



HOW THE CASTELLO DA VINCI BRAND CAME TO BE

By Lewis Perdue

My newest investigative thriller, *Perfect Killer*, is as much fact as it is fiction. Perhaps more fact than fiction as evidenced by all the Freedom of Information Act documents, the bibliography, Col. Gabriel's Afterword, the Virtual Tour and especially by the real people in the book. I interviewed many people including General Clark Braxton (U.S. Army, Retired)

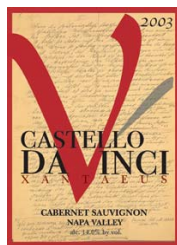
One afternoon, following one of the many sessions with Gen. Braxton at Castello Da Vinci, he took me on a tour of his remarkable wine cellar carved out of his estate's volcanic knoll overlooking the Napa Valley. We tasted one of the rare bottles of his own privately vinted wine. General Braxton mentioned that he had many demands for his wine, many more than he could possibly fulfill. Besides, he stressed, the government regulations, permits and bureaucratic torture associated with selling wine to the general public was more than he wanted to deal with. "I will not be held hostage by some power-hungry bureaucrat," were his exact words.

Over the next several months, we talked about this and I suggested that perhaps we could find a fine vintner willing to make a limited amount of specially made wine for retail sales.

That led me to Cline Cellars. I've known Fred and Nancy Cline for years. Their children go to school with mine. And significantly -- my wife and I have probably consumed more Cline Cellars wine than any other single winery in the world.

The current release of Xantaeus Red 2003 is the joint venture that resulted. While most wineries and wine brands start with a fantasy of some sort, the Castello Da Vinci, Xantaeus 2003 is the first to make the transition from fiction to fact.

Cline Cellars, General Braxton and I are all partners in this new venture which we hope will bring you great pleasure, sipped thoughtfully as you read your copy of *Perfect Killer*.



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