



PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

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Pinot Noir:
Vitamin P

2018 Pinot Noir & Chardonnay All-Americans

In the final issue of the *PinotFile* I name the All-Americans, my favorite domestic Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays reviewed over the past year. In 2018, 24% of the wines received a score of 94 or above and were considered extraordinary. These were spellbinding wines that elicited emotion.

I score both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay using the 100-point scoring system with guidelines as follows: 94-99 Extraordinary, 90-93 Outstanding, 86-89 Very Good, and 82-85 Good. Wines scoring less than 82 including flawed wines do not merit publication in the *PinotFile* (there are very few of these submitted for review in the current marketplace). All reviewed wines in the *PinotFile* scoring 94 or above are awarded the Pinot Geek icon for Pinot Noir and the Golden Geek icon for Chardonnay.



Wines in the Value Priced All-American category offer an exceptional price to quality ratio. My cutoff for this class of wines is \$40 or below that also receive a score of 89 or above. All reviewed wines within this category are awarded the Pinot Value icon for Pinot Noir and the Golden Value icon for Chardonnay.



The All-Americans are the highest scoring wines judged independently of price, case production, vintage or wine region of origin. For Pinot Noir, the average price of wines scoring 89 or less was \$38.66 and the average price for wines scoring 90 or above was \$55.95. Most of the wines tasted in 2018 were from the excellent 2015 and 2016 vintages. I believe it is somewhat unfair to compare wines from disparate vintages, but the evaluation of each wine is taken on its own merit in the context of the vintage.

Only finished bottled wines that are formally reviewed in controlled, and therefore, comparable circumstances at my home office are candidates for All-American consideration. Wines tasted at dinners, festivals or wineries are not included. All wines are culled from unsolicited winery submissions with the exception of a few wines that are rarely submitted for review and were purchased.

To search for the complete review of each All-American wine, visit the Home Page at www.princeofpinot.com. Click on Winery Directory, then the producing winery, and read the review among those listed.

2018 California Pinot Noir All-Americans

First Team Wines

2013 Soliste L'Ambroisie Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 98....*unreal aromas of blackest cherry, Prada leather coat and earthy funkiness....texture is as smooth as a baby's bottom....truly glamorous and almost too good to be true....ambrosial.*

2016 Benovia Tilton Hill Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 97....*gorgeous nose....freakishly concentrated boysenberry and blackberry fruits, yet retains all of Pinot's charms....gratuitous balance....*

2016 Fulcrum Gap's Crown Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 97....*ultimate expression of Pinot's exuberance, encouraging contemplation and gloating....intense, sappy and lengthy finish.*

2015 Littorai Savoy Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 97....*aromatic goodness....sophisticated wine that satisfies from attack to finish....possess the ephemeral Pinot quality that is the Holy Grail of vintners.*

2013 Soliste Nouveau Monde Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 97....*haunting aromas of potpourri and rose petal....polished, silken and dreamy....virile finish that gives and gives.*

2015 Three Sticks Gap's Crown Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 97....*sensational, persistent aromas, bombastically flavored with majestic fruit, yet elegantly composed....astonishing.*

2016 Big Basin Coastview Vineyard Monterey County Pinot Noir 96....*a gifted wine....sleek and polished....swagger and finesse in one package.*

2015 Calera Jensen Vineyard Mt. Harlan Pinot Noir 96....*enticing aromas....the first taste tells you this wine is special....the satiny texture is mesmerizing....the Prima Donna among the Calera stable of wines.*

2016 Masút Estate Eagle Peak Mendocino County Pinot Noir 96....*irresistable aromas....terrific attack, length and finish....you can feel the Fetzer boys' passion in this Pinot....amazing value at \$40.*

2014 Soliste L'Ambroisie Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 96....*aromas soar from the glass....envious vibrancy, boisterous, yet dances graciously in the mouth from attack to finish.*



Claude Koeberle, Soliste Cellars

Second Team Wines

- 2016 Benovia La Pommeriae Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 95
- 2016 Black Kite Cellars Redwood's Edge Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 95
- 2016 Dutton-Goldfield Azaya Ranch Marin County Pinot Noir 95
- 2016 Dutton-Goldfield Redwood Ridge Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 95
- 2015 Ellen Redding Marin County Pinot Noir 95
- 2015 Gary Farrell Martaella Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 95
- 2016 Gary Farrell Fort Ross Vineyard Fort Ross-Seaview Pinot Noir 95
- 2015 Ken Brown Sanford & Benedict Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 95
- 2015 Littorai The Haven Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 95
- 2016 Paul Lato "The Contender" Drum Canyon Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 95
- 2016 Paul Lato "Lancelot" Pisoni Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir 95
- 2015 Sea Smoke "Ten" Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 95
- 2015 Small Vines TBH Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 95
- 2015 Three Sticks Walala Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 95
- 2015 Three Sticks Cuvée Eva Maria Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 95
- 2016 Tongue Dancer Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 95
- 2016 WesMar Balletto Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 95



Honorable Mention Wines

- 2014 Aether Matrix Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Alden Alli Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Benovia Martaella Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Benovia Bella Una Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Benovia Cohn Vineyard Sonoma County Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Big Basin Vineyards Alfaro Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Big Basin Vineyards Lester Family vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Brooks Note Weir Vineyard Yorkville Highlands Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Castalia Rochioli Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Calera Reed Vineyard Mt. Harlan Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Cattleya Donum Vineyard Carneros Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Chenoweth Green Valley of Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Dutton-Goldfield Redwood Ridge Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Fulcrum Brousseau Vineyard Chalone Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Donelan Cushing's Block Barbed Oak Vineyard Bennett Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Dutton-Goldfield Emerald Ridge Vineyard Green Valley of Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Dutton-Goldfield McDougall Vineyard Ft Ross-Seaview Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 Dutton-Goldfield Deviate Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Gary Farrell Gap's Crown Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Gary Farrell McDonald Mountain Vineyard Clone 667 20% Whole Cluster 94
- 2016 Gary Farrell Hallberg Vineyard Dijon clones Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Gracianna Westside Reserve Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2015 Gracianna Mercedes Block Estate Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2016 HIBOU Riddle Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94
- 2014 Kitá Hilliard Bruce Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 94

2015 LaRue Rice-Spivak Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94

2015 Littorai Wendling Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 94

2016 Lynmar Estate Block 10 Quail Hill Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94

2015 Maggy Hawk Hawkster Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 94

2015 Maggy Hawk Jolie Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 94

2016 Metzker Terra De Promissio Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94

2016 Morgan Tondre Grapefield Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir 94

2016 Sojourn Riddle Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94

2014 Soliste Grands Charmes Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94

2014 Soliste Contrabande Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94

2016 Paul Lato “Duende” Gold Coast Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir 94

2015 Ram’s Gate Silver Eagle Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94

2014 Siduri Pisoni Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir 94

2016 Small Vines TBH Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94

2016 Sojourn Walala Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 94

2015 Ten Acre Jenkins Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94

2016 Ten Acre Earl Stephen Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 94



Theresa Heredia, Winemaker, Gary Farrell

2018 Oregon Pinot Noir All-Americans

First Team Wines

2015 Alloro Vineyard Estate 'Justina' Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 96....soaring aromas, seductively elegant style that dances across the palate....silk pajama texture....went from great to exceptional over night.

2016 DION Old Vines Special Release Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 96....elicits emotion from the first sip....gorgeous perfume....vigorous with black cherry flavor....impeccable harmony....flat-out beautiful!

2016 Evesham Wood Mahonia Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 96...."Oh, my God!" aromas, flat-out delicious....seamlessly composed....lasting echo of scent and fruit on the finish....a wine-gasm.

2015 Evening Land Anden Seven Springs Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 96....intoxicating aromas.... extremely long finish....won't bowl you over with sap, but it will seduce you with nuance.

2016 Knudsen Vineyards Reserve Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 96....darker fruited framed by a touch of oak....long, deeply aromatic finish....luscious texture.

2015 Alloro Vineyard Estate 'Riservata' Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....more of everything....a bold statement, yet easy to cozy up to....swagger, depth and dimension.

2016 Arterberry Maresh Maresh Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....lovely aromas, appealing brightness and purity of red fruit....righteous tannins and crisp acidity....delightful grip of cherry on the finish.

2015 Big Table Farm Sunnyside Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....a striking wine from the get-go....glamorous and sexy....flavors make love to the palate....sleek and lacy.

2015 Flâneur Bon Vivant Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....penetrating aromas....a nose you could drink....complex and layered....whole cluster driven....caressing mouth feel....a regal wine.

2015 LUMOS Temperance Hill Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....very charming....nicely spiced blackberry fruit....subtle oak treatment delights....remarkably persistent finish.

2015 Prince Hill CL 95 Grand Vin De Garage Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....enticing, intoxicating aromas....pleasingly sappy cherry presence....like a Chambertin....flat-out terrific.

2015 Winter's Hill Block 10 Whole Cluster Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....dramatic aromatics that excite....equally seductive on the palate....unctuous flavors....very long, flavorful and juicy finish.

2016 Walter Scott Temperance Hill Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....flamboyant aromas....stunning and succulent on the palate with far-reaching flavors....harmonious....long, long, long finish.

2016 Walter Scott Freedom Hill Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 95....very classy....delicious fruit....enticingly silken in texture....a highly nuanced wine....intensely aromatic and spicy finish.



Alloro Vineyard, Chehalem Mountains

Second Team Wines

- 2015 Anam Cara Nicholas Vineyard Reserve Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Anam Cara Mark IX Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2014 Angela Estate Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Arterberry Maresh Maresh Vineyard Old Vines Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Broadley Vineyards Jessica Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Coelho Coelho Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Coelho Zeitoun Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Cristom Marjorie Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Evesham Wood Sojourner Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Evesham Wood Temperance Hill Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Evesham Wood Cuvée J Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Flâneur Cuvée Constantine Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2014 Guillén Winemaker's Cuvée Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Guillén Reserve Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Knudsen Vineyards Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Lenné Estate cinq elus Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Lingua Franca Estate Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Nicholas-Jay Bishop Creek Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Trisaetum Estates Reserve Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2015 Winter's Hill Block 10 Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**
- 2016 Winter's Hill Reserve Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94**

2018 California Value Priced Pinot Noir All-Americans

Most of the wines submitted for review to the *PinotFile* are in the ultra premium or premium category and cost more than \$40. As a result, I do not have the opportunity to review large numbers of value priced Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Nevertheless, here are some recommended wines I did find in 2018. The value priced wines category includes wines priced \$40 or less with a score of at least 89. I have not included Pinot Noir Rosé wines as they always represent good value.

Some of these wines are only available through the producer's website. The wines of larger production wineries such as Etude, La Crema and Migration are widely distributed.

First Team

2016 Kitson Wines Black Knight Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 93 \$36

2016 Big Basin Dune & Mountain Monterey County Pinot Noir 92 \$36

2016 Kitson Wines Haynes Vineyard Coombsville Napa Valley Pinot Noir 92 \$92

2014 Aether Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir 91 \$36

2016 Fallon Place Herbitage Vineyard Los Carneros Pinot Noir 91 \$38

2015 J. Wilkes Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir 91 \$30

2016 J. Wilkes Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir 91 \$30

2016 Kendric Vineyards Petaluma Gap Marin County Pinot Noir 91 \$38

2014 KORI KW Ranch Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir 91 \$38

2016 On Point (Fulcrum) Christianna's Cuvée North Coast Pinot Noir 91 \$38

2015 Peake Ranch Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 91 \$40

****Special recognition for wines deemed All-Americans and Value Priced All-Americans

2016 Masút Estate Vineyard Eagle Peak Mendocino county Pinot Noir 96 \$40

2015 Ellen Redding Marin County Pinot Noir 95 \$36

Second Team

2016 Etude Grace Benoist Ranch Carneros Pinot Noir 90 \$36

2015 Karah Estate Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 90 \$30

2013 KORI KW Ranch Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir 90 \$30

2015 La Crema Panorama Vineyard Arroyo Seco Pinot Noir 90 \$40

2016 Lichen Estate Moonglow Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$35
2016 Migration Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 90 \$40
2016 Sante Arcangeli Integrato Barrel Selection Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 90 \$39
2016 Sarah's Vineyard Santa Clara Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$25
2016 Siduri Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 90 \$35
2016 Sojourn Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 90 \$39
2016 Sonoma-Loeb Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 90 \$34
2016 Ten Acre Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 90 \$35
2016 Trader Joe's Platinum Reserve Lot #79 Carneros Pinot Noir 90 \$14.99
2015 Wait Cellars Devoto Garden Vineyard Green Valley of Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$35

Honorable Mention

2015 Cambria Julia's Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$25
2016 Frank Family Carneros Pinot Noir 89 \$38
2016 Joseph Jewell Ryan Vineyard Humboldt County Pinot Noir 89 \$39
2016 Kitson Wines North Coast Pinot Noir 89 \$32
2015 La Crema Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$40
2016 La Crema Monterey Pinot Noir 89 \$23
2015 Mignanelli Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 89 \$36
2016 Morgan Twelve Clones Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir 89 \$35
2016 On Point (Fulcrum) Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 89 \$38
2015 Waits-Mast Mendocino County Pinot Noir 89 \$35
2016 Windy Oaks Estate Terra Narro Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 89 \$29
2014 Windrun Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 89 \$32
2015 Yamakiri Filigreen Farm Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$33

2018 Oregon Value Price Pinot Noir All-Americans

Evesham Wood and Haden Fig (same producer) are clearly the winners in this category.

First Team Wines

- 2016 Broadley Vineyards Zenith Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 93 \$35
- 2015 DION Vineyard Winemaker's Reserve Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 93 \$40
- 2015 Evesham Wood Illahe Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 93 \$30
- 2015 Evesham Wood Le Puts Sec Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 93 \$40
- 2016 Winter's Hill Watershed Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 93 \$25
- 2015 Evesham Wood La Grive Bleue Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 92 \$28
- 2015 Cooper Mountain Vineyards Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 92 \$25
- 2015 Haden Fig Bjornson Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 92 \$30
- 2016 Lingua Franca AVNI Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 92 \$35
- 2015 Tye Estate Barrel Select Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 92 \$35
- 2016 Winter's Hill Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 92 \$39

****Special recognition for Oregon wines deemed both All-Americans and Value Price All-Americans:

- 2016 Evesham Wood Mahonia Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 96 \$36
- 2016 Evesham Wood Sojourner Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94 \$36
- 2016 Evesham Wood Temperance Hill Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94 \$36
- 2015 Flâneur Cuvée Constantine Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94 \$40

Second Team Wines

- 2015 A to Z Wineworks The Essence of Oregon Oregon Pinot Noir 91 \$24
- 2016 Broadley Vineyards Estate Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 91 \$35
- 2015 Cristom Mt Jefferson Cuvée Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 91 \$32
- 2014 HillCrest Reserve Umpqua Valley Pinot Noir 91 \$36

2015 Lenné Estate Le Nez Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 91 \$30

2015 LUMOS Five Blocks Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 91 \$25

2015 Saffron Fields Zenith Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 91 \$40

Honorable Mention Wines

2015 Analemma Oak Ridge Vineyard Columbia Gorge Pinot Noir 90 \$32

2015 Bow & Arrow Hughes Hollow Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$29

2016 Broadley Vineyards Open Claim Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$35

2016 Brooks Janus Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$38

2016 Cooper Mountain Vineyards Life Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$40

DION Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$30

2015 Evesham Wood Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$26

2016 de Lancellotti Famiglia Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$40

2014 Guillén Esteban Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$25

2016 Rain Dance Estate Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$40

2015 Yamhill Valley Vineyards Estate McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 \$22

2016 Brooks Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$28

2016 Cloudline Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$14.99

2015 Guillén Esteban Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$25

2015 Haden Fig Croft Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$30

2016 Trisaetum Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$36

2015 Youngberg Hill Cuvée Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 89 \$35

2018 California Chardonnay All-Americans

First Team Wines

- 2016 Gary Farrell Bacigalupi Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 98**
- 2015 Aubert Sugar Shack Napa Valley Chardonnay 97**
- 2015 Ten Acre Ritchie Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 97**
- 2015 Chateau St. Jean Reserve Sonoma County Chardonnay 96**
- 2015 Dutton-Goldfield Rued Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 96**
- 2016 Gary Farrell Rochioli Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 96**
- 2015 Three Sticks Gap's Crown Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 96**
- 2016 Chateau Boswell Ritchie Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 95**
- 2015 MacRostie Kent Ritchie Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 95**
- 2016 Paul Lato "Belle de Jour" Duvarita Vineyard Santa Barbara County Chardonnay 95**
- 2016 Metzker Ritchie Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 95**
- 2015 Paul Hobbs Richard Dinner Vineyard Sonoma Mountain Chardonnay 95**
- 2015 Ramey Ritchie Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 95**
- 2015 Rusack Santa Catalina Island Vineyards California Chardonnay 95**
- 2016 Sojourn Reuling Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 95**
- 2015 Three Sticks Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 95**

Second Team Wines

- 2014 Aether Sierra Madre Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay 94**
- 2016 Benovia La Pommeraie Russian River Valley Chardonnay 94**
- 2016 Cattleya Pratt Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 94**
- 2016 Chateau St. Jean Belle Terre Vineyard Alexander Valley Chardonnay 94**
- 2016 Chateau St. Jean Le Seul Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 94**
- 2016 Davis Family Vineyards Russian River Valley Chardonnay 94**
- 2016 Domaine Della Ritchie Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 94**
- 2016 Gary Farrell Ritchie Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 94**
- 2016 Joseph Phelps Freestone Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 94**

2016 Lynmar Estate Old Vines Russian River Valley Chardonnay 94

2017 Masút Estate Vineyard Eagle Peak Mendocino County Chardonnay 94

2016 Paul Lato “Le Souvenir” Sierra Madre Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay 94

2015 Ramey Rochioli Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay 94

2016 Senses B.A.Thieriot Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 94

2016 Small Vines TBH Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 94

2015 Smith-Madrone Napa Valley Chardonnay 94

2016 Three Sticks “Origin” Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 94

2016 Three Sticks “One Sky” Sonoma Mountain Chardonnay 94



Kent Ritchie, Ritchie Vineyard, Russian River Valley

2018 California Value Price Chardonnay All-Americans

First Team Wines

- 2015 Alma Fria Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 93 \$40**
- 2015 Chateau St. Jean Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 92 \$35**
- 2015 Chateau St. Jean Robert Young Vineyard Alexander Valley Chardonnay 92 \$35**
- 2016 Frank Family Vineyards Carneros Chardonnay 93 \$38**
- 2016 Byron Bien Nacido Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay 92 \$40**
- 2016 Byron Nielson Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay 92 \$40**
- 2016 MacRostie Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 92 \$25**
- 2016 Sonoma-Loeb Sangiacomo Vineyard Carneros Chardonnay 92 \$30**
- 2016 Sonoma-Loeb Envoy Carneros Chardonnay 92 \$38**
- 2014 Tulocay Haynes Vineyard Napa Valley Chardonnay 92 \$28**

Second Team Wines

- 2016 Kessler-Haak Sta. Rita Hills Chardonnay 91 \$35**
 - 2015 Chateau St. Jean Cold Creek Ranch Sonoma County 90 \$35**
 - 2016 La Crema Russian River Valley Chardonnay 90 \$30**
 - 2014 Sweetzer Cellars Presqu'ile Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay 90 \$40**
 - 2015 Thirty-Seven Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 90 \$24**
 - 2015 Cambria Katherine's Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay 89 \$22**
 - 2016 Migration Sonoma Coast Chardonnay 89 \$40**
 - 2016 Morgan Highland Santa Lucia Highlands Chardonnay 89 \$28**
 - 2015 Thirty-Seven Sonoma Coast Reserve Chardonnay 89 \$36**
- ****Special recognition for wines deemed All-Americans and Value Priced All-Americans**
- 2014 Aether Sierra Madre Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay 94 \$36**
 - 2016 Chateau St. Jean Belle Terre Vineyard Alexander Valley Chardonnay 94 \$35**
 - 2016 Davis Family Vineyards Russian River Valley Chardonnay 94 \$38**
 - 2015 Smith-Madrone Napa Valley Chardonnay 94 \$34**

2018 Oregon Chardonnay All-Americans

First Team Wines

2016 Big Table Farm The Elusive Queen Willamette Valley Chardonnay 97

2015 Knudsen Vineyards Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Chardonnay 96

2016 Walter Scott X Novo Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Chardonnay 95

2015 Haden Fig "Juliette" Willamette Valley Chardonnay 94

2016 Lingua Franca Bunker Hill Vineyard Estate Willamette Valley Chardonnay 94

2015 LUMOS Wren Vineyard Willamette Valley Chardonnay 93



Big Table Farm, Gaston, Oregon

2018 Oregon Value Priced Chardonnay All-Americans

First Team

2016 Haden Fig Willamette Valley Chardonnay 93 \$22

2016 Youngberg Hill Aspen McMinnville Chardonnay 93 \$40

2016 Walter Scott Cuvée Anne Willamette Valley Chardonnay 91 \$40

2017 Child's Play Willamette Valley Pinot Chardonnay 90 \$30

2014 Lundeen Bunker Hill Vineyard Willamette Valley Chardonnay 90 \$30

2015 Tye Wine Cellars Estate Willamette Valley Chardonnay 89 \$20

2018 Winery of the Year: Windy Oaks Estate Vineyards & Winery

"I do the most I can in the vineyard and the least I can in the winery."
Jim Schultze

Founded in 1996, this is a family winery in the truest sense of the words. Jim Schultze directs all the vineyard management and winemaking. His spouse, Judy, manages marketing and sales. One son, Spencer, assists in winemaking, and a second son, James, manages the winery's three tasting rooms.

Jim is a winemaker whose approach is meticulous and innovative. When you talk grapevines and winemaking with him, you just get the feeling that his grapes are in good hands. Having spent considerable time in Burgundy, Jim's viticulture and winemaking methods are Burgundy-themed. Never one to rest on his laurels, he is constantly researching to update his production skills.



An example is the acquisition of the AgroThermal Systems heat treatment machine. This machine was developed originally to do chemical-free farming in South America, but it works very well on wine grapes. It produces a very hot - 300° F - blast of hot air which dries the fruit zone, killing mildew and botrytis, and increases the phenolics of the grape skins. Jim's machine is pictured below. This is the first time I had encountered this machine at any winery.



Although in recent years the winery's production has been expanded to include several varietals, the focus remains on Pinot Noir and Chardonnay produced from three estate vineyards: the 15-acre Schultze Family Vineyard located in Corralitos that was first planted in 1996, an adjacent 7-acre vineyard that is managed and leased, and a 4-acre vineyard in Aptos. The Schultze Family Vineyard is planted to Pinot Noir clones 115, 667, 777, "828," 2A, Pommard and Burgundy selections. All vineyards are fully sustainable, using many organic and biodynamic practices.

The estate Schultze Family Vineyard, is located on a ridge at 1,000 feet overlooking the town of Corralitos and the Monterey Bay beyond in the southern region of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The picturesque site, surrounded by dense forest, is mostly above the fog line. Summer is free of heat spikes with consistent temperatures in the 70° F range dropping to 40° F at night. This is due to the moderating influence of the Monterey Bay. The result is a very long growing season, often extending well into October and even early November, with vines yielding physiologically ripe grapes at relatively low Brix and grapes with good natural acidity.



Winemaking is all gravity-driven and non-interventional with no additives. For Pinot Noir, a 3 to 5-day cold soak is followed by very long fermentations with extended maceration. Roughly 50% of fermentations are wild yeast

driven. 25% to 30% whole cluster is often the rule since the stems are frequently ripe, but a 100% whole cluster wine is also produced. A 100% wild yeast fermented Pinot Noir and a wood tank fermented Pinot Noir are also made. The grapes are gently pressed with a basket press and no racking is done once the wines are in barrel.

Jim is obsessive about his oak regimen, and the Schultzes travel to Burgundy yearly to meet with coopers. Aging is carried out in mainly 3 to 5-year-old air-dried, tight-grained French oak barrels for 17 to 27 months in 35% new oak or larger percentages of new oak in certain bottlings. A state-of-the-art bottling line is used that employs minimal oxygen uptake yielding wines that go through little to no bottling shock. All wines are bottled without fining or filtering and aged appropriately in bottle before release.

I have reviewed over 80 Windy Oaks Estate wines dating back to 2004. Several bottlings have been among my yearly All-Americans (2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2017). Nearly all wines have garnered a score of 90 or above except for the entry-level Terra Narro Pinot Noir bottlings that represent an excellent value. A few special release bottlings such as the Special Burgundy Clone wines have been extraordinary.



2016 Windy Oaks Estate Terra Narro Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$29. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. A simple and forward-drinking wine in a lighter weighted style featuring aromas and flavors of plump, red cherry, strawberry, savory herbs and toasty oak. The wine finishes on a dry, but not astringent note. 89.*

2015 Windy Oaks Estate Santa Cruz Mountains Chardonnay 13.5% alc., 72 cases, \$45. Crushed, fermented, aged and bottled at Windy Oaks Estate in Corralitos. *Light golden yellow and unfiltered in appearance in the glass. Engaging scents of lemon oil, white peach, spice and sawn oak. Even more pleasing on the palate, with fresh flavors of pear and white peach with a compliment of supportive oak. Somewhat delicate in style, with well integrated acidity. 92.*

2016 Windy Oaks Estate Special Release Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 13.7% alc., 65 cases, \$78. Vinified in a 600L oak barrel made by Tonnellerie Sylvian in Bordeaux. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with bright aromas of blueberry, black cherry, raspberry, toast and spice. Richly endowed with black cherry cola flavor underlain with nutty oak accents. The fruit is mouth filling and nicely ripened. Tame, fine-grain tannins appear on the finish. This wine was more cohesive and expressive with better oak integration when tasted the following day indicating it will benefit from more time in bottle. 93.*



Some older vintages recently tasted:

2006 Windy Oaks Estate Schultze Family Vineyard Estate Cuvée Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 13.9% alc.. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light garnet color with slightest rim yellowing in the glass. Aromas of dried cherry, plum and bark. Light to mid-weight flavors of dark cherry and some oak char wrapped in gossamer tannins. Still fruity but shallow. Elderly, but still some vitality. Drink up. 88*

2006 Windy Oaks Estate Proprietor's Reserve Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 14.1% alc.. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Dreamy aromas of dried cherry, berry jam and judicious oak. Endowed with generous and well-ripened black cherry fruit underlain with a bit of cola flavor. Impressive attack and persistence on the finish. This wine doesn't show its age at all! Drink now through 2023. 92*

2007 Windy Oaks Estate Proprietor's Reserve Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 14.1% alc.. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Shy fruit aromas of dried plum and prune with a note of earthy flora and oak. Light and weight, even shallow, with flavors of earthen cherry and berry. The tannins are resolved, but some toasty oak remains that supersedes the fading fruit. Drink now to 2020. 88.*

2007 Windy Oaks Estate Schultze Family Vineyard Estate Cuvée Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 13.9% alc.. *Moderately light garnet. Gregarious aromas of black cherry reduction sauce and raspberry. Mid weight plus in style, with gratifying flavors of black cherry and pomegranate. Silky in the mouth, with resolved tannins and enough fruit to please on the generous finish. Drink now to 2020. 90.*

2008 Windy Oaks Estate Limited Release Wood Tank Fermented Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 13.9% alc.. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Appealing aromas of cherry, dried plum, wilted rose and grilling spices. Very fresh, with a compatible mix of cherry fruit and oak spice and toast. Silken in texture, with some tannins in the background. The oak has superseded the fruit with age. Drink now to 2020. 89.*

2008 Windy Oaks Estate Limited Release 100% Whole Cluster Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 13.9% alc.. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Aromas of cherry, blueberry and prune lead to a charge of black cherry fruit that embosses the mid palate. Compatible tannic support with deft oak input. The overall balance is impressive. Drink now to 2023. 91.*

2009 Windy Oaks Estate Limited Release Wood Tank Fermented Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 13.9% alc.. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. The nose leads with bright aromas of warm cherry pie, spice, baked bread and sandalwood. Tastes like a recently released wine with a mid weight plus core of vivid black cherry fruit accented with a complex spice and herb mix. The tannins are suave and the texture is velvety. I liked this wine. Drink now to 2023. 93.*



2010 Windy Oaks Estate Henry's Block Schulte Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 13.9% alc.. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Initially demure aromas of cherry fruit pick up intensity over time in the glass. Silky, with suave tannins in a mid weight style, offering flavors of oak-kissed black cherry and cola. Finishes with a generous cherry-themed charge. Drink now to 2023. 91.*

2010 Windy Oaks Estate Proprietor's Reserve Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 14.1% alc.. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Inviting aromas of black cherry, dark berry, toast and woodland spice. Beautifully composed, with mid weight flavors of vivacious black cherry and blackberry fruits. Silky in the mouth with fully merged tannins. This wine seduces with its harmony. Drink now to 2025. 93.*



The Windy Oaks Wine Group (WOW) is a wine club that offers members significant discounts with assured access to all wines including limited release wines. Several club membership options are available. Limited and special releases such as the Proprietor's Reserve, Special Burgundy Clone and One-Acre Chardonnay, are only available to Wine Group members. Visit www.windyoaksestate.com for more information.

When I visited Windy Oaks Estate this year I tasted several wines at the Tasting Bar with Jim. A 2016 Limited Release Wild Yeast Pinot Noir was superb. Jim told me that in December he poured some 2016 barrel samples for the winery's Wine Group club and "customers absolutely loved it." Look for more 2016 reviews early next year.

The best way to appreciate the wines and the family behind them is to visit the winery in Corralitos. Check the website for hours. There are also two locations for tasting in Carmel-By-The-Sea and Carmel Valley Village.

Quotable Wine Quotes of 2018

Quotes have relevance in an historical context because they tell us about the topics and controversies that are prevalent at a certain year in time. They also represent a gift that says plenty with few words. Here are the most notable quotes related to Pinot Noir and wine in general that captured my attention in 2018.

Regarding Pinot Noir

"I would so marry Pinot. You can enjoy it at the opera, or the baseball game. It glistens in any crystal goblet but dazzles in a jelly jar. It's exactly the kind of wine you'd bring home to mom and then sneak into your room after dinner. Before you blinked, you'd both be on the front porch (you on the swing, it in your glass) waiting for your grandkids to show up."....Jeff Bundschu, Gundlach Bundschu Winery

"Everyone wants to crack Pinot, both because it's a sign of winemaking and viticultural prowess, but also because there is such a strong market for the variety."....anonymous

"Burgundy won't be making Pinot Noir in 20-40 years as it will be too hot; they'll be making Syrah and still Pinot production will move to Champagne and England."....Chester Osborn, Australian winemaker

"When I hear the comment, 'Your wines are so Burgundian,' I usually wave it off as gently as possible. If my wine tastes like Burgundy, that means I'm making wines that do not respect the site - which is actually a bit of an insult - the remark does sandpaper my soul a bit."....Jason Lett, winemaker, The Eyrie Vineyard

"No longer do you hear Oregon winemakers talk about Oregon wines as Burgundian. Nor are California or Kiwi winemakers either. The world of wine has moved on from this old paradigm."....Josh Bergstrom, winemaker, Bergstrom Winery

"There are attributes that differentiate the sub AVA's (of the Willamette Valley). Volcanic regions tend to be more fruit driven, whether red, blue or black fruits. Clean and crisp. Focused. Sedimentary sites are more savory, floral and spice driven."....Ken Wright, winemaker, Ken Wright Cellars

"Pinot Noir is a buzzword for people who want to get into wine and know it's what professionals are drinking."....Amy Racine, sommelier

*"The musk, sweat and tears that occasionally crops up in wine descriptions suggest affinities with human pheromones. Such connections have received tentative chemical validation, resulting in wishful speculations about Pinot Noir's potential for subliminal seduction."....David Schildknecht, *The World of Fine Wine**

"I think in ten years or less clone 95/117 of Pinot Noir will become the backbone of Oregon Pinots."....Dick Erath

"Now there is no excuse for not being well red."....Chapter 24 Vineyards

"You have to search hard to find a wine made in Oregon that's done poorly. but the problem is, they're all so similar."....Randall Grahm

Regarding Wine In General

"A Riedel glass whose shape is matched to a wine is usually a small percentage better, but life is just too short to have lots of slightly different but similar glasses."....Jancis Robinson, British wine critic and journalist

"I would be delighted if the 'sulfites-in-red-wine-cause-headaches' trend would go away. Sensitivity to sulfites can trigger a reaction, but it is an asthmatic reaction, not a headache. I think likelier conclusions for wine headaches are high residual sugar, high tannins, or dehydration."....Jessica Norris, Senior Director of Wine Education, Del Frisco Double Eagle Steakhouse

"Since an ingredient list isn't required on wine labels, the average shopper might not realize that their go-to-grocery store wine has up to 75 ingredients other than grapes. These wines comes from huge swaths of land, particularly in California and Provence, with 'terroir' barely suitable for even vegetables."....Victoria James

"There is little awareness, for instance, of the wide economic disparity that has been created in the past quarter-century between the middle class who actually make many of the best wines and the upper class who, today, are the only ones that can afford them. There's little acknowledgement of the ranks of everyday workers who make the industry run. For that matter, we manage to ignore that it's a world still guided by powerful white men, stark in its lack of diversity."....Jon Bonné, writer, author and journalist

"The hard part for new people getting into the wine business today is the limited amount of land that's available at very expensive prices. Then people are stuck with purchasing grapes...if you have to buy grapes and try to make great wines out of purchased grapes, it's a lot harder than if you control your destiny and can make the wine from the ground up."....Merry Edwards, winemaker, Merry Edwards Wines

"The picking starts at midnight and continues until sunrise. The fruit comes into the winery in waves, where it is hand-sorted, de-stemmed and moved into open-top tanks. Punch downs happen around the clock. There is coffee, so much strong coffee. There's that moment when your shoes are still soaked from processing fruit the morning prior (or was it the day before that?), and you start to wonder if it's possible to sleep on a forklift. And on top of it all, we have to miss the first four weekends of college football."....Andrew Delos, winemaker, EnRoute

*"A simple black-and-white view that low alcohol is good and higher alcohol is bad doesn't reflect the complex reality of producing terroir-driven wines."....Jamie Goode, *The World of Fine Wine**

"Taste refers to the senses inside our mouth including our tongue. Aroma occurs inside our noses and relates to our sense of smell. Flavor is when taste and aroma converge."....Oregon Wine Almanac 2018

"Minerality is a family of aromas including wet stones, rock quarry, chalk, sea breeze (salinity) and flint....It is most apparent in white wines....It is one of the new frontiers of wine description."....Dwight Furrow

*"Price tells you almost nothing about quality (of wine). Forces such as land and grape costs, fashion and hype determine the cost of a wine as much as anything else."....Matt Kramer, *Wine Spectator**

"Old vines know better. There's something special about them that winemakers love. They tend to self-regulate."....Eric Lavmann, winemaker, Cambiata Winery

"Any wine lover who is tired of Chardonnay is tired of life."....Patrick Schmitt

"Old vines are the real McCoy."....Josh Jensen

Regarding Wine Writers/Critics

"Giving a wine a score - a hard and fast number to hang around its neck like a noose - does nothing positive for the wine industry. It infantilizes our decision-making and hogties us from being able to discover what we like about certain wines."....Katie Finn, sommelier

“When judging, even for international competitions, I think in terms of medals: for a Bronze, I’d drink a glass or two in a pub; for Silver, I’d share a bottle with my husband over dinner; for Gold, I’d keep the whole bottle for myself!....a comment by “Helena” on Tom Wark’s Fermentation The Daily Wine Blog

“How wood-based aromatics and flavors developed as a nearly mandatory component of any red wine that purports to be of high quality (and thus is expensive) is a complicated tale. But some reviewers are so smitten with oak they lavish praise on wines that have almost no grape or wine aromas.”....Dan Berger, The Press Democrat

“Paul Masson once said, ‘I don’t care how a wine tastes, I care about how a wine drinks.’ The meaning is that the last glass is the best glass...that wine should evolve over the course of an evening. This is meaningful because wine criticism today is only a brief sniff-sip-spit regimen. One cannot truly appreciate a wine’s true qualities and future potential without spending an evening with it.”....Jeffrey Patterson, winemaker, Mount Eden Vineyards

“The difference between entering a wine for competition versus submitting a wine for professional review is, then, essentially the same as the difference between prostitution and marriage. A winery pays a fee for every wine submitted to be judged in a competition. This is contrary to wines submitted for professional review which are provided for free.”....Ron Washam, MW

“A neutral setting is key to correct wine scoring.”....Wine Enthusiast

“Our current fascination with wine expertise - and, often, the wine experts themselves - has actually made it harder to enjoy wine.”....John Bonné, writer, author and journalist

“Despite the fact that dozens of wine books continue to be published each year, those that make a profit must be far and few between. For many wine writers, their purpose is to raise their profile and credibility, and in many cases purely to satisfy a creative urge.”....anonymous

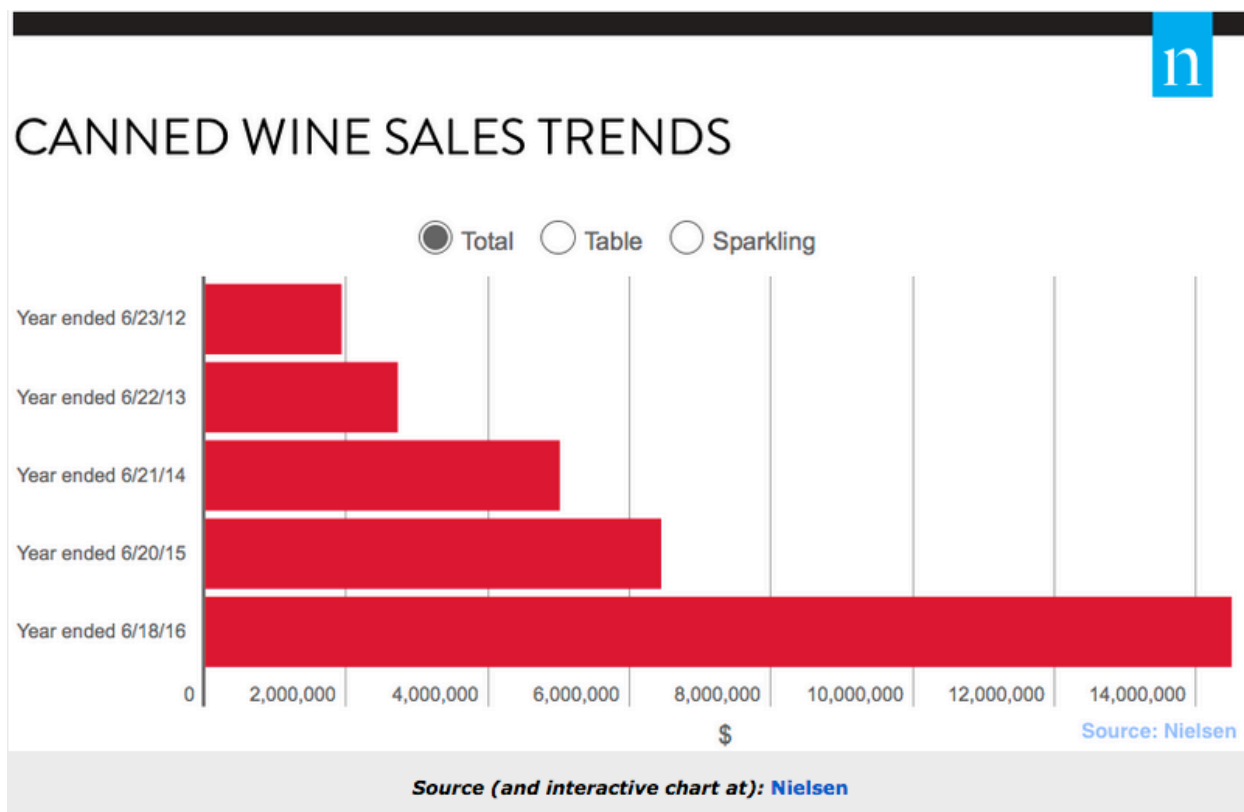
“No matter how carefully or honestly someone describes a taste, a significant chunk of the population will experience the same bottle in a different way.”....Kevin Begos, Tasting the Past

“I am not about to recommend the wine writing path to budding enthusiasts of the written word.”....Joe Roberts 1WineDude

“The fact is there are a lot of talented, dedicated people writing about wine despite the lack of remuneration. Some of that writing is well informed and of high quality. Wine writing is one of those activities, like acting, painting, or writing novels, that people want to do for its intrinsic value, not because of an external reward.”....DwightFurrow

Canned Pinot Noir: An Intellectual Pleasure Becomes a Beverage Like Cold Beer

Canned wine sales rose 43 per cent from June 2017 to June 2018 according to the market research firm BW 166. Forbes reported retail wine sales during this period were flat. Nielsen has reported a 125.2 percent increase in sales of canned wine for the years 2012-1016 (see below).



What accounts for the astonishing rise in popularity of canned wine? Why would you want to put Pinot Noir, the Queen of Wines, in the lowly flip-top beer can? There are a number of reasons. Cans of wine are portable like canned beer and do not require stems or an opener. They are handy for picnics, concerts, hiking, camping and the beach, and cans are completely recyclable. Cans are easy to transport, lighter than bottles, unbreakable and reduce the environmental imprint. The can eliminates the pretentiousness associated with wine drinking and makes wine more easily accessible.

The canned wines are said to be identical in taste to the same wine packaged in a 750-ml bottle because the can is lined to avoid unwelcome flavors. Back in 2014, when the Union Wine Company released its Underwood Pinot Noir in a can, I tasted the Underwood Pinot Noir from a bottle and can and I did not find that they tasted the same. The bottled version was more aromatic, and had slightly more flavor and verve.

The disadvantages of wine in cans is that the consumer cannot see the color of the wine. They can't swirl the wine to release aromas. Once you open the can, you cannot close it. The current wines, particularly the Pinot Noir, are not premium grade, but more in the under \$20 a bottle category. Eventually, there may be more premium wines available in cans, at \$20 and up per can.

Oregon has been at the forefront of canned wine. **Union Wine Company** was the pioneer, launching a canned Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris with its Underwood label in 375-ml cans in 2014. In 2018, owner Ryan Harms said that production was increased by 95% and 55% of the Underwood wines are now put into cans (224,000 cases). The lineup now includes a Rosé, White and Rosé sparkling wines, Riesling, and a fruity wine cooler.



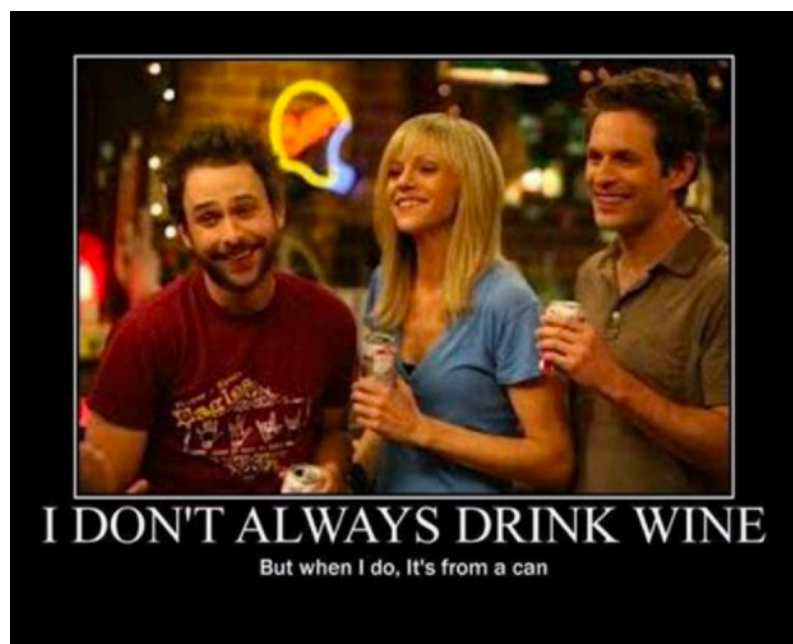
Other Oregon wineries have launched their own line of canned wines including the Stoller Wine Group (**Canned Oregon** Sparkling White and Sparkling Rosé), Enso (**Portland Sangria**), and Dobbles Family Estate (**Joe To Go** Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir and Rosé). Read more at <http://www.shankennewsdaily.com/index.php/2018/12/03/21966/oregons-winemakers-spearhead-a-new-wave-of-high-quality-canned-wine-offerings/>.

California has entered the fray as well. Francis Coppola Winery recently launched its first canned red wine with the 2017 **Diamond Collection Pinot Noir**. Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio and Sauvignon Blanc white wines were released as part of the same can collection last summer. The 250 ml cans are offered in a 4-pack (\$24) that can be purchased at the winery's tasting room and online.

7-Eleven sells its **Roamer** private label brand of canned Chardonnay and Rosé. **WineSociety** began selling 500 ml cans of wine online in January 2018 and now is sold in Kroger Stores. **Right Now** canned red, white, dry Rosé and sweet Rosé debuted in early 2018, offered in 12 ounce cans.

The typical 375 ml or 12 ounce can of wine sells for \$6 and is often presented as a four-pack for \$24 (equivalent to two standards bottles of wine).

My biggest concern with canned wine is that a typical can contains 375 ml or about 12 ounces, the equivalent of three standard 4-ounce drinks. Some tallboy wine cans contain almost the equivalent of a 750ml. bottle. Drinkers are used to polishing off a couple of 12-ounce cans of beer, but drinking two 375 ml cans of wine would be equal to swigging an entire bottle of wine! Wine is not a utility drink like beer and is meant to be sipped, not gulped or chugged.



Pinot Briefs

14th Annual Pigs & Pinot Weekend Charlie Palmer has announced that the 14th Annual Pigs & Pinot Weekend will be held on Friday, March 15 and Saturday, March 16, 2019 at the Hotel Healdsburg. This year's participating pork and pinot authorities include Dante Boccuzzi (Dante Dining Group), Nancy Oaks (owner and executive chef of Boulevard in San Francisco), Bryan Voltaggio (owner and chef of VOLT), and Joe Youkhan (partner and chef in Aussie Pies), Michael Browne (proprietor of CIRQ Estate), Heidi Von Der Mehden (winemaker at Merry Edwards), Erik Miller (owner and winemaker at Kokomo Winery) and Cleo Pahlmeyer (proprietor of Wayfarer). The event benefits Share Our Strength as well as local scholarships and charities. Tickets and packages go on sale Thursday, January 10, 2019 at 11 AM PST/2 PM EST. For ticket options, visit www.pigsandpinot.com. The most desirable tickets typically sell out in minutes. I attended this event a few times when I was able to get tickets and even judged the Pinot Cup once. On the 10th Anniversary of the event, I bought a magnum of the 2013 10th Anniversary Pinot Cup Cuvée, a blend of Pinot Noir from all the participating wineries in the Pinot Cup competition. I pulled the cork earlier this year and the wine was magnificent - a true wine-gasm.



Renaud Society 2018 Blind Wine Competition The Renaud Society (of which I am a member) has been re-energized after a few year lapse. On December 6, 2018, the Renaud Society Blind Wine Competition for the Coveted Renaud Tastevin was held at the Silverado Resort & Spa in Napa. The wines were judged by members of the Renaud Society. The **Domaine Carneros 2015 La Ciel Serein Pinot Noir** scored the highest from the judges and was awarded the 2018 Renaud Tastevin as Best-In-Show. The competition supports the Desert Heart Foundation Wine & Heart Health Research Initiative promoting research and education with respect to responsible wine competition and better health. The highest scoring wine will be served at the next major venue, namely, the 2019 International Wine & Health Summit at UC Davis May 4-7, 2019, chaired by Andrew Waterhouse PhD and Tedd Goldfinger DO, FACC, FESC.

2015 Domaine Carneros Le Ciel Serein

The La Ciel Serein ranch was developed between 2002 and 2004 and was planted to a wide variety of Pinot Noir clones. The site was selected for its rolling hills, diverse exposure and exceptional soils. The wine is a blend of clones 667 (66%), 777 (18%), Pommard 5 (9.5%) and a Swan selection (6.5%). Harvest Brix was 24.0°-25.2°. 14.5% alc., pH 3.56, TA 0.62, 1,285 cases, \$59. Aged 15 months in 3-year, air-dried, medium-toast French oak barrels, 40% new. Bottled without fining or filtration.



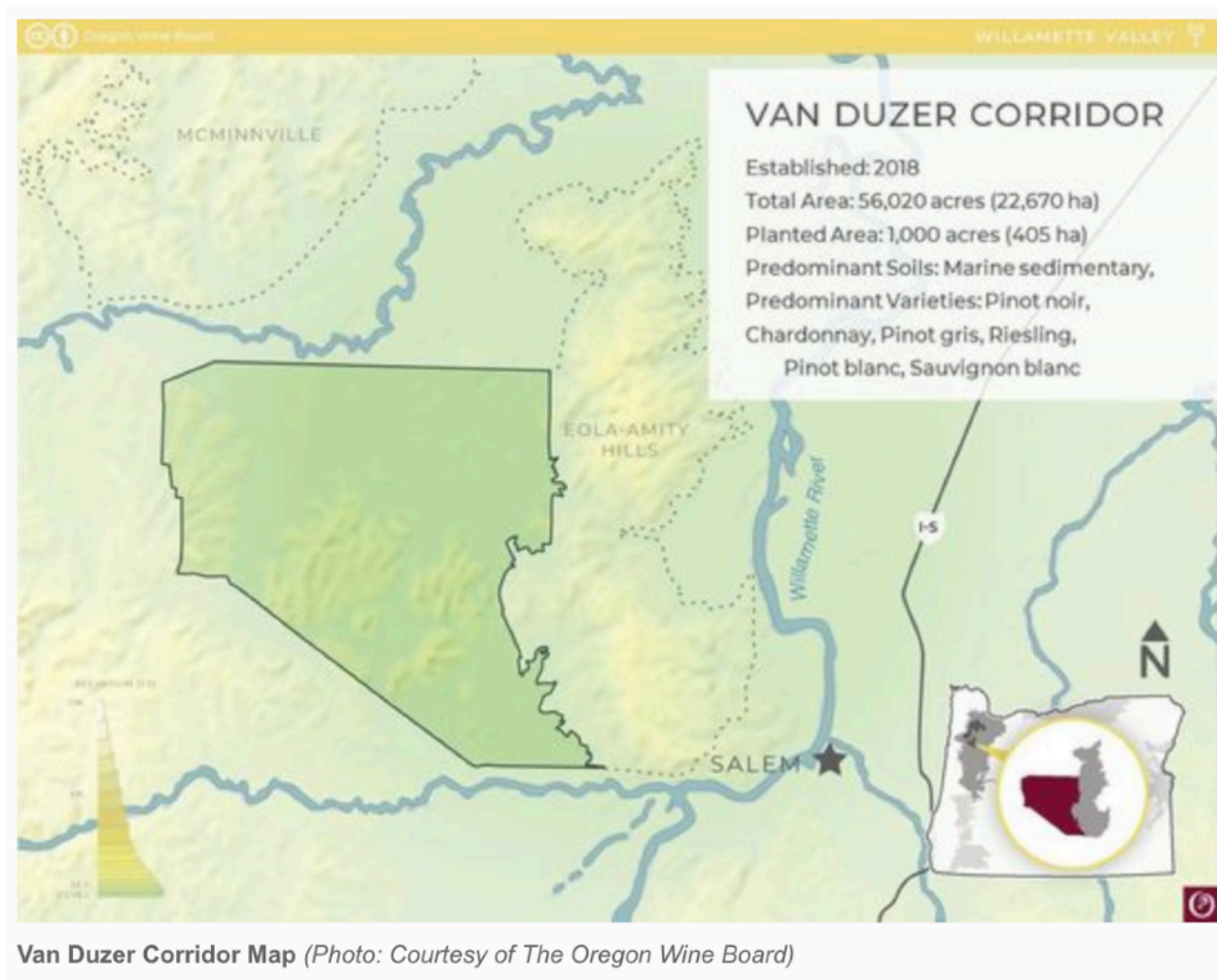
The Renaud Society is an international society of medical professionals with an interest in better health and a passion for wine. The Renaud Society, formed in 2001, honors the legacy of Professor Serge Renaud, father of the French Paradox, and promotes the sharing of wine interests among medical colleagues worldwide. Sommeliers and wine industry professionals can also become members. For further information, visit The Renaud Society website at www.renaudsociety.com.



Best Wine Critics of the World The Best Wine Critics of the World is a poll of wine professionals conducted by tastingbook.com. The competition voted Jancis Robinson MW the top wine critic of the world. I wasn't in the top 50.

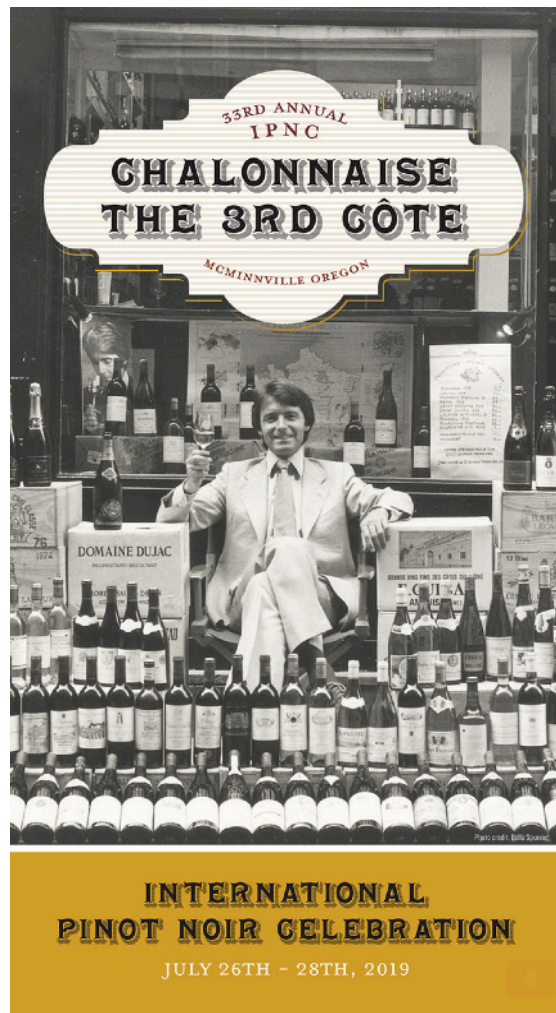
Van Duzer AVA Approved by TTB The Van Duzer AVA becomes the 19th AVA in Oregon and remains part of the larger Willamette Valley AVA. The Van Duzer corridor is an anomaly in the Coast Range of Oregon in that it allows a mild oceanic influence to enter the Willamette Valley. This creates the ideal paradigm of warm days and cold nights allowing the production of world class wines in the Willamette Valley and specifically within the 35.9 square mile triangle that constitutes the new AVA. The winds that funnel through the corridor creates a cooling effect as early as 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The breeze dries out the vine canopy and decreases fungus pressure, reducing the need for fungus spray, and making this area ideal for wine grape growing. In response to the wind, the grape skins thicken leading to an extra generosity and an abundance of anthocyanin and tannins in the finished wines. Within the new AVA, there are nearly 1,000 acres occupied by 18 commercial vineyards and 6 bonded wineries. The photo below, courtesy of Carolyn Wells-Kramer, shows the corridor in the background, with Huntington Hills in the mid ground and Van Duzer Vineyards in the foreground.





World's Largest Online Wine Community Marks Milestone WineBeserkers.com is celebrating its 10-year anniversary on January 27, 2019. The website provides a free forum where wine geeks can interact directly with winemakers and other small wine producers for the exchange of ideas, information, education and experiences. On January 27, 2019, WineBeserkers members can gain access to an exclusive one-day sale of products offered by wineries, gourmet food producers and wine accessory customers. This offers exclusive wines/deals for members and a much needed sales outlet for small wine producers. Some participants in WineBeserkers include Brian Loring of Loring Wine Company, Ed Kurtzman of Sandler Wine Company, Jeff Nelson of Liquid Farm, and Marcus Goodfellow of Goodfellow Family Cellars. Check out www.winebeserkers.com.

2019 International Pinot Noir Celebration The 33rd Annual International Pinot Noir Celebration, July 26-28, 2019, announced the Grand Seminar. Steven Spurrier will guide an in-depth exploration of the wines of the Côte Chalonnais. This region is located in the southernmost part of the Côte d'Or and has received increased attention as Burgundy lovers discover this lesser-known region. Steven and his panel of top winemakers will present a tasting-tour through the region from Rully in the north to Givry in the South. Early bird pricing is in effect until December 31, 2018: \$100 off the regular registration fee of \$1295. Visit www.ipnc.org.



Oregon Chardonnay Celebration The 2019 Oregon Chardonnay Celebration will be held Saturday, February 23, 2019, at The Allison Inn & Spa in Newberg, Oregon. The Seminar is titled “Time in a Bottle: The Evolution of Chardonnay.” Four Oregon winemakers with decades of Chardonnay winemaking experience will guide attendees through a tasting of what happens when Oregon Chardonnay ages. The price of the Seminar and Chardonnay Grand Tasting is \$170.00. Attend the Grand Tasting only where more than 45 Oregon Chardonnays will be poured for \$85.00. Visit <https://intlpinotnoirassoc.ticketspice.com/oregon-chardonnay-celebration-2019>. Special lodging rates at The Allison Inn & Spa are available for the weekend. Reservations must be made by January 18, 2019 by phoning 503-554-2525.

On-Demand Wine By the Glass at Four Seasons Resort Orlando Guests in select rooms at the Four Seasons Resort Orlando at Walt Disney World Resort can dispense a glass of wine on demand at the touch of a button, through Plum, the Resort’s new on-demand wine system. Plum houses two standard wine bottles and preserves each bottle for up to 90 days. Four Seasons Resort Orlando is currently offering a 2016 Lyric Pinot Noir by Etude and a 2016 Stag’s Leap Napa Valley Chardonnay in the Plum units. Guests can use Plum’s interactive touchscreen to read more about the wine and see photos of the vineyard. When dispensed, Plum is automatically charged to the guest’s hotel folio.

New Head Winemaker for Chehalem Winery Katie Santora has been promoted to the role of head winemaker at this 20,000-case winery. Chehalem founding winemaker Harry Peterson-Nedry had hired Santora as assistant winemaker in 2012. Santora is a 2007 graduate of the viticulture and enology program at UC Davis. Harry Peterson-Nedry sold Chehalem Winery to longtime friend Bill Stoller in early 2018. This fall, Harry and his winemaker daughter, Wynne, moved to the Carlton Winemaker’s Studio to continue production of their 500-case RR brand dedicated to Pinot Noir and Riesling from the 164-acre Ridgecrest Vineyard.

Benovia’s Mike Sullivan Co-Owner & Winemaker of Year *The North Bay Business Journal* announced at the 6th Annual Wine Industry Awards on December 4, 2018 that Mike Sullivan Co-Owner and Winemaker of the Year for his career at Benovia Winery in the Russian River Valley. Benovia is known for its

Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grown on 72 acres of estate vineyards, owned and sustainably farmed by the Benovia team Benovia has been named Winery of the Year by Rusty Gaffney of the *PinotFile*.



Conetech Perfecting 100% De-Alcoholising Wine Technology Conetech presented its latest technology at the World Bulk Wine Exhibition (WBWE). For many years, Conetech has employed its spinning cone column to reduce the ABV of wine to about 8%-11%. The company has continued to pursue technology to create low and no alcohol products. The latest technology, called GoLo, can create low or no alcohol products more efficiently and cheaper than the current spinning cone column. Zero alcohol beverages may have considerable commercial potential when combined with cannabis.

Sta. Rita Hills AVA Wine Tours Stagecoach Co. Wine Tours, established in 2001, offers daily wine tasting tours of Santa Barbara County's wineries and more specifically of interest to pinotphiles, the Sta. Rita Hills AVA. Expert tour hosts pick up parties at their accommodations in Santa Barbara County and take them on a fun and educational wine tour. Private tours and group tours are available. Stagecoach Co. Wine Tours has been a Trip Advisor Hall of Fame inductee and has received 5 stars on Yelp. Visit www.winetourssantaynez.com.

Cooper Mountain Vineyards Purchases Olenik Vineyard The 50-acre Olenik Vineyard in the Chehalem Mountains was first planted to Rex Hill's Jacob-Hart Vineyard in the early 1990s and a section was purchased by John Olenik in 2005. The vineyard is unique for the north Willamette Valley in that it has both volcanic and sedimentary soils. With the acquisition of Olenik Vineyard, Cooper Mountain Vineyards, now has a total of five vineyards and 152 planted acres. The winery, founded in 1978, celebrated its fortieth harvest in the 2018 vintage. Learn more at www.coopermountain.com.

The Prince Interview Wine Industry Advisor has published an Interview with me, "Turning the Tables on Rusty Gaffney," by Carl Giavanti of Carl Giavanti Consulting. This interview is one of a series by Carl titled, "Turning the Tables-Interviewing the Interviewers." Check it out: www.wineindustryadvisor.com/2018/12/17/turning-tables-on-rusty-gaffney.



While it has been a strange and trying year for all of us, I am confident that the upcoming holidays and the promise of a clean slate with the arrival of the New Year will renew our spirit and rekindle our enthusiasm for the pleasurable aspects of life. In other words, pull a few corks and get on with the business of drinking Pinot Noir. That's the reason to drag ourselves out of bed every day.

A special glass of Pinot Noir shared with good friends gives you the excuse to meet and to savor the company of those important people you enjoy. The wine may even inspire a stroll down memory lane and rekindle fond moments of the past. Pinot Noir can take you on a trip of time travel.

Do not wait for a reason to pull that cork or to celebrate. Learn to stop and smell the bouquet of a fine Pinot Noir. Don't worry about what Pinot Noir is the proper one to match with food, or whether you need to wait for a special occasion to enjoy a glass. Pinot Noir itself is enough of an occasion.

Some may think that you are what you drive, or what you do, or who you married, or what you wear, but really you are what you drink. It has been said that an aged Cabernet Sauvignon is like an old couple holding hands watching a glorious sunset. Pinot Noir, on the other hand, is like the spark between two young people when they first fall in love.

I have published 527 issues of the *PinotFile* since the inaugural one on April 22, 2001. It has been a long and winding Pinot road, but during this lengthy time my love of Pinot Noir has never wavered. I still crave that perfect Pinot Noir experience and certainly more than common sense would indicate. My wife says I am busy with Pinot Noir every waking moment. Not true, I also dream about it. I have happily found my muse in life.

Happy Holidays and Sweet Pinot Dreams.....Prince