



# PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

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If you drink no  
Noir, you Pinot  
Noir

## Pinot Postscript

When I “retired” on August 1, I continued to receive wines for review. It was challenging to turn off the sample spigot. This postscript includes reviews of wines received “post-retirement.”

### Big Table Farm, Gaston, OR

**2017 Big Table Farm Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.8% alc., 239 cases, \$62 (\$150 magnum). Released September 2, 2019. Comprised of four vineyards. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Attractive nose with scents of muddled black cherry, spice, rose and woodland. Luscious black cherry flavor along with hints of black raspberry, floral infusion, shaved oak and smoke. Beautifully balanced and welcoming with a satisfying finish. 91.*

**2017 Big Table Farm Sunnyside Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., 245 cases, \$62 (\$150 magnum). Released September 2, 2019. Vineyard is located just south of Salem. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Shy but pleasant aromas of cherry pie, spice and earthy flora. Light to mid weight in style, but packed with delicious spiced cherry goodness., Sleek and refined, with good harmony, taking on more appeal over time in the glass. This vineyard is usually my favorite in the Big Table stable. 93.*

**2017 Big Table Farm Cattrall Brothers Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 12.6% alc., 136 cases, \$62 (\$150 magnum). Released September 2, 2019. Certified organic vineyard at 700 feet elevation with direct exposure to the Van Duzer corridor winds. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The complex nose offers aromas of cherry, red berry, exotic spices, burnt tobacco and smoke. Silky in the mouth in a feminine style, with a core of red cherry fruit framed by very fine tannins. Delicate and slightly smoke with an appealing but modest finish. 90.*

**2017 Big Table Farm Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Chardonnay** 13.1% alc., 87 cases, \$48. Released September 2, 2019. Comprised of several sites in this AVA. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light golden yellow color in the glass. Engaging aromas of lemon and seasoned oak. Crisp and vibrant, with a core of bright citrus flavors underlain with a compliment of oak. Invigorating, with a quenching citrus-driven finish. 93.*

**2017 Big Table Farm Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Chardonnay** 13.1% alc., 85 cases, \$48. Released September 2, 2019. *Light apricot color in the glass. Aromas arrive over time in the glass to include lemon rind, yellow peach, yellow apple, pear and nuts. Sleek and gracious, with a satiny mouthfeel, offering flavors of apricot and yellow peach. A bit unusual but satisfying. 89.*

### Dutton Estate Winery, Sebastopol, CA


**2017 Dutton Estate Manzana Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** 14.8% alc., pH 3.56, TA 0.59. 231 cases, \$65. Released September 2019. Dry-farmed vineyard planted in Goldridge sandy loam soil. Harvest Brix 25.3° and 24.0°. Dijon 115 and “828.” 100% de-stemmed, 5-day cold soak, aged in French oak barrels, 45% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Aromas of dark red and purple grapes and cut wood. Very ripe fruited in character but not in the compote range, with mid weight flavors of black cherry and blackberry framed by nutty oak. Silky in texture with mild tannins. A tad too ripe and oaky for my taste.* **89.**


**2017 Dutton Estate Kyndall’s Reserve Dutton Ranch Russian River Valley Chardonnay** 14.2% alc., pH 3.47, TA 0.63, 733 cases, \$42. Released September 2019. Sebastopol, Dutton Palms and Mill Station vineyards. Robert Young, Wente and 40-year-old heritage selection. Fermented equal parts in concrete eggs, stainless steel and French oak barrels. Partial MLF up to 75%. Aged in French oak barrels, 30% new. *Moderate golden yellow color in the glass. Plenty of California sunshine in this ripe fruited wine, offering aromas and flavors of grilled pineapple, lemon curd and butter toffee. Slightly viscous in the mouth, with a pineapple-fueled finish that has a welcome cut of acidity.* **89.**

## Evening Land Vineyards, Salem, OR

**2017 Evening Land Seven Springs Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.0% alc., \$35. (\$70 magnum). This wine is built around Pommard and Wädenswil vines planted in 1984. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Fresh aromas of black cherry and earthy flora with a bit of oak. A middleweight style that is both earthy and fruity, offering flavors of black cherry and purple berry. Suave in texture with very fine tannins and a juicy cut of acidity on the finish. This wine shows the most oak of the 2017 Pinots tasted here.* **89.**

**2017 Evening Land Seven Springs Estate La Source Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$75 (\$150 magnum). Dijon clone vines at the top of Seven Springs Vineyard. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Very expressive nose revealing aromas of cherry, black raspberry, spice, and underbrush. Clearly a step up over the Seven Springs bottling with a charge of dark red and black cherry fruit making a noticeable mid palate and finishing impression. Nicely composed, with integrated tannins and great drive. This wine has that ephemeral quality that can be so appealing in Pinot Noir.* **92.**

 **2017 Evening Land Seven Springs Estate Anden Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.0% alc., 1,800 bottles, \$100 (\$200 magnum). Last vintage from these old vines. Aged in 100% new Ermitage French oak barrels. Unfiltered. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The nose is rather exotic with scents of darker fruits and mysterious spices. Suave and gracious on the palate in a middleweight style with giving flavors of purple and black fruits framed by restrained tannins. The fruit core is complimented with flavors of earth, animale, and tobacco making this wine quite distinctive. Better when tasted several hours after opening. Needs a few years in the cellars to unfold.* **94.**

 **2017 Evening Land Seven Springs Estate La Forêt Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 12.5% alc., 1,200 bottles, \$(available only as part of the Reserve Allocation). Debut vintage. Sourced solely from the prized La Forêt (“the forest”) Vineyard at the summit of Seven Springs Vineyard. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. A glorious combination of darker red berry fruits and earth tone in a mid weight styled wine. Luscious yet light on its feet with impeccable balance. A captivating, sexy wine that aims to please with its silky tannins and extremely long finish.* **95.**



**2017 Evening Land Seven Springs Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Chardonnay** 13.0% alc., \$35 (\$70 magnum). *Light golden yellow color in the glass. Noticeable flinty reduction along with aromas of lemongrass and pineapple. Light in weight but pleasing, with a core of lemon-lime flavor. Sleek, with adequate grip, the faintest oak, and a 7-Up finish with a little length. 90.*

**2017 Evening Land Seven Springs Estate La Source Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Chardonnay** 13.0% alc., \$75 (\$150 magnum). *Light golden yellow color in the glass. The slightest flinty reduction upon opening. Aromas of yellow apple, pear and oak-driven vanilla and spice. More mouth filling pleasure and textural interest, featuring flavors of lemon-lime, green apple and pear shot through with gregarious acidity. 93.*



**2017 Evening Land Seven Springs Estate Summum Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Chardonnay** 13.0% alc., \$100 (\$200 magnum). *Crafted from just 14 rows of the best Chardonnay vines at Seven Springs Vineyard. Fermented and raised in new Stockinger puncheons. Light golden yellow color in the glass. Enviably marriage of citrus, pear, lemon and reduction scents that persist over time in the glass. Noticeably intense on the palate with excellent energy, offering flavors of lemon-lime and green apple. Impressive length in the mouth and on the extended finish. A high-collared, "mineral-bound" wine that checks all the right boxes. 95.*



## **Keller Estate, Petaluma, CA**

**2017 Keller Estate La Cruz Vineyard Petaluma Gap Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with aromas of red cherry, red berry and spice. Mid-weight in style, with an unctuous core of black cherry and purple grape flavors accented with cedary oak. Silky in the mouth with impressive balance and some finishing length. I like this wine for its freshness and juiciness. 91.*

**2017 Keller Estate El Coro Petaluma Gap Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc. 100% de-stemmed. Clones “828,” 667, 777 and a La Tache selection. Native yeast fermentation. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 25% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Captivating aromas of rose perfume, red cherry and cardamom spice. A bit of earth and mushroom complements the core of red cherry and berry fruits in a middleweight style. Beautifully balanced, with a silky texture and a sleek and polished demeanor. Lacks the finish for an even better score, but is nevertheless an exceptional wine.* **93.**

**2017 Keller Estate Precioso Petaluma Gap Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., \$. 100% de-stemmed. Clone “828,” and Pommard. Native yeast fermentation. Aged in 50% new French oak barrels. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Reserved, but pleasant aromas of black cherry, fertile earth and marzipan. A little riper fruit flavors are featured that include an array of purple and black fruits backed by gentle tannins. A nuttiness, presumably from oak, is rather prominent and detracted from the overall impression. The grand finish is noticeably long that is only fitting for this barrel selection wine.* **92.**

**2017 Keller Estate La Cruz Vineyard Petaluma Gap Chardonnay** 14.18% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.53, 2014 cases, \$. Wente clone 4. Aged in 30% new French oak barrels. Native yeast fermentation. *Light golden yellow color in the glass. A pleasant offering featuring flavors of lemon, pear and pineapple with only the slightest hint of toasty oak. A gentle, simple and somewhat austere style that finishes with a grassy and green apple note.* **89.**

## **La Crema, Windsor, CA**

**2017 La Crema Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., pH 3.63, TA 0.53, \$25. Aged 9 months in barrel. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Presents well on the nose with aromas of spiced cherry, rose petal and Herbs de Provence. Mid weight in style, with flavors of dark red cherry and berry. Appealing tension and balance with a short finish. Solid but not exciting.* **89.**

## **Montagne Russe Wines, Petaluma, CA**

**2017 Montagne Russe Roberts Road Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 13.3% alc., 92 cases, \$58. Dijon 115 and Pommard clones. 13.7% alc., 42 cases, \$69. *Light garnet color in the glass. Leading off are aromas of cherry, forest flora and a floral note. Light in weight but flavorful, offering tastes of cherry and purple grape backed by gracious tannins. An easygoing, elegant style with admirable balance and a cherry-fueled, modest finish.* **90.**

**2017 Montagne Russe Dragon's Back Black Knight Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., 86 cases, \$50. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Aromas of white flower blossom, dark cherry and oak-driven toast and spice. Mid-weight flavors of black cherry and black raspberry. Gentle tannins, with the slightest oak in the background. A very agreeable wine that has excellent balance and some finish.* **92.**

**2017 Montagne Russe Spring Hill Ranch Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., 42 cases, \$69. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Enticing aromas of black cherry, fertile earth, rose petal and vanilla. Middleweight in style, with a rich core of black cherry and blackberry fruit flavors. Oak chimes in with a bit of char and smoke. The tannins are well-matched, and the wine builds in character over time in the glass.* **92.**

**2017 Montagne Russe Silver and Gold Black Knight Vineyard Sonoma Coast Chardonnay** 13.4% alc., 50 cases, \$50. Primarily clone 4. *Moderate golden yellow color in the glass. Aromas of toasty oak, grilled lemon, pineapple and poached pear. Flavors of oak-charged citrus, yellow apple, burnt caramel and vanilla. Slightly viscous in the mouth, with a good cut of acidity on the finish.* **89.**

## **Morgan Winery, Salinas, CA**



**2018 Morgan Metallico Unoaked Monterey Chardonnay** 13.5% alc., pH 3.17, TA 0.75, 4,025 cases, \$22. A blend of five vineyards. Clones include Dijon 96, Musqué, and Roger Rose. Aged 4 months in stainless steel. No MLF. *Light golden yellow color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with aromas of lemon, pineapple, white peach and tropical fruits. The nose is extremely alluring. Enjoyable mouthful of citrus, pear, and Honey crisp apple goodness. Bright and crisp, with an arrow of acidity and an apple-driven finish. This is the best of this genre of Chardonnay that I have tasted in recent memory.* **93.**

## **Prince Hill, Dundee, OR**

**2017 Prince Hill Grand Vin De Garage Depuis 1965 CL 95 Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 1 barrel, unlabelled. A small production personal project of Dick Erath. Grapes were from third leaf vines at Prince Hill Vineyard. Yield about 1 ton per acre. Harvest Brix was over 25° so watered back. *Dark garnet color in the glass. Aromas of purple and black berries and a hint of vanilla. Deep blackberry flavor backed by moderate tannins. Intense and saturating in flavor in a mid weight plus, very ripe style. A hedonistic Pinot that is a bit “over the top” with an astringent finish.* **88.**

## **Van Duzer Vineyards, Dallas, OR**

**2017 Van Duzer Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$32. A blend of Dijon, Wädenswil and Pommard clones. Aged 10 months in French oak barrels. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Highly fragrant floral (lillies) perfume with added aromas of soap and darker cherry. More enjoyable on the palate, with light to mid weight flavors of black cherry, black raspberry and blackberry with a touch of oak spice. Gentle tannins and juicy acidity with some finishing length.* **88.**

**2016 Van Duzer Dijon Blocks Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., pH 3.51, TA 0.59, \$60. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Pleasing aromas of dark fruits, potpourri, floral bouquet and nutty oak. Tasteful core of purple and black fruits with a hint of smoky oak. Good richness on the palate, with modest tannins, a good grip of acidity and a soothing mouthfeel.* **92.**

**2016 Van Duzer Westside Blocks Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., pH 3.69, TA 0.53, \$60. Best Oregon Wine of Cascadia Wine Competition. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Nicely perfumed nose offering scents of purple and black berries and fertile earth. Densely fruited in a mid-weight plus style yet very gracious and agreeable. Flavors of purple and black berries with a pleasing accent of spice and earthy. Silky in the mouth with a persistent finish. This wine seems to have the least amount of acidity in the 2016 lineup tasted here but is not at all flabby.* **93.**



**2016 Van Duzer Bieze Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., \$60. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Inviting aromas of black cherry, spice, beef bouillon, and nutty oak. Elegant in composure in a mid-weight style, offering vivid flavors of red and black cherry and blackberry with a compliment of toasty oak. Beautifully balanced with a satin texture, lively acidity and a juicy finish of very good length. Tres Pinot. 94.*

**2017 Van Duzer Bieze Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Chardonnay** 13.5% alc., pH 3.24, TA 0.74, \$36 (sold out). Aged 8 months on the lees. *Moderately light golden yellow color in the glass. Aromas of green apple and lemon oil lead to an acid-fueled wine offering flavors of green apple and pear with tastes of lemon and white peach on the sharp-edged and very slightly astringent finish. There is no oak intrusion. I prefer Chardonnays that have undergone MLF for their textural qualities, but I can appreciate this style as well. 92.*