



PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

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Great Pinot Can
Bring You
Closer to God

2012 Pinot Noir All-Americans

The end of the year approaches, and I am pleased to present my annual tradition of naming my favorite Pinot Noir performers. This year I tasted more Pinot Noir from California and Oregon than ever before, and there were so many exceptional wines, my task was particularly challenging. Picking the best in any lineup of wines is always controversial, so this issue always stirs up the pot. Some of your favorite wines or producers may not be included since tasting every American Pinot Noir release is an impossible task. For the Pinot Noir wines that were left out of the awards this year, the words of Mark Twain ring true. "It's better to deserve honor and not have them, then to have them and not deserve them."

There are a number of steps I take to arrive at the wines that are truly special and deserved of the title "All-American." The honored wines have all been tasted in private at my home in a quiet setting in the late morning and over the course of the following day or two. The wines come directly from my home cellar at about 63°F and are all tasted in identical Riedel Vinum Burgundy or Riedel Oregon Pinot Noir stemware. I usually taste 6 to 10 wines a day, giving each wine the attention it deserves. I make several passes as I taste each wine carefully over the time needed for the wine to open up. Occasionally I will decant a wine if the winemaker recommends it or if I think this will benefit the evaluation.

I do not taste the wines blind, but strive for integrity, consistency and objectivity. I take my responsibility seriously. There are three reasons that I do not taste blind. First, I prefer to evaluate wines in the same manner as the consumer experiences them. Second, I believe an essential part of judging wine is to know what you are drinking. Third, I often have all the production information at hand, and that assists me in further understanding the wine. The more background information I have, the more I am likely to discover in the wine.

British wine writer, Jamie Goode, whom I respect immensely for his lucid writing about wine (*Authentic Wine: Toward Natural and Sustainable Winemaking*, *The Science of Wine: From Vine to Glass*, and the blog wineanorak.com), supports my methodology. He says the following. "When we are tasting blind, there is a limit to what we can say about the wine that is in front of us. Seeing the label influences our perception of the wine; it brings our knowledge about wine into play. But it also helps us understand the liquid in the glass better. We can put into context the flavors we are experiencing. This is important: it is more than just bias; it is making sense of the sensation, which allows us to reach a more robust conclusion."

I tend to focus on current drink ability, since most consumers prefer to drink their wines relatively young. I most appreciate wines that are at or close to their best the days I taste them. That said, credence is given to age ability, particularly in the context of balance. I often re-taste wines later in the day with food at dinner to replicate the consumer's drinking experience, or over the next day or two from an opened and re-corked (but not gassed) bottle. The latter gives me insight into the quality, balance and age ability of the wine.

I do not award scores to wines since evaluating wines in such a manner implies scientific precision, rather I prefer to give an unpretentious, concise, and descriptive review to reveal the style and quality of the wine that the reader can easily understand and appreciate. I am convinced that arriving at an apropos description of a wine is not only more challenging than awarding a score, but is the fairest way to evaluate a wine. The Pinot Geek icon is used to designate wines of exceptional merit and these are the only ones considered for All-American honors. The Value icon is used to indicate wines of good or better quality that are value priced (\$35 or less) and wines in this category are also awarded All-American honors. Rarely, a wine can receive both designations: nineteen wines from California and Oregon were in that category in 2012.



Chardonnays are reviewed less often. They are often submitted for review because they are a natural partner with Pinot Noir and many wineries produce both varietals. The Golden Geek icon indicates exceptional quality and the Golden Value icon reflects quality at a value price. Rarely a Chardonnay is awarded both designations: only one wine reviewed in 2012.



It is a daunting task to single out wines from the vast array of styles of Pinot Noir currently crafted in California and Oregon. I attempt to separate my personal Pinot Noir stylistic preferences from the objective assessment of the wines. I try to reward wines for their excellence regardless of style. It boils down to distinguishing between appreciating and liking. As writer Jake Lorenzo has noted (*Wine Business Monthly*, June 2012), "If the style is not one of my favorites, I hope I have the experience and generosity to appreciate what the winemaker set out to accomplish."

Pinot Noir is the chameleon among wines making its critical evaluation particularly challenging. Pinot Noir can vary from bottle to bottle, day to day, and week to week. Winemaker Daniel Baron's (Twomey) remarks about wines is very poignant regarding Pinot Noir. "You have to remember this when you think about judging wines. They're alive and changing moment to moment; they have good days and bad; they show well in a particular glass or with particular food. Judging wine at any particular moment in life is like giving a kid a letter grade based on his behavior in the supermarket."

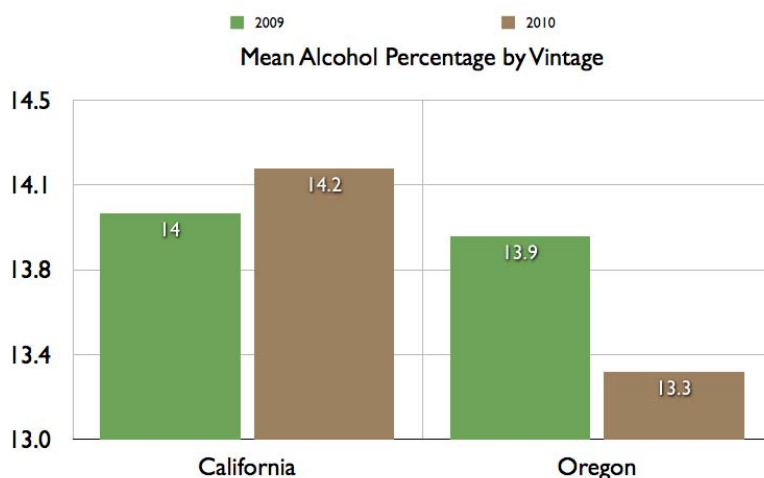
Aromatics, flavor nuances, texture, balance and finishing persistence all come in to play in finding those special wines that stand out. Often it is not an objective feature, but the emotion that the wine elicits that sets it apart. There are many technically sound wines today, but All-Americans have a powerful charisma. **It is a truth that it is not what is said or written about a special wine, but what is emoted that truly defines a wines greatness.** Veronique Drouhin-Boss, the winemaker at Domaine Drouhin Oregon, has said it best. "There are plenty of good wines in the world that give you pleasure. A great wine gives you emotion." Remington Norman (*Grand Cru*) notes that, "The impact of great wine is as much emotional as sensorial and, in any case, at the topmost level one runs out of distinctive superlatives."

The 2012 All-Americans were judged on merit, independent of price, vintage and region of origin. I have no monetary arrangement with any winegrower or winery, but do accept advertising on my website from retailers. I do accept wines for review, but about a third of the wines I sample are bought directly from a winery or through customary retail channels. There are a significant number of California and Oregon Pinot Noirs that are never sent to the major publications for review for various reasons such as a disdain for numerical scores, and many of these wines are purchased by me and reviewed in the PinotFile. There are many Pinot Noirs that I sample casually at wineries (including barrel samples), social dinners, Pinot Noir festivals, competitive wine

judging events, wine tastings and wine dinners, but I do not include these wines in the All-American selection process. **Only finished, bottled wines that are formally tasted in controlled, and therefore comparable, circumstances are eligible for All-American consideration.**

The vast majority of Pinot Noir wines tasted in 2012 were from the 2009 and 2010 vintages. In the 2009 vintage, alcohol percentages for California Pinot Noir ranged from 12.8% to 15.8% with a mean of 14.0% and for Oregon Pinot Noir ranged from 12.5% to 15.7% with a mean of 13.9%. In the 2010 vintage, alcohol percentages for California Pinot Noir ranged from 12.8% to 15.8% with a mean of 14.2%, and for Oregon Pinot Noir ranged from 12.4% to 14.1% with a mean of 13.3%. Keep in mind that the alcohol percentages are not always “honest” since a 1% reporting leeway is permissible with wines above 14.0% alcohol, so the actual percentage may be higher. I attempted to use technical sheet figures when available as they are more accurate than labels that are often prepared months before bottling.

The stylistic superiority of high alcohol versus low alcohol continues to be debated, but the inimitability of either style of wine will in the end be decided by the consumer. I personally prefer modest alcohol levels because these wines are often more balanced, easier to drink, more compatible with food, allow you to drink two glasses without getting sideways, and confer the health benefits associated with taking in moderate amounts of alcohol. See graph below for comparison.



In the 2009 vintage, the pH for California Pinot Noir ranged from 3.34 to 3.82 and for Oregon Pinot Noir 3.31 to 3.90, and in the 2010 vintage, the range for California Pinot Noir was 3.35 to 3.90 and for Oregon Pinot Noir was 3.10 to 3.87.

Of the wines reviewed in 2012, the price for 2009 California Pinot Noir ranged from \$10 to \$110 with a mean of \$50, and for 2010 from \$10 to \$80 with a mean of \$43; for Oregon Pinot Noir the range was \$20 to \$100 in 2009 with a mean of \$43, and \$15 to \$95 in 2010 with a mean of \$42. The price range and average price for reviewed Pinot Noir in California and Oregon is roughly the same. Prices that appear in my tasting notes are either the winery retail price or the retail price paid by the Prince.

Collecting and drinking quality Pinot Noir can be a rich man's game if only trophy wines are sought after. There are a number of cult level Pinot Noir wines from California and Oregon that are priced near or above \$100. Generally, the quality of life in Pinot Noir begins at \$20, but expect to pay at least twice this for quality wines. Fortunately, there are many satisfying Pinot Noirs on the market that are priced below \$35. The 2012 Value

Pinot Noir All-Americans represent the best \$35 and under North American Pinot Noirs I sampled this year. Value Pinot Noirs generally do not match up in quality of fruit, aromatic sophistication, flavor nuances, and age ability compared to the more expensive prestige bottlings. **You get what you pay for.**

The 113 California Pinot Noirs awarded the Pinot Geek designation in 2012 had a price range of \$14 to \$85. The 55 Oregon Pinot Noirs awarded the Pinot Geek designation in 2012 had a price range of \$28 to \$95. The 10 Chardonnays given the Golden Geek designation ranged in price from \$26 to \$70. There are somewhat fewer awards for Oregon Pinot Noirs than California Pinot Noirs. That is simply because I am based in California, travel more often to California wine regions, there are more Pinot Noir producers in California than Oregon, and more samples are submitted to me for review from California. This in no way represents a reflection of comparative quality of Pinot Noir between the two states. I am a huge fan of wines from both California and Oregon.

I wish to emphasize that I do not take my reviews as gospel. There have been numerous instances when I have raved about a wine only to find others less than impressed or vice versa. There is no scientific calibration for taste. I preach that you use my tasting notes as a guide, but trust your own palate. **Focus more on the producer than on any one specific wine.**

The number of corked wines I experience has remained constant and continues to be an annoyance. There are at least 5% of wines that are either corked or do not appear to be corked but are just not right. Bottle variation is definitely a challenging problem in wine evaluation. James Cabbini of CUBE Communications said, "Bottle variation is the wine industry's elephant in the room." Fortunately, I often have two bottles available to review and only report the review of the stellar bottle. Cork continues to be the predominant closure of premium California and Oregon Pinot Noir wines. The number of flawed commercial wines is extremely low.

The awarded wines to follow are listed in alphabetical order or from lowest to highest price in the case of value-priced wines. Many of the wines are still available from the winery or through retailers or the secondary marketplace. Even though some wines are offered only to mailing list members, they may still be available, and it is always worthwhile to make a phone inquiry. In today's economy, top level Pinot Noir has been a more difficult sell, and even highly allocated wines of the past have become more available. If you cannot obtain a certain All-American wine, keep in mind that there will always be another vintage and the best producers make quality wine consistently in each vintage. The wine may not be the same song, but it will be the same composer. Membership in winery wine clubs or participation in a winery's mailing list are both good ways to insure that you obtain highly coveted Pinot Noirs from a popular producer.

One final disclosure. **There are a number of wineries who produced multiple wines deserving of All-American recognition** (Alysian, Brewer-Clifton, Cristom, Drew, Donum Estate, Kosta Browne, Maggy Hawk, Paul Lato, Winderlea, to name a few), but I chose to spread the love, and considering that some wineries only produce one or two Pinot Noirs, I considered it equitable to only give an All-American award to one wine per winery.

To seek out any of the awarded wines, contact the winery first, then the retail marketplace through any of the popular wine search engines (wine-searcher.com, vinquire.com, vinopedia.com, wineaccess.com, or winezap.com). If you still need assistance in locating a wine, contact me and I will do what I can to help you.

2012 California Pinot Noir All-Americans First Team

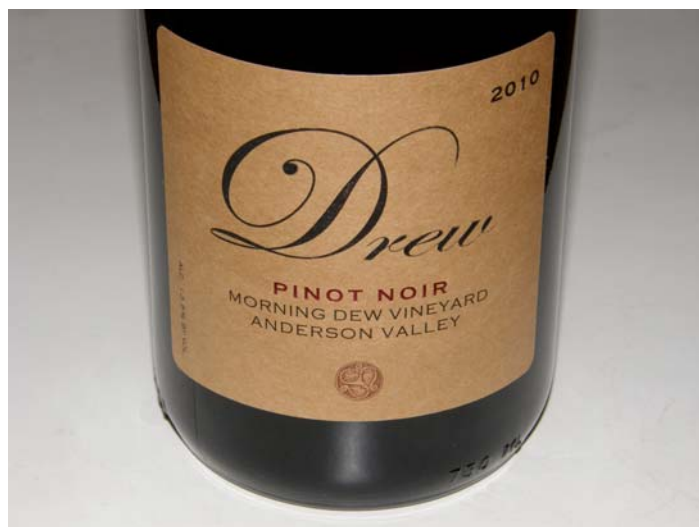
2009 Alysian Floodgate Vineyard Rock Hill Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

13.9% alc., pH 3.40, TA 0.71, 159 cases, \$55. From an estate property in a sub appellation of the Russian River Valley known as the Middle Reach. Rock Hill is a tiny block planted on one of the rockiest knolls on the property. Dijon clone 777. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. The nose is a fruit wonderland. Intense fragrance of spiced Bing cherries, raspberries and plums. Richly flavored but light on its feet, with alluring flavors of black cherries, black raspberries, herbs and spice. So good you want to bite into it. Refreshing acid spine, gossamer tannins and a memorable finish of uncommon length. Crazy good.*



2010 Drew Morning Dew Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., pH 3.55, TA 0.66, 165 cases, \$47. Second release from this vineyard. Owner is Burt Williams of Williams Selyem fame. Includes Rochioli selection, a suitcase DRC selection and clone 828. 50% whole cluster fermentation. 50% native fermentation. Aged 11 months in 30% new and 70% seasoned French oak barrels. Unfined and unfiltered. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Reserve but pleasing aromas of fresh dark cherries and Pinot Noir must with exotic spice highlights. Delicious core of dark cherries and raspberries with a subtle floral note and complimentary oak features. Very complex, offering different flavor angles with each sip. Lighter weighted and elegant and soft in the mouth with mild tannins and a good cut of acidity on the finish. A world apart.*



2009 Donum Estate Grown West Slope Carneros Pinot Noir

14.4% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.64, 250 cases, \$85. From a west-sloping block in the 5.5-acre site at Donum Ranch. Roederer selection. A barrel selection from this single block as a stand-alone wine. 100% de-stemmed, 6-day cold soak, inoculated with RC212, four punch downs per day, extended maceration (total maceration time was three weeks). Aged 16 months in 70% new French oak barrels. Best barrels selected and blended in the summer of 2009. Aged in 70% new French oak (Francois Frères, Billon and Ermitage). · *Dark reddish-purple robe. Intriguing aromas of dark cherries and berries, compost, soil, hops and rose petals. Wow! Hits the mid palate with strikingly plush, spicy dark red and black fruits buffered with ideal oak integration and perfectly balanced tannins and acidity. Ridiculously long and memorable finish. Offers something different with each sip. Like Drew Barrymore - very successful at a young age (much more approachable than previous vintage). Even better the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. An amazing wine that is California Pinot at its best and flat out one of the finest Pinots (along with the Donum Thomas) I have reviewed so far this year. Wine Spectator trumpets "94," I claim "98." Did I say long finish?*



2010 Kosta Browne 4-Barrel California Pinot Noir

14.8% alc., 351 cases, \$78. · Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure, pretty aromas of exotic berries with a complimentary hint of vanilla and spice. Exceptional fruit flavor and the most polished wine in the KB lineup. *An ephemeral blend of black raspberry and boysenberry flavors with an underpinning of nutmeg spice. Great purity of fruit. Supple tannins, a beguiling satiny texture and endless length on the finish. Not the biggest wine, but a complete and sophisticated wine. Even better the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Consider yourself very lucky if you are able to snag a bottle or two of this gem.*



2011 Kutch McDougall Ranch Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

13.6% alc., 345 cases, \$55. Release August 2013. 7-day cold soak, native fermentations, 50% de-stemmed and 50% whole cluster, all fruit crushed and punched down by foot, aged sur lie for 10 months without racking in 50% new and 50% used French oak barrels. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Striking nose offering extroverted scents of black cherries, spice, briar and rose petal. Mouth watering flavors of ripe black cherries and dark red berry jam, with a joyful hint of spice. Very soft and smooth, almost ephemeral, but with eye-opening fruit intensity. There is an extra depth of flavor on the finish that keeps rolling along just when you think it must be finally done. I was really taken by this wine, and as I sat in my chair, I kept looking at the glass and shaking my head in wonderment. Even better the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Similar in some ways to the great 2009 vintage of this wine, but more approachable and elegant in style.*



2009 Maggy Hawk Unforgettable Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

14.5% alc., pH 3.70, TA 0.51, 235 cases, \$N/A. From 2.64-acre Block 5, clone 667. Aged 15 months in 35% new French oak barrels. · *Very interesting woody nose offering aromas of black cherries, spice and mushrooms on the grill. Delicious core of fresh black raspberry and blackberry fruit, nicely spiced. A veritable iron fist in a velvet glove wine with rich, strikingly intense flavor, countered with seductive elegance and silkiness. Flat-out great the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. The name of this wine is very appropriate.*



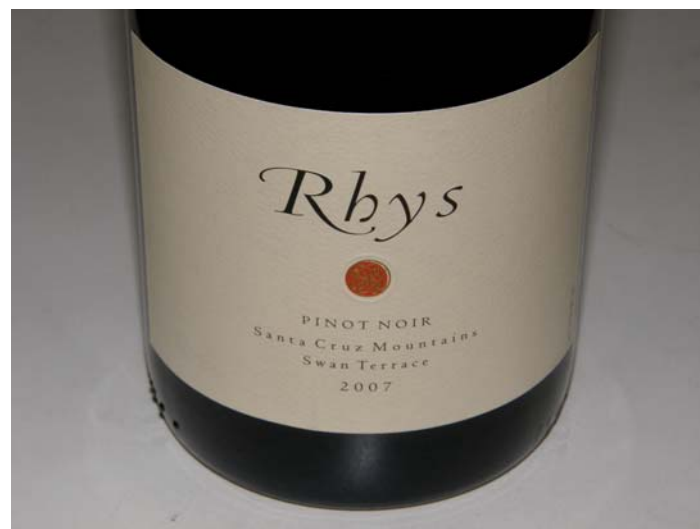
2010 Paul Lato "Suerte" Solomon Hills Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir

14.5% alc., 150 cases, \$70. · *Dark reddish-purple color in the glass. The nose is brooding initially, opening over time to reveal very appealing aromas of spiced berry cake, forest floor and cedary oak. Moderately rich core of dark cherry, berry and plum flavors with a hint of oak vanillin. Think sweet blackberries with fresh cream. Gathers intensity and interest over time in the glass, reaching a state of flamboyance that is striking. Seamless, with well-managed fine grain tannins and integrated acidity. Finishes long and scented. Tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the wine was even better, continuing to pump out the pleasure at a welcome pace. My favorite by a hair among the five stunning 2010 Paul Lato wines.*



2007 Rhys Alpine Vineyard Swan Terrace Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., \$59. From a 1.5-acre section of Alpine Vineyard planted to a Swan field blend. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Another aromatic wonderland with scents of berry jam, spice, and an exotic floral note. Better and better over time in the glass. Would love to make a perfume like this. Amazingly fresh flavors of alpine strawberries with an interesting candied and edible flower note. I have never tasted anything quite like this in a California Pinot Noir. The wine displays healthy tannins, but they are better integrated in this wine and nicely balanced by the lively acidity. Filled with verve and intrigue, this is a wine to savor. Flat-out great the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.*



2010 Twomey Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

13.6% alc., pH 3.48, TA 0.61, 1,853 cases, \$46. Sourced from Ferrington, Savoy and Monument Tree vineyards. Aged 15 months sur lies in 45% new and 55% once-used French oak barrels. · Moderately light reddish color in the glass. *Muted, but pleasing aromas of fresh strawberries, raspberries, dried rose petals and sandalwood. Delicious core of raspberry flavor elevated by brisk acidity, draped in well-proportioned tannins, underlain with a complimentary note of oak and savory herbs, and finishing with a vivid riff of cherry fruit which lingers for a remarkably long time. A seamless wine that is uncommonly refreshing. Tasted against several very good Anderson Valley Pinot Noirs, this was the clear standout. Re-tasted the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the wine had become more aromatic and generous in flavor. Irresistible.*



2009 WesMar Balletto Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

14.0% alc., 195 cases, \$40. Pommard clone. Eighth vintage from this vineyard. · Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. *Beguiling aromas of spiced cherries and berries with an exotic floral and musk element. Veers to the darker fruit side and clearly the most intensely flavored wine in the lineup. Long in the mouth, endowed with plush black cherry and fresh plum flavors, and an underpinning of cola and spice. Very impressive persistence on the flamboyant peacock finish. Even better later in the day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle and still better two days later. The Williams Selyem legacy lives on in this wine.*



2008 Windy Oaks Estate Special Burgundy Clone Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir

14.3% alc., \$75. Very limited. From a special half-acre section of the vineyard that is carefully hand-tended exclusively by Jim Schultze. The clone is a rarely propagated French Pinot Noir clone not available in the United States. Aged 27 months in 100% new French oak. Unfined and unfiltered. - *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. A very polished and sophisticated offering that reminds me of a Frédéric Mugnier wine from Chambolle-Musigny. Deep cherry and spice aromas and flavors that take on an extraordinary appeal over extended time, seemingly partnering with the glass. Comforting and silky with soft tannins and beautifully integrated oak. Very food friendly (try roast chicken). My wife was impressed and that is saying something. Still great the next day when we finished the bottle. Truly in a class by itself.*



2012 California Pinot Noir All-Americans Second Team

2010 Bailiwick Silver Pines Vineyard Sonoma Mountain Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., pH 3.66, TA 0.64, 140 cases, \$44. Growers are Norm and Carole Silverman. The vineyard overlooks Bennett Valley from an elevation of 900 feet. Planted in 2000, the loamy-clay volcanic soil is low in vigor limiting yields to about 2 tons per acre. Clone 115. Aged in 34% new French oak barrels. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with aromas of dark red fruits, cardamom spice and candied rose petal. Juicy red cherries and berries saturate the mid palate, embellished with spice and magic. Healthy, but non-aggressive fine-grain tannins add grip and support. Still young and takes its own sweet time opening up. Tremendous finishing power with fruit coming and going in waves. Cellar this another year or two and you will be infatuated.*

2010 Belle Glos Clark & Telephone Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir

14.3% alc., 3,475 cases, \$44. Released December 2011. Established in 1972, this vineyard is planted own rooted to the Martini clone. 100% de-stemmed, inoculation of yeasts to match each lot, punch down and punch-over techniques. Yields 1.67 tons per acre. · *Deep, dark purple robe in the glass. The nose is remarkably intense and persistent, pumping out aromas of dark berry jam, black currants, spice and vanillin over extended time in the glass. Flat-out stunning flavors of fresh black raspberries and blackberries with a complimentary exotic spice bent. Some refined tannins lead to a silky mouth feel. Astonishing length on the fruit-laden finish. I have rarely experienced a California Pinot Noir with such an incredibly long finish.*

2010 Brewer-Clifton Machado Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir

14.5% alc., 290 cases, \$46. · 15-acre parcel on Machado family land adjacent Clos Pepe and immediately behind Kessler-Haak Vineyard. Pommard, Merry Edwards, Mount Eden and 459 clones. 100% of fruit is sold to Brewer-Clifton which is one of three vineyards Brewer-Clifton exclusively farms and manages. *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Inviting aromas of plums and dark berry jam. Delicious and majestic in the mouth with flavors that replicate the aromas. The tannins are supportive and the mouth feel is very soft and comforting. Impressive length on the fruit-filled finish. Seamless and beautifully balanced. Still great the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Like rough sex play: it can raise your interest.*

2009 DuMOL Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

14.3% alc., 3,900 cases, \$64. Sourced from seven cool vineyards located on the western edge of the Russian River Valley. Clones are Old Beringer, Dijon 114, 115, 667, 777, Calera, Swan and Pommard. Vine age 5 to 24 years. Aged 11 months in 40% new French oak barrels. Unfined and unfiltered. · *This wine was a revelation. Moderately deep reddish-purple color in the glass. Lovely, demure aromas of dark red cherries and berries and brioche. Sinfully delicious with intense, sweet flavors of black cherries, spice and Hoison sauce. Polished and classy, seductively silky on the palate, with suede tannins and perfect integration of oak, ending with a juicy finish that lures you back to the glass. Impeccable balance. I gave my wife a taste and she grinned from ear to ear. Everything you could ask for in a Russian River Valley appellation Pinot Noir and worth every penny.*

2010 Fulcrum Gap's Crown Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., 189 cases, \$56. Clones 667 and 777. Aged 15 months in 33% new Remond French oak. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Brightly perfumed with aromas of black plums, blackberry jam and Chinese Five Spice. Deliciously rich core of blackberry and plum reduction sauce flavors with a very appealing accent of spice. The wines fills the mouth with fruit, grabbing your attention, but is light on its feet due to supple tannins and impeccable balance. A big boy Pinot with black tie class that is flat-out terrific.*

2009 Hirsch Vineyards “East Ridge” Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

13.8% alc., pH 3.46, TA 0.66, 160 cases, \$85. A limited bottling from three of the oldest blocks on the East Ridge of the Hirsch Vineyard consisting of 18 acres and 16 farming blocks. Dominated by Pommard and Mt. Eden clones, this bottling is a selection of the very best barrels from these old blocks. Aged 17 months in 35% new French oak barrels. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Alluring aromas of black cherries and spice. Impressive rush of earth bound black cherry and dark berry fruit on the mid palate, persisting on the long and expressive finish. The mild, sinewy tannins add support and well-honed acidity adds vibrancy. Plenty of character in this wine and in my opinion, the best expression of Hirsch Vineyards Pinot Noir among the wines tasted here. I had some wine left over after tasting the following day, my wife took the wine as a gift to her friend who loves Pinot Noir, but mistakenly left it in the trunk where it stayed for three days. When I retrieved it, five days after opening, it was still fabulous! Built for the long haul and an exceptional Sonoma Coast treasure.*

2007 John Tyler Bacigalupi Vineyard Wente Clone Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

14.4% alc., 418 cases, \$45. 100% old Wente selection from Bacigalupi Vineyard at Goddard Ranch. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Lovely aromas of dark cherry and berry mash with a hint of rose petal. Vibrant fruit on the mid palate with intense flavors of black cherries, dark berries and cassis, carrying over on the richly endowed and persistent finish. This wine really attracts your attention, offering and retracting numerous fruit and savory flavors over time in the glass. Well-structured with moderate tannins, offering appealing charm and complexity. Will easily last another 10 years. A connoisseur's wine.*

2009 La Follette Manchester Ridge Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir

14.7% alc., pH 3.74, TA 0.59, 494 cases, \$49.99. This vineyard is located at 2,000 foot elevation overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The vines are rooted in decomposed sandstone. The relatively cool summer allows the fruit a long hang time. Clones 777, 115 and 114. 45% whole cluster. Bottled unfiltered. · *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Exotic perfume of purple rose petals, mushrooms, musk, framboise and subtle oak. Hard to take your nose away from the glass. Delicious medium-weighted core of black raspberry and black cherry fruit clings to all reaches of the mouth, and persists with a vengeance on the aromatic finish. There are complimentary notes of cola and oak-driven mocha that add interest. Very satiny on the palate. I continue to be impressed by wines from this vineyard. Flat out beautiful.*

2009 La Rochelle Tondre Grapefield Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir

14.8% alc., 125 cases, \$48. Released September 8, 2012. Originally planted to 6 acres of Pinot Noir in 1997. Today the vineyard contains 80 acres of Pinot Noir and 25 acres of Chardonnay, farmed by Joe Allarid. Clones 943 and Pommard are in this bottling. Inaugural release from this vineyard. Aged for 18 months in 20% new and 80% second use French oak barrels. · *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Smells like the freshest blackberry jam you have ever experienced. Delicious and entirely seductive, with a moderately intense core of blackberry, cassis, Hoison sauce and vanilla flavors. Smooth and satiny, with well-balanced tannins, perfectly integrated acidity in the background and the most outrageously long finish of all the wines in the 2009 La Rochelle lineup. I have had several great wines from this vineyard and this one continues the trend.*

2009 Stemmler Ferguson Block Carneros Pinot Noir

14.4% alc., pH 3.57, TA 0.63, 67 cases, \$44. To be released soon. Ferguson Block sits less than a mile east of The Donum Estate. It is the oldest vineyard in The Donum Estate, planted in 1974 with an old Martini selection of Pinot Noir on St. George rootstock in gravelly, loamy clay soils. Aged 18 months in once-used French oak barrels. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Evocative nose offering savory and fruity aromas including black cherries, baking spice and herbs. Really wows in the mouth with flat-out delicious core of earthy black cherries accented with complimentary vanillin oak. Satiny in texture with a generous finish that makes you want to take another sip. Nothing like old vine sophistication.*

2009 Three Sticks Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

14.7% alc., 253 cases, pH 3.70, TA 0.63, \$60. Released March 20, 2012. A selection from the finest blocks in the vineyard and the best barrels in the cellar. Clones 667, 115 and 777. 10% whole cluster. Aged 15 months in 50% new French oak barrels. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Ripe dark berry and plum aromas explode from the glass accented by the slightest note of herbs and spice. An “Oh my God!” nose.*

Delicious essence of fresh black raspberries, black currants and dark plums, accented with Middle Eastern spices and cola. Amazing mid palate presence, soft tannins, and a finish that would make Hollywood proud. Crafted for early accessibility. You will need a cold shower after drinking this one.

2012 California Pinot Noir All-Americans Honorable Mention

All these wines received the Pinot Geek designation in 2012.

Humboldt County

2009 Joseph Jewell Elk Prairie Vineyard Humboldt County Pinot Noir

Mendocino County

2009 Waits-Mast Oppenlander Vineyard Mendocino County Pinot Noir

Mendocino Ridge

2010 Arista Perli Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir

2009 B. Kosuge Wines Manchester Ridge Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir

2009 Drew The Gatekeepers Blend Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir

2009 Drew Perli Vineyard Murder Ridge Block Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir

2009 Lattanzio Wines Manchester Ridge Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir

2009 Olson Ogden Manchester Ridge Vineyard Mendocino Pinot Noir

Anderson Valley

2010 Balo Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2010 Champ de Rêves Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2010 Foursight Wines Charles Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2009 Foursight Wines Charles Vineyard "Clone 05" Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2009 Goldeneye Ten Degrees Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2010 Greenwood Ridge Vineyards Hundred Point Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2009 Knez Winery Cerise Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2009 Londer Vineyards Ferrington Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2009 MacPhail Ferrington Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2009 Maggy Hawk Afleet Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2010 Navarro Méthode A L'Ancienne Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

2009 Zina Hyde Cunningham Reserve Anderson Valley Pinot Noir

Yorkville Highlands

2010 Drew Weir Vineyard Yorkville Highlands Pinot Noir

Sonoma Coast

2009 Canihan Exuberance Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2009 Cobb Emmaline Ann Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2009 Dunstan Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2010 Flowers Sea View Ridge Estate Vineyard Block 20 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2009 Hirsch Vineyards "San Andreas Fault" Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2010 Kosta Browne Gap's Crown Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2011 Kutch Falstaff Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2010 Loring Wine Company Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2009 MacPhail Wildcat Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2010 Peay Vineyards Ama Estate Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2010 Siduri Hirsch Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

2010 Vivier Sun Chase Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

Russian River Valley

2009 Alysian Russian River Selection Pinot Noir
2009 Alysian Rochioli Vineyard Edgewater Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Alysian Rochioli Vineyard Allen-Rochioli Blocks Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Alysian Floodgate Vineyard Origins Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Alysian Hallberg Vineyard Crossroads Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Bailiwick Foray Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Castalia Rochioli Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Donum Estate Grown Reserve Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 DuMOL ryan Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2009 DuMOL finn Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Fogline Vineyards Floodgate Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Gary Farrell Rochioli Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 george Vintage VIII Ceremonial Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2009 J Vineyards & Winery Barrel 16 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Kosta Browne Koplen Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Kosta Browne Kanzler Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2009 La Rochelle Dutton Ranch Campbell Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Patz & Hall Chenoweth Ranch Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Paul Mathew TNT Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Paul Mathew Horseshoe Bend Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir.
2010 Sandler Wine Co. Keefer Ranch Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Siduri Keefer Ranch Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Twomey Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 WesMar Oehlman Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Williams Selyem Westside Road Neighbors Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

Carneros

2009 Donum Estate Grown Thomas Carneros Pinot Noir
2009 La Rochelle Donum Estate Vineyard Carneros Pinot Noir
2009 Stemmler Estate Grown Carneros Pinot Noir
2010 Valerie's Vineyard "One Acre" Carneros Pinot Noir

Sierra Foothills

2007 Clos Saron Home Vineyard Sierra Foothills Pinot Noir

Marin County

2010 Bailiwick Borderline Marin County Pinot Noir
2009 Pey-Marin "Trois-Filles" Marin County Pinot Noir

Monterey

2010 La Crema Monterey Pinot Noir
2010 Talbott Sleepy Hollow Vineyard Estate Grown Monterey Pinot Noir

Santa Cruz Mountains

2009 Mount Eden Vineyards Estate Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir
2009 Neely Spring Ridge Vineyard Upper Picnic Block Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir
2009 Windy Oaks Estate Limited Release Wood Tank Fermented Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir

Santa Lucia Highlands

2010 August West Rosella's Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir
2010 Belle Glos Las Alturas Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir

2010 Kori KW Ranch Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir
2010 McIntyre Vineyards Estate Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir
2010 McIntyre Vineyards East Block 3 Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir

Arroyo Grande

2009 BIGVINE Arroyo Grande Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Laetitia Single Vineyard La Colline Arroyo Grande Valley Pinot Noir

Santa Barbara County

2009 Toretti's Family Vineyard Inocencio Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir

Santa Maria Valley

2010 Cambria Estate Winery Clone 4 Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir

2009 Native9 Ranch Ontiveros Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Paul Lato "Duende" Gold Coast Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Sandler Wine Co. Bien Nacido Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Twomey Bien Nacido Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir

Sta. Rita Hills

2010 Dragonette Cellars Fiddlestix Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir
2010 Evening Land Even Land Estate Memorious Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir
2010 Brewer-Clifton 3-D Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir
2010 Brewer-Clifton Mount Carmel Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir
2010 Paul Lato "Atticus" John Sebastiano Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir
2010 Paul Lato "Seabiscuit" Zotovich Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir
2010 Pisoni Estate Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir
2010 Sea Smoke Southing Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir
2010 Sea Smoke Ten Sta. Rita hills Pinot Noir

2012 California Value Priced Pinot Noir First Team All-Americans

The wines designated with ** received both my highest accolade, the Pinot Geek designation, and were priced at \$35 or less and received a Value icon.

2009 BIGVINE Arroyo Grande Valley Pinot Noir**

14.3% alc., 2,300 cases, \$14. 85% Arroyo Grande, 15% Sta. Rita Hills. Aged 12 months in 25% new French oak barrels with regular lees stirring. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. The interesting and complex nose really draws you in. Aromas of strawberries, cherries, sandalwood, sawdust and Indian spice. Delicious middleweight core of fresh dark cherries and red raspberries, caressed by supple tannins, offering good acidity, and finishing with memorable aromatic persistence. A beautifully balanced wine that is very easy to cozy up to, and quite impressive for a first release. Unbelievable value.*



2010 Cambria Estate Winery Julia's Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir

14.6% alc., pH 3.59, TA 0.54, \$25. Clones 4, 2A, 23, 667, 115, 12, 5 and 777. Aged 8 months in 26% new French oak barrels. Week-long cold soak for optimum color and flavor extraction. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Beautifully perfumed with aromas of boysenberry pie glaze, dark cherries, black grapes, spice and just a hint of mocha. Very tasty core of moderately dark red, blue and black berries with an earthy undertone, well-integrated oak and a polished mouth feel. A quintessential Santa Maria Valley wine that has respectable power, good finishing length and enough spirit to be thoroughly satisfying. Very good.*



2010 Champ de Rêves Anderson Valley Pinot Noir**

14.5% alc., \$35. · *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Very seductive aromas of fully ripened cherries with hints of spice, leather and dark chocolate. Delicious core of black raspberry and black cherry fruit framed by toasty oak and a bright cut of acidity. The finish is crazy long: my notes say amazing! Beautifully composed and balanced. Reminds me of a Russian River Valley Pinot Noir in character but with better acidity typical of Anderson Valley. Impressive debut.*



2009 Drew The Gatekeepers Blend Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., pH 3.62, TA 0.67, 450 cases, \$28. Released February 2011. Sourced from Manchester Ridge and Perli vineyards. Clones 777, 667, 114 and 115. 100% de-stemmed. Aged 11 months in 100% neutral French oak. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. A nose you could chew on, with luscious aromas of dark red cherries and berries and spice, underlain with a floral and sandalwood note. Equally satisfying in the mouth, with a flavorful array of perfectly ripe cherry and dark raspberry flavors complimented by the finest dusting of flowers and oak. Can't say enough good things about this well-crafted, seamless wine. I could easily drink it all night long. Very good.*



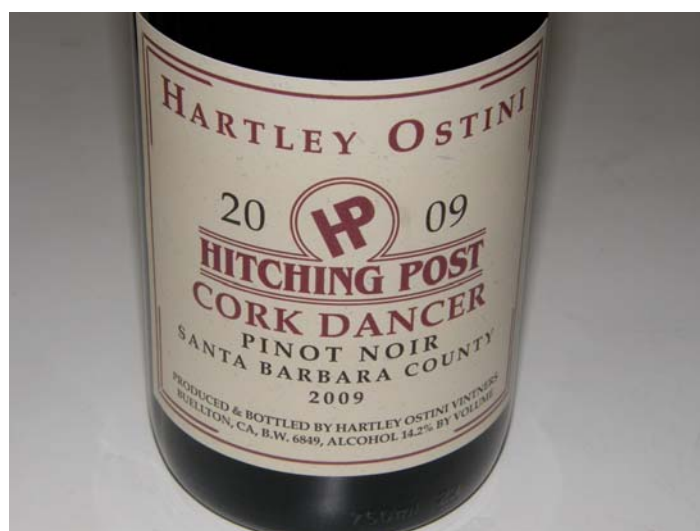
2010 Hahn Estate SLH Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir

14.5% alc., pH 3.81, TA 0.62, \$35. 65% Doctor's Vineyard, 22% Smith Vineyard and 13% Lone Oak Vineyard. Clones are Pommard 5, 667, 777, 115 and 2A. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Very enticing nose offering bright aromas of black cherry liquor, saffras, toasted brioche and oak spice. Delicious essence of fresh black cherries with impressive mid palate presence. Relatively full-bodied with mild dusty tannins. Accents of red velvet cake and cola add interest. Drinking nicely now. Very good.*



2009 Hitching Post Cork Dancer Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., \$18, screw cap. The duo of Hartley and Ostini have been making wine since 1979. The Hitching Post tasting room is at the Hitching Post II Restaurant in Solvang. · *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Very nice perfume of pie cherries, spice and oak. More complex than you would expect at this price level with flavors of dark red berries and cherries, rose hips tea and cola, with a hint of citrus peel on the uplifting finish. Well-managed oak and tannins with an easy drinking personality. Would work beautifully with a Hitching Post oak-grilled steak. Very good.*



2010 Hook & Ladder Third Alarm Reserve Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., \$35. Native yeast fermentation. Aged 11 months in 30% new French oak barrels. • *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Very expressive nose of ripe dark cherries, cola and spice. Quintessential Russian River Valley Pinot Noir with signature flavors of black cherries, cola and brown spice with a hint of mocha. Fully ripe in fruit character, very smooth on the palate, displaying impeccable balance. Highly approachable now and well worth the tab. Very good (+).*



2010 La Crema Monterey Pinot Noir**

13.9% alc., \$20. • *Moderately dark reddish-purple hue in the glass. Very fragrant aromas of perfectly ripe berries include strawberries with hints of spice and vanilla. A charming wine that aims to please with a medium weighted core of luscious dark raspberries, strawberries and boysenberries accented with cola, cassis and oak. Nicely buttressed with soft tannins and offering good length on the finish. Great balance. All you can ask for in California Pinot Noir for the price of a Jackson.*



2009 Lattanzio Wines Manchester Ridge Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir**

14.5% alc., \$35. · Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Subdued aromas of pleasing dark cherries, dry leaf and oak. Creamy and fullflavored on the palate with a delicious core of perfectly ripened black cherries framed by the slightest hint of oak. Nicely balanced with lively acidity and ripe tannins, finishing with aromatic persistence. Still great the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.



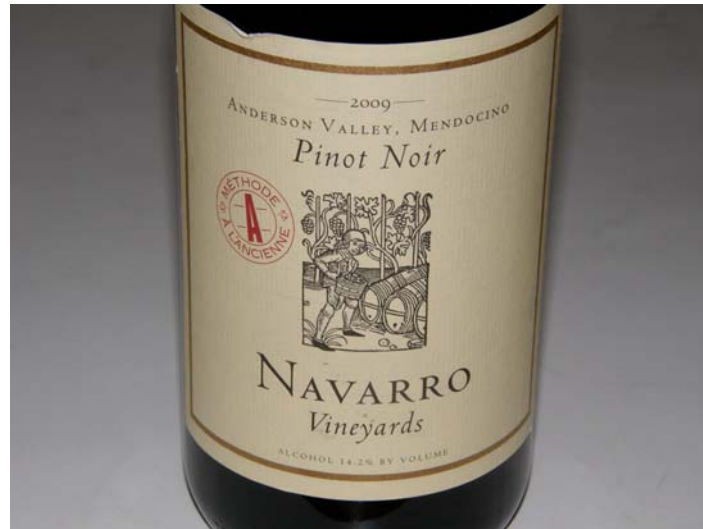
2010 Meiomi California Pinot Noir

13.8% alc., \$18-\$20, screw cap. "May-OHmee" means "Coast" in the language of the California Wappo Indian tribe. 57% Monterey County, 23% Santa Barbara County, and 20% Sonoma County. Winemaker Joseph J. Wagner. · Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Deep, rich and enticing aromas of plums and dark berries with a hint of oak spice, vanillin and BBQ. Discreetly concentrated, yet richly flavored with delicious plum, black raspberry, dark chocolate and vanilla cola notes. The fruit is caressed by soft, fine-grain tannins, creating a velvety mouth feel that is very seductive. The best Meiomi Pinot Noir to date. This wine will find many fans. Widespread retail and restaurant availability. Very good.



2009 Navarro Méthode A L'Ancienne Anderson Valley Pinot Noir**

14.2% alc., pH 3.68, TA 0.67, 4,910 cases, \$29. · *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure, but pleasing aromas of black raspberries and boysenberries with a hint of brier and oak. Fresh and uplifting on the palate with a darker berry and black cherry flavor profile. Medium-weighted with well-behaved tannins and bright acidity. Admirable balance predicts longevity.*



2012 California Value Priced Pinot Noirs Honorable Mention

The following value priced Pinot Noir wines are often widely distributed in wine retail and supermarket stores. They are often discounted below the listed prices. Pinot Noir priced at \$50 or more has often been decried as the “dead zone” because the poor economy in recent years has made it more difficult to sell wines in this price category. The wines listed below, however, can be considered to be in the “fun zone” and drinking these wines can make you feel good about skirting a punishing economy. All these wines received the Value icon award.

- 2011 Origine Russian River Valley Rosé of Pinot Noir \$12**
- 2010 Irony Monterey County Pinot Noir \$12**
- 2010 Sean Minor Four Bears Central Coast Pinot Noir \$12**
- 2010 Jack Hammer Central Coast Pinot Noir \$12.99**
- 2010 Sean Minor Carneros Pinot Noir \$14**
- 2011 Moobuzz Monterey Pinot Noir \$15**
- 2011 Vivier Sonoma Coast Rosé of Pinot Noir \$18**
- 2010 De Loach Vineyards Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$18.50**
- 2010 Kendall-Jackson Vintner’s Reserve California Pinot Noir \$19**
- 2010 Carmel Road Monterey Pinot Noir \$20**
- 2010 Pali Wine Co. “Riviera” Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$20**
- NV Laetitia Arroyo Grande Brut Cuvée Sparkling Wine \$21**
- 2010 Pali Wine Co. “Huntington” Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir \$21**
- 2010 Pali Wine Co. “Bluffs” Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$21**
- 2010 Briceland Vineyards Humboldt County Pinot Noir \$23**
- 2010 La Crema Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$25**
- 2010 Hook & Ladder Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$25**
- 2010 Laetitia Estate Arroyo Grande Valley Pinot Noir \$25**
- 2010 Talbott Logan Estate Grown Monterey Pinot Noir \$25**
- 2010 Briceland Vineyards Bosco Vineyard Humboldt County Pinot Noir \$27**
- 2010 Tessier Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$28**
- 2010 Straight Line Wine Mendocino County Pinot Noir \$28**
- 2010 Stomping Girl Unhinged Sonoma County Pinot Noir \$28**
- 2010 Brophy Clark Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir \$30**
- 2010 Siduri Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir \$30**
- 2010 Siduri Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$30**
- 2010 Paul Mathew PM Vineyards Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$32**
- 2010 Seagrape Wine Co. “Jump Up” Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir \$32**
- 2010 Longoria Lovely Rita Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir \$32**

2010 Sequana Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir \$32

2010 On Point Christinna's Cuvée North Coast Pinot Noir \$34

2010 Arista Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$35

2010 J. Lohr Fog's Reach Arroyo Seco Pinot Noir \$35

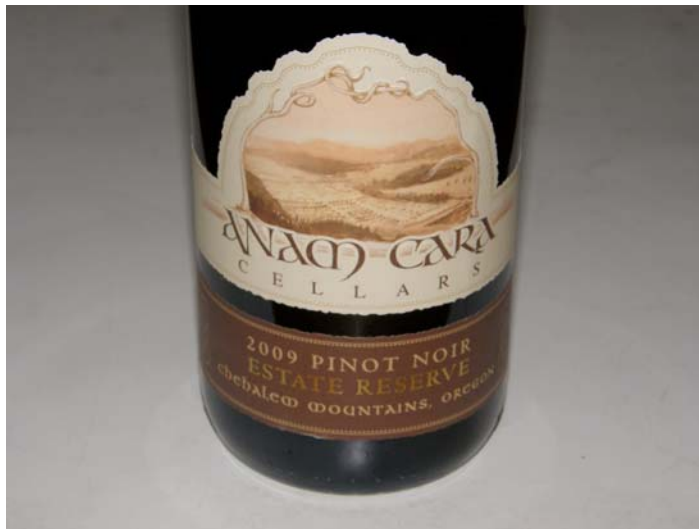
2010 Stomping Girl Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$35

2010 Evening Land Spanish Springs Edna Valley Pinot Noir \$35

2012 Oregon Pinot Noir All-Americans First Team

2009 Anam Cara Cellars Estate Reserve Chehalem Mountains Oregon Pinot Noir

14.0% alc., 240 cases, \$42. From special sections and rows of the vineyard with Reserve potential and a best barrel selection. Yields 1.5 tons per acre. Clones are Pommard, 114, 115 and 777. Aged in 24% new French oak barrels. · *Light reddish-purple color in the glass. Reserved but welcoming aromas of black cherries and darker red berries. Striking medium-bodied black cherry core which impresses the mid palate and lingers for half a minute on the finish. Smooth as a baby's bottom with reserved tannins. Very classy and always the best wine in the Anam Cara stable. More reserved and elegant than the 2008 version of this wine, but more Pinot character. Pinot.com.*



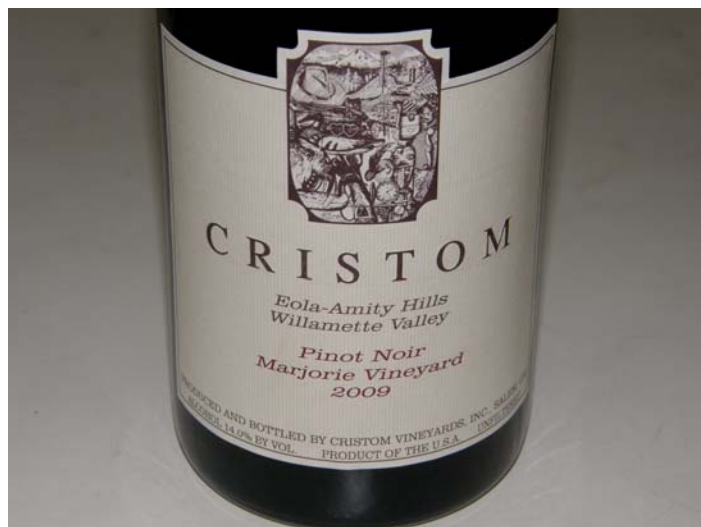
2010 Antica Terra Botanica Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.3% alc., \$75 (sold out). Built around fruit from Shea Vineyard in the Yamhill- Carlton District where grapes are sourced from 8 acres of Pinot Noir split between East and West Hill. · *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Delicate aromas of black cap raspberries and plum sauce waif from the glass. Round, rich and Rubenesque, yet very smooth, seamless and light on its feet, offering delicious flavors of black plum, black raspberry and spice, caressed by gossamer tannins. Amazing flavor at a modest alcohol level. Perfect integration of oak and impeccable balance. Approachable now, but can go the distance. America, this is a Pinot Noir we can be very proud of. Winemaker Maggie Harrison is in it to win it!*



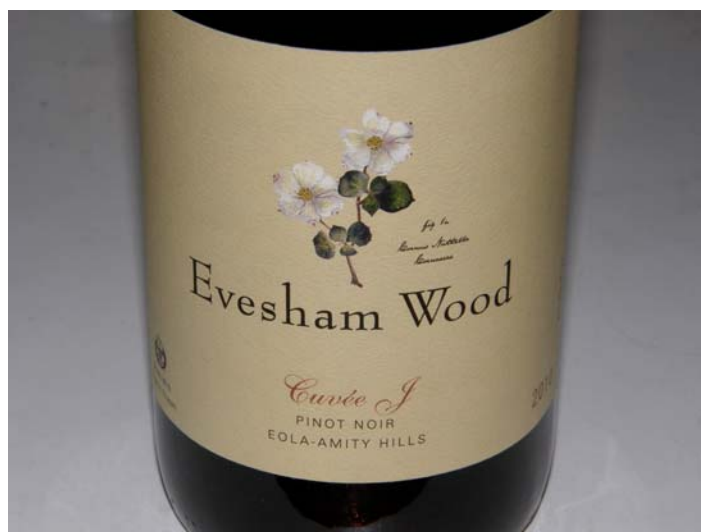
2009 Cristom Marjorie Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

14.0% alc., \$59. · Moderately light reddish-purple hue in the glass. The nose is well-fruited, showing aromas of red cherries, strawberries and spice. An elegant, feminine wine that is flat-out delicious. Middleweight flavors of dark red cherries and red berries, accented by the slightest oak and spice, and robed in firm but silky tannins. Very soft like the hair of an angel. In short, a party of velvet-edged red fruits. Like actor Keira Knightley - perfumed and sensuous.



2010 Evesham Wood Cuvée J Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.0% alc., 150 cases. \$44. Exclusively from Le Puits Sec Vineyard. Aged in 40% new French oak. Unfiltered. · Moderately light purple color in the glass. Wonderfully perfumed with fresh scents of black cherries, briar, compost, rose petal and spice. Well-endowed with attention-getting flavors of black cherries, kirsch and spice. Riper with more body, more structural bones, and less noticeable acidity than the Le Puits Sec bottling. Incredible length on the generous finish. Very age worthy. A real crowd pleaser and one of the best wines I have sampled from Oregon in this vintage.



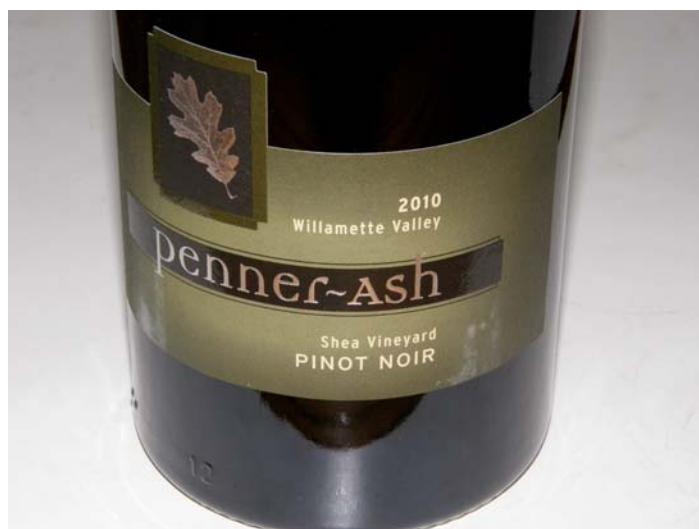
2010 Lenné Estate Yamhill-Carlton District Oregon Pinot Noir

14.0% alc., \$45. The best barrels from each harvest. - *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Enticing aromas of black cherries, darker berries, sassafras, sandalwood and coffee. Hits the palate with remarkable intensity, offering delicious, slightly sweet flavors of black cherries, black raspberries and ripe strawberries which persist on the long, dreamy, citrus-toned finish. Good structural bones, balancing acidity, and everything in tune. 1 to 2 years from super stardom, although you can indulge yourself now. Lenné Estate killed it in this vintage.*



2010 Penner-Ash Shea Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., pH 3.87, TA 0.50, 500 cases, \$60. Released July 2012. Almost equal parts Pommard, 777 and 114 clones, sourced from multiple blocks at Shea Vineyard. The Wädenswil did not make into the 2010 blend. Cold soak was shorter than normal (3 days) due to botrytis and coldness of the fruit when it came in. Fermented in 2-ton stainless steel tanks with hand punch downs. Aged in 25% new French oak, 25% once-filled barrels, and 50% seasoned barrels. - *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Beautifully perfumed with aromas of dark stone fruits and berries with a touch of oak. Ambrosial flavors of black cherries and black raspberries with a touch of spice. The fruit is perfectly ripe and vivid. Excellent concentration with firm matching tannins, exhibiting deep cherry flavor in a lasting finish. This is a "Wow" wine that really emotes. Still terrific the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle when my wife and I happily polished it off.*



2010 Privé Vineyard le sud Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.2% alc., \$80. · *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Strikingly aromatic featuring scents of ripe black cherries, black raspberries, black plums and dark rose petals. Retains aromatic intensity over time in the glass and I am wondering if it is possible to capture this aroma in a perfume. Very polished with moderately rich and glorious black cherry, black raspberry, cassis and cola flavors with perfect integration of oak, complimentary acidity, and soft, ripe tannins. The fruit hangs on like a 3-hour movie you don't want to end. Very plush for a 2010 Oregon Pinot Noir. Still great the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle indicating age ability. A sensual pleasure that will persuade you to make Pommard your paramour. Mesmerizing.*



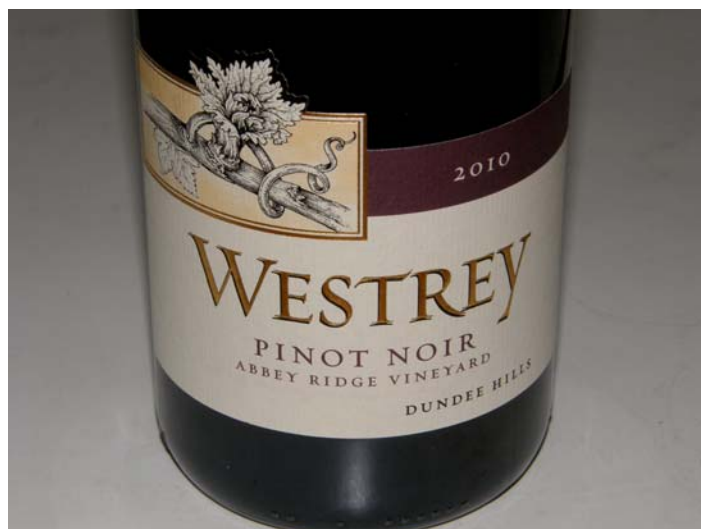
2008 Siltstone Guadalupe Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.2% alc., 380 cases, \$28. Released May 2011. Viticulturist Joel Myers' own label. His company, Vinetenders, manages Guadalupe Vineyard for owners Jim Stonebridge and Kathleen Boeve. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Evocative aromas of red berries and cherries on a bed of mesquite. Vibrant flavors of red raspberries and Bing cherries with a hint of caramel and spice that fan out nicely on the palate in an elegant presentation. Very forward for this vintage. Long, scented aftertaste. An exceptional wine of great pinotosity. The most fun you can have with your clothes on.*



2009 Westrey Abbey Ridge Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., 219 cases, \$33. Aged in 22% new French oak barrels. · *Light reddish-purple color in the glass. Aromas of dark red and black berries with spice, floral and forest floor notes. Moderately intense mid palate presence showing power without weight with many subtle flavor nuances. Beautifully balanced with perfectly ripe and well-spiced berries returning to haunt the extraordinarily long finish. More curves and spice than a Victoria's Secret runway.*



2010 White Rose Estate White Rose Vineyard Whole Cluster Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.3% alc., pH 3.57, 97 cases, \$95. Yields 0.5 tons per acre from blocks 1 and 3 planted from 1978 to 1982 with self-rooted Pommard clone. 100% whole cluster. 5-day cold soak, 10 day fermentation, 9 day post-maceration skin contact. Pressed off in an old world, half-ton, wooden basket press. Aged 15 months in French oak. Racked once after malolactic fermentation and then again just before blending. · *Moderately light red rose color in the glass. Intoxicating aromas of fresh baked cherry pie and sandalwood. A cherry bombast that is soft and smooth on the palate with mouth-filling presence, tamed and focused tannins, crisp, well-integrated acidity, and an intense, cherry-driven and spicy finish that won't quit. The whole-cluster-driven spice is very enticing to me. A beguiling wine that was still remarkable the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.*



2010 Winderlea Ana Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.1% alc., \$48. This vineyard is located on a north-south ridge at 350 to 450 feet. Owned and farmed by Andy Humphrey, the vines are own rooted and date to 1976. Pommard and 777 clones. · *Moderate light ruby red color in the glass. Cherries are the theme is this outstanding wine. Aromas of fresh pie cherry glaze and rose petals. The discreetly concentrated core of juicy cherries is accented with hints of exotic spices, clove and a kiss of oak. Soft and smooth in texture with gossamer tannins. Finishes with a flourish of cherries. Like cherry pie day at cooking school: cherries, baking spices and very interesting results.*



2012 Oregon Pinot Noir All-Americans Second Team

2010 Andrew Rich Verbatim Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., 833 , \$30. Winemaker Rich's blend that best captures the vintage and the expression of Willamette Valley Pinot Noir. Sourced from Ribbon Ridge, La Colina, and Momtazi Family vineyards. Aged 15 months in French oak barrels. - *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Immediately appealing upon opening the bottle with fresh red cherry and berry aromas accented with notes of spice and sandalwood. Dances lightly on the palate, and delivers plenty of Pinot flavor. Impeccably balanced with supple tannins, finishing with a cherry focus that lingers. A lovely portrait of the 2010 Willamette Valley vintage.*

2009 Anne Amie Vineyards Prismé Yamhill-Carlton Pinot Noir Blanc

14.1% alc., pH 3.31, TA 0.59, 404 cases, \$45, screw cap. Released May 2012. Sourced from Anne Amie Estate and Rainbow Ridge vineyards. Pommard and Dijon 115 clones. Aged 18 months in 25% new, 25% 1 year-old, and 50% neutral French oak barrels. Free run juice with no skin contact, entirely barrel fermented, lees stirred, and aged on the lees in oak barrels for 18 months. - *Pale yellow color in the glass. Very aromatic with vivid scents of crème brûlée, golden apples, buttered brioche, honeysuckle and baked pear. Substantial and delicious with full-bodied flavors of pear, white peach, golden apple, citrus, nutmeg and brown butter persisting on the generous and lengthy finish. Reminds one of Chardonnay but different. Creamy mouth feel with good underlying acidity. A remarkable wine that confirms the saying that Pinot Noir is a white wine masquerading as a red wine. Very special and quite unique.*

2010 Carabella Estate Chehalem Mountains Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., 550 cases, \$37. 6 blocks including Pommard, Wädenswil, and Dijon clones. Each block fermented separately. - *Moderately light reddish-purple hue in the glass. The nose wows you with bright, perfectly ripe cherries and dark berries. Very polished and elegant in style, with delicious cherry and strawberry flavors accented with complimentary spice, cola and oak. A high class offering with beautiful balance that reeks of pinotosity. Still great the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Invites meditation.*

2009 Cornerstone Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.9% alc., 400 cases, \$50. - *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with aromas of black cherries and spice. Delicious medium weighted flavors of blueberries, black cherries and black raspberries with an emphasis on cherry. Riffs of cola and spice add interest. Juicy with restrained, dusty tannins, well-honed acidity and the slightest complimentary oak in the background. The delicious flavors are slightly ahead of the aromas at this stage. A beautiful wine that shows impeccable balance for the cellar but can be thoroughly enjoyed now.*

2002 Domaine Drouhin Oregon Louise Drouhin Family Estate Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

14.1% alc.. - *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Complex and beguiling with aromas that dance in and out of the glass including black cherries, fennel, balsam and Herbs de Provence. Soft and smooth on the palate with discreetly concentrated flavors of dark red cherries and berries, tea and fresh herbs. The tannins are refined and supple, and the sensuous mouth feel is a real delight. The finish is extraordinary long with fruit flavors lingering for what seems like a minute. Still beautiful the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. An exceptional, suave wine that really grabs your attention. Chambolle in the USA.*

2008 Domaine Serene Evenstad Reserve Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

14.1% alc., \$65. The winery's flagship wine sourced from estate vineyards in the Dundee Hills and Eola-Amity Hills. First vintage was in 1990. A blend of 40% Pommard, 51% Dijon, and 9% Wädenswil clones sourced primarily from estate vineyards grown in the Dundee Hills (70%) and Eola Hills (30%). Aged 17 months in 72% new French oak barrels. · *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Upon opening, smoky oak and campfire aromas and flavors dominate the fruit. Tasted later in the day from an opened bottle, the wine had blossomed in an extraordinary fashion, with oak receding to the background as a pleasing mocha note, and luscious black cherry and black raspberry fruit marching to the forefront to saturate the mid palate with flavor. A satiny mouth feel leads to a generous, long, and dry finish. I suggest you decant this wine if opened now, or patiently cellar to allow the oak and tannins to further integrate. A marvelous assembly of Pinot Noir clones that will please any Pinot aficionado.*

2010 Luminous Hills Lux Estate Grown Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., 112 cases, \$35. Released February 15, 2012. Exclusively Pommard and 777 that combines dark fruited notes from the Pommard on lower elevation sedimentary soil coupled with the intense redder fruits of the 777 on the upper elevation Jory soil. The two clones were co-fermented. Aged in 23% new French oak barrels. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Hi-tone and pure aromas of black cherries and black raspberries. Delicious mid palate fruit offering a mélange of dark red and black berries, stone fruits and black grapes. Supple tannins make for easy drinking now. Impeccable balance and very polished. Hard to top the regular Estate Grown bottling, but this one does with slightly more flavor and length. Crazy good at a modest price.*

2010 Owen Roe The Kilmore Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.0% alc., 988 cases, \$42. Sourced from Lennè and Merriman vineyards. Aged in 33% neutral, 39% 2-year and 28% 1-year French oak barrels. Pommard, Wädenswil and Dijon Clones. · *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Subdued but very pleasing aromas of black cherries, black raspberries, plum and violets. Hits the mid palate with enormous tenacity, offering delicious black raspberry, marionberry, cola and vanilla cream flavors which linger on the spiced, fruit-scented finish. Very soft and alluring in the mouth. Plenty of Pinot singing in this sensational wine that is ready to drink now.*

2010 Roots Saffron Fields Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., 74 cases, \$35. · *Evocative perfume of black cherry pie glaze with hints of oak and slate. Delicious, deeply flavored essence of perfectly ripe dark cherries nicely spiced with a complimentary note of oak-driven mocha. Striking flavor on entry, expanding in waves on the palate, and finishing with a taunting, memorable intensity. Still great two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle when I finished the bottle with dinner. Exceptional class.*

2009 Scott Paul La Paulée Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.1% alc., \$32, screw cap. Finest lots of the vintage from the winery's blocks of Maresh Vineyard. · *Moderately light deep red color in the glass. Lovely perfume of dark cherries, herbs and mocha java. Plenty of body and weight with multiple layers of fruit that really jump out. Rich flavors of fresh dark cherries, raspberry coulis, mocha and sandalwood with gossamer tannins, bright acidity and easy drinkability. Could use a little more time in the cellar to shed its oak sheen but very hard to resist now. Pick any superlative you want.*

2010 Soter Vineyards Mineral Springs Ranch Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.4% alc., \$50. Exclusively from the estate vineyard planted to 20 acres of Pinot Noir just east of the town of Carlton. 100% de-stemmed, 3-4 day cold soak, 7-10 day extended maceration, aged 12-15 months in 33% new French oak and an additional 6 months in bottle before release. · *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Penetrating and uplifting nose offering aromas of Bing cherries and spice. Rich attack of delicious black cherry, plum and boysenberry fruits, impressing the mid palate and finishing long and generous. Seamless, soft and silky with well-mannered tannins. Highly enjoyable now but has the balance to evolve over many years. A remarkably consistent bottling in every vintage that you can bank on.*

2012 Oregon Pinot Noir All-Americans Honorable Mention

All these wines received the Pinot Geek designation in 2012.

Chehalem Mountains

2009 Carabella Inchinnan Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Carabella Inchinnan Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Gresser Vineyard Vineyard Select Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Laura Volkman Jacob Estate Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Privé Vineyard le nord Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Privé Vineyard le nord Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2009 ROCO Private Stash No. 7 Wits End Vineyard Chehalem Mountains Pinot Noir

Dundee Hills

2010 Alexana Signature Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2008 Domaine Drouhin Lauréne Drouhin Family Estate Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2005 Domaine Drouhin Louise Drouhin Family Estate Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2004 Domaine Drouhin Louise Drouhin Family Estate Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 J. Christopher Dundee Hills Cuvée Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Matello Durant Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Siltstone Guadalupe Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Winderlea Winderlea Legacy Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

Eola-Amity Hills

2009 Cristom Eileen Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Evesham Wood Cuvée "J" Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Westrey Justice Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

McMinnville

2010 Maysara Estate Cuvée McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Winderlea Meredith Mitchell Vineyard McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2008 Youngberg Hill Vineyards Natasha McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

Yamhill-Carlton District

2009 Bergström Shea Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Big Table Farm Resonance Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Lenné Estate Jill's 115 Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Lenné Estate Karen's Pommard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Luminous Hills Estate Grown Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Penner-Ash Dussin Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Homer Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Sineann Resonance Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2009 Soter Mineral Springs Ranch Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir
2010 Winderlea Shea Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

Willamette Valley

2010 Antica Terra Erratica Willamette Valley Rosé
2009 Tyee Wine Cellars Estate Barrel Select Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

2012 Oregon Value Priced Pinot Noirs First Team

The wines designated with ** received both my highest accolade, the Pinot Geek designation, and were priced at \$35 or less and received a Value icon.

2010 Beckham Estate Vineyard Chehalem Mountains Oregon Pinot Noir

13.3% alc., 275 cases, \$32. Released April 2012. Yields 2.5 lbs per vine. 100% de-stemmed, whole berry fermented, aged 11 months in 35% new French oak barrels. • *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Very enticing aromas of fresh pie cherries, red plums and baking spices. Discreetly concentrated flavors of red cherries and berries with a hint of baking spice, offering hi-tone acidity and mild tannins, leaving a memorable fruit-filled impression on the finish. Lighter weighted than the 2009 bottling but offering more transparency, finesse and charm. Very good (+).*



2010 Evesham Wood Temperance Hill Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Pinot Noir

13.0% alc., 100 cases, \$30. Release November 2012. Retro label. From a block planted in 1982. Aged in neutral barrels. • *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Lovely nose, smelling of a field replete with spring flowers, and a medley of well-spiced stone fruits. Luscious core of dark red cherries with subtle cedary oak flavors folded in nicely. A special wine that is quite approachable now. Very good (+).*



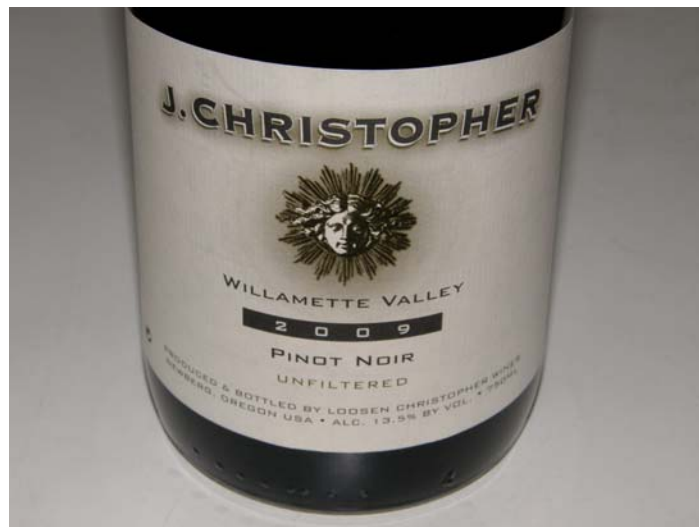
2009 Gresser Vineyard Vineyard Select Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

14.1% alc., 246 cases, \$24. UCD 29, Dijon 113 and 115 clones. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels. • *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with the aroma of fresh dark red pie cherries. Delicious medium-weight dark red berry and black cherry flavors caressed by ripe tannins. Elegant with a very soft mouth feel and aromatic persistence on the long and flamboyant finish. An exceptional wine at this price point.*



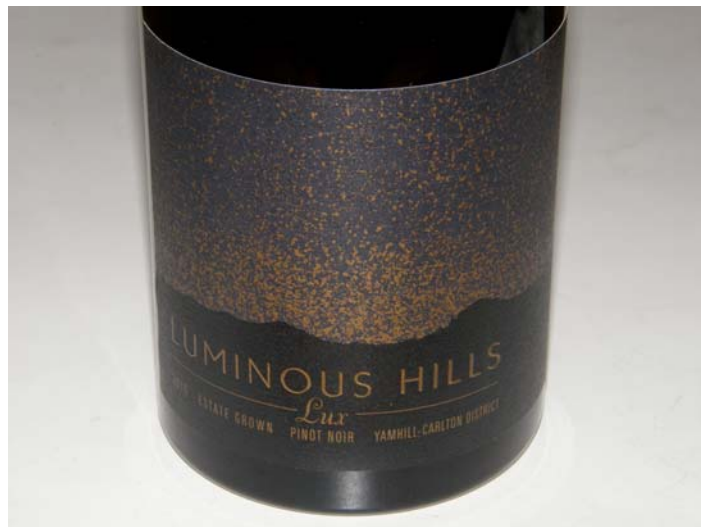
2009 J. Christopher Dundee Hills Cuvée Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

13.5% alc., 450 cases, \$35. A barrel selection from several vineyards including Bella Vida, Baptista, Maresh, Charlie's, Abbey Ridge and Le Pavillon. Unfiltered. • *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Very shy initially, but opens beautifully over time in the glass revealing aromas of dark red and purple fruits with wood spice and subtle oak vanillin. Earthy and charming, with a medium weight core of darker Bing cherry and raspberry flavors perfectly accented by oak notes of spice and anise, and displaying a fancy thrust of pure fruit on the finish. Light on its feet and very accommodating.*



2010 Luminous Hills Lux Estate Grown Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

13.5% alc., 112 cases, \$35. Released February 15, 2012. Exclusively Pommard and 777 that combines dark fruited notes from the Pommard on lower elevation sedimentary soil coupled with the intense redder fruits of the 777 on the upper elevation Jory soil. The two clones were co-fermented. Aged in 23% new French oak barrels. • *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Hi-tone and pure aromas of black cherries and black raspberries. Delicious mid palate fruit offering a mélange of dark red and black berries, stone fruits and black grapes. Supple tannins make for easy drinking now. Impeccable balance and very polished. Hard to top the Estate Grown bottling, but this one does with slightly more flavor and length. Crazy good at a modest price.*



2009 Maysara Estate Cuvée McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

13.8% alc., 919 cases, \$32, screw cap. Clones 113, 114, 667, 777 and Pommard. Aged 12 months in 30% new French oak barrels. • *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Very appealing aromas evolve with conviction on the nose which shows a perfume of dark red cherries and berries, dried herbs and complimentary oak. Mid weight flavors of perfectly ripe Bing cherries and raspberries wrapped in ripe fruit tannins with some persistence on the juicy finish. A refined and well-rounded wine that is very enjoyable.*



2010 Seven of Hearts Armstrong Vineyard Ribbon Ridge Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5%alc., 98 cases, \$35. Released March 15, 2012. Vineyard farmed by owners Dough and Michelle Ackerman. 50% Pommard and 50% 666 with 67% whole cluster fermentation. • *Moderately light reddish-purple hue in the glass. Very bright and enticing aromas of fresh berries and rose petals. Big-boned core of purple and black berries and black plum with a subtle oak underpinning. The fruit is overshadowed by the prodigious tannins now, but there is enough fruit presence to grab your attention. More body and fruit than the Lia's. Needs more time in the cellar, but very promising. Very good (+).*



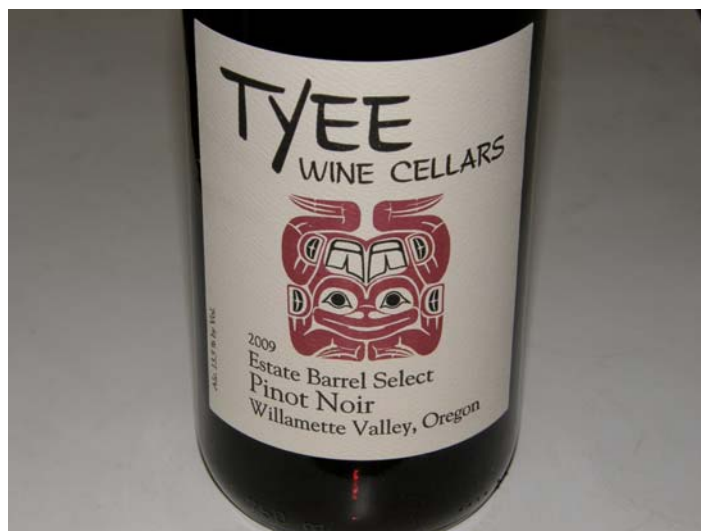
2009 Siltstone Guadalupe Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

13.9% alc., 230 cases, \$30. Vineyard owners are Jim Stonebridge and Kathleen Boeve and the vineyard is managed by Joel Myers of Vinetenders whose family produces this wine. • *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Intense and very appealing aromas of black cherries, black raspberries, allalieberries and dark chocolate. Soft, smooth and ambrosial, with middleweight flavors of well-ripened dark cherry and berry fruits with complimentary accents of Asian 5-spice, cinnamon and toasty oak. Balanced, ripe tannins and a powerful, lasting finish complete the picture. I have been very impressed by this wine over the past three vintages. It seems to fly under the radar, yet is deserving of a bigger audience. Remarkably, the winery is still offering the 2007 and 2008 vintages of this superb wine. If you want a wine that typifies the Dundee Hills, this would be an excellent choice.*



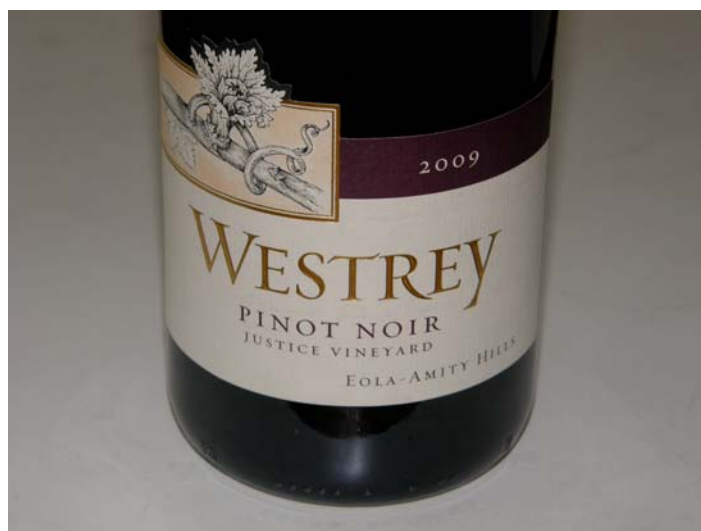
2009 Tye Wine Cellars Estate Barrel Select Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

13.5% alc., \$34.99. • *Moderately light reddish-purple robe. Reserved but enticing aromas of a bowl of crushed dark red cherries, plums and berries. A very polished wine with grace and elegance, yet offering a substantial rush of sinfully delicious and perfectly ripe dark red cherries and berries that persist on the crisp and juicy finish. Combines power with finesse. Youthful, and will benefit from more time in the cellar. Not the blockbuster that the 2008 vintage was, but very representative of the vintage.*



2009 Westrey Justice Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

13.5% alc., 321 cases, \$26. From a vineyard adjacent Bethel Heights Vineyard. Dijon 667 and 777 clones. 27% whole cluster. Aged in about 30% new French oak barrels. • *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Enchanting perfume of fresh dark raspberry glaze with a lovely rose petal garnish. Vivid, discreetly concentrated core of an array of spicy berry fruits supported by ripe, well-integrated tannins, finishing with a long and graceful finish. Thoroughly pleasing.*



2011 Willful Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., 370 cases, \$35. Released September 2012. First vintage from a 7-acre estate, densely planted, vineyard of 12 clones. 100% de-stemmed. 2-week cold soak. Native fermentations and minimal use of new French oak. • *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Perfectly ripe black cherries and cranberries are the theme here. Aromatically fresh and well-perceived on the palate, with a generous fruit core and a refreshing spark of lemon peel acidity on the finish. This wine grows on you over time in the glass. The firm tannins are supportive rather than dominating, but will benefit from some time in the cellar. Still solid the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Very good.*



2012 Oregon Value Priced Pinot Noirs Honorable Mention

The following value priced Pinot Noir wines are often widely distributed in wine retail and supermarket stores. They are often discounted below the listed prices. Pinot Noir priced at \$50 or more has often been decried as the “dead zone” because the poor economy in recent years has made it more difficult to sell wines in this price category. The wines listed below, however, can be considered to be in the “fun zone” and drinking these wines can make you feel good about skirting a punishing economy. All these wines received the Value icon award.

2010 Kudos Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$15

2010 Plowbuster Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$20

2010 Seven of Hearts Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$20

2010 Kramer Vineyards Estate Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$20

2010 Kudos Reserve Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$20

2010 Longplay Lia’s Vineyard Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$20

2010 Cardwell Hill Cellars Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$24

2009 Kramer Vineyards Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Brut Sparkling Wine \$24

2010 Ponzi Vineyards Tavola Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$25

2010 St. Innocent Temperance Hill Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$28

2008 Siltstone Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$28

2010 Elk Cove Vineyards Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$29

2008 Youngberg Hill Vineyards Natasha McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$30

2010 St. Innocent Zenith Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$30

2010 Kudos Zena Crown Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$30

2010 Purple Hands Oregon Pinot Noir \$30

2010 Haden Fig Cancilla Vineyard Barrel Select Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$30

2010 Haden Fig Bjornson Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$30

2010 White Rose Estate Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$30

2010 Bethel Heights Black Label Estate Grown Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$32

2010 Et Fille Heredity Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$34

2010 Luminous Hills Estate Grown Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$35

2010 Cooper Mountain Vineyards “Life” Willamette Valley Organic Wine \$35

2010 Seven of Hearts Lia’s Vineyard Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$35

2010 Evesham Wood Le Puits Sec Eola-Amity Hills Pinot Noir \$35

2010 J. Christopher Dundee Hills Cuvée Terroir Series Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$35

2010 Roots Johnson Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$35

2010 Roots Estate Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$35

Chardonnay All-Americans

2011 Anam Cara Cellars Nicholas Estate Chehalem Mountains Chardonnay

13.5% alc., \$26, screwcap. Inaugural Chardonnay from Anam Cara. Estate Dijon clone grapes. Fermented 70% in neutral oak and 30% in stainless steel. · *Light straw color in the glass. A ravishing wine with bright aromas of white peach, passion fruit, lemon curd, apple cider and fir tree. Delicious, fresh, crisp and lively, with flavors of nectarine, baked apple, lemon, and a little nuttiness and minerality. The oak is kept under wraps, the texture is seamless, and the finish is long and refreshing. One of the best Oregon Chardonnays I have had in my recent memory.*



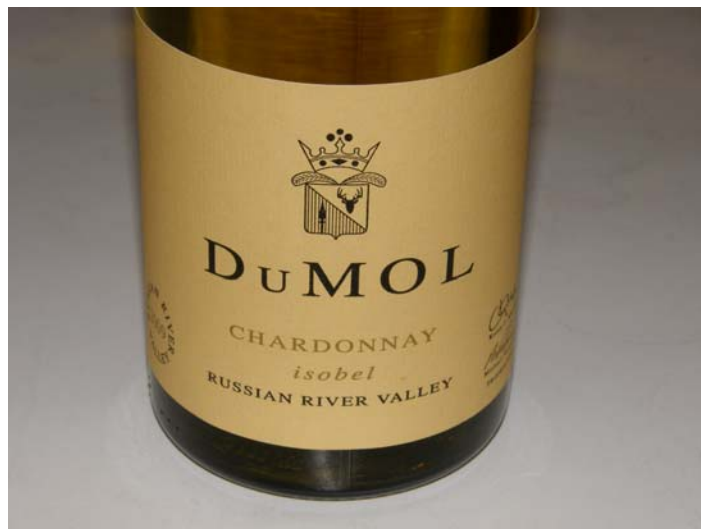
2010 Briceland Vineyards Lolonis Vineyard Mendocino County Chardonnay

Table wine, \$21. Vinified from certified organically grown grapes. · *Pale straw color in the glass. Fresh aromas of rocky stream, lemon curd and buttered brioche. Slightly creamy on the palate with restrained but satisfying flavors of pears, white peach and citrus complimented by subtle oak. Flows off the back of the palate like a silk sheet in retreat. Beautifully crafted.*



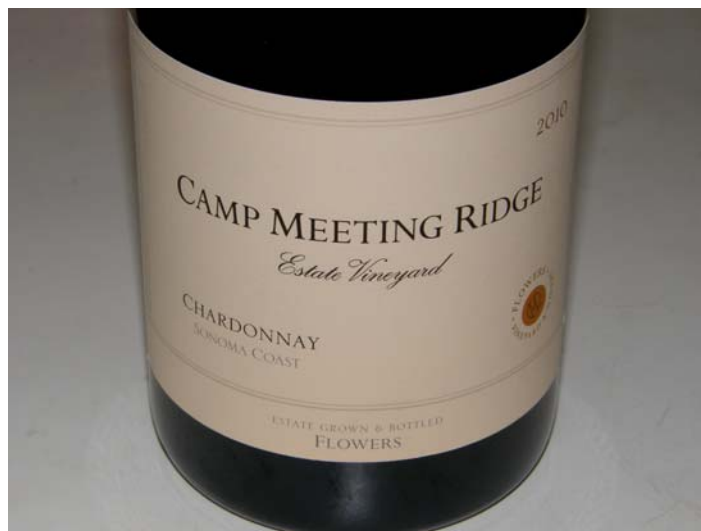
2009 DuMOL isobel Russian River Valley Chardonnay

14.3% alc., 1,174 cases, \$60. Sourced from old-vine Charles Heintz Vineyard in the Green Valley. Aged 18 months sur lie. · *Light golden straw color in the glass. Aromas of quince, lychee, baked apple, flint, and subtle oak-driven scents of buttered popcorn and toffee. Delicious flavors of apple pan dowdy, honey, citrus and toffee with a slight tropical fruit riff offered in a discreet and charming style. Impressive finishing show for a Chardonnay. Still great two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. I had a second bottle at a restaurant a week later with lunch and it was even better accompanied by a persimmon-studded very lightly dressed salad. I have had more great Chardonnay drinking experiences from Charles Heintz Vineyard than any other vineyard in California.*



2010 Flowers Camp Meeting Ridge Sonoma Coast Chardonnay

13.5% alc., \$70. An estate vineyard situated at 1200 to 1400 feet elevation, planted to Hyde, Old Wente and Dijon 95 clones. Yields of 1.25 tons per acre. Barrel fermented in 64% new French oak barrels for 14 months. · *Moderate straw color in the glass. Alluring aromas of baked pear, roasted nuts, crème brûlée and milk chocolate. Plenty of flavor intensity including juicy lemon and apple with hints of buttered brioche and sweet oak. An exceptional wine with very slight dry tannins, lively acidity, and an appealing lemon drop finish.*



2010 Fogdog Sonoma Coast Chardonnay

13.5% alc., pH 3.38, TA 0.75, 1,470 cases, \$35. Sourced from independent growers (67%) and Freestone estate vineyards (33%). Aged 8 months in 20% new and 7% two to three-year old French oak barrels. · *Light yellow in color and slightly cloudy. Uplifting aromas of lemon curd, pomelo and baked apple. Delicious flavors of lemon tart, white pear and subtle oak with bright acidity driving the wine. Finishes soft and creamy. A very classy wine at this price point.*



2010 La Follette Sangiacomo Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay

14.2% alc., pH 3.57, TA 0.63, 560 cases, \$38. From the cold climate Petaluma Gap. Planted in 1998, the Roberts Road block is rooted in the alluvial soils of Copeland Creek with tracks of gravel. Predominantly Old Wente selection. Made in a Burgundian reductive style with native yeasts. Aged 10 months sur lie with gentle stirring of the barrels. · *Light straw color in the glass. Complex perfume of lemon curd, petrichor, Asian pear, ripe pineapple, roasted hazelnuts, and subtle oak. Delicious flavors of baked pear, citrus, and green apple, with perfectly integrated and supportive oak. Juicy and spirited, making you reach for another sip. La Follette is a master of Chardonnay.*



2010 Lucia Santa Lucia Highlands Chardonnay

14.1% alc., \$40. Sourced from three small blocks at Pisoni Vineyards and vinified by Jeff Pisoni. Few wine connoisseurs are aware of the tiny amount of Chardonnay on the Pisoni property that was originally planted in 1982. · Light straw color in the glass. Aromas and flavors of baked pear, crème brûlée, pineapple and lemony citrus. A moderately rich style made with full malolactic barrel fermentation and barrel aging sur lie. Fresh, satisfying and thoroughly user friendly, displaying perfect integration of oak and overall impeccable balance. One of my favorite California Chardonnays and a great value.



2010 Patz & Hall Hudson Vineyard Napa Carneros Chardonnay

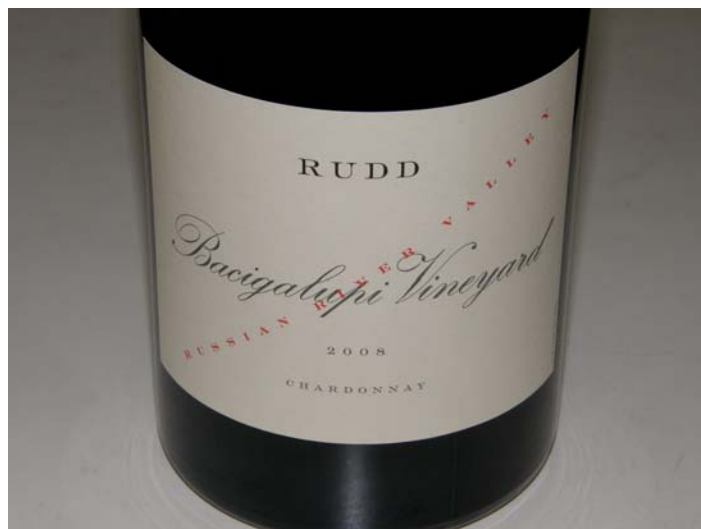
14.2% alc., 454 cases, \$55. Hudson Vineyard was founded in the 1980s by Lee Hudson and is considered one of the grand cru sites in Carneros. Sourced from a 4-acre block that is planted to the Hudson- Wente selection. Whole cluster pressed, indigenous fermentations, aged sur lie with weekly stirring, 100% malolactic fermentation in barrel, aged in 60% new French oak barrels, and bottled without filtration. · *Light straw color in the glass. The wine draws you in with appealing aromas of honey, lemon curd, roasted almonds and toasty oak. Moderately rich on the attack with luscious flavors of baked pear, lemon peel, and toffee, finishing soft and comforting with a refreshing brightness due to harmonious citrus-driven acidity. Choose any superlative you want. A masterpiece and one of the greatest California Chardonnays I have tasted this year.*



2008 Rudd Bacigalupi Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay

14.6% alc., \$75. This Oakville Estate winery is the only winery to produce a wine from the original 65-year-old Paris Tasting Block at Bacigalupi Vineyard. It is the only Rudd wine made from purchased fruit. This release is the ninth vintage. Each year the fruit production of this vineyard decreases due to the age of the vines. Barrel-fermented with 100% MLF. · *Light straw color with mild haze (unfiltered). Invigorating aromas of lemon curd, baked pear, oak, and a hint of butter and grapefruit. Delicious flavors of white peach, pear, and complimentary toasty oak with an undertone of minerality and a riff of lemon on the lengthy finish. The creamy texture adds appeal. A spectacular offering made from vines of great historical significance that will please any Chardonnay connoisseur.*

Note: Beginning with the 2009 vintage, this wine is bottled under the Edge Hill label by Rudd. Edge Hill was considered one of the finest wine estates in Napa Valley until it ceased production in 1907. Inspired by this legacy, Leslie Rudd has directed a restoration of this historic property and now handcrafts a limited production of select wines using exceptional grapes from heritage vineyard sites. The website is www.edgehill.com.



2010 Sea Smoke Sta. Rita Hills Chardonnay

14.6% alc., pH 3.37, TA 0.68, \$59. Released October 2012. Exclusively Sea Smoke Estate Vineyard. Predominantly Wente clone with smaller amounts of Dijon clones 76, 95 and 96. Aged 16 months in 55% new French oak barrels. · *Light straw color and clear in the glass. A majestic, full-on California style Chardonnay. Aromas of lemon curd, butter brickle, and roasted nuts. Richly flavored with notes of citrus, baked pear, and toasty oak complimented by clean, crisp acidity. Sta. Rita Hills is not just Pinot Noir country, for its Chardonnays typically offer incredibly lush, chewy, hi-tone fruit backed by generous, defining acidity. For those who relish this style of Chardonnay, it doesn't get any better.*



2010 Ulises Valdez U.V. El Diablo Vineyard Russian River Valley Chardonnay

14.7% alc., \$50. Barrel fermented, 100% MLF. - *Light straw color with slight haze (unfiltered) in the glass. Aromatically pleasing with notes of yeast, buttered popcorn, white peach and citrus peel. Very tasty core of baked pear, apple, pie crust and tropical fruit flavors with complimentary oak. Crisp and lively with a hint of tannin and a dry finish. A dead wringer for one of Aubert's top Chardonnays. From Valdez Family Winery.*



Also worthy:

2011 Scribe Carneros Chardonnay \$38

2010 Olivia Brion Heron Lake Vineyard Wild Horse Valley Chardonnay \$40

2010 Patz & Hall Hyde Vineyard Carneros Chardonnay \$55

2010 Sonoma-Loeb Envoy Russian River Valley Chardonnay \$40

2009 Hirsch Vineyards Sonoma Coast Chardonnay \$75

2009 La Follette Manchester Ridge Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Chardonnay \$48

2007 Peirson Meyer Charles Heintz Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$55

Good values:

2011 Briceland Vineyards Humboldt County Chardonnay \$21

2011 Crossbarn by Paul Hobbs Sonoma Coast Chardonnay \$25

2010 Hahn Estate SLH Santa Lucia Highlands Chardonnay \$25

2010 Envolve Carneros Chardonnay \$25

2010 J. Lohr Arroyo Vista Vineyard Series Arroyo Seco Chardonnay \$25

2010 Gundlach Bundschu Estate Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay \$27

2010 Stoller Family Estate Reserve Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Chardonnay \$28

2010 Patz & Hall Sonoma Coast Chardonnay \$35

Little All-Americans: Buy My Wine!

Everyone knows of the established Pinot Noir specialists such as Kosta Browne, J. Rochioli, and Ponzi Vineyards, or iconic wineries such as The Eyrie Vineyards, Calera Wine Co., and Merry Edwards, but what about the little guys, the boutique producers with little or no marketing budget, yet turn out small lots of original, hand-crafted Pinot Noir wines. These wineries need your support for they have very little outlet for representation or notoriety. Distributors treat them like pariahs, seeing little profit in extending a hand to bring their wines to the marketplace. To be honest, some of these tiny producers enter the wine business with little or no experience in marketing. The fact is, Pinot Noir is a lot easier to make than to sell. In the pages of this issue, I have brought to your attention a number of these small-scale, independent producers. Here is a list of wineries that want your business and deserve your attention. There are many more to be discovered.

OREGON

Amalie Robert Estate
Anam Cara Cellars
Andrew Rich
Beckham Estate Vineyard
Big Table Farm
Boedecker Cellars
Brittain Vineyards
Carabella Vineyard
Coelho Winery
Coeur De Terre Vineyard
Cornerstone and Stepping Stone Cellars
Dion Vineyard
Et Fille
Ghost Hill Cellars
Gresser Vineyard
Haden Fig
HillCrest Vineyard
Illahé Vineyards & Winery
IOTA Cellars
Kelley Fox Wines
Kramer Vineyards
Lenné Estate
Longplay
Luminous Hills & Seven of Hearts
Lumos Wine Company
Matello
Phelps Creek Vineyards
Privé Vineyard
ROCO Winery
Roots Wines & Vineyard
Saffron Fields Vineyard
Seufert Winery
Siltstone Wines
Styring Vineyards
Tendrill Wine Cellars
Tyee Wine Cellars
Utopia Vineyard
Westrey Wine Company
Wahle Vineyards & Cellars
White Rose Estate
Willful Wine Co.
Youngberg Hill

CALIFORNIA

**Alta Maria Winery & Vineyards
Anthill Farms
A.P. Vin
Asuncion Ridge Vineyards
Auben Cellars
B. Kosuge Wines
Bailiwick
Balo Vineyards
Baxter Winery
Berridge Wine Company
Big Basin Vineyards
Bjornstad Cellars
Black Kite
Briceland Vineyards
Brogan Cellars
Bruliam Wines
Cabot Vineyards
Campesino Cellars
Canihan Family Cellars
Castalia
Chanin Wine Company
Cherry Pie
Clary Ranch
Claudia Springs Winery
Clos Saron
Clouds Rest Vineyards
Coho
Couloir
Derby Wine Estates
Dragonette
Drew Family Cellars
Dubakella
Dunstan Wines
Elke Vineyards
Emtu Estate Wines
Fogline Vineyards
Foursight Wines
Fрати Horn Wines
Fulcrum
Furthermore Wines
George
Gracianna
Grey Stack Cellars
Gros Ventre Cellars
Gypsy Canyon
Halleck Vineyard
Harmonique
Harrington Wine
Heart O' The Mountain
Heintz Ranch Vineyards & Winery
Hilliard Bruce Vineyards
Hug Cellars
John Tyler Wines
Joseph Jewell
Kanzler Vineyards
Kastania Vineyards
Keefer Ranch
Kendric Vineyards**

**Knez Winery
Kori Wines
Kutch Wines
LaRue
Lattanzio
Londer Vineyards
Loos Family Winery
Lula Cellars
Luminesce Wine
Masut Vineyard & Winery
McIntyre Vineyards
McNeil & Sons
McHenry Vineyard
Michaud Vineyard
Muns Vineyard
Neely/Varner
Odanata Wines
Olivia Brion
Olson Ogden
Pacific Ridge Vineyards
Paul Mathew Vineyards
Pey-Marin
POE
Porter Creek
Prodigal Wines
RN Estate
Road 31 Wine Co.
Salamandre Wine Cellars
Samsara
Sandler Wine Company
Scherrer Wine Co.
School House
Seagrape Wine Company
Shandel's Oppenlander Vineyard
Sinor-LaVallee
Skewis Wines
Soliste
Sonria Wines
SPELL
St. Rose Vineyard & Winery
Stomping Girl Wines
Suacci Carciere Wines
Talisman
Tensley/Lea
Tessier Winery
Tondre Wines
Toretti's Family Vineyard
Valdez Family Winery
Valerie's Vineyard
Vaughn Duffy Wines
Vivier Wines
Waits-Mast Family Cellars
Waxwing Wine Cellars
WesMar
Willowbrook Cellars
Woodenhead
Wren Hop Vineyards
Zepaltas Wines
Zotovich Cellars**

Notable Quotes in 2012

"It's Pinot. It's the ultimate high-IQ red, smoothed into the contours of a Cleopatra."
Andrew Jefford, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 36

"It's hard to overstate Burt Williams's influence: since its creation, Williams Selyem has been the mothership of Sonoma Pinot Noir."
Jan McInerney, *WSJ* December 1-2

"We don't make Pinot Noir, we make Burgundy!"
Aubert de Villaine, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti

"No grape variety anywhere demands, as if by divine right, a higher out-of-the-gate asking price than Pinot. It has the lordly imprimatur of Burgundy. And acolytes insist that Pinot Noir plays by a different set of rules, requiring a kind of obeisance bestowed on no other grape variety."
Matt Kramer, *Wine Spectator* May 31

"Perhaps the sheer struggle of trying to describe the unique nature of great Burgundy is what has driven so many winemakers to try to emulate it."
Benjamin Lewin MW

"You cannot turn an ordinary wine into an expensive wine by just exposing it to oak."
Dr. Anita Oberholster, UC Davis extension enologist, *Wine Business Monthly* December 12

"For the past 15 years, much of the colorful mosaic that is California wine has been lost in an obsession with new-oaky, high-alcohol, heavily manipulated wines that have garnered rave reviews and ridiculously high prices in many corners of the wine world but left a growing number of wine lovers utterly cold and mystified about the praise these behemoths have received."
John Oilman, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 35

"I would like to see the compulsory labeling of fining, filtration, cold stabilization, any processing - in addition, of course, to an ingredient list."
Olivier Humbrecht, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 38

"45% of premium California wines are alcohol adjusted either by reverse osmosis or by the spinning cone."
Clark Smith, Vinovation

"Until the world invents a better grape or a useful yeast that ferments great wines at less than normal conversion rates or technology that reduces alcohol without changing body, flavor or balance, we are stuck with that great bugaboo called moderation."
Charles Oiken

"A wide range of alcohol levels in wine is a cause for celebration and enjoyment, not censoriousness or hang wringing."
Andrew Jefford, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 36

"It is alcohol that gives wine an emotional dimension or force that enables us not just to perceive wine's beauty but to feel it, to be moved by it. You could say that alcohol humanizes wine."
Andrew Jefford, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 36

"A wine journalist once said to me that she sometimes wished she could spend the whole of waking consciousness in the state of mind induced by exactly one glass of wine."
Stuart Watton, *The Journal of Fine Wine* Issue 38

"The score and tasting note delivered as an absolute, without context, is less fashionable than telling a wine's story."
Talia Baiocchi

“Wine ratings are most often presented via scales that imply scientific precision, however that they are measuring something for which we have no scientifically reliable calibration: people sense (mostly) qualitative aspects of wine.

Joe Roberts, *1 Wine Dude*

“People can say what they like (or don't like) about scores. But without the accompanying words - and not just any words, but romantic ones - nobody dreams. And without dreams, fine wine loses its grip. Of this I am certain.”

Matt Kramer, *Wine Spectator* January 31-February 29

“The American wine consumer's palate is maturing, and now there is greater interest in more subtle wines and more complex wine-drinking experiences.”

Jasmine Hirsch, *Hirsch Vineyards*

“Americans are coming to realize that fine wines don't necessarily have to blow you over by force of oaked fruit and alcohol, or pack the most impact in a blind tasting. Big oaky wines are the JR Ewings of the wine world: they belong to a richer, more arrogant, self-assured era that is eons away from today.”

Neil Empson, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 37

“No one can continue to consume for any length of time wines that are 'cartoons': that is, wines that in their exaggerated form are exhausting to drink. After all, wine is at its best when married to cuisine. Wines that are balanced, complex and subtle will always be appreciated.”

Neal Rosenthal, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 37

“Figures widely quoted suggest that of the estimated 800 or so volatile flavor compounds found in wine, at least 400 are produced by yeasts.”

Jamie Goode & Sam Harrup MW, *Authentic Wine*

“Consumers need to be held to the same high standards as great producers. We need to take the time to find out who is uncompromising when making their wines. Once we identify these winemakers, we need to buy their wine and pony up the amount of money they need to stay in business. Consumers with a true appreciation for the craft of fine winemaking need to do it the right way.”

Jake Lorenzo, *Wine Business Monthly* February 12

“Those who seek to do less winemaking do seem to accomplish more in the result.”

Matt Kramer

“These days, anybody with half a brain and a fast internet connection can figure out how to make good, solid, market-quality wine.”

Tim Patterson, *Wines & Vines* September

“No matter how successfully winemakers think they have represented their style, some people aren't going to like it. If the style is not one of my favorites, I hope I have the experience and generosity to appreciate what the winemaker set out to accomplish.

Jake Lorenzo, *Wine Business Monthly* June

“The great wines you have to give them a piece of yourself. You have to really study them, and it's a physical exercise. Wine is meant to be tasted before it is consumed. It's really a science of taking small sips and chewing it like food. You process everything. You smell it like a lover, and taste it when it's gone.”

John Kapon, *Wine Spectator* June 30

“Wines are little like women in that it's often the imperfections that fascinate.”

Sam Neill, actor, *Two Paddocks*, Central Otago

“The point is that throughout history, the act of consuming wine has essentially been one of uncritical enjoyment. It's a simple pleasure, first and foremost, the beverage equivalent of bread on the table.”

Eric Asimov, *How to Love Wine*

“This is one reason why there is now so much interest in whole-bunch fermentation - it is a technique for making more expressive, more elegant red wines, even from sites not known for those qualities.”

Jamie Goode, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 37

“In Burgundy at the moment there is a tendency to move toward stems. I can see two main reasons for this. One is that Henri Mayer, who hated stems, is dead. And the other is that with climate change, the stems are more often riper than they used to be.”

Jasper Morris MW, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 37

“There are very few people in the world who actually know what old wine tastes like.”

John Tilson

“We consumers should support wines made from old vines as a means of protecting the genetic material the plants harbor and ensuring these sites remain vineyards well into the future.”

Joe Czerwinski

“Nobody is getting rich making wine in Oregon.”

Bruce Schoenfeld, *The Journal of Fine Wine* Issue 36

“Bottle variation is the wine industry’s elephant in the room”

James Cabbini, CUBE Communications

“The fact that our experience of wine can differ from day to day, or even from hour to hour, should help us remain humble in the face of wine.”

Jamie Goode, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 38

“Biodynamics has become shorthand for ‘I care more about my vineyard,’ and therefore a powerful marketing tool.”

Marco Pisanella, “*Uncorked*”

“So, at present there is no evidence, except for the anecdotal observations of the producers themselves, to support the assertion that there is any benefit from advancing from organic to biodynamic viticulture.”

Benjamin Lewin MW, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 38

“Personally, I am inclined to the view that it is the enormous care and attention that the producers devote to their vineyards that is responsible for their success, and that they would have exactly the same success if all the biodynamic preps were replaced with distilled water.”

Benjamin Lewin MW, *The World of Fine Wine* Issue 38

“Rudolf Steiner is mistakenly believed to be dead by many people. Steiner recently emerged from the gigantic cow horn he’d been buried in 50 years ago and is actually consulting for many wineries and vineyards.”

Ron Washam HMW

“Darling....Be natural, take your clothes off! Show me your terroir.”

Guillaume Jordan

“There will always be wine, and there will always be writing. But now they’re seen together about as often as sommeliers and humility.”

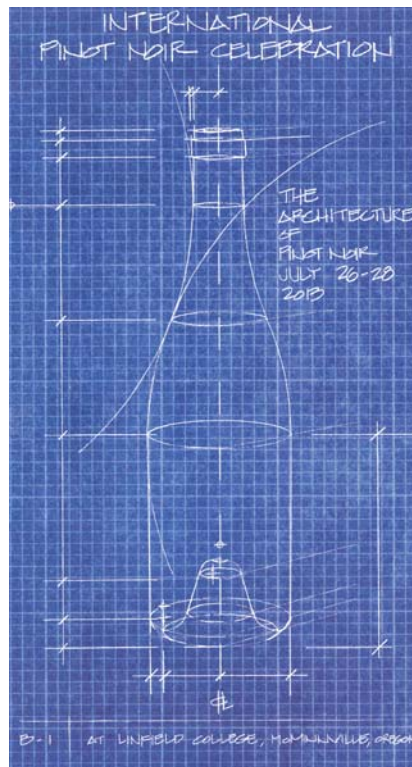
Ron Washam HMW, HoseMaster of Wine™

Pinot Briefs

‘Sideways’ Moves to La Jolla Rex Pickett’s adaptation of his bestselling novel ‘Sideways’ that debuted in May in Santa Monica, California, is moving to the La Jolla Playhouse beginning in July 2013. The play recently ended a successful run in Santa Monica on November 17, 2012.

Watch Your Driving if Drinking over Holidays Herbert Moskowitz, an experimental psychologist who did extensive research on the effects of alcohol and drugs on driving, recently died at the age of 87 according to a report in the *Los Angeles Times* (December 17, 2012). The article noted the following. “He was an advocate of setting lower legal limits for intoxicated driving and his efforts resulted in the standard for driving under the influence, currently 0.08% blood alcohol in most states. His research found that one standard drink could significantly change brain function, increase the risk of a crash, and the mental skills needed to drive began to degrade at blood alcohol levels below 0.05%.”

Early IPNC 2013 Information The theme of next year’s International Pinot Noir Celebration, July 26-28, 2013, is “The Architecture of Pinot Noir.” Presenters will be Eric Asimov and Terry Theise. Early bird pricing ends December 31 and local accommodations are already filling up fast. Visit www.ipnc.org.



Wine Owes Plenty to the Hornet The University of Florence in Italy reported a study that showed the complexity of some of the world’s finest wines were due to the European hornet which spreads the yeast, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, to grapes while on the vine.

Record 2011 Production & Sales in Oregon OregonLive.com reported that Oregon’s commercial wine industry outdistanced the rest of the United States in sales. For the first time in nearly 50 years, the \$2.7 billion industry topped the two million case mark according to the 2011 Oregon Winery Census Report released by Southern Oregon University’s Southern Oregon Research Center. Total case sales were 2.2 million, topping the prior record of 1.93 million set in 2010. Overall sales increased 9 percent in both volume and revenue (far outpacing the 2 percent growth rate for wine sales national and the 5.6 percent growth rate in California). Oregon’s wineries reach 463 in number in 2011, a significant increase from 419 reported in 2010. The greatest number of new wineries appeared along the Columbia River east of Portland.

Total vineyard acreage in Oregon exceeded 20,000 for the first time, and produced a record harvest of 42,033 tons.

Pinot Noir Lineage According to the new book, *Wine Grapes*, Pinot Noir is either the child or parent of Savagnin and mated with Gouais Blanc to produce Aligoté, Chardonnay, Gamay, Melon and other varieties. If Pinot Noir is the father of Savagnin rather than the child, Pinot Noir would be the great grandparent of Cabernet Sauvignon. It also appears that Pinot Noir is a great grandparent to Syrah as a result of another offshoot of the family tree.

Frank Family Vineyards Receives Accolade *Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wine* published by Charles Olken, named Frank Family Vineyards "Winery of the Year." This year marks the 20th anniversary of the winery, owned by Rich Frank. The winemaker since 2002 has been Todd Graff. The winery has over 250 acres of vineyards in Napa Valley and is most known for Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay. The past few vintages of Pinot Noir have also been stellar. Frank Family Vineyards wines are distributed in all 50 states and online at www.frankfamilyvineyards.com.

8th Annual Pigs & Pinot Weekend Chef Charlie Palmer is bringing together notable chef pork authorities and wine elites from around the country to participate in this annual event held at Hotel Healdsburg. Participating chefs this year include Elizabeth Falkner (Krescendo), Dean Fearing (Fearing's Restaurant), Jose Garces (Garces Group) and Craig Stoll (Delfina Restaurant Group). Gala dinner winemakers are Brian Maloney (De Loach Vineyards), Caroline Parent (Domaine A.F. Gros), Michael Browne (Kosta Browne), Lee Martinelli (Martinelli Winery) and Victor Gallegos (Sea Smoke). All net proceeds benefit Share Our Strength® and local scholarships and charities. To view the full line up of the March 22-23, 2013 weekend events visit www.hotelhealdsburg.com.



Hospices de Beaune Smashes Records According to *The Telegraph* (December 19, 2012), the auction, now in its 152th year, saw the price of a bottle of Burgundy increase by more than 54 percent compared to last year. Total sale was 5.9 million euros. The increase was largely attributable to speculation by wealthy Asian buyers. China is now Burgundy's fourth largest export market behind Japan, Britain and the United States, but the sales to China are still very small compared to the United States. Chinese travelers are showing up in Burgundy in small groups and minibuses. They only buy the expensive stuff.

La Paulée de New York Daniel Johnnes presents this event at The Metropolitan Pavilion on March 6, 7, 8 & 9, 2013. The cuisine of Daniel Boulud, Daniel Humm, Cesar Ramirez and Michel Troisgros will be featured. This event has been described as "the greatest Bacchanalia on the face of the earth." Growers include all the big names in Burgundy such as Maison Joseph Drouhin, Domaine Dujac, Domaine Fourrier, Domaine des Comtes Lafon, Domaine Laflaive, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti and Domaine Georges Roumier. The wines of the Hospices de Beaune and the village of Meursault will also be presented. For information, visit www.lapaulee.com.



Vintner's New Year's Eve 2012

The harvest was generous
There was plenty of sun
Total production was
Up by a ton

The wine was all bundled
Up snug in French oak
Fermentation awakened
Amid memories of cold soak

Who will now buy it?
And how will it be priced?
Will Parker anoint it?
Will the Prince be enticed?

Well, wait until 2013
You've earned a respite
A cool glass of Pinot
And to all, a happy New Year's night

Best wishes for the New Year and many sweet Pinot dreams

Prince & Princess