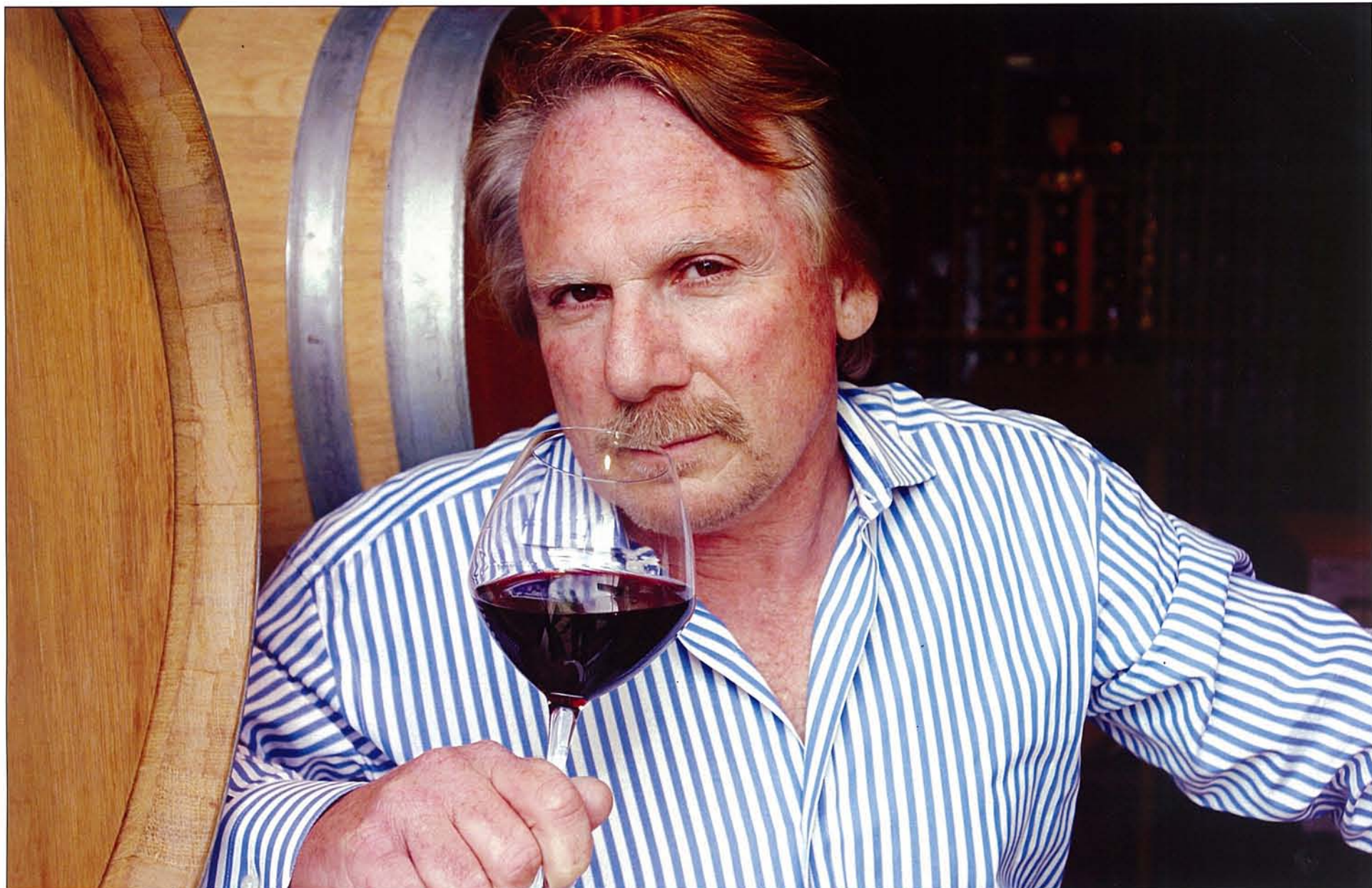


# Palisadian-Post Real Estate NEWS & VIEWS

THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2011 ♦ PACIFIC PALISADES, CALIFORNIA



Cosimo Pizzulli has a hillside vineyard on his 1.5-acre property on Marquette Street (above Las Pulgas Canyon) and a winery in Camarillo. He sells his wine commercially at Los Angeles-based restaurants and wine shops.

Rich Schmitt/Staff Photographer

## Pizzulli: Interior Space Expert and Winemaker

By DANIELLE GILLESPIE  
Staff Writer

While painting a condominium complex in the Sonoma Valley after his senior year of high school, Cosimo Pizzulli had the opportunity to meet the architects of the project.

"I had a lot of conversations with them about all the things that I thought were wrong with their design," Pizzulli recalls. "I did not think the project was consistent with the environment they were putting it in."

The experience inspired him to study the refinement of interior spaces and design, which led him to his current career as owner of Pizzulli Associates, a full-service interior architecture firm in Santa Monica. The Pacific Palisades resident is currently working on a makeover of the former Dante Palisades restaurant on Swarthmore.

Pizzulli, who is of Italian ancestry, attended Parsons: The New School for Design and the Pratt Institute. After college, he spent three years (1980-83) in Milan, Italy working with Anna Castelli Ferrieri, an architect and industrial designer, and her team.

"Their philosophy about design was that good design should be for the masses not for the classes, and so the practice was based on designing things that were very simple and very beautiful that everyone could afford," Pizzulli says, noting that they also practiced conservation and sustainability. "They were just way ahead of their time in the sense of being respectful to nature."

After returning to the United States, he worked for three firms before establishing Pizzulli Associates in 1986. Since then, he has completed projects in the areas of retail, entertainment, hospitality and residential totaling more than \$500 million. He has operated his firm out of three separate offices in Santa Monica and is now located at 718 Wilshire Blvd. His staff fluctuates from six to 10 employees, depending on the workload.

Chef Alain Giraud, who recently purchased Dante's, hired Pizzulli to design the interior space of his new restaurant, Maison Giraud, and his wife's retail store, Lavender Blue. The Girauds plan to open for business in mid-May.

The restaurant, serving French cuisine, will feature a large outdoor covered patio, a bakery and an interior space with simple, warm tones.

"There will be stained concrete floors, softly painted walls and a very simple flat ceiling," Pizzulli says, noting the restaurant will resemble those found in the South of France. "The emphasis will be on the food and not the space."

A dividing wall, with windows, will be erected between the dining area and the 400-sq.-ft. retail space, where Catherine Giraud will sell imported table linens and napkins from the South of France.

Pizzulli told the *Palisadian-Post* that he finds it exciting to work with clients such as Giraud to craft an interior space that is based on a certain style or period.

"I think the real art in design is having enough history and resources to pull from to design your clients' dreams, and to have it be any sort of a style."

In the past three years, Pizzulli has been hired for a number of projects in Beverly Hills. He recently designed an art gallery, Galerie Michael, and a penthouse suite above Armani on Rodeo Drive for the prominent dermatologist Dr. Harold Lancer, and he's designing a 5,000-sq.-ft. high-end luxury men's store on Rodeo Drive for Stefano Ricci of Florence, Italy.

He has also completed interior architecture designs for Sony Music Entertainment, Bertelsmann Entertainment, Universal Music, General Motors, Sheraton Hotels and Resorts, Topson Downs Green Office Project (a building in Culver City that earned an LEED Gold Certification), Yamaha Motors International and celebrity homes for Paul Anka and Larry King. In addition, he worked as the designer and contractor for Giorgio Baldi Restaurant on West Channel Road in Santa Monica Canyon.

# Cosimo Pizzulli:

Pizzulli is also proud of his work for Steve Wynn of Wynn Hotel Casino Resort, who hired him to design 12 ultra-luxury suites and gave him a budget of \$1 million per suite. He crafted and custom designed all the furniture, silk carpets, fabrics, mosaics, marble-tile floors, wood work and private pools.

While working in Milan in the 1980s, Pizzulli learned the art of furniture design. He teamed up with designers from countries such as Chile, Argentina, Brazil, China, Japan and Germany at Centrokappa, the design studio of Kartell.

“It was a collaboration of how people work and live around the world, and how do you bring all of that culture together to design furniture that meets the masses,” Pizzulli says. “It was a lot of sharing of ideas.”

He now designs furniture that is unique for his clients as part of his interior architecture projects. In Los Angeles, he designed furniture for Drago Santa Monica on Wilshire and il Pastaio and Enoteca Drago, both on Canon Drive in Beverly Hills.

In fact, Pizzulli, who describes himself as “a modern-day renaissance artist,” also works in fine-art painting, pen-and-ink drawings, landscape design and lighting design. He has designed products such as light fixtures, fabrics, carpets and clothing. His Italian intercom device won Italy’s top design award, Compasso D’Oro.

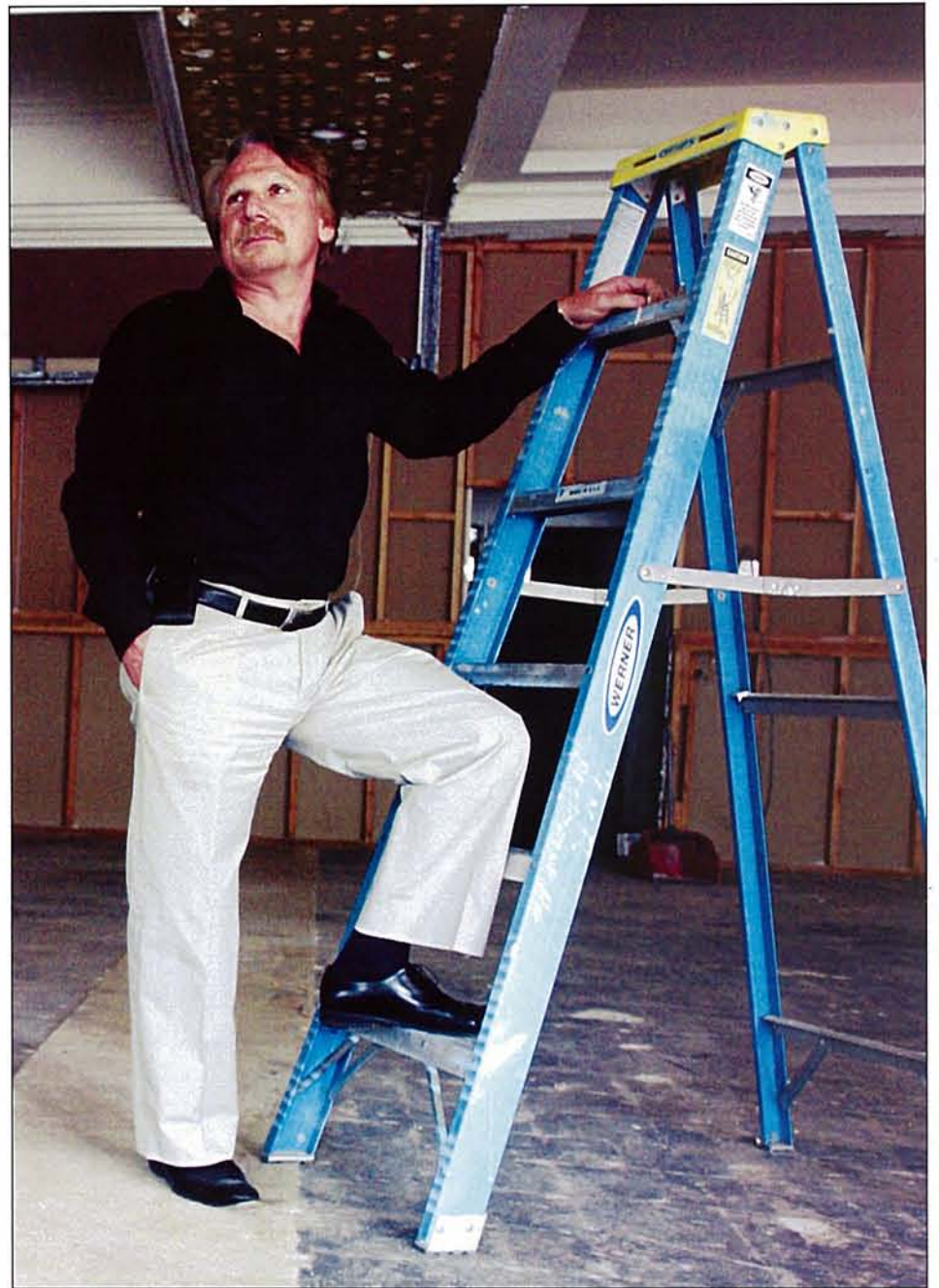
His fine art has been exhibited in the Quadriennale Nazionale d’Arte di Roma and the Museo Di Palazzo Decale Di Mantova, Italy. He enjoys creating sculptures, and designed a stainless-steel cone sculpture at 8760 Wilshire as public art in Beverly Hills. He is currently working on marble sculptures that he expects to release in the next 12 to 18 months.

If that were not enough, Pizzulli also makes wine and sells it commercially. “As a young child, I watched my grandfather make wine in his basement in New York, and I always had a fascination for what he was doing,” Pizzulli says. “When I had the opportunity to buy this large property in the Palisades 11 years ago, I decided to build a vineyard on the whole hillside. In a sense, it was a continuation of what my grandfather did.”

He met winemakers in Malibu who taught him harvesting, pruning, crushing, de-stemming and processing. After making wine successfully on his 1.5-acre property on Marquette Street (above Las Pulgas Canyon), he decided to sell his wines in a commercial venue. In 2007, he began buying grapes from a Los Alamos vineyard in Santa Barbara County and created the Pizzulli Family Winery, located in Camarillo.

Pizzulli’s wines are now served at Los Angeles-based restaurants and wine shops and will be featured at the Maison Giraud. He makes Sangiovese, Nebbiolo, Barbera, Dolcetto and Nebbiolo Rose. His 2008 Dolcetto received the 2010 Double Gold Medal/Best of Class at the California State Fair.

While pursuing all his creative ventures, Pizzulli enjoys spending time



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with his family. His wife, Christine, is the director of nursing and operations in the surgical operating rooms at UCLA Ronald Reagan Medical Center. They have two children, Domenico, 18, a senior at Palisades High, and Angelina, 16, a junior at Marymount.

“I also love to garden, and the Palisades is such a great place for it,” Pizzulli says, noting that he grows tomatoes, fava beans and arugula.

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*Cosimo Pizzulli’s winery in Camarillo has won numerous awards. His 2008 Dolcetto, an intensive ruby red, received the 2010 Double Gold Medal/Best of Class at the California State Fair.*

Rich Schmitt/Staff Photographer