

**Too Much of a  
Good Pinot is  
Barely Enough**

# PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

Volume 6, Issue 39

September 10,  
2007

Inside this issue:

Alfaro Family Vnyds	4
Windy Oaks Estate	6
De La Montanya	9
"The Catch" Pinot	10
Dovetail Vineyards	11
Kalin Retraction	12

## Magic in the Wines from Corralitos

The Santa Cruz Mountains appellation is quite large at 350,000 acres spread over three counties and extending from Half Moon Bay in the north to Mount Madonna just north of Watsonville in the south. Tucked away in the southwest corner of the appellation is the tiny town of Corralitos (9 square miles), home to only 5 of the more than 90 wineries in the appellation. Despite its small size and the infancy of most of its vineyards, the Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays from Corralitos have been strikingly good and knowledgeable pinotphiles are beginning to take notice.



Corralitos is an agricultural area, well known for apples (“Apple City of the West”) and strawberries (“Strawberry Capital of the World”). It is bordered on the west by flatlands leading to the Pacific Ocean, only 3 to 5 miles away, and on the east by modest hills rising to 1,000 feet. Santa Cruz is 17 miles to the north, Monterey 20 miles to the south. Dotted with “McMansions” bought with Silicon Valley money, this rural area is blessed with unpolluted air and well-drained loamy sand soils underlain with some limestone. The most distinguished landmark is the Corralitos Market and Sausage Co. located on Corralitos Road and known for superb bacon, sausages, and other meats.



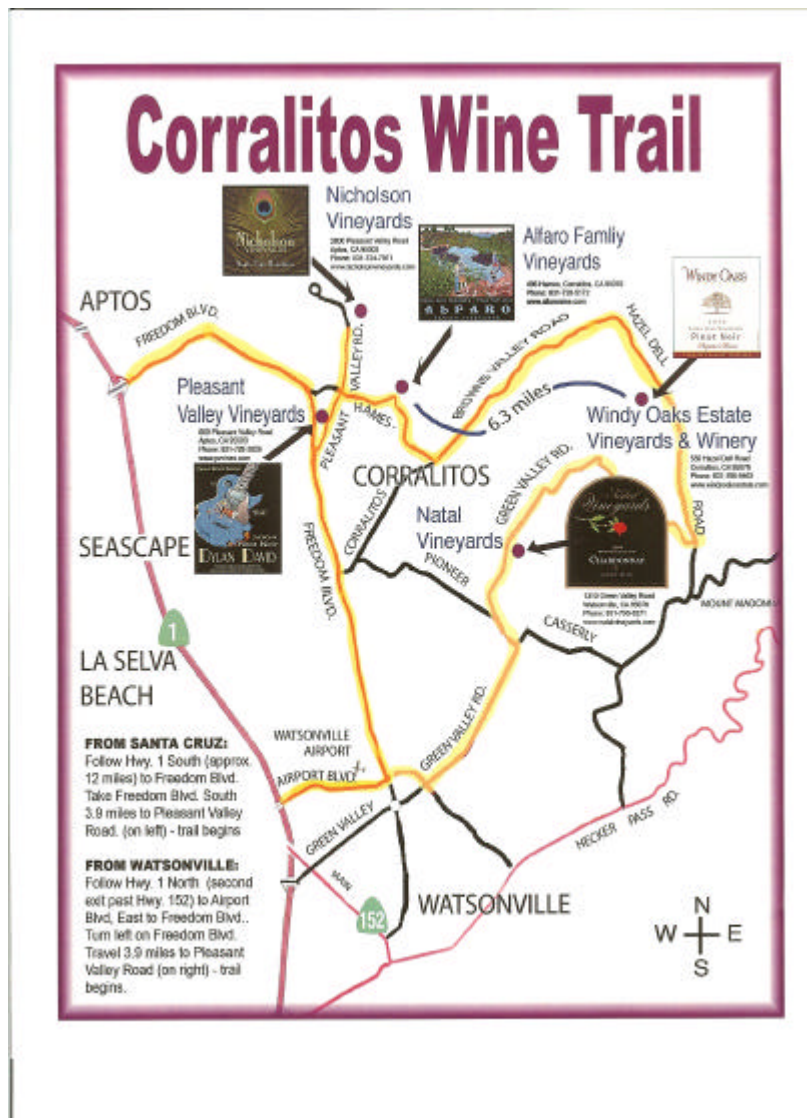
The origin of the name Corralitos is not definitively known. According to Judy Malmin, author of the book *Corralitos*, the name comes from the Spanish meaning two or more small yards or enclosures or little corrals. By 1820, the name Corralitos was in common use and in 1823 it was the name given to a land grand rancho that included Corralitos, Rancho de Los Corralitos.

I visited the area in early July of this year. The photo below was taken while driving over the Santa Cruz Mountains summit as one approaches Corralitos from Highway 101 to the east. The Pacific Ocean can be seen in the far distance. The vineyards are situated on the southwest facing hillsides in the foothills of the large north-south oriented Santa Cruz Mountain range.



The close proximity of Corralitos to the Pacific Ocean is ideal for farming grapes. The summers are dry and warm with foggy mornings and the winters are cool and moist with annual rainfall between 12 and 30 inches. Large temperature swings are not unusual, with 90° days followed by 50° nights. The growing season here is probably the longest of any viticultural area in California, with bud break in early February and harvest extending all the way into the first days of November.

Craig Handley, proprietor of Pleasant Valley Vineyards in Corralitos, has spearheaded the “Corralitos Wine Trail,” consisting of five relatively new, family-owned, small wineries located in close proximity (Alfaro Family Vineyards, Natal Vineyards, Nicholson Vineyards, Pleasant Valley Vineyards, and Windy Oaks Estate Vineyards & Winery). A sixth winery, Storrs, is planting a vineyard adjacent to Alfaro Family Vineyards and building a new winery which will open next year. All of the wineries are only open by appointment except for special occasions. On September 15, 2007, all of the wineries will have Open Houses from 12 to 5 as part of the second annual Corralitos Wine Trail Event. Tickets are \$30 per person in advance and include wine tasting, barrel tasting, a commemorative crystal glass, Corralitos sausage tasting, cheese tasting, and self-catered picnicking at select vineyards. All of the participating wineries are within 6 miles of one another. For tickets and maps, consult the participating wineries websites or [www.corralitoswinetrail.com](http://www.corralitoswinetrail.com).



When I visited Corralitos, I spent some time with Richard Alfaro of Alfaro Family Vineyards and Jim and Judy Schultze of Windy Oaks Estate Vineyards & Winery. Profiles of both wineries and tasting notes follow.



## Alfaro Family Vineyards and Martin Alfaro Wines

Richard Alfaro's background is in bread making, but he has had a personal interest in wine for over twenty-five years. He founded Alfaro's Micro-Bakery in Watsonville in 1988 and subsequently sold it to Sarah Lee in 1998 giving him the funds to start a winery. Always a Cabernet and Bordeaux lover, it was in 1996 that he had his Pinot Noir epiphany. He was having dinner in Lake Tahoe with a friend and ordered a 1994 Rex Hill Reserve Willamette Valley Pinot Noir. He was taken by the wine and returned to the same restaurant the next evening to confirm his impressions. He ordered another bottle of the same wine and it was even better the second time. Having lived in the Monterey Peninsula, he was familiar with Corralitos and had quite an attraction to the Chardonnay from the Christie Vineyard. He saw the potential of the area for winegrowing and found a 75-acre property in 1998 that was suitable. Today, he has the largest planting of Pinot Noir in the Santa Cruz Mountains (22 acres) and will release 12 different Pinot Noirs from the 2006 vintage. Besides his estate fruit, he sources Pinot Noir from Garys' Vineyard and Sleepy Hollow Vineyard in the Santa Lucia Highlands, Franscioni Vineyard in Monterey County, an unnamed vineyard in the Sonoma Coast, Gemelli Vineyard in Cienega Valley and vineyards in Corralitos. Production is about 4,500 cases per year.



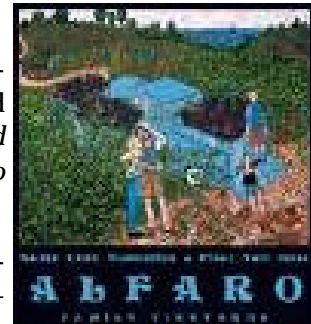
Richard drove me around Corralitos pointing out the most notable vineyards. The Deer Park Vineyard is owned by Dan Lester and managed by Prudy Foxx who is a well-respected viticulturalist in the Santa Cruz Mountains. This vineyard has multiple clones including 115, 667, 777, 37 (Mt. Eden), Wädenswil, and Mariafeld. The Christie Vineyard plantings are 20-25 years old (the first planted in Corralitos) and consist of both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Other vineyards include Saveria Vineyard, Pleasant Valley Vineyard and Schultze Family Vineyard. There are several small 1 to 3 acre vineyards as well in the region. Storrs Winery is currently planting a Pinot Noir vineyard.

Next year, Richard will be planting Mary K's Vineyard, named after his wife to celebrate their 25th Anniversary together. The vineyard will contain heritage clones of Chardonnay and own-rooted vines from a Vosne-Romanee Grand Cru Monopole vineyard.

I sat down with Richard in his winery and tasted through several of his wines. He produces two lines: Alfaro Family Vineyard wines from estate fruit, and Martin Alfaro wines from purchased fruit. The name Martin comes from Joe Martin who is a partner and winemaker at Alfaro. Richard has a wealth of information about Corralitos and a visit to this area would not be complete without meeting him and experiencing his passion and energy for his accomplished winegrowing efforts.

**2005 Alfaro Family Vineyards Santa Cruz Mountains Chardonnay** 14.0% alc., 192 cases, \$25. Own-rooted vines planted in 1999. Primarily Wente clone and with a small amount of Muscat clone added for complexity both from a block in the Lindsay Paige Vineyard. 100% ML. *This is a perfectly fine example of Chardonnay with restrained oak notes, spice, minerality and lively acidity.*

**2005 Alfaro Family Vineyards Alfaro Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., 144 cases, \$33. Yields were .55 tons/acre. Aged for 15 months in 50% new oak. Clones 113, 114, 115, 667, 777 and 828, *Red and blue fruits run throughout with herbal influences and a hint of oak from start to finish. Good acid structure.*



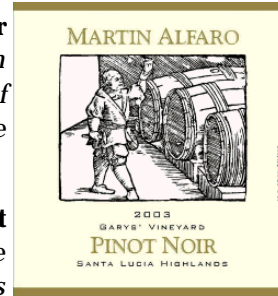
**2005 Alfaro Family Vineyards Lindsay Paige Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., 138 cases, \$40. The vineyard, named after Richard's daughter, is closely planted to a clonal potpourri with 113, 114, 115, 667, 777, 828, 359, 475 and Pommard 4 and 5. Compared to the Alfaro Family Vineyard, the Lindsay Paige Vineyard has different root stocks, better soil, and protection from the afternoon sun. Yields were .75 ton/acre. 100% de-stemmed. Aged 19 months in 66% new oak and released this July. *A spectacular Pinot Noir. Very flashy Pinot fruits on the nose and palate with an appealing earthy edge for good measure. Silky texture in the mouth leading to fine-grained tannins and lip-smacking acidity on the backend.*

**2006 Alfaro Family Vineyards Alfaro Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** Barrel sample. *A bit astringent now and not ready for prime time.*

**2006 Alfaro Family Vineyards Lindsay Paige Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** Barrel sample. *Very soft and silky in the mouth with impeccable balance at this point. The fruit is still restrained but the impressive potential is obvious. This vineyard is a superstar.*

**2005 Martin Alfaro Deer Park Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** 14.5% alc., \$33. 40% new oak for both Martin Alfaro wines. *A lot of Mt. Eden clone in this wine resulting in plenty of earthiness. There are appealing notes of cherries, cranberries and Xmas spice as well. The nose is quite funky with notable oak features.*

**2005 Martin Alfaro Schulze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** 14.9% alc., \$33. Clones 115, 667 and 777. *A beautiful and sexy fruit core here with barnyard and earthy highlights. The nose is redolent with cranberries and spice. A little warm on the finish.*



**Alfaro Family Vineyard** is located at 420 Hames Road in Corralitos. The wines are distributed widely in Northern California. The websites are [www.alfarowine.com](http://www.alfarowine.com) and [www.martinalfaro.com](http://www.martinalfaro.com). 831-761-5563.

## Windy Oaks Estate Vineyard & Winery

Sometimes you come upon a winemaker (Ted Lemon comes to mind) and after you spend a little time with him or her, you just know they get it. Jim Schultze is in the same mold. He has a charming calm and trustworthy demeanor and his approach to wine is meticulous and well thought-out. You just get the feeling that his grapes are in good hands. If I was a Pinot Noir grape, I would like Jim to raise me and make me into a fine wine. Jim expresses his philosophy so succinctly: "I do the most I can in the vineyard and the least I can in the winery."

Jim and Judy Schultze are escapees from the high-tech world who have used their twenty years of interest and experience in artisan winemaking and winegrowing to create Windy Oaks Estate. The Burgundian varietals, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, are produced from a 15-acre vineyard located at 1,000 feet on a ridge overlooking the town of Corralitos and the Monterey Bay beyond.





Viticulture and winemaking here is very Burgundy-themed. The vineyard is farmed according to sustainable, organic principles with all of the wines hand-tended and directly monitored for water status. The vineyard is mostly above the fog line. Summer is free of heat spikes with temperatures in the 70s and 40s at night. The site is extraordinary and yields physiologically ripe grapes without high brix and high natural acidity. Clones are 115,667, 777, 828, 2A and Pommard. Winemaking is non-interventional with no additives (ie enzymes, acid). Jim employs a 4 to 6 day cold soak and uses a basket press. Fermentations use 50% wild yeast and last 25-30 days. No racking is done once the wine is in barrel. The Schultzes travel yearly to Burgundy to meet with coopers. They use 3-year-old air dried tight grained French oak barrels and age their Pinot Noirs for 18-25 months with a high percentage of new oak (50% up to 75% in the Reserve). The modern estate winery is all gravity-driven. They use a state-of-the-art bottling line with minimal oxygen uptake yielding wines that go through little or no bottling shock.

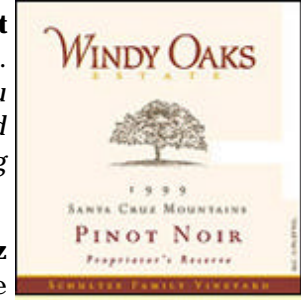


I visited the winery and was quite impressed. Jim is experimenting with wood tank fermentation and just released the **2005 Windy Oaks Estate Tank Fermented Pinot Noir** (26 cases, \$55). The wood fermenter is in the photo at left. After tasting the results of this fermentation method in France, Jim believes wines fermented in wood develop smooth, well-integrated tannins, a round mouth feel, and excellent preservation of fruit with good complexity and a long finish. This initial release is from the estate vineyard's Bay Block (which typically provides the majority of the Reserve). The wine was aged for 22 months in 100% new French oak.

Another new release is the **2005 Windy Oaks Estate Special Burgundian Clone Pinot Noir** (26 cases, \$95). This is a release from a special half-acre block at the top of the vineyard ridge. Jim tends this block himself, doing everything from pruning to leaf pulling to tucking vines. This special Pinot Noir clone came from Burgundy and tastes similar to its Burgundian counterpart. Aged 27 months in 100% new French oak. The wine is being offered in a beautiful wood box with the a poster silk-screened on the bottle that was created by noted French poster artist, Jean-Pierre Got (pictured right).



**2004 Windy Oaks Estate Proprietor's Reserve Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** 175 cases, \$45, sold out. The Reserve is the winery's signature wine. *This one will stand up to any wine produced in California and is everything you could hope for in a Pinot Noir. From classic Pinot aromatics of Bing cherry and spice, through elegant, sweet and vivid fruit with a caressing texture, to a lasting finale, this is one impressive drink. You won't be able to get enough of this one.*



**2004 Windy Oaks Estate Diane's Block Klein Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** 153 cases, \$40, 2004 and 2005 sold out. This is the second vintage from this 4-acre vineyard in Aptos. *It has its own charm and distinctive character with racy mixed berry and black cherry fruit, a soft texture, ample acidity, and supple tannins.*

**2005 Windy Oaks Estate Cuvée Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., 285 cases, \$35. A blend of 4 clones, aged 18 months in 50% new French oak. *A dusty cherry nose leads off the show. Raspberry, strawberry, and pomegranate flavors star and a hint of gingerbread and herbs add interest. Oak adds appeal and support. Beautiful balance.*

**2005 Windy Oaks Estate Proprietor's Reserve Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** Barrel sample. *WOW! Stunning aromatics of red and blue fruits. Plenty of spiced fruit on a soft and clean platform. Seamless. This one will bring you to your knees.*

**2005 Windy Oaks Estate Wood Fermented Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir** Barrel sample. *More pepper in the nose and spicier on the finish. Soft and smooth as a baby's bottom. Very unique and great in its own way.*

**2004 Windy Oaks Estate One Acre Santa Cruz Mountains Chardonnay** 94 cases, \$35. Jim reluctantly planted one acre of Chardonnay because his wife insisted. It has turned out to be a wise decision not only for marital harmony but because the Chardonnay is flat-out terrific. *This is no weak sister playing second fiddle to the Pinot Noir. A perfectly balanced wine with butter, caramel and exotic fruit notes finishing with demure acidity. A Kistler-killer at half the price.*

**Windy Oaks Estate** sells 85% of their wine directly to a mailing list. There is not a lot of wine to go around. I almost hesitate to rave about it. The website is [www.windyoaksestate.com](http://www.windyoaksestate.com). 831-786-9463.





## DLM: Hidden Gem Off Westside Road

When you think of Westside Road in the Russian River Valley, several prominent wineries come to mind including Rochioli, Williams Selyem, Gary Farrell, Moshin and Davis Bynum. A relative newcomer to the area is De La Montanya Vineyards & Winery located just off Westside Road on Foreman Road (halfway between Armida and Twomey). Proprietor and winemaker, Dennis De La Montanya has followed in the footsteps of his family's legacy, the seventh generation in a long line of farmers and purveyors of wine who often doubled as judges, wine smugglers, outlaws and other suspicious characters. Dennis farms over 160 acres in Sonoma County and founded his winery in 1995. The tasteful barn-inspired tasting room and winery is but three miles from the town of Healdsburg. Dennis has a wood-burning pizza oven on the premises, a bocce ball court, and a picnic area shaded by mature apple trees. He rents out an adjacent lodging known as the "Little Yellow Cottage," which has all of the comforts of home and overlooks the Felta Creek Vineyard on the property.



Dennis is the type of winemaker you love to hang out with. Unpretentious and humorous, with a dry wit and twinkle in his eye, he never takes himself or his wines too seriously, although his wines are produced with the utmost care and attention. With 30 different wines offered in 25 to 250 case lots, there is something to appeal to everyone. The wines run the gamut from the unusual (Primitivo and Tempranillo) to the tried and true (Zinfandel and Cabernet), to Pinot Noir, and to several white varietals. And to add spice to the lineup, he bottles a "Pin-Up" series of wines featuring attractive ladies in pin-up poses on the front labels for sale only at the winery (the labels are not enticing to those stiff at the government). Unfortunately, there is no



Pinot Noir with a pin-up label but this is understandable since Dennis's Pinot Noirs are quite serious wines.

I had the unique experience of tasting the five 2005 De La Montanya Pinot Noirs and a single Pinot Meunier at three stages in their development. In 2006, I sampled them out of barrel at the winery, then tasted through the wines shortly after bottling (see notes in the *PinotFile*, Vol 6, Issue 3, November 7, 2006), and finally, tasted through the lineup recently after 10 months in bottle. A word about the style of Dennis's Pinot Noirs is in order. Although Dennis, himself, has no aversion to big, bold wines, he believes Pinot Noir should have restraint, elegance and finesse and be a suitable companion at the dinner table. Aging is usually 11 months in 40% or less new oak. The current co-winemaker with Dennis is Tami Collins (sister of winery co-founder Tina De La Montanya) and the long-time consulting winemaker is Michael Loykasek.

**2005 De La Montanya Estate Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Meunier** 13.4% alc., 72 cases, \$34. Pinot Meunier is a descendent of Pinot Noir that is the most widely planted grape in Champagne. The flavor profile is similar to Pinot Noir and has great charm when young. It is less tannic than Pinot Noir. Very few producers in California bottle it as a varietal, the most notable being Domaine Chandon. *Berries, toast and coffee on the nose. Berry pie flavors. Smooth, soft and easy to drink. Not flamboyant or particularly complex, but a nice drink.*

**2005 De La Montanya Tina's Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** 14.0% alc., 307 cases, \$32. 75% Pommard, 25% Dijon clones. *The aromatics are interesting with barnyard, woodshed and root beer. Light to medium bodied in structure. Cherry, plum and spiced raisins lead the flavor profile. Lively acidity on the finish. Very enjoyable.*

**2005 De La Montanya Christine's Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 13.8% alc., 241 cases, \$40. *Bright cherry and spice with toast on the nose. Rich, dark fruits including raisin create a full mouth feel. The tannins are fine-grained and the finish is clean.*

**2005 De La Montanya Flying Rooster Ranch Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 14.0% alc., 47 cases, \$36. *A lot of dirt in this wine. An earthy nose leads to blue fruit flavors including plum and blackberry with a touch of anise. A very rich wine lacking a bit of acidity and showing some heat on the backend.*

**2005 De La Montanya Reserve Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., 46 cases, \$42. *This wine has shed some weight since tasted last year for the better. It leads off with cherry, exotic wood and a hint of oak. Black cherries and brown sugar lead the flavor parade with healthy acidity around the core of solid but nimble fruit. Unlike a lot of reserve wines, it is not heavily extracted and over-oaked and retains an attraction for food.*



**De La Montanya Vineyards & Winery** is located at 999 Foreman Lane, Healdsburg. The tasting room is open Saturday and Sunday from 11-4:30, but call ahead to see if Dennis is behind the bar (note: Dennis has two boys who play baseball and he is a big baseball fan so he may be at a diamond somewhere). The informative website is at [www.dlm.com](http://www.dlm.com). 707-433-3711. For information and reservations for the Little Yellow Cottage, contact Tina De La Montanya at [tina@dmlwine.com](mailto:tina@dmlwine.com) or consult the website. Check the website for directions to the winery - it can be tricky.

## “The Catch” Pinot Noir

Former San Francisco 49er football player Dwight Clark has teamed with Steve Ledson at Ledson Winery & Vineyards to produce the **2005 Dwight Clark's “The Catch” Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., 400 bottles, \$95. This is the third Ledson Harmony Collection wine and was produced to commemorate and celebrate the 25th anniversary of “The Catch.” Each bottle is signed. The wine won a Gold Medal at the 2007 San Diego International Wine Competition.

Proceeds from the sale of this wine benefit the Harmony Foundation for Children, which provides support and resources to underprivileged children who have a determination to excel.

To purchase, go to the Ledson website at [www.ledson.com](http://www.ledson.com) and look under the Reserve & Library Wine section.



## Dovetail Vineyards

Dovetail is one of those rare birds - a boutique producer of both Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon. The name Dovetail is derived from a term defined as fitting readily together or combining neatly two pieces. Dovetail is an appropriate name for premium wine in that good wine is the result of a balanced harmony between winegrowing and winemaking. Owner Michael Logan's habit for Bordeaux led him to produce his first vintage of Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon in 2003 (133 cases). In 2005, he added three Russian River Valley Pinot Noirs to his lineup. With the 2006 vintage, Logan is assuming full winemaking duties with Craig Becker acting as consultant.

Logan has a background in computer science and after ten years of successful business and technology consulting, he decided to pursue his passion for wine. He purchased a home in Napa in 2003 which had a small Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard. He enlisted the assistance of grower Carmine Indindoli to manage his vineyard. Much of his winemaking experience has come from working at Del Dotto and assisting friends in making wine. Craig Becker has been an invaluable mentor. After graduating from University of California Davis, Becker eventually became head winemaker at Spring Mountain Vineyard. He developed quite a following and became in demand as a consultant for numerous wineries throughout Napa and Sonoma, even venturing south to Santa Maria.

Like all good winemakers, Logan spends considerable time in the vineyards, working closely with his growers. Winemaking is non-interventional. Native yeasts are used whenever possible, and quality barriques are utilized to age the wines.

**2005 Dovetail Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** 14.9% alc., 105 cases, \$39. *The aromatics are shy but appealing with Bing cherry, cola and spice. Nicely weighted, the wine has juicy red fruits backed by oak spice. The finish is clean and refreshing.*

**2005 Dovetail Vine Hill Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** 13.3% alc., 42 cases, \$45. A blend of Dijon clones 9 (?) and 115. Aged 10 months in Hungarian barrels. *Similar to the wine above but more expressive aromas. The red cherry and berry fruits are framed by noticeable but not intrusive oak. A lightweight, feminine wine that is a little thin on the backend.*

**2005 Dovetail Indindoli Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** 15.2% alc., 130 cases, \$52. This vineyard is planted to Dijon clones 115 and 667 over less than two acres. The wine was aged *sur lies* for 10 months in a combination of French and Hungarian barrels, 50% new. *The nose is redolent with super ripe, jammy fruit leaning toward raisin with a little spearmint. The flavors carry on the theme with sweet darker fruits, raisin and spice. The alcohol is well integrated and the peach-skin tannins create a soft texture. This bottle may have been slightly oxidized. A wine of great appeal to fruit hedonists.*



**Dovetail** wines are sold through the website, [www.DovetailVineyards.com](http://www.DovetailVineyards.com). The winery is located in Napa and not open to the public. 707-258-0132. The Pinot Noirs are quite good for an inaugural release, but Logan is clearly still searching for a style that suits him. For my taste, the Russian River Valley appellation release is the most appealing.





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Now go drink some great Pinot.

**Too Much of a Good  
Pinot is Barely Enough**

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**\*\* Kalin Cellars Correction \*\***

**In Volume 6, Issue 37 of the *PinotFile*, I wrote a feature on Kalin Cellars. Regretfully, there was some misinformation that I would like to rectify.**

**Terrance Leighton is in his early 60s (not 70s as stated) and still actively producing wine at Kalin Cellars. The 2007 vintage is fermenting at this time in Cuves. The 2005 vintage was bottled in January of this year. Happily, he plans on producing wine for many more years.**

**Kalin Bourgogne is produced in very limited quantities and is offered to a small select group of “Kalinites,” wine specialists, and restaurants. The currently available vintage is 1999. If you have interest in this or any other Kalin wines, send an e-mail to [tjl@ix.netcom](mailto:tjl@ix.netcom) attention Terrance Leighton.**

## **Unrated Bottle of Pinot Consumed**

A friend of mine found himself running late for a wine tasting dinner. Realizing that he would not have time to stop by his 5,000 bottle wine cellar at home and consult his computer to access the scores of every wine, he made a hurried stop at the nearest wine retailer. According to a witness at the store, he was unable to get the attention of the store’s resident wine expert and appeared quite jittery. What happened next in the store is uncertain. Apparently, he reached for a bottle of Pinot Noir for which the store had not posted a “shelf talker” with a high score noted from a major wine publication. Still shaken by the ordeal several days later, he said, “I don’t know what came over me. I thought I remembered something about the wine and the producer, but I was in a hurry and did not know the score on the wine.”

When he reached the door at the wine tasting dinner, he was in the dark about whether the wine had received a score above 90. He actually tried to discourage the host from pouring the wine, exclaiming “Parker says this wine is still closed and needs a few years to open up.” The host, however, was undeterred, and said he would gladly decant the wine. Even though the wine perfectly complemented the food and showed very well, my friend was besides himself with grief about the group consuming an unrated wine. He apologized profusely to the group and promised never to do this again. Fortunately, no one in the group was harmed.