



# PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

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*There's more to  
life than Pinot  
Noir, but not  
much more*

## Paul Lato: 2015 Pinot Noirs Dazzle

2015 is turning out to be a stunning vintage for California Pinot Noir and no where is this more evident than in the lineup of Pinot Noirs crafted by Paul Lato.

Paul is the epitome of the American immigrant success story. Born in Poland, he worked as a certified sommelier in Toronto Canada's most exclusive restaurants. His encounter with noted winemaker Jim Clendenen in 1996 on a trip to California for the first time inspired him to move to California six years later to enter the wine production business. He had plenty of passion, very little savings, and all of his possessions in two suitcases.

His first job was at Bien Nacido Vineyards where he worked for \$10.00 an hour while receiving free "lodging" at the bunkhouse in the vineyard. The late owner of Bien Nacido Vineyards, Bob Miller, urged Paul to make his own wine.

Paul is a smart guy and he realized that he could draw on the experience of other vintners. He observed the best in the business for many years, asked many questions and experimented a lot. After he produced his first six barrels of wine in 2002, he met Robert Parker by chance. Parker tasted his wines and was so impressed, he gave them rave reviews. Paul didn't even have a name for his new winery but his encounter with Parker brought tears to his eyes. Paul's career was officially launched at that moment and his wines have continued to dazzle the pinotphile community ever since.



Starting out very modestly with no investors, he began crafting Pinot Noir, Syrah and Chardonnay alongside many other vintners in a small space at Central Coast Wine Services in Santa Maria. Despite success over

time, he refuses to succumb to grow fast, take on investors and engage a marketing machine. Instead, he opts for carrying on true quality, rejoicing in the authenticity of his wines. I have visited him a number of times and have been impressed by his gracious demeanor and modesty. While other Pinot Noir specialists are losing their soul to corporate takeover (think Kosta Browne, Copain, Brewer-Clifton, Siduri, etc.), Paul remains true to his vision and craft.

Paul does not own any vineyards but carefully selects vineyards of distinction located in the Central Coast of California. He has an uncanny gift for recognizing blocks in each vineyard that offer the best potential for fulfilling his winemaking goals.

I have been reviewing Paul Lato wines since the 2005 vintage. I recently had an epiphany while tasting several of his 2015 Pinot Noir wines. Could these wines be the Holy Grail of California Pinot Noir? Maybe not, but they were undoubtedly the most stunning lineup of Pinot Noirs I had ever tasted from a California producer. Some wines flirted with perfection and these are surely reference wines for California Pinot Noir. The wines fulfill Paul's goal of creating wines that possess authenticity, harmony and elegance, as well as enough structure and balance to complement fine cuisine.

Paul, who is never grandiose in his personal acclamations about his wines, told me, "2015 is probably my best vintage to date. The vintage offers both power and elegance." 2015 was a unique vintage due to a severe drought and low yields. It was a vintage greatly influenced by vineyard practices. Paul relied on his French vineyard consultant, Philippe Coderey to advise him in overcoming the 2015 vineyard challenges.

Paul Lato's wines are made in small lots and eagerly snapped up by a faithful cadre of mailing list customers. The 2015 Pinot Noirs reviewed here are long sold out but may be available on the secondary market. Not surprisingly, a number of US fine restaurants also carry Paul Lato wines since Paul is also a foodie who relishes great food as much as great wine. These restaurants are listed on the website at [www.paulatowines.com](http://www.paulatowines.com). Paul Lato wines are released two to three times a year and sold on a first-come, first-served basis.

Other Paul Lato Wines that were part of the Spring Release: 2016 "Manga Girl" Rosé of Pinot Noir (\$40), 2015 "Belle de Jour" Duvarita Vineyard Chardonnay (\$70), 2015 "Le Souvenir" Sierra Madre Vineyard Chardonnay (\$70), 2015 "East of Eden" Pisoni Vineyard Chardonnay (\$80), and 2015 "The Prospect" Sierra Madre Vineyard Pinot Noir (\$70).

All wines are unfiltered. Only the Pisoni bottling has a small amount of whole cluster inclusion.

**2015 Paul Lato "Duende" Gold Coast Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$70. This vineyard is owned and managed by the Burk and Espinosa families. Low yielding vines grown on a sandy plateau with excellent drainage. The own-rooted vines are over 22 years old and are a Martini selection. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The nose offers an olfactory onslaught of cherry, exotic spice, and burnt tobacco aromas. Light to mid weight in style, with fruit flavors of cherry and cranberry. Elegantly composed, with tight acidity and modest tannins, offering a slightly tart finish. A riff of baking spice and tobacco notes add interest. The fruit is somewhat under ripe, but the wine remains highly satisfying. 92.*



**2015 Paul Lato "Suerte" Solomon Hills Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., \$80.

The most westerly vineyard in the Santa Maria Valley appellation making it the coolest due to its proximity to the ocean. Low yielding vines of clones 115, 667 and 777. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Cozy fruit aromas of black cherry and raspberry are paired with aromas of fertile earth, spice, burnt tobacco and bark. A flood of black cherry, black raspberry and blackberry goodness greets the mid palate. Velveteen in texture with deft oak appointments. A juicy cut of acidity energizes the lengthy finish. 94.*



**2015 Paul Lato "Atticus" John Sebastiano Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., \$75. A newer vineyard on the eastern side of the Sta. Rita Hills. Clone 115 and Swan selection. Ownership partners are Sebastiano Sterpa and John Wagner, and vineyard manager is Ruben Solzono.

*Moderate garnet color in the glass. The aromas of exotic spices, beautifully ripened dark red and purple fruits and a pine sap note are knee-weakening seductive. An ephemeral wine with impressive vibrancy, amazing harmony and silkiness. The boysenberry fruit core is enlivened by bright acidity that also energizes the finish that lasts and lasts and lasts. I found it really hard to avoid swallowing this*

one. The wine was still almost indescribable when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. **98.**



**2015 Paul Lato “The Contender” Drum Canyon Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., \$75. This vineyard is an estate property of Dierberg Winery. Sourced from a parcel located in the western section on the steepest slope, graced by southern exposure. Planted to Swan and Calera selections. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. The nose is rather shy upon opening, delivering more sustained black fruit and spice aromas over time in the glass. Mid weight plus in style with an energetic core of gorgeous boysenberry and blackberry fruit flavors accented with spice and earth. Lush in the mouth with impeccable balance, suave tannins, and a very long, fulfilling finish.* **96.**



**2015 Paul Lato “Seabiscuit” Zotovich Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., \$75. This vineyard is located in the heart of the Sta. Rita Hills off Hwy 246. A collaboration between Steve Zotovich, his family, and vineyard manager Ben Merz. Dijon clones 113 and 115. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Inviting aromas of black cherry, sous-bois, mushroom and spice. Vivid and vibrant in the mouth with a mid weight core of well-spiced blackberry goodness. Silky, fine-grain tannins satisfy, as does the elegant demeanor, lasting finish, and overall harmony. Even better the following day when tasted from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.* **97.**



**2015 Paul Lato “Lancelot” Pisoni Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir** 14.5% alc., \$90. *Dark garnet color in the glass. The nose soars over time with enticing aromas of raspberry compote, rose petal, fertile earth and vanilla biscuit. Silky in the mouth, with plenty of sap yet lacking a husky character, offering flavors of earth-toned, mineral driven, blackberry, black raspberry fruit flavors along with a riff of spice. This wine kept grabbing appeal over time in the glass and was considerably more generous when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. The tannins had been tamed, and the finish was of uncommon length. Decanting of this wine would be advisable if drunk now. A superb rendition of this vineyard’s terroir.* **97.**

# 2014 COBB Pinot Noir: Whole Cluster Goodness Abounds

Ross Cobb probably knows as much as anyone about growing grapes and making wine on the far western Sonoma Coast. His exposure to the winegrowing potential of the region began when he was a child, when his father, marine biologist and ecologist David Cobb, wrote a paper while at the University of California at Berkeley about the opportunities for growing world-class Pinot Noir on the West Sonoma Coast.

In 1989, David moved beyond theory when he, his spouse Diane, and Ross planted 5 acres of the family's Coastlands Vineyard together. Coastlands was not the first Pinot Noir vineyard on the far Sonoma Coast, but it featured more than a few acres of vines and also included a Pinot Noir nursery spearheaded by Diane in conjunction with University of California at Davis that was designed to isolate the most suitable clones for the extreme coastal climate.

Ross attended University of California at Santa Cruz where he studied agroecology and sustainable agriculture, and began to take an interest in wine. He worked a few days at Williams-Selyem during harvest and then spent time at Ferrari-Carano and Boony Doon. Burt Williams called him because he needed a lab technician and Ross soon apprenticed under him and winemaker Bob Cabral. In 2000, he traveled to Burgundy and returned to eventually become the winemaker at Flowers Winery and subsequently Hirsch Vineyards. His roles at these wineries and his experience with his own Cobb Wines label established with his family in 2001, means he has worked with almost every vineyard of note on the West Sonoma Coast.

It has taken Ross well over 15 years of frequent visits to Burgundy and hands-on winemaking experience to perfect his vision for Cobb Wines. He has become a leader in using no-till and dry-farming techniques for better grape flavor development as well as canopy management techniques that encourage variability in ripeness that translates into more complexity in his wines. Over the years, he has moved to earlier picking and was one of the first wineries to make a sub-13.0% ABV Pinot Noir from the Western Sonoma Coast. He has progressed to even less new oak over the years, yet ages most of his Pinot Noirs for 20 months or more. He says, "If you lower the amount of new oak and the toast levels, more time in oak doesn't make the wines more oaky, it makes them more integrated. I am not using oak to add new flavors to the wines but use it to lift existing aromas so that the character of the sites we work with can be even more fully expressed."

The following 2014 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noirs represent the Cobb Wines October 2016 Fall Release.

2014 presented a long growing season on the Sonoma Coast, with modest yields of about 1.8 tons per acre, and ideal late-season weather allowing harvest with forethought and precision. Ross believes the 2014 vintage will be the most outstanding since 2007.

The Cobb Pinot Noirs are typically vinified with significant whole cluster inclusion and native yeasts. The grapes are picked early leading to relatively low alcohols. The wines are bottled unfiltered. The winery's calling card has been perfume, elegance and harmony from specially chosen vineyards in the West Sonoma Coast.

These limited production wines are allocated exclusively to the winery's mailing list at [www.cobbwines.com](http://www.cobbwines.com).

The more recent 2017 Spring Release includes the 2014 Cobb Wines Diane Cobb: Coastlands Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, the 2014 Cobb Wines Coastlands Vineyard: 1906 Block Mt. Eden Clone Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, and 2014 Cobb Wines Jack Hill Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir. A 2015 Cobb Wines Mariani Vineyard Chardonnay was also released in the spring 2017 and

**2014 Cobb Wines Coastlands Vineyard 1906 Block Pommard Clone Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 12.5% alc., 200 cases, \$80 (\$175 per 1.5L magnum). This vineyard is located near the town of Occidental on a ridge. In 1998, Cobb's parents planted Pommard and Mt. Eden clones on a block just shy of 4 acres within their Coastlands Vineyard. They called it the 1906 Block because the original rancher who worked the land carved the date 1906 into an old oak tree overlooking the block at the time of the great San Francisco earthquake. The vines are planted on rocky, uplifted marine-terraced soils and produce wines that are the most dark and concentrated of Coastlands Vineyard. In 2014, both a Pommard clone and Mt. Eden clone bottling were produced. Aged 22 months in French oak barrels, 30% new. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass.*

*Intoxicating perfume of pie cherry, raspberry and timber. Intense and sappy on the palate, featuring cherry, raspberry and red grape flavors with a subtle green thread in the background. Nicely balanced with suave tannins and a sweet cherry finish. While the fruit seems slightly underripe, the wine is delightful. 93.*



**2014 Cobb Wines Emmaline Ann Vineyard Sonoma Coast**

**Pinot Noir** 12.8% alc., 310 cases, \$75 (\$160 per 1.5L magnum). This 3-acre vineyard gets the most fog of any of the vineyards Cobb works with leading to an appealing vibrancy. Located near the town of Occidental, this vineyard is planted to 2 Dijon clones in Goldridge soil. Aged 22 months in French oak barrels, 30% new. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass.*

*Sensational aromas of burnished cherry, spice, pine sap and wilted rose lead to a middleweight core of delicious cherry fruit accented with spice and cola. Seamless, elegant and polished with a generous finish that is unusually persistent. This wine tugs at your heart strings. 95.*



**2014 Cobb Wines Rice-Spivak Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 13.3% alc., 310 cases, \$75 (\$160 per 1.5L magnum). Ross has worked with this vineyard since 2003 and has made a single-vineyard wine from its fruit since 2006. Ross directs all the farming and has first pick of the grapes. This is the most inland vineyard that Ross sources fruit from, yet it is only six miles from the Pacific Ocean and greatly influenced by the marine climate. Located in the Sebastopol Hills, this 6-acre vineyard is planted to Swan selection and Dijon clones grown in Goldridge soils. Aged 22 months in French oak barrels, 30% new. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Highly aromatic, with soaring aromas of black cherry, wilted rose, burnt tobacco, smoked game and earth. Deeply flavored with spiced cherry and cranberry fruit flavors, this mid weight wine has inviting lift, gentle tannins, and some finishing purpose. 93.*

# Sips of Recently Tasted California Wines

## Cosa Obra Wines, Santa Rosa, California

I received a shipment of two wines from Cosa Obra in April but there appeared to me to be an issue with the quality of the wines possibly due to shipping. I did review the 2016 Pinot Noir Rosé (88), but the 2015 Pinot Noir was not pristine. I asked owner Gregory Hayes to re-ship in June and both wines were reviewed again. The reviews below reflect pristine examples of the two wines. The winery's website is [www.cosaobra.com](http://www.cosaobra.com).



**Cosa Obra Sonoma County Rosé of Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., \$18. *Moderate pinkish orange color in the glass. Pleasing aromas of orange rind, peach and white flowers. Noticeable attack and intensity of strawberry, red cranberry and orange peel flavors. Bright acidity, with a mouthwatering finish replete with Mandarin orange and white pepper flavors. 91.*



**2015 Cosa Obra Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., \$32. Release October 1, 2017. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. The nose opens slowly over time revealing aromas of dark cherry, spice, fertile earth and mesquite. Mid weight plus flavors of black cherry, blueberry-pomegranate and cherry cola are embellished with toasty oak in the background. Well-rounded, integrated tannins and texturally appealing with a soft and sleek mouthfeel. The wine leans a little too much on oak for my personal taste, but those who favor oak-embossed Pinot Noir will love this wine. 91.*



## The Donum Estate, Carneros, California

The entire 2014 portfolio of The Donum Estate wines are adorned with new labels designed by Chinese artist, Ai Weiwei, whose Circle of Animals installation is displayed at the estate. Each year, the label will change to reflect and honor the Chinese animal zodiac, with the 2014 vintage commemorating the Year of the Horse.

The Donum Estate is overseen by president and winegrower Anne Moller-Racke and the winemaker is Dan Fishman, who has been part of the winemaking team for ten years. Now celebrating its sixteenth vintage, The Donum Estate comprises 187 acres north of San Pablo Bay just off Highway 121.

Donum is home to The Donum Sculpture Park, displaying sculptures from recognized global artists and can be appreciated by appointment only at 707-939-2290.

Donum will soon open the Donum Home, an elegant new hospitality space located on the south side of Donum's property with vast views of the estate vineyards, neighboring wineries, and San Pablo Bay. The intimate space will provide an ideal environment for private, personal tastings.

Donum has limited distribution with about 3,000 cases, with some availability in fine retail stores and ready availability by contacting the winery or through the mailing list. The winery's website is [www.thedonumestate.com](http://www.thedonumestate.com).

The 2014 portfolio of wines includes the flagship Carneros Estate Grown Pinot Noir (\$72), and additional single-vineyard wines including Anderson Valley Estate Grown Pinot Noir (\$72), Anderson Valley Angels Camp Pinot Noir (\$90), Russian River Valley Estate Grown Pinot Noir (\$72), Russian River Valley Ten Oaks Pinot Noir (\$72), and Carneros West Slope Pinot Noir (\$90).

The Donum Estate Pinot Noirs are sourced from estate owned or leased vineyards and are distinctive. Grapes tend to be picked at higher Brix, the wines are broadly and richly extracted and vinified in a large percentage of new French oak barrels. The resultant wines are voluptuous, mouth coating interpretations of Pinot Noir. There is too much oak overlay for my personal taste, but that is a stylistic choice.

**2014 Donum Single Vineyard Estate Carneros Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., pH 3.80, TA 0.60, 575 cases, \$72. From the 50-acre Donum Ranch planted to a diverse collection of clones and heritage selections. A selection from the best blocks in the vineyard and the most appealing barrels within each lot. Aged in French oak barrels, 55% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Extroverted nose, offering scents of blackest cherry, black raspberry, cardamom, clove and toasty oak. Mid weight plus in style, featuring earth-toned black cherry, blueberry-pomegranate and black tea flavors. Silky in the mouth with modest tannins and a prolonged fruit-driven finish. Oak plays a notable role in the background.* **90.**



**2014 Donum Single Vineyard Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.5% alc., pH 3.88, TA 0.55, 459 cases, \$72. From Angels Camp Vineyard located in the deep end of the Anderson Valley. A barrel selection from all blocks. Pommard, Swan, Martini, David Bruce, 2A, and Dijon 115, 667, 777 and "828." Aged in French oak barrels, 59% new. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Shy, but pleasant aromas of blackberry, blueberry, spice and bittersweet chocolate. Full-bodied, with a charge of blackberry and prune flavors underlain with oak-driven notes of dark chocolate and coffee. There are noticeable fruit tannins and there is a slight bit of alcoholic warmth on the finish.* **89.**

**2014 Donum Single Vineyard Estate Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** 14.7% alc., pH 3.61, TA 0.66, 627 cases, \$72. Sourced from the Winside Vineyard planted in 1997 by Anne Moller-Racke and Joe Nugent to 10 acres of Dijon 115 and 667. Some fruit from the Pommard block is also included. Aged in French oak barrels, 55% new. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Demure aromas of black fruits, dark rose petal and oak spice and toast. The fruit pushes the ripeness envelope with flavors of blackberry jam, plum reduction sauce and cassis. The oak is better integrated on the palate. Full-bodied and velvety in the mouth, with balanced tannins and a sweet-fruited, generous finish.* **90.**

## Spell Wines, Santa Rosa, California

**2015 Spell Nichole's Blend Sonoma County Pinot Noir** 14.4% alc., pH 3.71, TA 0.58, 445 cases, \$41. Sourced from Morris Vineyard and declassified barrels of Terra de Promissio, Umino and Alder Springs vineyards. Aged in French oak barrels, 40% new. *Dark garnet color in the glass. Aromas of blackberry, black current, prune and spice lead off. A charge of sappy black fruits saturates the palate and finish. The dry fruit tannins are well-proportioned. Easy to drink and like able, but lacks nuance and uplifting acidity.* **88.**

**2015 Spell Alder Springs Vineyard Mendocino County Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., pH 3.68, TA 0.59, 102 cases, \$50. Grapes sourced from the 3Tiers Block located at an elevation of 1,700 feet on a southeastern facing slope. Dijon clone 459 and DRC and Calera selections. Low-vigor, sandstone-based soils. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Well-appointed aromas of dark red berries and underbrush lead off. The fruit is vivid and juicy in the mouth, displaying a full-bodied load of fresh, well-ripened black cherry and blackberry fruits. Although quite sappy, the firm tannic backbone keeps the fruit in line. There is an appealing Old World rusticity to this wine. The prominent fruit tannins combined with balanced acidity predict age ability.* **92.**



**2015 Spell Weir Vineyard Yorkville Highlands Pinot Noir** 14.4% alc., pH 3.70, TA 0.58, 150 cases, \$50. Clones are Rochioli Pommard selection, DRC selection and Wädenswil 2A. Aged in French oak barrels, 33% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. The nose entices with vibrant aromas of strawberry, black cherry and sweet grape. The glorious dark red cherry and berry fruits demand attention as do the muscular tannins. A supportive oak thread plies the background. The wine finishes with some astringency. Further time in bottle should mellow the tannins.* **90.**

**2015 Spell Russian River Valley Chardonnay** 14.2% alc., pH 3.49, TA 0.63, \$38. Sourced from the Dutton-Sullivan Vineyard located near Graton and planted in the 1980s to a heritage selection of Wente Chardonnay on its own rootstock. Aged in French oak barrels, 33% new. *Moderate golden yellow color in the glass. Very shy aromas of buttery citrus. More expressive on the palate, with flavors of yellow apple, nectarine and lemon. Nicely balanced, with good acid integration and brightness, but lacks enthusiastic flavor.* **88.**

## Weatherborne, Lompoc, California

Chris Carter uses the most minimalist winemaking methods. He only makes two wines per year. One man, two wines. He attended University of California at Davis at the tender age of eighteen and his only jobs have been in vineyards, labs and cellars. What you find in his wines is the result of years of work and learned travels from New Zealand to Oregon to Chile to Tasmania, not some whim. Visit [www.weatherborne.com](http://www.weatherborne.com).



**2015 Weatherborne Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., pH 3.65, 350 cases, \$40, screwcap. 88% John Sebastiano Vineyard and 12% La Encantada Vineyard. Harvest Brix 22.0°-23.5°. 25% whole cluster. Aged in 10% new French oak barrels. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Pleasant aromas of cherry, purple grape, pomegranate and brown spice. A forward drinking, mid weight styled wine, with a healthy core of cherry fruit lifted by juicy acidity. Nicely balanced with inviting poise, finishing with righteous black cherry, exotic spice and cola aromatics. This wine picks up intensity and appeal over time in the glass and the aromatics eventually soar. This wine is so easy going you can drink it all night long.* **93.**



**2015 Weatherborne La Encantada Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir** 12.9% alc., pH 3.53, 50 cases, \$50, screwcap. Harvest Brix 22.0°. 50% whole cluster. Aged 10 months in neutral French oak barrels. *There is enough whole cluster character in this wine to add another dimension. Aromas of Bing cherry, underbrush, tobacco leaf and Asian 5-spice lead to a mid weight plus charge of black cherry fruit alerting the mid palate and donating goodness to the finish. A little more extract, tannin and length of finish compared to the Sta. Rita Hills bottling. Toned and trim, this wine carries more earthy and savory notes in a good way, while the mouth coating fruit leaves an impression.* **92.**



# Sips of Recently Tasted Willamette Valley Wines

There are plenty of good values still to discover in Oregon Pinot Noir. Because of inflation and trends in pricing, I now award the value image to Pinot Noirs scoring 89 or above that are priced at \$40 or less.

## Amalie Robert, Dallas, Oregon

100% estate bottled wines. Amalie Robert grows, ferments, blends and bottles all their wines from their estate vineyard.



**2016 Amalie Robert “Pinot in the Pink” Willamette Valley Pinot Noir Rosé** 13.4% alc., 95 cases, \$20. Lightly juiced wings of Pinot Meunier and Pommard clone Pinot Noir including the stems. Fermented to dryness in stainless steel. *Moderately dark pink color in the glass. Lovely aromas of red cherry, strawberry, watermelon, hay and dried herbs. Cheerful and welcoming, with flavors of cherry, raspberry, strawberry, blood orange and tangerine, uplifted by tight acidity. Crisp and refreshing, with a zippy finish. 91.*



**2012 Amalie Robert The Uncarved Block Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.3% alc., 1,000 cases, \$30. An introduction to the winery’s style of whole cluster and indigenous yeast fermentation. Represents a combination of all the clones and rootstock combinations of Pinot Noir grown throughout the property. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. The whole cluster inspired nose offers aromas of burnt tobacco, wilted rose and charred oak. Succulent black raspberry and purple grape fruit flavors arrive in the mouth with purpose. Accents of smoke and black tea add interest. The tannins are silky and the finish has pedigree. Even better when tasted two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle with more soaring aromatics and displaying the balance to age successfully. This wine will appeal most to those who favor whole cluster embossed Pinot Noir. 91.*



**2013 Amalie Robert Dijon Clones Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 12.3% alc., 890 cases, \$40. 100% estate grown Pinot Noir. Pinot Noir clones 60, 113, 114, 115, 667, 777 and “828.” *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The nose leads with aromas of cherry, red berry, dusty rose, pipe smoke and a subtle green note. Mid weight in style and silky in texture, with flavors of black cherry, raspberry, exotic spice and tobacco. Nicely balanced with a complimentary whole cluster character. The fruit is on the under ripe side, but the wine delivers. Still fine when tasted two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. 90.*

**2013 Amalie Robert Pommard Clone Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.2% alc., 45 cases, \$65. A two barrel selection of the most compelling barrels of Pommard clone Pinot Noir in the cellar. A blend from a new and neutral barrel. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Aromas of BBQ spice, toasty oak, tobacco and mulch. Mid weight flavors of black cherry, marionberry, cola, smoke and char. Satiny in texture, with balanced t ‘n a and some length on the finish. Reminds of standing next to a barbecue grill and smelling meat spices, smoke and ash. 87.*

**2013 Amalie Robert Wädenswil Clone Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 12.2% alc., 45 cases, \$65. A selection of two barrels of the most compelling barrels of Wädenswil clone Pinot Noir in the cellar. A blend from a new and a neutral barrel. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Aromas of dark red berry, black cherry, earthy flora, campfire and a slight pungency. Lighter in weight, with flavors of deep red cherry and cranberry*

accented with an oak spice and a wood char note. Soft tannins and lively acidity, with a red fruited, acid-driven finish. **88.**

## Big Table Farm, Gaston, Oregon

**2015 Big Table Farm Earth Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., 107 cases, \$105. Released April 11, 2017. A barrel selection by Brian and Clare in collaboration. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Aromas of black cherry reduction sauce, root vegetables, dark chocolate syrup, rose petal and a slight pungent note. Prodigiously concentrated flavors of black cherry syrup, black raspberry compote and blackberry fruit with a bit of floral perfume, brown spice and chocolate oak in the background. Structured, with firm, svelte fruit tannins and a generous, very long finish. The wine picks up appeal over time in the glass and will benefit from decanting or more time in the cellar.* **92.**

## Brigadoon Wine Company, Junction City (Southern Willamette Valley), Oregon

A family affair involving proprietor and vineyard manager Chris Shown, proprietor Sheree Shown and winemaker Matt Shown. Chris' involvement in the wine industry began in 1970, assisting his father in establishing their Rutherford vineyard in California's Napa Valley. Matt has been working in the vineyards since he was eight years old. Because of his upbringing, his winemaking philosophy is rooted in the vineyards. He earned a degree in Horticulture at Oregon State University and began working in wineries in 2005. He helped launch Brigadoon Wine Company in 2008, and also consults for a variety of small labels. Another family member, Nick Shown, is the cellar master at Left Coast Cellars in Oregon but helps out at Brigadoon at bottling and special projects and events.

Brigadoon Vineyards is located in the southern Willamette Valley, just northwest of Eugene. The 66-acre farm has 6 acres of six different clones of Pinot Noir, 4 acres of Pinot Blanc and a half of acre of Riesling. The vineyard sits at 400 to 600 feet elevation and is planted in Bellpine soils. Brigadoon produces certified rootstock and scion wood material for the grapevine nursery industry.

The winery's tasting room and picnic grounds are located in Junction City, Oregon with views of a secluded canyon, vineyard and forest. Tasting is available April through November Wednesday through Sunday or by appointment. Visit [www.brigadoonwineco.com](http://www.brigadoonwineco.com).

The following wines will be release in the summer of 2017.



**2015 Brigadoon Lylee Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., pH 3.55, 500 cases, \$23.. This is the first bottling from the estate vineyard each year and is meant to be a fruit forward and approachable representation of the vineyard. Average vine age is 12 acres and average yield is 2.7 tons per acre. New oak is kept at a minimum (10%). Clones are Wädenswil, Pommard and Dijon 115 and 777. Aged 0.5 months in French oak barrels. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. The nose is pleasant but nondescript even with vigorous swirling. Mid weight plus in style, with a core of boysenberry and blackberry fruits that are tightly wound. There is a balancing firm tannic backbone and a fruit filled finish. This wine shows considerable potential but requires decanting or more time in bottle for most appreciation. When tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, this wine was more polished and giving than the Taproot bottling.* **91-92.**



**2015 Brigadoon Taproot Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., pH 3.54, 200 cases, \$40. A winemaker's barrel selection, usually ones from the vineyard's oldest vines, a block of Dijon 115 and Wädenswil clone Pinot Noir planted in 1997. Clones are Wädenswil, Pommard and Dijon 115. Average yield 2.7 tons per acre. Average vine age is 16 years. Aged 17 months in French oak barrels, 37% new. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. The wine is intended for cellar aging. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. The nose is rather shy and primary at this early stage. Aromas of black cherry, cardamom, clove and splintered oak. Full and lush on the palate in a mid weight plus style featuring*



flavors of blackest cherry and blackberry. Still tight, with balanced tannins, a fortuitous acid backbone, a deft touch of oak, and a modest finish. This sappy wine will appeal to bold fruit lovers. Decanting or more time in bottle is suggested. Still a bit foreboding when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. **91-92.**

## Broadley Vineyards, Monroe, Oregon

**2015 Broadley Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$18. 100% de-stemmed fruit. Wild yeast fermentation over 10-14 days in open-top stainless steel and plastic bins. Aged 9-10 months in neutral French oak barrels. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. A ripe fruited wine displaying aromas of blackberry, boysenberry and fertile earth, and flavors of purple and black berries with a woody, marzipan note. Mid weight in style, with juicy acidity and balanced tannins, a satin mouthfeel, and finishing with modest length and a red cherry note. A solid wine that is a bit shallow mid palate and finish, but embraceable at this price point.* **88.**



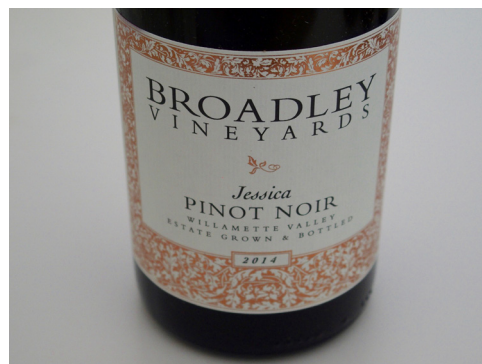
**2015 Broadley Estate Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$25. Composed of a variety of blocks containing newer and older vines. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Pleasant scents of cherry, woodland spice, forest floor and a hint of vanilla. Generous extraction with a core of black cherry flavor underlain with a subtle marzipan taste. Good brightness and juiciness, with enviable harmony and some finishing length.* **89.**



**2015 Broadley Rocky Hill Vineyard** 13.5% alc., \$30. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The nose is rather primary even with time in the glass. The earthy black cherry core initially lacked charm and expression and was even somewhat gruff. More giving when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle with pleasant aromas of cherry, fertile earth and spice, a charmingly soft mouthfeel, and enough cherry fruit to satisfy.* **89.**

**2015 Broadley Shea Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$50. Clones 777 and Wädenswil. Wild yeast fermentation in 3-ton open-top Taransaud wood fermenter for 14-21 days. Starting with pump overs in the early stage and switching to 3 punch downs a day. Aged in French oak barrels, 30% new and 70% neutral for 12 months. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. Rather shy and primary but pleasant aromas of cherry, raspberry and rose petal. Further bottle aging should release the aromatics (the wine was more aromatic when tasted from a previously opened bottle the next day). Prominent tannins frame the middleweight core of black cherry and black raspberry fruits that impress the mid palate. Silky in the mouth, with a rather long, fruit-filled finish offering slight astringency. This wine definitely requires decanting or further cellaring.* **91-92.**

**2014 Broadley Jessica Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$50. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Very ripe fruited aromas including Bing cherry are accompanied by notes of woodpile and smokehouse maple spice. Lush and endowed on the palate, with a rush of deep black cherry, boysenberry and blackberry fruit flavors that explode in the mouth. Soft and succulent, with favorable balance, finishing with remarkable intensity of smoky dark fruits. When tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the amazing fruit explosion on the palate and the incredibly intense finish persisted. A hedonistic wine.* **93.**



## Dion Vineyard, Cornelius, Oregon

A family owned and operated vineyard in the north end of the Chehalem Mountains AVA, just west of Beaverton and Portland, Oregon. Three generations of the family have been stewards of the land that is Dion Vineyard. Today, husband and wife Kevin Johnson and Beth Klingner produce 800 to 1,000 cases of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Gris annually, available for tasting at the winery Friday-Sunday April through November. Premium wine grapes are also sold to other wineries throughout Oregon. Visit [www.dionvineyards.com](http://www.dionvineyards.com).



**2015 Dion Chehalem Mountains Oregon Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., \$25. *Light ruby red color in the glass. Lovely perfume of red cherry, cranberry relish, sandalwood and rose petal. Forward and giving in a mid weight style with flavors of sweet red cherry and strawberry. Succulent on the mid palate, with supportive tannins and some finishing purpose. 90.*

**2014 Dion Old Vines Limited Release Chehalem Mountains Oregon Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., \$50. Vineyard block planted in 1976 on 10 acres. Self-rooted, non-irrigated Pommard clone. *Light ruby red color in the glass. Pleasurable scents of red and purple fruits and spice. Expansive, polished and refined in the mouth in a middleweight style. The very ripe cherry core of fruit is underlain with flavors of brown spice, nutmeg and raisin. Smooth in texture, with svelte tannins and envious balance, finishing with intensity and lasting goodness. 92.*



## Flâneur Wines, Carlton, Oregon

The current Director of Vineyards and Winemaker for Flâneur Wines is Grant Coulter, who worked for years at Beaux Frères, and who joined Flâneur at the end of 2015. The 2016 vintage is Coulter's first vine to bottle vintage. The wine reviewed here was crafted by Kely Kidneigh. A tasting room opened in 2016 at the estate Flanerie Vineyard, located in Newberg in the Chehalem Mountains AVA.



**2014 Flâneur Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., 250 cases, \$40. 60% estate Flanerie Vineyard and 40% X-Novo Vineyard. Fermented with feral yeast, aged 18 months in French oak barrels (40% new) and bottled unfiltered. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Heady aromas of black cherry, spice and floral bouquet captivate.*

*Opens slowly in the glass, offering a core of sappy black cherry and black raspberry goodness accented with welcome spice and framed by muscular tannins. The finish is particularly impressive, leaving a trail of spiced dark fruits in its wake. Even better when tasted later in the day from a previously opened bottle. 92.*



## iOTA Cellars, Amity, Oregon

Owners and winemakers Johanna and Don Sandberg relocated from Minneapolis to Portland, Oregon in 1999 to investigate growing grapes and making wine in the Willamette Valley. A family partner owner, Lynne Pelos contributed financial and marketing support so that by the end of 2000, they had moved to the future vineyard site to oversee land development and learn the business of growing grapes. The vineyard was first planted in 2002. The 57-acre parcel of land had never been planted to grapes. Located in the northern Eola Hills of Yamhill County, the land sits just east of the Van Duzer corridor. As of 2014, there were 14.5 acres planted to Pinot Noir, with a small amount of Chardonnay. Some grapes are sold to Big Table Farm. Visit

[www.iotacellars.com](http://www.iotacellars.com).



**2014 iOTA Not One iOTA Pelos Sandberg Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Oregon Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., 658 cases, \$28. A blend of barrels not used in the flagship or whole cluster bottlings. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 7% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Aromas of black cherry, Asian 5-spice and smoky timber. Rich and fully flavored, with a satisfying core of cherry fruit and welcome t n'a balance. A smoky, barnyard character is noted upon pouring the wine, but this tends to largely resolve over time in the glass. This rustic barnyard note is typical of Pinot Noir from this vineyard. A very good value. 90.*



**2014 iOTA Pelos Sandberg Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Oregon Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., 486 cases, \$40. The winery's flagship bottling. A selection of barrels including all four of the clones in the Pelos-Sandberg Vineyard: Pommard, Wädenswil, Dijon 777 and 667. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 40% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass.*

*Appealing aromas of black cherry, blackberry, and pipe smoke. Plush in the mouth with a serious extract of fresh black cherry and black raspberry fruit flavors accented with spice and a subtle smoky signature. Plenty to discover in this wine with many nuances, commendable harmony and an inspiring finish. 93.*



**2014 iOTA Pelos Sandberg Vineyard Whole Cluster Eola-Amity Hills Oregon Pinot Noir** 14.0% alc., 94 cases, \$44. Four barrels of 100% whole cluster Pinot Noir. 25% each of Pommard, Wädenswil, 777 and 667 clones. Aged 10 months in French oak barrels, 25% new. Bottled unfiltered. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Exotically perfumed with aromas of dark berries, spice, sweet smoke and oil can. More intensely flavored with a more profound attack than the flagship bottling, offering flavors of purple and black berries, spice, mushroom, smoke and earth. Velveteen in texture, with snappy acidity and a very long, sweet cherry finish. Much more rounded and inviting when tasted two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. 92.*

## Lingua Franca, Salem, Oregon

The leader of this new and exciting project is noted Master Sommelier and former general manager of Evening Land, Larry Stone. The executive winemaker is Burgundian vigneron Dominique Lafon, and Thomas Savry, a former assistant winemaker at Evening Land who previously worked in the cellar and vineyard at Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, is the full-time winemaker. The winery and newly planted estate vineyard are located next door to Evening Land's Seven Springs Vineyard (from which Lingua Franca buys fruit).

The grapes are picked earlier than most, cold soak (a technique to gain extraction of color and aroma from the skins) is avoided. The wines are aged in French oak, but never more than medium-plus toast. The resultant wines are quite distinct as evidenced by their tension, elegance and sense of purity. The wines need time in the cellar and only offer their charms with decanting or left untouched in the bottle a few days after sampling.

The Avni label is the more affordable and approachable offering of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. The upper tier Pinot Noirs feature names connected to people at the winery, and are made in very small quantities. Total production in 2015 was 4,000 cases.

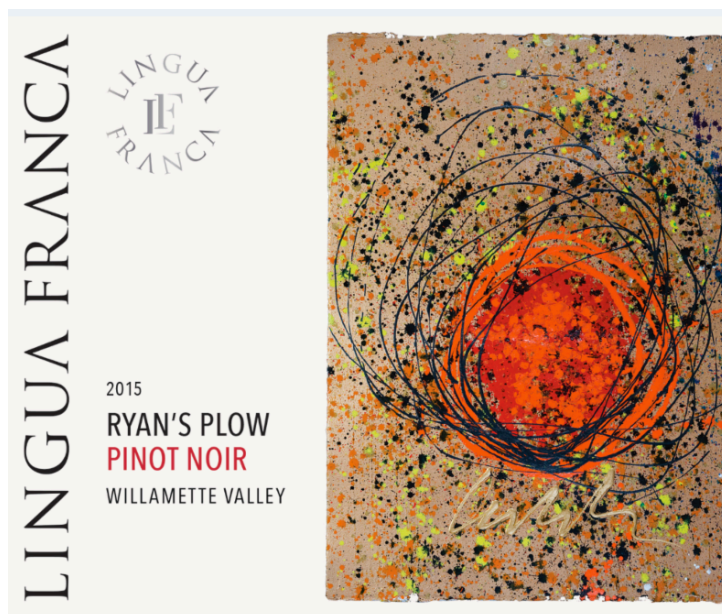
The wines are sold on the website, [www.linguafranca.com](http://www.linguafranca.com), and through limited retail channels such as Avalon Wine Inc & Northwest-Wine at [www.northwest-wine.com](http://www.northwest-wine.com) and Oregon Pinot Noir Club at [www.oregonpinotnoir.com](http://www.oregonpinotnoir.com). Wines other than those reviewed here include 2015 Lingua Franca Rosé of Pinot Noir Coeur Libéré (\$24), 2015 Lingua Franca Avni Eola-Amity Hills Pinot Noir (\$45), 2015 Lingua Franca Mimi's Mind (\$105), 2015 Lingua Franca Sisters Chardonnay (\$105)

The 2015 Lingua Franca Avni Chardonnay is reviewed below.

**2015 Lingua Franca Joshua, Junichi and Siri Ribbon Ridge Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$50. Named after three individuals who volunteered to work the first harvest. The crew cut the ends off the clusters for this whole berry cuvée. A portion of fruit fermented via carbonic maceration (grapes ferment inside their own skins in the absence of oxygen rather than being crushed first). This produces a notably fruity and juicy wine. It was then blended with traditionally fermented Pinot Noir that has more serious extraction and tannin. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Upon opening, the nose is rather primary, offering demure aromas of red cherry, spice and sous-bois. Tasted two days later from a previously opened bottle, the nose was more aromatic with fresh scents of red cherry and strawberry fruits and burnt tobacco. Like the nose, the palate was much more expressive two days later. Silky and elegant on the palate with a mid weight array of red fruits including cherry, cranberry, raspberry and dark strawberry accented by spice. Fresh and lithe, with modest tannins, complimentary oak, and an explosion of red cherry on the finish. 93.*



**2015 Lingua Franca Ryan's Plow Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$60. Named after Ryan Hannaford who is an Aussie transplant to the Willamette Valley and has a talent for biodynamic farming. The sources for this cuvée are tended by Ryan and come from two Jory soil vineyards near Lingua Franca (Seven Springs and Black Walnut vineyards). *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. My notes reflect my impressions of the wine when tasted two days after opening. Seductive aromas of cherry, strawberry and spice lead to an elegantly composed wine with vibrant flavors of cherry and strawberry. Suave tannins, noticeable mid palate intensity, and a remarkable finish filled with sweet cherry and strawberry aromatic goodness. 94.*



**2015 Lingua Franca Tongue 'n Cheek Eola-Amity Hills Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$60. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. My notes reflect my impressions of the wine from a previously opened bottle two days prior. Initially the nose and palate were quite primary. Penetrating aromas of dark red cherry and berry, dark red rose and anise. Mid weight plus in style, offering the vivid essence of fresh dark red cherries. Somewhat earthbound, with an attractive note of iron minerality. Expansive in the mouth, impeccably balanced, and sporting a remarkable finish replete with dark cherry fruit that is tenacious for what seems like a minute. 94.*

## Nicholas-Jay, Newberg, Oregon

The 2015 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir is the second vintage from this winery. The winery is a culmination of a thirty-year friendship between American Jay Boberg and French vintner Jean-Nicolas Méo, who first met in Philadelphia when Jean-Nicolas was studying economics and was on an exchange program in the United States. They connected immediately over their shared interests in wine and music. They built their friendship while Jean-Nicolas took over as winemaker at his family's domaine in Burgundy, Domaine Méo Camuzet, and Jay co-founded the indie record label I.R.S. Records, later becoming President of MCA/Universal Records.

Both Jay and Jean-Nicolas have had a longtime interest in the Willamette Valley. In 2012, they set out to start a project in Oregon, conducting intensive tastings and immersing themselves in the Willamette Valley wine world. The vineyard that stood out for both of them in blind tastings was for sale and they were able to purchase the 33-acre Bishop Creek Vineyard in the Yamhill-Carlton AVA. Fruit is also sourced from almost every AVA in the Willamette Valley.

Jay and Jean-Nicolas both call the Willamette Valley their second home, traveling to Oregon regularly and bringing their families and recruiting friends to help during harvest. Associate Winemaker Tracy Kendall provides the consistent day-to-day guidance.

Nicholas-Jay wines are now distributed nationally and internationally. "French winemaking with Oregon terroir." The website is [www.nicholas-jay.com](http://www.nicholas-jay.com).



**2015 Nicolas-Jay Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.0% alc., pH 3.63, TA 0.56, 2,400 cases, \$65 (\$150 magnum). Released April 2017. Fruit sourced from every AVA in the Willamette Valley, almost exclusively biodynamic, organic and LIVE certified vineyards. Harvest Brix 22.6°. Aged in French oak barrels, 33% new, 67% neutral. *A very interesting wine that does not make an impression upon opening but evolves beautifully over time. When*

*I tasted this wine at 10 a.m. and then again at 5 p.m. from the same bottle, the wine had transformed dramatically. I drank a glass with dinner and can attest to its superb food compatibility. Moderate dark garnet color in the glass. Highly pleasing aromas of black cherry, blackberry, spice and sous-bois. Mid weight plus in style, with charming flavors of blueberry, dark cherry and earthy delight. Soft in the mouth, with a structure for aging, and a sleek, rewarding finish that is fruit-filled and refreshing. Still terrific when tasted the following day. If you want to drink now, decant and leave in the decanter for several hours prior to drinking. This will allow the wine to become noticeably more cordial. 94.*



## Penner-Ash Wine Cellars, Newberg, Oregon

**2015 Penner-Ash Shea Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., 430 cases, \$65. Pommard, Wädenswil, and Dijon 777 and 114. Aged 10 months in French oak barrels, 31% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Pleasant aromas of cherry, spice and sous-bois. Soft, even creamy in the mouth, with a discreet concentration of dark berry and black cherry fruits. Seamless, with a deft touch of oak, and enticing blackberry fueled finish. Still shows impeccable balance when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. 92.*

## Rain Dance Vineyards, Newberg, Oregon

Rain Dance Vineyards is a newer producer with an Oregon agricultural and hospitality legacy dating to 1859. Ken and Celia Austin of Newberg, Oregon, founded the winery in 2009 and debuted their first vintage in 2013.

Rain Dance is home to 120 acres of farmland including 73 acres of LIVE and Salmon Safe vineyards. A collection of four estate vineyards includes 53 acres of Pinot Noir, 17 acres of Chardonnay, 2 acres of Riesling and 1 acre of Gewürztraminer. The vines are dry farmed sustainably using balanced pruning, careful attention to cover cropping and multiple thinning passes to insure low yields. Vine by vine composting is one particularly unique approach. Vineyard clients include Adelsheim, Alexana and King Estate.

The wines are produced and bottled under the direction of winemaker Bryan Weil of Alexana Winery in a custom crush agreement working closely with Ken and Celia Austin.

The winery's country tasting room is located at 26335 NE Bell Road just minutes from the center of Newberg. Tasting is offered at the tasting bar, or covered porch or outdoor patio. Open daily. Visit [www.raindancevineyards.com](http://www.raindancevineyards.com).



**2016 Rain Dance Estate Nicholas Vineyard Chehalem Mountains Oregon Rosé of Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., pH 3.41, TA 0.66, RS 0.05%, 81 cases, \$22, screwcap. Harvest Brix 22.4°. Dijon clone 114. Whole cluster pressed, cold fermented, vinified in 100% neutral French oak barrels. *Moderate salmon color in the glass. Exuberant aromas of strawberry, watermelon, orange water, pale cherry and briar. Nicely*

*composed in a bright, crisp style, with flavors of blood orange and strawberry, finishing with thirst quenching resolve. A superb rosé. 93.*





**2015 Rain Dance Estate Chehalem Mountains Oregon Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., pH 3.62, TA 0.52, 125 cases, \$40. Sourced from the estate Rain Dance Vineyard, established in 2009, and planted to 15 acres of Pinot Noir on Jory soil. Harvest Brix 25.5°. 60% Pommard, 20% Wädenswil, 20% Dijon 667. Triple hand sorted, 4-day cold soak, 10-day fermentation, aged in French oak barrels, 40% new, 40% once filled and 20% neutral. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Highly aromatic, sporting hi-tone aromas of black raspberry, blackberry, wine cave, toast and white pepper. Mid weight in style, with a somewhat lush array of black raspberry, and blueberry-pomegranate fruit flavors overlain with complimentary toasty oak. Silky and sleek in texture, with admirable balance and a pleasing finish. 92.*

## Trisaetum Winery & Vineyards, Newberg, Oregon

Proprietor and winemaker James Frey (photo below) and proprietor Andrea Frey acquired a cattle ranch in the foothills of the Coast Range outside McMinnville in 2003. Two years later they planted 22 acres of Pinot Noir and Riesling, the two varietals the couple liked to drink. They later added 17 acres near Newberg on Ribbon Ridge and again planted Pinot Noir and Riesling. Finally, an 8-acre vineyard in the Dundee Hills was acquired in 2011.



The Freys built a modern winery, dramatically lit underground wine caves and a 1,500-square-foot art gallery to display James' and others artwork at Ribbon Ridge adjacent neighbors Beaux Freres and Brick House.

The name Trisaetum ("Tris-say-tum") is a Latinized version of the names of their son Tristan and daughter Tatum.

All Pinot Noirs are vinified with fruit from estate vineyards. This was my first encounter with the lineup of Trisaetum Pinot Noirs and I was quite impressed.

Beginning in 2013, Jacques Lardiere of Louis Jadot began vinifying Louis Jadot's Resonance wines at Trisaetum.

The winery's tasting room and art gallery are open Thursday through Sunday. Visit [www.trisaetum.com](http://www.trisaetum.com).





**2015 Trisaetum Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir**

13.6% alc., 4,000 cases, \$36. Released June 2017. A blend of fruit from Trisaetum's three estate vineyards. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Aromas of black cherry, pomegranate and toast lead to a forward-drinking, juicy mid weight styled wine of welcome harmony. Flavors of black cherry and blackberry are enhanced with a touch of oak, and the wine finishes with a burst of black raspberry goodness. An delightful everyday table wine. 90.*



**2015 Trisaetum Wichmann Dundee Estate Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., 302 cases, \$49. Released March 2017. A single vineyard bottling from Trisaetum's 8-acre Wichmann Dundee Estate Vineyard. Old vines planted in red volcanic soils. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Aromas of muddled black cherry, wilted rose and brown spice arrive over time in the glass. Elegant in character, and light to mid weight in extraction, featuring a core of fresh red cherry fruit and a sidecar of subtle herbs. The wine offers soft, comforting tannins and a bright cherry cola finish. More enjoyable when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. 92.*

**2015 Trisaetum Coast Range Estate Yamhill Carlton Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., 459 cases, \$49. Released March 2017. A single vineyard bottling from Trisaetum's 22-acre Coast Range Estate Vineyard. A mix of volcanic and sedimentary soils. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Shy aromas of cherry and underbrush lead to a mouth filling array of cherry and berry flavors alongside a rocky minerality. Nicely balanced, with fine-grain tannins, a soothing, luxurious mouthfeel, and a cherry driven finish. Enters a little better than it finishes. 90.*

**2015 Trisaetum Ribbon Ridge Estate Ribbon Ridge Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., 432 cases, \$49. Released March 2017. A single vineyard bottling from Trisaetum's 17-acre Ribbon Ridge Estate Vineyard. This site has rare high quartz sandstone soils. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Love the soaring aromas of black cherry, spice and sandalwood that build in intensity over time in the glass. Impressive attack of black cherry, black raspberry and sarsaparilla flavors framed by complimentary fine-grain tannins. Smooth and silky in the mouth with impeccable balance, finishing with purpose and generosity. 93.*



**2015 Trisaetum Estates Reserve Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., 358 cases, \$69. Released June 2017. A combination of Trisaetum's three estate vineyards. A selection of the most prized barrels. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. The nose is grand, with gloriously fresh aromas of blackberry, black grape, spice and fertile earth. A flavor explosion greets the palate with layers of purple and black fruit accented with notes of spice, savory herbs and toasty oak. Well-structured with suede tannins and a remarkably long finish. 94.*



**2014 Trisaetum Family Reserve Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., 142 cases, \$100. Release August 2017. A combination of Trisaetum's three estate vineyards. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Heady scents of black pie cherries, grilled beef and brioche. Intense attack and mid palate presence of black cherry and black raspberry fruits with added tastes of dark chocolate and Asian-5-spice. The cashmere texture is quite seductive, the sap is mouth coating, and the finish is grand cru in spirit. An age worthy, connoisseur's wine. 95.*



**Van Duzer Vineyards, Dallas, Oregon**

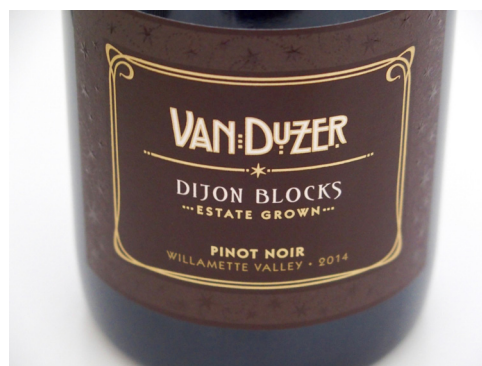
**2014 Van Duzer Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$32, screwcap. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition Gold Medal. Sourced from Van Duzer Estate, Kalita, Saffron Fields and Dukes Family vineyards. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The nose opens slowly in the glass to reveal delicate*

aromas of raspberry, dried red cherry, mocha and bark. Light to mid weight in style, with darker fruit flavors on the palate including black cherry, black raspberry and Damsel plum. Matching tannins, a light touch of oak, and a modest finish complete the picture. **88.**

**2014 Van Duzer Homestead Block Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$60. 100% Pommard clone from the Van Duzer Estate Vineyard. 30-year-old, own-rooted vines planted at the site of the original homestead. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Shy aromas of red berries, red cherry, mushroom and oak spice arrive slowly in the glass. More expressive on the pleasing palate, with juicy flavors of dark red raspberry and cherry accented with a bit of oak spice. Noticeable mid palate presence, inviting balance, bright acidity and a cherry fueled finish. Still fine when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.* **90.**

**2014 Van Duzer Westside Blocks Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., pH 3.69, TA 0.53, 429 cases, \$60. Cole Danehower Memorial Award Winner. Best Oregon Wine of Cascadia Wine Competition. Dijon 777, 113, Wädenswil, and Pommard clones. A limited selection of the best lots. *Delicate aromas of cherry, vanilla and toast lead off. Deep cherry flavor supported by integrated fine-grain tannins. Satiny smooth in texture, with noticeable length on the finish, leaving behind plenty of cherry goodness in its wake. Considerable more flavor expression when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.* **92.**

**2014 Van Duzer Dijon Blocks Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., pH 3.65, TA 0.52, 297 cases, \$60. Four Dijon clones from the Van Duzer Estate Vineyard contribute to this blend: 777, 113, 115 and 114. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. A well composed and balanced wine with aromas of black cherry, floral bouquet and nutty oak, and mid weight plus flavors of sappy, dark red and purple fruits including boysenberry, blueberry and pomegranate. Texturally pleasing with satin and polish, finishing with good purpose and juiciness. More integration and approachability when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.* **91.**



**2014 Van Duzer Bieze Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., pH 3.48, TA 0.57, 127 cases, \$60. Wine Club members exclusive. 62% Dijon 777 and 28% Dijon 667. Red volcanic soils. Aged in French oak barrels, 45% new. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Aromas of dark red cherry, earthy flora and peppery herbs lead to a light to mid weight styled palate of nicely spiced black cherry and raspberry fruit flavors. The tannins are noticeably silky and there is admirable vibrancy, creating a harmonious impression. The finish is particularly noteworthy, offering uplifting and persistent Montmorency cherry goodness.* **92.**

## Walnut City Wineworks, McMinnville, Oregon

Walnut City has crafted wines in a historic McMinnville winery since 1999. The facility was formerly a walnut processing plant that inspired the winery's name. Walnut City is rooted in farming and manages over 200 acres of vineyards in the Willamette Valley, having planted, grafted and grown more than a million vines. The reviewed wines are made from LIVE Certified Sustainable vineyards. Visit [www.walnutcitywineworks.com](http://www.walnutcitywineworks.com).

The 2014 Walnut City Wineworks Reserve Chardonnay is reviewed below.

**2014 Walnut City Wineworks La Cantera Vineyard Chehalem Mountains Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., pH 3.54, TA 0.63, 110 cases, \$40. Wädenswil clone planted in Laurelwood soil at a 30-year-old vineyard. A combination of de-stemmed (75%) and whole cluster fermentation (25%). 2-day cold soak, daily pumpovers. Uninoculated fermentation with twice daily foot treading on the whole cluster lots and punchdowns on the de-stemmed lots. Aged 15 months in French oak barrels, 15% new. *Light ruby red color in the glass. Shy aromas of red cherry, dark red cranberry, red rose and sandalwood. An easy drinking mid weight style, offering an array of red fruit flavors embellished with subtle oak highlights. Infused with bright acidity, the wine finishes modestly. When tasted two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the wine was unchanged.* **88.**

**2014 Walnut City Wineworks Reserve Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** 13.4% alc., pH 3.69, 333 cases, \$30. Harvest Brix 23.5°-25.2°. 50% La Cantera Vineyard (Chehalem Mountains AVA), 30% Carlton Hill Vineyard (Yamhill-Carlton AVA), and 20% Folie Hill Vineyard (Dundee Hills AVA). 100% de-stemmed. 3 to 5-day cold soak. Combination of native and inoculated yeast fermentation. Aged 12 months with light lees contact, then racked clean to barrels for another 5 months before bottling. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The nose leads with aromas of cherry, strawberry, toast and green bean. Noticeable vibrancy on the mid weight palate, displaying flavors of black cherry, raspberry and cranberry with a green note in the background. Integrated firm tannins, finishing slightly tart with good length. When tasted two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the wine was more savory in character with notable vegetal notes and less appeal.* **88.**

# Informed Doctors Reveal Truths about Wine & Health

W. Blake Gray, staff writer for *Palate Press, The Online Wine Magazine* at [www.palatepress.com/author/w-blake-gray/](http://www.palatepress.com/author/w-blake-gray/), published a review of a seminar in Canada on wine and health held by two doctors, Michael Apstein, M.D., and Ian D'Agata, M.D., who are gastroenterologists and also wine writers. 15 facts about wine and health came out of this seminar:

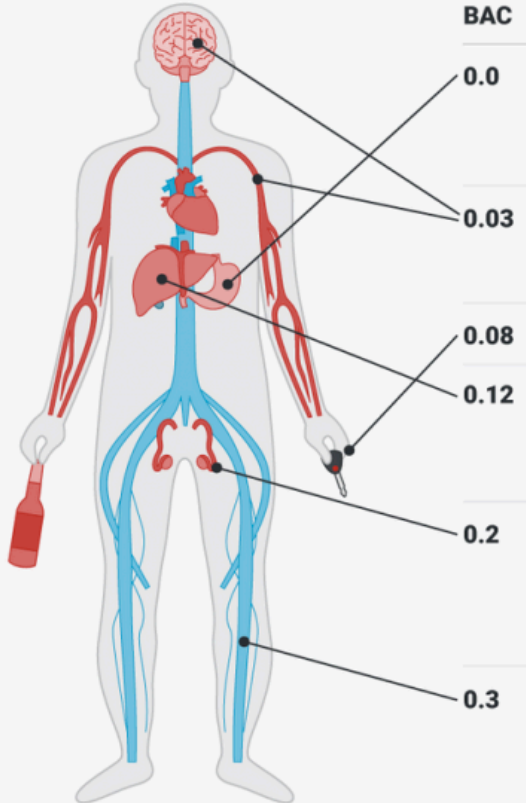
- (1) A cleansing by taking a week or month off from drinking is not particularly beneficial. The liver creates enzymes to metabolize alcohol and Dr. Apstein said, "Consistent moderate drinking is better. The liver creates enzymes to metabolize alcohol and has the capacity to create more enzymes."
- (2) Acetaminophen (Tylenol) should not be ingested when drinking wine since people who drink alcohol have a higher risk of getting liver disease from Tylenol.
- (3) Aspirin is also not an ideal painkiller for drinkers.
- (4) Wine is close to the pH of stomach acid, which helps digestion, but it makes heartburn worse.
- (5) Sparkling wine makes people drunk faster than still wine because carbonation accelerates stomach emptying. Keeping alcohol in the stomach longer allows it be broken down better and absorbed less, limiting the increase in blood alcohol. That is why it is advisable to eat while drinking since it slows down emptying of the stomach."
- (6) Women have a harder time breaking down alcohol than men. They have a different stomach enzyme or these enzymes are blocked by estrogen. (I should add that there has been considerable publicity in the news recently about alleged rape in women who are inebriated. I learned early on at frat parties in college that women cannot hold their liquor. Women should never drink so much that they put themselves in an uncompromising position. Young girls need to be educated about this - see # 14)



- (7) Hangover remedies do not work. To avoid a hangover, Dr. D'Agata advises, "Drink a liter of water before going to bed and probably a little sugar too."
- (8) We still do not clearly know what causes red wine headaches. Some think it is histamines and try to treat it with beta blockers. But most people who get headaches stop drinking wine.

- (9) Sulfites are an overblown worry. The gorilla in the bottle is alcohol, not sulfites. About 1% of Americans have a genuine allergic reaction to sulfites expressed as dangerous asthmatic reactions and hives. The other 99% of us, sulfites are not a problem and keep wine pristine.
- (10) Most natural wines smell like bruised apples because if acetylaldehyde molecules don't bind with sulfur, free acetylaldehyde is present. Dr. D'Agata said, "People talk about natural wines showing terroir. They all smell like bruised apples, and that comes from acetylaldehyde. That's not terroir."
- (11) For pregnant women, it is best not to drink any alcohol during the first trimester as the fetus is most sensitive in the first three months. The problem is that many women don't immediately realize they're pregnant. If they are trying to get pregnant, avoiding alcohol is probably advisable (my comment).
- (12) If there is a history of breast cancer in the family, it is probably best to abstain from alcohol but this is controversial.
- (13) Good news for diabetics. Peak blood sugar concentration is 30% lower after a meal that includes a glass of wine and that lower blood sugar is at the core of why wine is good for you."
- (14) Both doctors think we should teach children how to drink. Dr. Apstein asserts, "There are a lot of activities that are pleasurable and potentially dangerous, like alcohol. Like driving. Like sex. We have driver's education. We have sex education. We need drinking education. This country is crazy. You can't drink anything until age 21 years and then you can drink as much as you want. We need alcohol education."
- (15) Breathalyzer tests measure alcohol absorbed from the mouth, even without swallowing the wine. So even compulsive spitters should beware driving after large wine tastings.

## HOW ALCOHOL AFFECTS YOUR BRAIN/BODY AS YOU DRINK



BAC	EFFECTS
0.0	Your body can process ~1 drink an hour. Alcohol starts to enter your <b>bloodstream</b> both immediately through your <b>stomach lining</b> and more slowly after passing through your stomach and intestines.
0.03	You start to feel warmer as <b>blood vessels</b> dilate and intensifies mood and emotion by increasing the release of serotonin and endorphins in the brain.
0.08	By this point, you are legally too intoxicated to <b>drive</b> .
0.12	Coordination and mental judgment are impaired. You may slur their speech. Consistently stressing your <b>liver</b> can cause fat or scar tissue to build up, impairing its function over time.
0.2	You will most likely appear very drunk and have lost significant motor control and mental function. Many people lose the <b>ability to perform sexually</b> , mostly because alcohol disrupts neurotransmitters in the brain. This also causes poor sleep.
0.3	You could lose consciousness and your central <b>nervous system</b> becomes depressed. Higher BAC levels are associated with an increased risk of alcohol poisoning and death.

**NOTE:** Factors including individual variation, gender, physiology (i.e. – presence of food, metabolism, fitness, genetics and drug use) might affect how you process alcohol. Some people with a high BAC may appear to be much more sober than they are.

SOURCES: NIAAA.gov; Johns Hopkins University; Brown University Wellness Center BUSINESS INSIDER

Source: Business Insider

More alcohol and health related news was reported in Vol. 46 No. 3 June 2017 issue of *AIM - Alcohol in Moderation Digest Online*.

- (1) The majority of epidemiologic studies have shown that both positive and negative health effects of alcohol consumption are modified by the socioeconomic status (SES) of individuals, with truly moderate drinkers who are from higher SES strata having better health outcomes and fewer adverse effects from alcohol than lower SES subjects supposedly consuming similar amounts. One potential explanation for this has been that higher SES subjects are more likely to be regular moderate drinkers, more likely to be wine drinkers, and to drink primarily with meals, while lower SES subjects are more likely to binge drink, not with food, and may tend to under report their alcohol intake. However, the specific reasons why lower SES subjects have worse health overall and poorer effects after alcohol consumption remain unclear. A recent Scottish Health Survey of over 50,000 subjects showed that lower SES subjects were at much greater risk for poor health outcomes and risks associated with increasing amounts of alcohol were much greater in the lower groups.
- (2) The association between alcohol consumption and breast cancer risk in younger women was evaluated in a study published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*. Using family history of breast cancer and folate intake, researchers prospectively followed nearly 94,000 US women aged 27-44 years as part of the Nurses' Health Study II who had alcohol consumption data. Alcohol consumption was not associated with breast cancer risk overall at levels of one drink a day in a population of younger women. However, a positive association between alcohol consumption and breast cancer was found among those with a family history and low folate intake.
- (3) A study published in the *American Journal of Internal Medicine* looked at the impact of multiple healthy lifestyle factors on lifespan. Both men and women were studied in Sweden from 1998 through 2014. Each of four healthy lifestyle factors were studied: nonsmoking, physical activity at least 150 min/week, alcohol consumption of 0-14 drinks/week and healthy. The researchers concluded that adopting healthy lifestyle behaviors including moderate alcohol consumption may markedly increase lifespan.

# Sips of Recently Tasted Oregon Chardonnay and another White



**2014 Alloro Vineyard Estate Chehalem Mountains Oregon Chardonnay** 13.4% alc., 250 cases, \$34. 100% estate grown and bottled. 50% Dijon 76 and 50% Dijon 96. Barrel fermented, full malolactic fermentation with batonnage, aged 10 months in French oak barrels, 20% new. *Moderately light golden yellow color in the glass. Pleasant aromas of grilled pineapple, orange bitters, butter sauce and nori. Lemon, pineapple and white peach fruits form the core of this unpretentious wine. Slightly creamy in the mouth, with some acid-driven minerality and a lingering, citrus themed finish. 89.*

**2014 Amalie Robert Heirloom Cameo Willamette Valley Oregon Chardonnay** 14.1% alc., 60 cases, \$50. From a single block of estate Chardonnay planted to Dijon clones 76 and 95. Whole cluster pressed and vinified in a single 500-liter French oak puncheon without batonnage. Full malolactic conversion. Aged 14 months on the lees. *Moderate golden yellow color in the glass. Engaging aromas of lemon curd, cut apple, pineapple, honeysuckle and stainless steel. Delicious flavors of yellow apple, blonde caramel, poached pear and pineapple. Ripely fruited in this vintage producing a buxom wine that is yet toned and trim. Very satisfying, with a slightly creamy texture and a noticeably heady finish. 93.*



**2015 Big Table Farm The Elusive Queen Willamette Valley Oregon Chardonnay** 13.3% alc., \$85. Released April 11, 2017. *Moderate golden yellow color in the glass. Hi-tone aromas of lemon curd, green apple, and toasty oak. Full flavored and soft on the palate, featuring tastes of lemon, lime, white peach, pear and apple. Seamless, with vanillin oak in the background, and a lasting, uplifting finish. This wine leans more on refinement and delicacy than an explosion of fruit. 92.*



**2015 Lingua Franca AVNI Willamette Valley Oregon Chardonnay** 13.0% alc., \$40. Avni means “of stone” or “rock” and is a signature of Eola-Amity Hills geology. Fruit is from Jory soils found in Salem’s Bunker Hill Vineyard, Dundee Hills Durand Vineyard, and a Yamhill-Carlton site with a contribution of fruit from Laubejac vineyard with Willakenzie soil. *Light golden yellow color in the glass. Soaring aromas of lemon curd, spiced apple, pineapple and ocean breeze. Highly satisfying in a crisp and bright style, featuring flavors of citrus, pear and green apple embellished with notes of slate, steel and subtle buttery oak. The finish is notable for its tight grip of acidity and length. A lovely wine. 93.*





**2015 Rain Dance Estate Nicholas Vineyard Chehalem Mountains Oregon Chardonnay** 13.5% alc., pH 3.30, TA 0.58, 204 6-pack cases, \$30. Inaugural Chardonnay. Sourced from Nicholas Vineyard, a 40-acre vineyard planted in 2001, 2008 and 2015 in Jory and Laurelwood soils at an elevation of 544 feet. Harvest Brix 22.3°. Dijon 95. Double hand sorted, whole cluster pressed, aged in French oak barrels, 25% new, 25% once filled and 50% neutral. *Moderately light golden yellow color in the glass. Deep well of aromas including lemon, pineapple, white peach, honeysuckle, spice and buttery brioche. Slightly creamy on the palate, with vibrant flavors of citrus, banana, and vanilla cream with a riff of stony minerality. Well endowed with spirited acidity making for refreshing drinking.* **93.**



**2015 Van Duzer Bieze Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Oregon Chardonnay** 13.5% alc., pH 3.24, TA 0.64, 243 cases, \$40. Wine Club exclusive. First Chardonnay since 2001. 100% clone 76. Fermented in small lots in 40% concrete tank, 10% new oak, 20% neutral oak and 30% stainless steel. *Moderately light golden yellow color in the glass. Invigorating aromas of green apple, hay, fresh sea air and steel. Polished and harmonious on the palate, with flavors of yellow pear and nectarine. Very slight tannins and a long, juicy finish.* **91.**

**2015 Van Duzer Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Blanc** 13.48% alc., \$25, screwcap. Barrel fermented and aged on the lees. *Moderately light golden yellow color in the glass. Delicate nose offering demure aromas of apple, lime and poached pear. More giving on the palate, with flavors of apple pie, peach and pear backed by bright acidity. Crisp and juicy with a soft mouthfeel and a good cut on the finish. The tender fruit flavor is typical of this varietal. A good food wine.* **88.**



**2014 Walnut City Wineworks Reserve Willamette Valley Chardonnay** 13.5% alc., pH 3.19, 104 cases, \$30. 50% Bunker Hill Vineyard and 50% Robinson Vineyard. Harvest Brix 21.8°-22.4°. Whole cluster pressed to tank, inoculated in barrel. Primary fermentation over 3-5 weeks and secondary fermentation another 2-3 months. Batonnage monthly while the wine spent 10 months on the lees. *Moderate golden yellow color in the glass. Fresh aromas of green apple, lemon, pomelo and nutty oak. Nicely composed, with appealing flavors of citrus, green apple, and pear, finishing with a quenching burst of lemon-lime fruit. Bright in character with good tension.* **90.**





# Pinot Briefs

**Oregon Winery Dinners in the Field Series** Casual wine dinners through the rest of 2017 featuring wines of notable wineries. The series of events was started by chef Pascal Chureau who envisioned communal dinners at wineries or in an open field, barn or tent. Prices are very reasonable at \$85 to \$90 per person for a six- or seven-course dinner and wine. Featured wineries include Ponzi Vineyards (July 15), Domaine Serene (August 26), and Penner-Ash Wine Cellars (September 30). At each event, the winery joins a local food producer or farm. Visit [www.fieldandvineevents.com](http://www.fieldandvineevents.com).

**California Chardonnay Prices are Over the Top** Some recently marketed California Chardonnays: 2014 Kongsgaard Napa Valley The Judge Chardonnay - \$200, 2014 Boars View Sonoma Coast Chardonnay - \$200, 2014 Alpha Omega Napa Valley Reserve Chardonnay - \$100, 2014 Grgich Hills Commemorative Paris Tasting Napa Valley Chardonnay - \$94, 2015 Aubert CIX Sonoma Coast Chardonnay - \$95, 2014 Kistler Kistler Vineyard Sonoma Valley Chardonnay - \$90, and so on. Really???? Wine writer Charles Oiken said it best, "It makes me wonder whether great wine, which is already the province of the well-off, will not become the plaything only of the very rich. Will the eager enthusiasts not blessed with megabucks now be shut out from ever tasting the great wines. If we are not already at that sad pass, we may well be very soon."

**Sustainable Sonoma County** Sonoma County Winegrowers (SCW) plans to have Sonoma County be America's first 100 percent certified sustainable wine region. This is a first-of-its-kind model in the global winemaking industry. Sonoma County is now well on its way to become 100 percent sustainable by 2019, with 85 percent of the vineyard acres sustainably self-assessed and more than 60 percent of the vineyards certified sustainable by a third party auditor. Some experts believe that sustainably grown grapes improve the quality of wine because sustainable vineyard practices and technologies allow growers to monitor their vineyards, vine by vine, to ensure proper irrigation levels. Another aspect of sustainability efforts is matching the right rootstocks and clones to the soil and terroir of each vineyard site. There are three ways you can experience Sonoma County's Sustainable Wines: (1) Free, self-guided vineyard walks provide Sonoma County visitors with an interactive, educational experience at nine of the region's wineries - [www.sonomavineyardadventures.com](http://www.sonomavineyardadventures.com); (2) During harvest season, SCW host a 3-day, immersive Wine Country harvest experience at which participants get hands-on at sustainably minded vineyards and meet some of the region's premier winegrowers and winemakers - [www.sonomagrapecamp.com](http://www.sonomagrapecamp.com); (3) Simply come to Sonoma County and visit. Uncork a bottle of wine that you know was crafted by farmers who are committed to the quality of the wine and to preserving the lands of Sonoma County for future generations.

**Total Eclipse Celebration at Willamette Valley Vineyards** The Willamette Valley Vineyards Estate is in the direct path of the 2017 solar eclipse and the winery is celebrating with wine tasting, educational presentations and live music. Each attendee receives a commemorative 2015 Solar Eclipse Pinot Noir and food pairings will be available for purchase. Admission is \$100 per person (\$75 for Wine Club Members). Call 503-588-9463 to reserve your space. Other wineries in the Willamette Valley are having similar celebrations on Monday, August 21, in the evening.

**2017 Oregon Wine University® Wine Discovery Series** The first two classes being offered this summer include Discover Oregon® on Tuesday, June 27, from 2-4 pm, at Southern Oregon University led by Greg Jones, PhD and Fundamentals of Our Region on Tuesday, July 18, 2-4 pm, at Southern Oregon University again hosted by Greg Jones, PhD, delving deeper into comparing Oregon's growing regions to other famous growing regions of the world. Tickets are \$39 for consumers. Visit [www.theOregonWineExperience.com](http://www.theOregonWineExperience.com). More classes to come in August.

**Summer Concert Series** Look to these wineries for a series of performances by headliners: Halter Ranch Vineyard, Paso Robles (June-August); Robert Mondavi Winery Concert Series, Napa Valley (July); Summer Sundays at Edna Valley Vineyard, Edna Valley (July-August); Rodney Strong Vineyard's Annual Summer Concert Series, Healdsburg (July-September); Vina Robles Concert Series, Paso Robles (Ongoing).

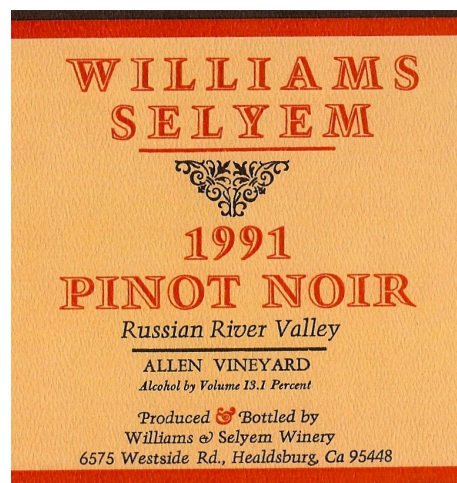
**Summer Wine Events** Roll Out the Barrels in San Luis Obispo, June 22-24; Santa Barbara Wine & Food Festival in Santa Barbara, June 24; 21st Annual Atascadero Lakeside Wine Festival, Atascadero, June 24; 14th Annual California Wine Festival, Santa Barbara County, July 13-15; Santa Cruz Mountains Passport

Celebration Day, July 15; Salinas Valley Food & Wine Festival, Salinas, August 12; and Sonoma Wine Country Weekend, Sonoma County, September 1-3.

**School House Vineyard Offers 4-Year Vertical** The owners dipped into the library for an early summer special. A vertical of four vintages of the cult School House Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2009-2012. Price is \$360 including shipping.

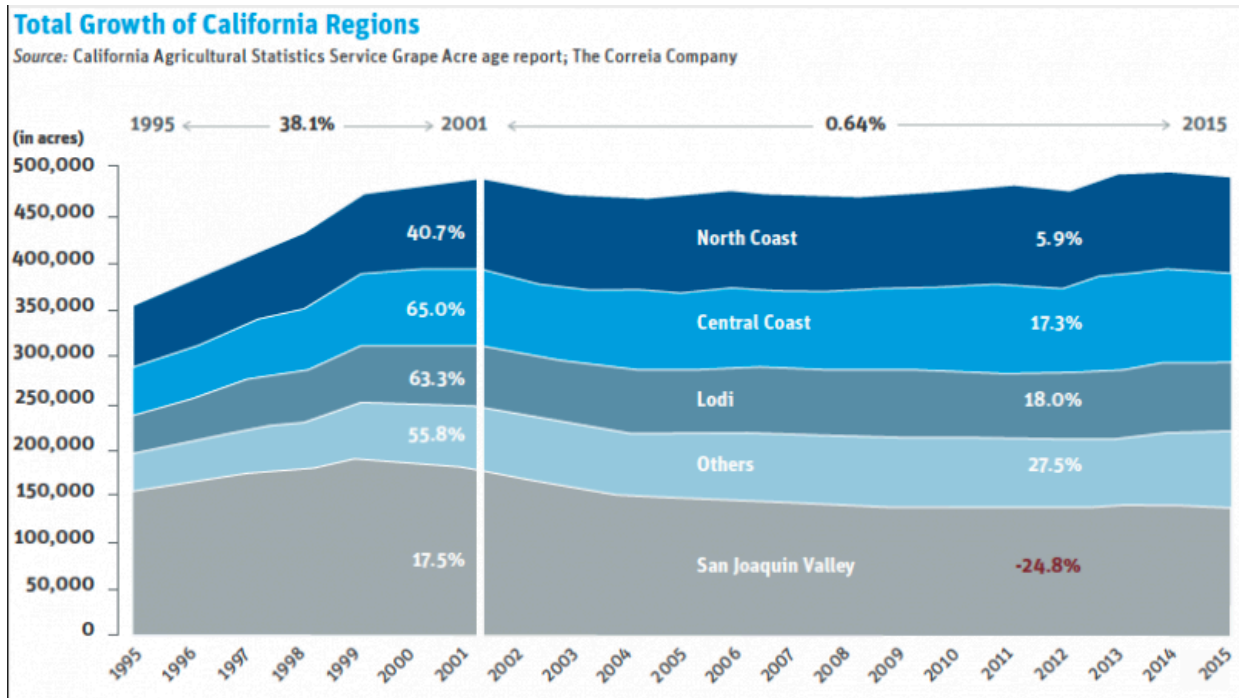


**Williams Selyem Magnum Vertical Tasting** The June 2017 issue of the Burghound - [www.burghound.com](http://www.burghound.com) - has a report on a vertical tasting of magnums of Williams Selyem Pinot Noir from 1985 to 1996: 1985 Rochioli Vineyard, 1986 Rochioli Vineyard, 1988 Allen Vineyard, 1991 Summa Vineyard 1991 Allen Vineyard, 1992 Rochioli Vineyard, 1994 Rochioli Vineyard, 1995 Summa Vineyard and 1996 Precious Mountain Vineyard. The tasting was held in November 2016 in Burgundy at the home of Becky Wasserman and Russell Hone. Burt Williams supplied the wines and provided much of the color commentary. Allen Meadows, who has been an avid collector of William Selyem wines beginning in the mid-1980s, attended and reported his reviews in the Burghound newsletter. Scores were all in the 91-96 range. To read the full report, you must be a subscriber to the Burghound. Many older vintages of Williams Selyem Pinot Noir from both 750 ml and 1.5 L format have been reviewed previously in the *PinotFile* as well.

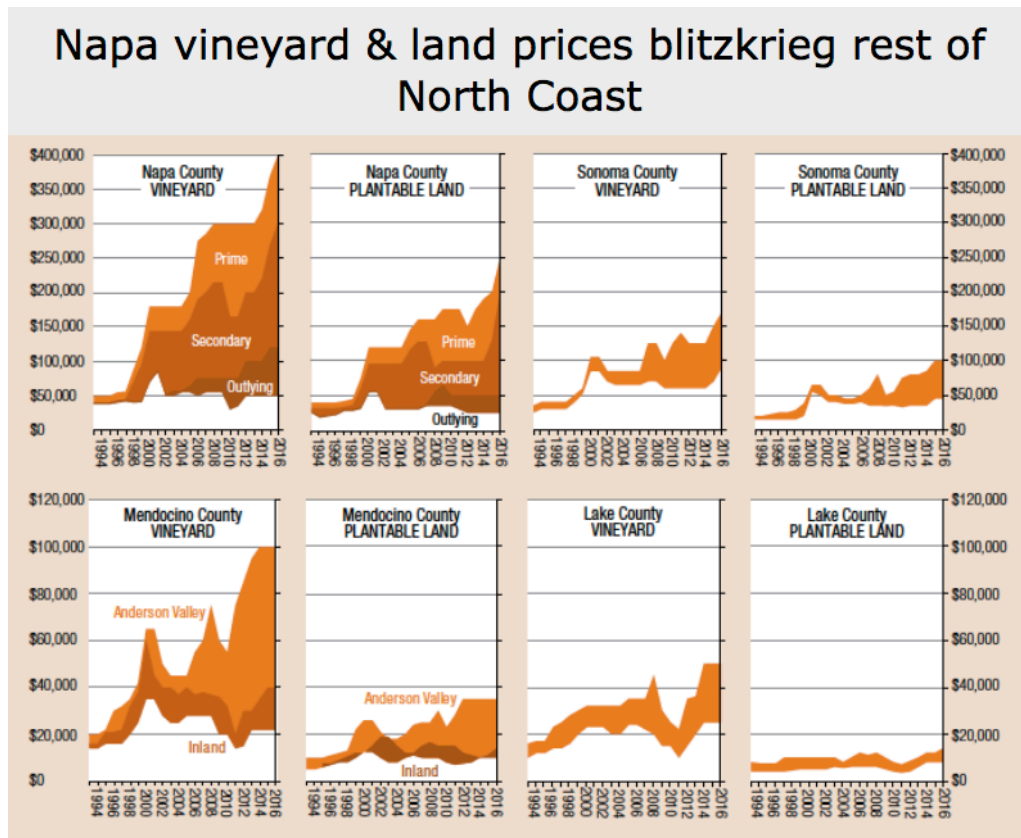


**Taste West Sonoma** There is a new group of local tasting rooms working together to celebrate West Sonoma County. Wineries include Claypool Cellars, Dmk Wines, Furthermore, Halleck Vineyard, Hartford Family Wines, Iron Horse Vineyards, Joseph Jewell, MacPhail Wines, Marimar Estate, Martin Ray and Red Car Wines. A tasting event was held June 17 at The Barlow Event Venue in collaboration between the Russian River Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence and the Taste West Sonoma group of wineries.

## Growth of California Wine Regions 1995-2015



## Vineyard Land Prices Napa County vs North Coast



**Domaine Drouhin Oregon Edition Limitées (EL) Now Available** The Domaine Drouhin Oregon 2014 Edition Limitée Pinot Noir (215 cases, \$85) and 2015 Edition Limitée Chardonnay (125 cases, \$65) are from particularly unique blocks of the winery's Dundee Hills estate, warranting these special, limited production wines. The inspiration for these wines began in 20014, with two exceptional barrels of chardonnay the winemaker Véronique couldn't fathom blending. 2011 gave the first EL Pinot Noir, sourced largely from one distinct block. This block has consistently lent its fruit to this exclusive bottling. There are limited amounts of these wines available in 750 ml and large formats. Visit [www.domainedrouhin.com](http://www.domainedrouhin.com).



**Sonoma County Wine Auction 2017** This annual event will be held Saturday, September 16, 2017. The County's leading annual fundraising event will at the La Crema Estate at Saralee's Vineyard. Honorary Chairs are Jackson Family Wines Chairman & Proprietor Barbara R. Bancke and the entire Jackson family. Named one of the top three charitable wine auctions by *Wine Spectator*, the Sonoma Harvest Wine Auction has raised \$24 million to date for more than 95 local Sonoma County charitable organizations. Tickets are now on sale. The weekend package is available via the website and special discounts are offered for Visa Signature and Visa Infinite cardholders. The price for the weekend package is \$2,500 per person that includes access to a variety of events. For information, visit [www.SonomaCountyWineAuction.com](http://www.SonomaCountyWineAuction.com).

SONOMA COUNTY WINE AUCTION • 2017

the auction

La Crema Estate at Saralee's Vineyard | Russian River Valley | Sonoma County | CA

save the date

Saturday, September 16, 2017  
[SonomaCountyWineAuction.com](http://SonomaCountyWineAuction.com)

**Single Vineyard Night in Sonoma County** The Russian River Valley Winegrowers are hosting Single Vineyard Night June 30, 2017 at Vintner's Inn in Santa Rosa. 46 of the Russian River Valley's top wineries will be pouring small-lot, single-vineyard Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Zinfandel, Syrah and Sauvignon Blanc. A limited number of VIP tickets are available. Visit [www.RRVW.org](http://www.RRVW.org) for tickets.

**Wine Infographic** Master of Wine and Bollinger Medal winner Sam Caporn has relaunched her website to showcase her new infographic, The Wine Flavor Tree. This is an aid to help consumers identify flavor profiles found in wine and includes 40 different flavors divided into 10 different branches. Visit the website at [www.themistressofwine.com](http://www.themistressofwine.com).

**FedEx Cold Chain Services** FedEx arranges specifically designed temperature controlled air cargo containers and exclusive use temperature controlled trucks for pickup and delivery. Temperatures are maintained within tight temperature ranges and temperature monitoring can be provided throughout shipment. The only part of the wine shipment where the wine does not travel or stay in a temperature controlled environment is the morning of the delivery and then the wine is delivered by 10:30 am by priority delivery. There are twelve states where this shipping option is not available. You will see this shipping option now offered by wineries and retailers wine and expect to pay about \$10 above normal shipping charges for two bottles shipped by Cold Chain.