. It's difficult to think of any other example of a wine selling for this sort of price and offering such relative antiquity of supply. I found the wine extremely juicy and lively with real intensity and brightness of Zinfandel's sweet berry fruit but, despite its strapping 14.5% alcohol, there is real freshness on the finish. Oak influence is minimal - this would make a great textbook example of pure Zinfandel flavour - and at a great price.

Seckford seem to have sold this wine as Scotto quite widely to the independent retailers in the UK (Great Grog of Edinburgh appear to have the best price) and, as Howling Moon, it can also be found on several websites in the US. The Scottos themselves suggest these:

www.myspace.com/fr_liquors

www.ghirpizza.com/wine.php

www.batonrougewine.com/baton-rouge-wine.html#california%20Zinfandel

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