



PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

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Once you go
Noir, you never
go back

2010 Pinot Noir All-Americans

It is time to renew the annual tradition in the *PinotFile* to name the best Pinot Noir performers of 2010 as “All-Americans.” In this, the tenth year of proclaiming Pinot Noir All-Americans, it was extremely challenging for me to single out wines from the array of stellar Pinot Noirs currently being crafted in California and Oregon. The bounty is a testimony to the cadre of passionate winegrowers and winemakers who have successfully corralled the temperamental nature of Pinot Noir.

The All-Americans were selected not only for their fruity, flirty New World hedonism and description-defying sensuality, but for the emotion they illicit. All the anointed wines were technically sound, but what separated the All-Americans was a powerful charisma. It is a truth that it is not what is said or written about a wine, but what is emoted that truly defines a wine’s greatness. Veronique Drouhin-Boss, winemaker at Oregon’s Domaine Drouhin, said it best, “There are plenty of good wines in the world that give you pleasure. A great wine gives you emotion.”

In choosing exceptional wines distinctiveness also comes into play. Terry These summarized my feelings on this beautifully, “I’d rather drink something that tastes like *something* and not like *everything*. Anything can taste like everything, and too often it does, and it bores the crap out of me.” Too many New World Pinot Noirs simply taste the same. I look for wines of character and uniqueness that speak of the special place from which they originated.

The stylistic split of power versus finesse, or “New World” versus “Old World” styles is ever present and debated, but superiority of either style is a tired argument. The best style is the one that gives you the most pleasure. Many pinotphiles can appreciate both styles and relish in the diversity of Pinot Noir. I try to steer a neutral course, separating my personal preferences from the objective assessment of the wine regardless of style.

The issue of high alcohol continues to be debated and the subject was approached in previous issues of the *PinotFile* this year. Winegrowers are often looking to achieve phenolic ripeness at lower brix and there are a spate of Pinot Noirs on the market with unbelievable flavor and complexity at alcohol percentages of 13.0% to 13.8%. Still, there remains a significant group of male consumers who prefer the sweetness and body that alcohol confers on wine, and this fact, combined with the unavoidable ripeness occurring in warmer growing regions and vintages, lead some producers to craft Pinot Noirs with well over 14.5% alcohol. I definitely prefer wines with under 14.2% alcohol since the wines are often more balanced, easier to drink, more compatible with food, allow you to consume two or three glasses without getting sideways, and offer the health benefits associated with taking in moderate amounts of alcohol. Of the wines receiving All-American awards in this issue, the California Pinot Noirs ranged from 12.8% to 15.2% alcohol with most under 14.5% alcohol, and the Oregon Pinot Noirs spanned 13.4% to 14.8% with the majority under 14.0% alcohol. I looked at the best New Zealand Pinot Noirs I tasted this year and their range of alcohol was from 12.5% to 14.5%. California Chardonnays ran the whole gamut from 13.5% to 15.2% alcohol.

There are a number of steps I take to arrive at the wines I recommend in the *PinotFile* each year. I do not taste the wines blind, but strive for integrity, consistency and objectivity. “The aim of judgment,” respected French wine critic Michael Bettane said, “is truth and impartiality.” There are two important reasons I do not taste blind. First, I prefer to evaluate wines in the same manner as the consumer experiences them. Second, an essential part of judging wine is to know what you are drinking. I tend to focus on current drinkability, since most consumers 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. If a wine is

balanced when I taste it young, it is almost certainly to hold up for several years. A wine that is out of balance initially will never become balanced over time.

I taste Pinot Noir (and occasionally other wines including Chardonnay) in a consistently calm setting in my home in the late morning. The wines are brought directly from my cellar and are tasted over an hour or two in a relaxed atmosphere. I usually only taste 6 to 7 wines at a time. I give the wines adequate time to open up and make several passes as I taste each wine. Occasionally I will decant a wine if the winemaker recommends it or if this will benefit the evaluation. I use either Riedel Vinum Burgundy or Riedel Oregon Pinot Noir glasses exclusively.

Often, I will re-taste wines later the same day with food at lunch or dinner to replicate the consumer's drinking experience, or over the next day or two from an opened and re-corked bottle. The latter helps to indicate quality and balance, and to predict longevity.

I have no monetary arrangement with any grower, winery, retailer, or wholesaler, and accept no advertising. I do accept wines for review, but about a third of the wines I sample are bought directly from the winery or through customary retail channels. There are many Pinot Noirs that I sample casually at wineries, social dinners, Pinot Noir festivals, wine tastings, and wine dinners, but I do not include these in the All-American selection process, preferring only to include bottled wines that are formally tasted in controlled, and therefore comparable, circumstances.

I do not award scores to wines, preferring to give an unpretentious and concise description of the style and quality of the wine that the reader can appreciate and use. I attempt to convey that special sensuality exhibited by Pinot Noir that is so easy to covet, yet so difficult to describe. I am convinced that an apropos description is not only more challenging to arrive at, 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 wines considered for All-American honors. The Value icon is used to indicate wines of good quality that are value priced (less than \$35).



I want to emphasize that I do not take my reviews or myself too seriously. I always keep in mind the tenant written by noted New Zealand winemaker Neil McCallum, namely, "The difficult art of wine tasting requires a considerable measure of humility." I preach that you use my tasting notes as a guide, but trust your own palate. Focus more on the producer than any one specific wine.

The All-American awards are unique in that the winners include trophy and cult Pinot Noirs that are infrequently, if ever, reviewed by wine competition tasting panels of major wine publications. The *PinotFile* All-Americans encompass every Pinot Noir produced in California and Oregon and each year I find All-Americans from each of the major Pinot Noir producing regions.

The All-Americans are judged on merit, independent of price, style, vintage and region of origin. I drink a fair amount of red Burgundy, but leave the critical evaluation of these wines to others who are more dedicated to that region. You cannot live on red wine alone (debatable), so I also taste and review some Chardonnay, Pinot Noir's cool climate partner.

The awarded wines are listed in alphabetical order. Many of the wines are still available from the winery or through secondary retail distribution. A few of the wines are highly allocated, sold out, and only available on the secondary retail or auction marketplace. A search using the following websites will often turn up sources for the wines: www.wine-searcher.com, www.vinquire.com, www.winezap.com, and www.wineaccess.com. If

there is a Pinot Noir you can't find and just have to have, contact me, and I will try to track it down for you through my connections. Keep in mind that there will always be another vintage and stellar producers make quality wine consistently in each vintage. The wine may not be the same song, but it will be the same composer. Membership on winery mailing lists and in winery wine clubs are good ways to insure that you obtain highly coveted Pinot Noirs from a popular producer.

Current prices of North American Pinot Noir featured in this issue span the range of \$10 to \$110. Generally, quality of life with Pinot Noir begins at \$20, but expect to pay more than \$50 for top wines. The 118 California Pinot Noirs awarded the Pinot Geek designation in 2010 averaged \$55 with a range of \$25 to \$110. The 27 Oregon Pinot Noirs receiving the Pinot Geek designation in 2010 averaged \$58 with a range of \$35 to \$100. The 60 wines awarded the Value icon in 2010 averaged \$24.50 with a range of \$10 to \$35. Seven wines from California were prestigious double dippers, a rare distinction, receiving both a Pinot Geek icon and Value icon designation (2008 Siduri Wines Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir, 2008 Meiomi by Belle Glos Pinot Noir, 2008 Foppiano Vineyards Estate Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, 2007 Greenwood Ridge Vineyards Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir, 2008 Claudia Springs Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir, 2007 Graton Ridge Cellars Estate Paul Family Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, and 2007 Varner Spring Ridge Vineyard Hidden Block Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir). The Chardonnays awarded the Golden Geek icon averaged \$55 with a range of \$22 to \$100.

In the past two years, although there has been a significant recession-driven reduction in sales of Pinot Noir costing more than \$50 (a class of wines that have become known as the "dead zone"), I have noticed an uptick in the number of Pinot Noir releases approaching, arriving at, and even exceeding triple digits. Some examples of C-note Pinot Noirs include: 2007 and 2008 Penner-Ash Wine Cellars Pas De Nom (\$100), 2008 Ponzi Vineyards Aurora and Abetina (\$100 each), 2007 Evening Land Vineyards Occidental Vineyard (\$120, and a 2009 Seven Springs Vineyard bottling is slated for \$100), 2008 Willamette Valley Vineyards Fuller and O'Brien (\$100 each), 2008 Elk Cove Vineyards Reserve Willamette Valley (\$100), 2006 Stoller Vineyards Cathy's Reserve (\$100), 2008 Freestone Vineyards Quarter Moon and Pastorale Pinot Noir (\$100 each), 2005, 2006 and 2007 Williams Selyem Litton Estate (now called William Selyem Estate Vineyard) (\$100), 2006 Brogan Cellars Michaela's Reserve (\$110), Fiddlehead Doyle (\$166), Paul Hobbs Lindsey Estate Cuvée Augustina (\$100), 2007 Lynmar Five Sisters (\$100), and 2007 Goldeneye Ten Degrees Estate Grown Anderson Valley (\$100). These are very special wines and compared to the prices demanded for high end California Cabernet Sauvignon, a C-note seems almost modest.

Collecting and drinking Pinot Noir can be a rich man's game if only trophy wines are sought after. Fortunately, there are many perfectly fine Pinot Noirs on the market that are priced less than \$35, and the increasing number of these so-called value-priced Pinot Noirs make good Pinot Noir more available now than ever. The 2010 Value Pinot Noir All-Americans represent the best \$35 and under North American Pinot Noirs I sampled this past year. Value Pinot Noirs do not match up in quality of fruit, aromatic sophistication, and flavor nuances compared to the more expensive prestige bottlings. You get what you pay for. However, the value-priced Pinot Noirs do offer a perfectly fine everyday drinking experience. Think of them as Pinot Noir unplugged.

I do not keep exact counts, but the number of corked wines seems to be declining to about 2% of the wines I sample. Another 5% of wines are just dumb," that is, not apparently corked, but just not right. Fortunately, for samples at least, I usually have two bottles and only report the review of the stellar bottle. I have not met with any problems with screw cap closures but these are rare in California and Oregon on premium bottlings. Today, the number of truly flawed commercial wines is extremely low.

You will notice that there are fewer Honorable Mention awards for Oregon Pinot Noirs compared to California Pinot Noirs. That is simply because I taste about three times as many California Pinot Noirs in an average year. It is not a reflection on relative quality.

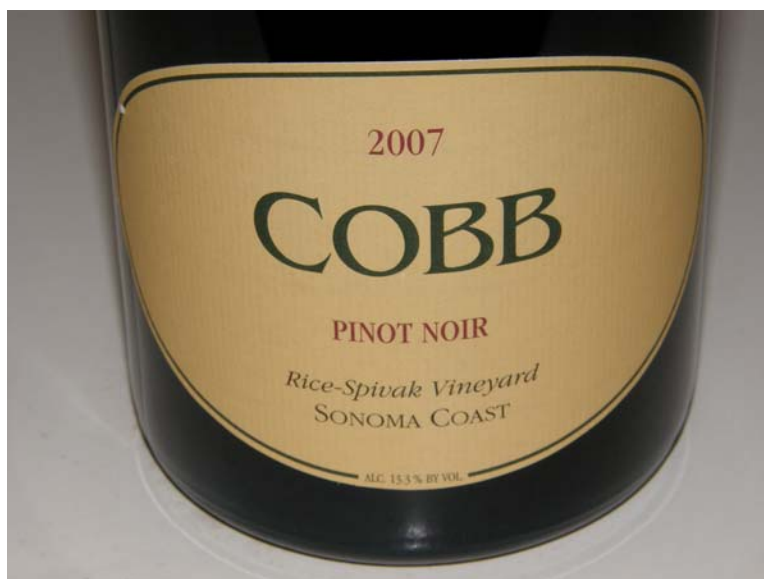
For the Pinot Noirs that were left out of the awards this year, the words of Mark Twain ring true, "It is better to deserve honors and not have them, than to have them and not deserve them."

2010 California Pinot Noir All-Americans First Team

2006 Brogan Cellars Michaela's Reserve Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$110 *Moderately intense reddish-purple color in the glass. A marvelously fruited nose brings you to attention. Delicious layers of intense red and black fruits fan out in the mouth, caressed by mild, firm tannins, and framed by a bright citric note. The texture wraps you in silk pajamas as the dreamy finish sails along. A very classy wine that lets you know it is a Reserve.*



2007 Cobb Rice-Spivak Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 360 cases, \$68 *Like the vintage 2006 version of this wine, this is a remarkable drink. Very expressive fruity nose emphasizing berry tart, the slightest oak, and a hint of spice. Flavors of redder-toned berries fan out softly on the palate, saturating every corner of the mouth, fading lithely in a lingering finish with a pleasing grip of acidity. Seamless in every way, urging you to reach for another sip. A little richer tasting than the 2006 vintage even at a lower alcohol. This vineyard is one fine piece of dirt.*



2007 Donum Estate West Slope Carneros Pinot Noir 150 cases, \$70 *Hold on to your seat when you pop the cork on this one. Terrific nose that is remarkably nuanced with aromas of cherries, berries, spice, oak toast and garden bouquet, all coming and going in a delicate dance in the glass over time. The earth-kissed dark stone and berry fruit really attacks the senses and holds on with a firm grip as it coats every nook and cranny in the mouth, and lingers for what seems like several minutes. The creamy texture and soft tannins add to the wine's sensuality. Descriptors don't do this wine justice. In short, flat-out great.*



2007 Dutton-Goldfield Devil's Gulch Vineyard Marin County Pinot Noir 325 cases, \$58 *Deeper colored than the 2006 vintage release of this wine. Initially subdued in the glass, the nose soon explodes, offering intense scents of wild berries and fresh cherries, spice and toasted brioche. Hard to turn your nose away from this intoxicating perfume. Delicious red and black fruit core with ripe, soft tannins, and a subtle citrus underpinning. Appealing finesse and impeccable balance. Fresher and richer than the excellent 2006 vintage. Still great two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Choose any superlative you want.*



2008 Freestone Vineyards Pastorale Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 143 cases, \$100

Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Great nose indicating something serious is to follow. A chameleon of a wine that changes constantly in the glass. Aromas of black cherries, exotic spices including cardamom, red rose petals and the slightest sweet oak. You would need to empty your entire spice cabinet into a bin of grape juice to duplicate the complex nuances and mysteries of this nose. The core is a mix of berries and stone fruits with an edgy, savage character from the whole cluster. Brisk and bright, satiny in the mouth, this wine is flat-out great. Tasted over the next two days from an opened and re-corked bottle, the wine held forth its allure indicating a long life ahead. A connoisseur's Pinot Noir.



2008 Gypsy Canyon Trois Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 75 cases, \$95 *Moderately deep reddish-purple color in the glass. Very lovely perfume of black cherries spiced with coriander, savory and sweet smoke. Luscious melange of dark berries and plums with a subtle underpinning of oak and tobacco. A welcoming silky texture and a bombastic peacock finish adds to the pleasure. Quite different from previous Gypsy Canyon Pinot Noirs with more backbone and fruit intensity, but still showing plenty of feminine charm. Great winemaking at work here. Man, what a wine and a novel package to boot.*



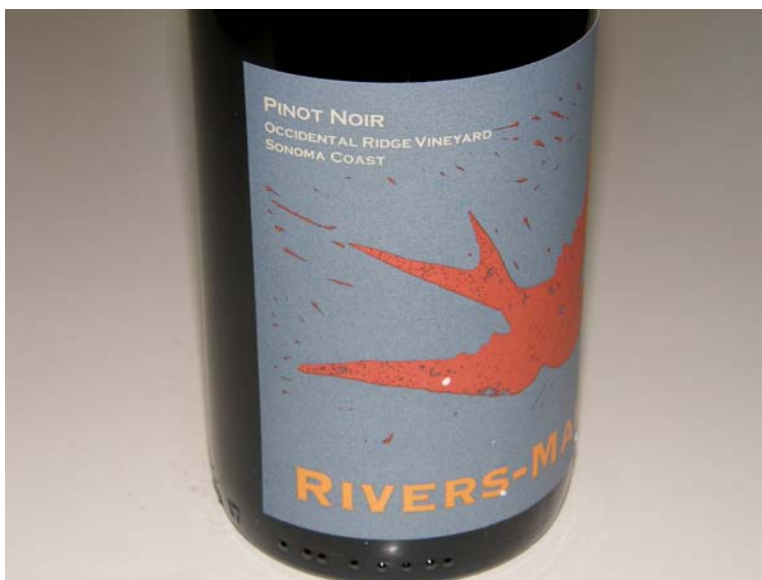
2008 Littorai Mays Canyon Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$65 Moderately dark reddish-purple robe. Very expressive and forward nose that is constantly changing in the glass offering scents of spiced Bing cherries, alpine strawberries, cola, mocha and toast. Crisp and delicious on the palate featuring darker red cherries and berries with just the right amount of oak and spice in the background. A cherry delight on the bright finish. A kick-ass Pinot that displays the typically luscious Russian River Valley fruit beautifully. You can drink it now for its flamboyant fruit, but it will further reward patience. Still great the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.



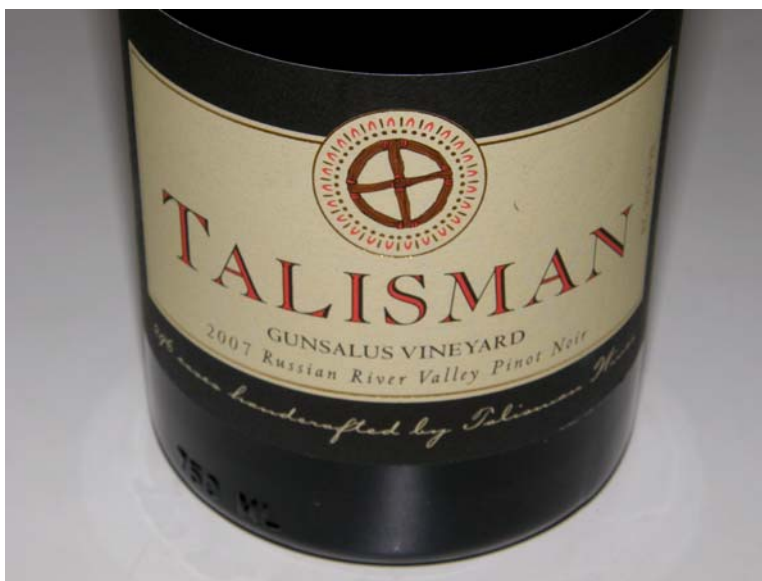
2008 Mount Eden Vineyards Estate Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 985 cases, \$46 Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Nicely composed aromatic profile of cherries, strawberries, savory herbs, and oak blossoming in the glass over time. A magnificent Burgundian styled wine with vivid, high-pitched red cherry, raspberry and cranberry flavors framed by lively acidity and fine grain tannins, and beautifully underlain with minerality. This wine has the balance to age for 20 years. After so many years at the helm, winemaker Jeffrey Patterson knows his vineyard and consistently offers Pinot Noir styled with the type of charm and restraint that is often lacking in so many fruit driven California Pinot Noirs. This wine really does taste like it came from a special place. A great food wine that should be cause for celebration.



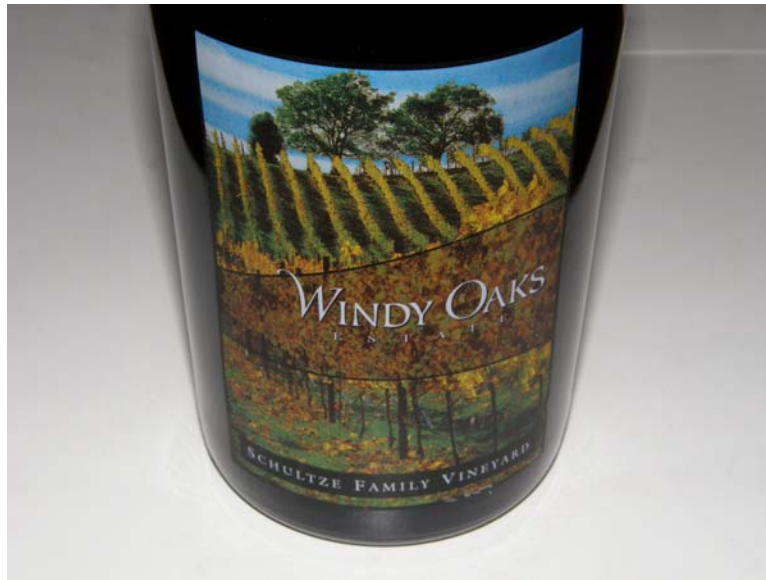
2008 Rivers-Marie Occidental Ridge Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 225 cases, \$45 *This one will make the hair on your neck stand erect. Lovely aromas of freshly picked red and black berries and cherries nicely spiced with hints of oak and sage. In the mouth I was at a loss for descriptors. My notes say, "Amazing fruit, want more, really attacks, great juice, class in the glass." This wine has that California fruit viscosity that makes you proud to be an American, and an addictive and refreshing ending in which the fragrance returns to haunt the finish. It was scary that this wine was even better later in the day from a bottle opened earlier in the morning. Imagine what this wine will be like in a couple of years!*



2007 Talisman Gunsalus Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 296 cases, \$36 *Impressive fruit expression on the nose and in the mouth with a seamless texture. Spiced Bing cherries, cherry cola and nutmeg fill out the aromatic and flavor profile. The oak is perfectly integrated, the tannins are ripe and silky, and the finish is long and memorable. I could drink this all night long. Still great the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. An engaging, age worthy Pinot Noir that has all the right stuff.*



2005 Windy Oaks Special Burgundy Clone Schultze Family Vineyard Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir \$95 *A specially embossed bottle adds to the appeal. Moderate burnished red rose color in the glass. Fresh aromas of mixed berries, chocolate truffle, spice, flower garden and a hint of oak. Delicious strawberry and black cherry core nicely spiced with a subtle kick of acidity on the striking finish that seems to persist for a minute. The layers of flavor seem to defy proper description. Very soft and plush on the palate. This is a very unique wine that is in a class of its own.*



2010 California Pinot Noir All-Americans Second Team

2008 Arista Mononi Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 258 cases, \$56 *Stunning and nuanced aromatic profile featuring spiced berries, rose petals and violets picking up intensity with time in the glass. This wine has all the charm and delicacy one could ask for combined with a tasty and hearty core of cherry, strawberry and cola flavors, harmoniously supported by soft tannins and bright acidity. The whole package.*

2007 BPinot (Bybee) Vineyards & Habitat Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 196 cases, \$49 *Very charming aromas of dark red berries, brioche and subtle oak. Lovely cherry and berry flavor that packs a wallop yet the wine remains light on its feet. A dynamite wine that is well dressed and ephemeral with supple tannins that allow for early drinking but possessing the balance to stay the course. The finish sails on for what seems like a minute. A special wine that you can spend the night with.*

2007 Clos Saron Home Vineyard Sierra Foothills Pinot Noir 82 cases, \$45 *Moderate reddish-purple in the glass. The nose is striking and the most flamboyant in a vertical tasting of Clos Saron wines. The profuse aromas of fresh berries, rose petals and exotic spices are mesmerizing. Intensely fruity with flavors of black raspberries, cassis, olallieberries, Oolong tea, cola and unidentified spice notes. This is one of those wines that really makes you want to take another sip. Seamless and harmonious in every way. You can drink this wine now for its hedonistic aromas and flavors, but this is one you will want to dance with after more maturation in the bottle. I was stoked over this Pinot.*

2008 Davis Family Vineyards Soul Patch Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$42 *Captivating perfume of rich and deep ripe dark berries with a hint of dried rose hips and cut flowers. Mouth coating flavors of fresh picked black raspberries and blackberries that attack the mid palate with a vengeance and persist on the lush and long finish. This wine is striking in its impeccable balance and sexy, silky texture. Class in the glass.*

2008 duMOL finn Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 363 cases, \$80 *A stunning wine with complex aromas and flavors of dark fruits, cut flowers, underbrush, earth and spice. Still has tannins to shed but offers a big mouthful of hedonistic flavor that coats every nook and cranny in the mouth. The tremendous fruit concentration is well buffered by the tannins and acidity. A superb wine that will thoroughly please any Pinot Noir lover.*

2008 de Coelo Terra Neuma Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$69 *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Exotic and complex nose offering scents of wild berries, truffle, wine cask and forest floor. Luscious core of dark berries that cling to the finish. Earth, mineral, oak and cola undertones add interest. The fruit is vivid, framed by soft tannins and complimented by crisp acidity. A seamless wine that picks up interest over several hours in the glass. A Pinot Noir unbridled by convention.*

2008 Littorai B.A. Thieriot Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$65 *Moderately dark in color and in intensity. Very sexy perfume of rose petals and fresh Pinot fruit basket. Would love to bottle this aroma. I always find this wine seductive and this vintage is no exception. That is not to say that it is ready to drink, for it is still somewhat ponderous, the delicious core of purple berries and plums only teasingly apparent at present. Thick with fruit wrapped in velvety tannins, this beauty wows you now, but will be more amazing in a few years. This wine is why Pinot is my paramour.*

2008 Olivia Brion Heron Lake Vineyard Wild Horse Valley Pinot Noir 680 cases, \$37 *Dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Shy initially, but opens with time in the glass. More savory than fruity, with aromas of ripe, darker berry fruit, violets and the slightest hint of mint. An interesting wine driven by exotic spices, dark berry fruit and cola. The wine really shines with time in the glass, bringing together healthy tannins, zingy acidity, uplifting minerality and hearty fruit into a very enjoyable drink. This is one of those little known and little touted labels that surprises with a very unique and lovable Pinot Noir.*

2008 Red Car Dreamland Platt Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$60 *Moderately deep color in the glass. Very shy initially, opening slowly to reveal lovely scents of plums, berries, sandalwood and spice. Very soft, even ephemeral, dark berry and plum fruit which lightly coats the mouth building to a generous and lengthy finish. This wine seduces you slowly, finishing you off with a memorable climax.*

2008 Sojourn Sangiacomo Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 580 cases, \$48 *Plenty of Pinot singing here beginning with enticing aromas of mixed berry jam and spice box including cardamom. Delicious rainbow of berry fruits discreetly concentrated and beautifully layered. Silky smooth in the mouth with remarkable persistence on the aromatic finish. The fruit is pulled into perfect alignment with fine acidity and tannin, and the oak adds just the right nuances. Heaven sent.*

2008 Thomas Fogarty Rapley Trail Vineyard Block B Estate Grown Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir <50 cases, \$68 *Very expressive aromas of wild berries, violets, brioche, graham and a hint of smoky oak. A delicious panoply of fruit flavors that really stick to your mouth. Dark red berries and strawberries are in abundance with undertones of savory herbs and forest floor. This wine's character supersedes the delicious fruit. Brilliantly crafted and beautifully proportioned with an impeccable balance that predicts a long life ahead.*



2010 California Pinot Noir All-Americans Honorable Mention

2008 Alysian Rochioli Vineyard River Block Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 233 cases, \$65
2008 Alysian Floodgate Vineyard Rock Hill Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 233 cases, \$55
2007 Alysian Hallberg Vineyard Crossroads Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 230 cases, \$55
2008 Arista La Cruz Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 258 cases, \$56
2008 August Briggs Dijon Clones Napa Valley Pinot Noir 805 cases, \$40
2007 Auteur Manchester Ridge Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir \$35
2007 B. Kosuge Wines Manchester Ridge Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir 300 cases, \$38
2008 B.R. Cohn Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 1,700 cases, \$40
2008 Big Basin Vineyards Alfaro Family Vineyards Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 105 cases, \$48
2007 Bjornstad Hellenthal Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 152 cases, \$40
2007 Bjornstad van der Kamp Vineyard Sonoma Mountain Pinot Noir 128 cases, \$60
2007 BPinot (Bybee) Vineyards & Habitat Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 396 cases, \$39
2007 Barnett Vineyards Savoy Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 414 cases, \$46.50
2008 Belle Glos Clark & Telephone Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir \$50
2007 Benovia Savoy Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir \$55
2008 Brogan Cellars Buena Tierra Vineyard Helio Doro Block Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$90
2007 Calera Jensen Vineyard Mt. Harlan Pinot Noir 1,113 cases, \$70
2007 Calera Selleck Vineyard Mt. Harlan Pinot Noir 411 cases, \$75
2008 C. Donatiello Floodgate Vineyard Old Vines Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 115 cases, \$55
2007 Canihan Family Cellars Sonoma Valley Pinot Noir 290 cases, \$39
2007 Carr Vineyards & Winery Turner Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 299 cases, \$40
2008 Carr Vineyards & Winery Kessler-Haak Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 98 cases, \$50
2008 Castalia Rochioli Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$50
2007 Ceritas Escarpa Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 130 cases, \$54
2007 Chasseur Rayhill Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 100 cases, \$50
2007 Chronicle Wines Cerise Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 556 cases, \$55
2007 Claudia Springs Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 372 cases, \$28*
2007 Clos Pepe Estate Clos Pepe Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 550 cases, \$54
2006 Clos Saron Home Vineyard Sierra Foothills Pinot Noir 78 cases, \$45
2007 Cobb Coastlands Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 240 cases, \$68
2007 Cobb Joy Road Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 240 cases, \$68
2007 Cobb Coastlands Vineyard Diane Cobb Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 145 cases, \$72
2006 Cobb Emmaline Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 166 cases, \$72
2006 Cobb Rice-Spivak Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 495 cases, \$72
2006 Davis Family Vineyards PinnaCole Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 70 cases, \$60
2008 de coelo Quintus Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$69
2007 Dehlinger Estate Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$48
2008 De La Montanya Reserve Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 48 cases, \$45
2008 Desmond Estate Vineyards Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 80 cases, \$36
2007 Donum Estate Grown Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$65
2008 Drew Wines Valenti Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir 362 cases, \$36
2008 DuMOL aiden Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 377 cases, \$80
2007 Dutton Estate Winery Karmen-Isabella Green Valley Pinot Noir 625 cases, \$30
2007 Dutton-Goldfield McDougall Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 198 cases, \$58
2008 Dutton-Goldfield Dutton Ranch Sanchiotti Vineyard Green Valley Pinot Noir 345 cases, \$58
2007 Esterlina Vineyards Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 611 cases, \$45
2008 Foppiano Vineyards Estate Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 800 cases, \$25*
2007 Foursight Wines Clone 5 Charles Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 97 cases, \$49
2008 Freeman Vineyard & Winery Akiko's Cuvée Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 420 cases, \$56
2008 Freestone Vineyards Quarter Moon Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 120 cases, \$100
2007 Freestone Vineyards Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$55
2008 Furthermore Amber Ridge Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 75 cases, \$40
2007 Gary Farrell Rochioli Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 519 cases, \$65
2008 Gary Farrell Hallberg Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 527 cases, \$50

2008 George Ceremonial Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 315 cases, \$50
 2007 Goldeneye Confluence Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 516 cases, \$75
 2007 Goldeneye Ten Degrees Estate Grown Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 222 cases, \$100
 2007 Graton Ridge Cellars Paul Family Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$36*
 2007 Greenwood Ridge Vineyards Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir 875 cases, \$30*
 2007 Halleck Vineyard Hallberg Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$55
 2007 Hanzell Sonoma Valley Pinot Noir 1,361 cases, \$95
 2008 Harrington Krause Vineyard San Francisco Bay Pinot Noir 175 cases, \$35
 2008 Harrington Gap's Crown Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 175 cases, \$40
 2007 J Vineyards & Winery Barrel 16 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 300 cases, \$70
 2008 Kanzler Vineyards Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$48
 2007 Keefer Ranch Green Valley of Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 243 cases, \$42
 2007 Keller Estate El Coro Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 309 cases, \$52
 2006 Kistler Occidental Station Vineyard Cuvée Catherine Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 528 cases, \$90
 2008 Kokomo Peters Vineyard Winemaker's Reserve Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 485 cases, \$48
 2007 Kosta Browne 4-Barrel Sonoma County Pinot Noir 91 cases, \$72
 2008 LIOCO Graham Family Vineyard Green Valley of Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$40
 2007 LIOCO Klindt Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 265 cases, \$45
 2008 Littorai Platt Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$60
 2007 Littorai Savoy Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir \$60
 2008 Longoria Fe Ciega Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 616 cases, \$48
 2008 Loring Wine Co. Graham Family Vineyard Green Valley of Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$40
 2006 MacMurray Ranch Winemaker's Block Selection Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 400 cases, \$60
 2008 Meiomi California Pinot Noir by Belle Glos \$24*
 2008 Pali Wine Co. Fiddlestix Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 125 cases, \$44
 2007 Prodigal Quinta Santa Rosa Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 92 cases, \$55
 2008 Red Car Heaven & Earth La Boheme Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$60
 2008 Rivers-Marie Summa Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 200 cases, \$45
 2008 Rivers-Marie Summa Vineyard Old Vines Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 175 cases, \$60
 2007 Scherrer Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$40
 2008 Siduri Wines Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir 611 cases, \$30*
 2008 Siduri Wines Amber Ridge Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 147 cases, \$45
 2007 Signaterra Benziger Bella Luna Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 1,350 cases, \$49
 2007 Signaterra Benziger San Remo Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 650 cases, \$49
 2008 Sojourn Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 550 cases, \$39
 2007 Talisman Hawk Hill Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 169 cases, \$46
 2007 The Ojai Vineyard Clos Pepe Vineyard Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir \$37.40
 2008 Valerie's Vineyard Carneros Pinot Noir <100 cases, \$40
 2007 Varner Spring Ridge Vineyard Hidden Block Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir \$35*
 2007 Walter Hansel Hansel Family Vineyards Cuvée Alyce Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$36
 2008 Williams Selyem Eastside Road Neighbors Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$49
 2008 Williams Selyem Allen Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$78
 2008 Williams Selyem rochioli Riverblock Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$78
 2007 Williams Selyem Flax Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$54
 2007 Williams Selyem Weir Vineyard Yorkville Highlands Pinot Noir \$56
 2007 Williams Selyem Rochioli Riverblock Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$75
 2007 Williams Selyem Precious Mountain Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$90
 2007 Windy Oaks Limited Release Wood Tank Fermented Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir \$55
 2007 Woodenhead Humboldt County Pinot Noir \$40
 2007 Woodenhead Buena Terra Original Plantings Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$57

* These wines received both a Pinot Geek and Value Icon

2010 Oregon Pinot Noir All-Americans First Team

2008 Antica Terra Botanica Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 185 cases, \$75 *The nose is reticent initially, becoming more charming with time in the glass eventually showing a melange of berry fruits, Herbs de Provence and a hint of oak. Lovely depth and richness of flavor featuring the entire array of berries including boysenberry, blackberry and strawberry with an underpinning of savory herbs. A charming wine with supple tannins, bright acidity and fruit all in perfect harmony. Needs plenty of foreplay (decanting) to drink now. A magnificent effort that will reward long term cellaring.*



2008 Big Table Farm Resonance Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 94 cases, \$45 *Rich, deep, brooding dark red fruits with a savory underpinning of chanterelle mushrooms, loamy earth and cardamom spice. This wine has impressive intensity on the mid palate, a pillowy texture, and a finish like a three hour movie you don't want to end. Still a little closed, seemingly possessing more hidden charm waiting to get out. Cellar this wine for at least two years for ultimate gratification. Love the low alcohol (13.1%). A very heavenly and sensual pleasure.*



2008 Carabella Inchinnan Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 150 cases, \$54
Moderate reddish-purple hue in the glass. Picks up aromatic intensity in the glass over time offering a plethora of aromas of dark stone fruits, allspice, rose petals, and a hint of cut flowers. Delicious dark plum and blackberry fruit flavors with a bit of sauvage, with eye-opening mid palate intensity, yet still only hinting at its future potential. Very smoothly textured with amazing persistence on the prodigious finish. A benchmark Pinot Noir for Oregon in 2008 that will be nothing short of spectacular in five years.



2008 Lange Estate Winery & Vineyards Lange Estate Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 295 cases, \$60
Dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Very complex aromatics that constantly change in the glass revealing a diverse perfume of dark fruits, baking spices, underbrush, toast and smoke. Charming dark red and black fruit profile with well integrated oak toast and spice. Impressive persistence on the aromatic finish that sails along. Big, yet more demure than the Lange Freedom Hill bottling with more emphasis on redder fruits. Beautifully composed with welcoming harmony. Definitely needs more time but can be a dinner table centerpiece now with decanting. It is wines like this that make Pinot my paramour.

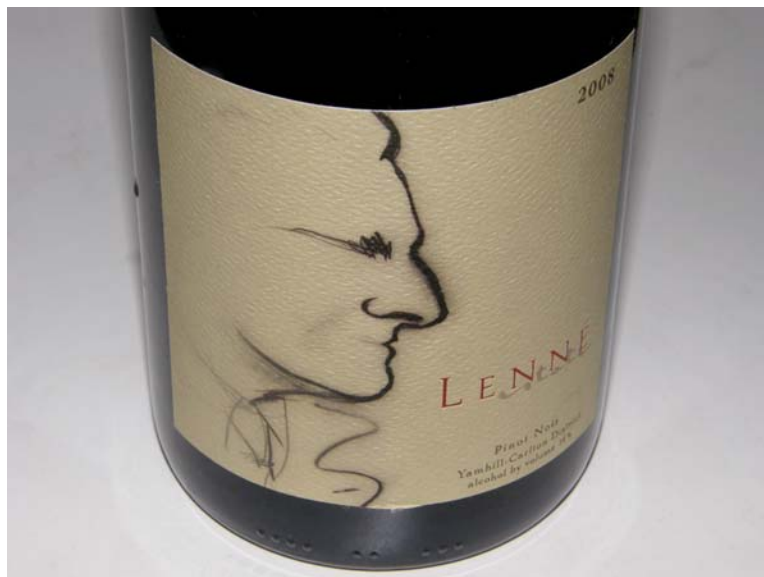


2008 Laura Volkman Rachel Estate Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$40

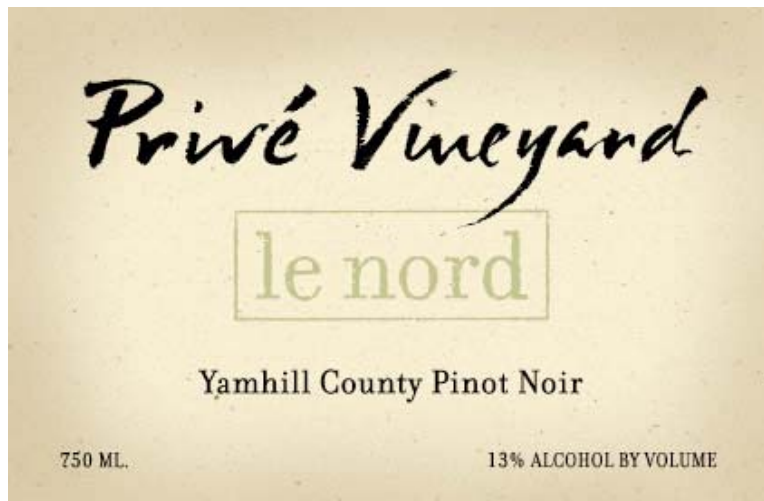
Moderate reddish-purple hue in the glass. Very charming scents of plum sauce, mixed berry tart and spice box that led me to write, "You gotta be kidding me!" The attack of dark red cherries and berries is ripe, juicy and vivid augmented by flavors of cherry skins and savory herbs. Slightly more weight than the 2007 version of this wine, but not weighty. Finely tuned tannins and impeccable balance. The cherry aromas linger on the finish for more than 30 seconds. This is the kind of Pinot Noir that drives normal people to do almost anything to get their hands on some. Very approachable now, but built to last another 7 to 10 years easily.



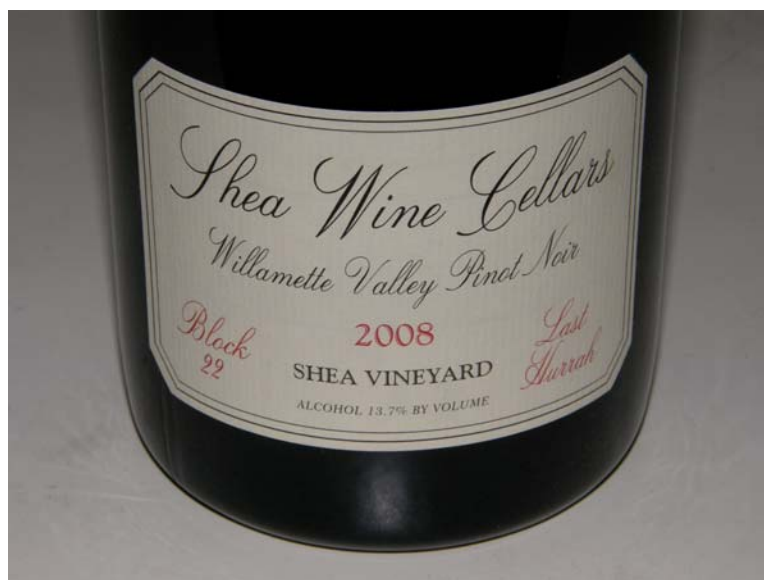
2008 Lenné Estate Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 496 cases, \$45 *The nose (see label) offers a panoply of different red and black fruit aromas including cherries, strawberries and red currents with an underpinning of smoky oak. Flat out delicious array of pristine fruit including black raspberries and cherries. Lovely accents of loamy earth and mocha. Highly persistent and intensely aromatic finish. A seamless wine from a magical piece of dirt.*



2008 Privé Vineyard le nord Yamhill County Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$49 *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Lovely aromas of black cherries, black raspberries and a hint of exotic spices. Rich and forthcoming with a blackberry and black cherry core clothed in caressing tannins and possessing the right touch of balancing acidity. More lush and forward than the Privé le sud bottling. A dreamy wine with a creamy texture that is approachable now but will benefit with more time in the cellar. If this wine was a lover instead of a wine, it is the one that would make you abandon your family, leave your job, and forfeit your hard-won position in the community for just one more fling.*



2008 Shea Wine Cellars Block 22 "Last Hurrah" Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$55 *Moderately dark reddish-purple hue in the glass. Demure but pleasing aromas of fresh red berries, graham and violets. Delicious core of red cherries and blueberries. Beautifully composed with vivid and well-focused flavors, fine ground gossamer tannins, a velvety texture, and an amazingly long and aromatic finish that is flat out stunning. A wine to treasure that is the last of its kind from Shea Vineyard. Drink some history.*



2008 St. Innocent White Rose Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$60 Moderate reddish-purple color. Shy but lovely perfume of fresh pie cherries with a sniff of smoky oak. An immensely satisfying wine offering delicious black cherry and berry flavors with a hint of citrus peel in the background. Astonishing persistence of cherry essence on the finish. Silky in the mouth with balanced supple tannins. This wine really grabs your attention and holds on. You can drink it now with grilled salmon, but it will be even better with more time in the cellar.



2008 White Rose Estate White Rose Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

176 cases, \$75 Moderately deep ruby color in the glass. Shy but haunting aromas of black cherries, grilled meat and spice. A black tie, sophisticated wine that is still a bit stiff and formal and needs time to unwind. That said, it offers a perfect balance of perfectly ripe cherry and berry fruit, vital acidity and refined tannins. The silky mouth feel adds to the allure. The beauty of this wine grows on you over time in the glass and is spectacular the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Very classy, age worthy juice.



2008 White Rose Estate Whole Cluster White Rose Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 98 cases, \$75 *Gorgeous perfume of cherries flush with baking spices including cinnamon, with added notes of rose petals and sandalwood. Happy to just smell this wine. Stylish and expressive on the palate, the luscious fruit is alive with charm accented by exotic spices and edible flower with plenty of firm tannin to balance the fruit. Never fades in the glass, pumping out lively aromas and flavors until the glass is emptied. I am a sucker for whole cluster done right and this wine really delivers.*



2010 Oregon Pinot Noir All-Americans Second Team

2007 Alexana Revana Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$38 *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Lovely and seductive nose which hints of gardenias upon opening, evolving to reveal aromas of strawberry tart, baking spices and red cherries. Soft and elegant on the palate with gossamer tannins, offering the delicious essence of fresh red berry fruits with herbs, toasty oak, and spices under tow. A feminine expression of typical Dundee Hills Pinot Noir that holds considerable charm.*

2007 Anam Cara Cellars Estate Reserve Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 280 cases, \$45 *Alluring perfume of blackberries, plum sauce and tea with a hint of oak. Rich but not cloying array of berry fruits that are thoroughly engaging. Admirable finesse, perfect harmony and a finish that keeps you coming back for more. Great two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. A keeper that is liquid nobility.*

2008 Benton Lane Estate Grown First Class Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 740 cases, \$60 *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Wonderful perfume of spiced dark cherry and berry fruits, anise, and rose petals, picking up intensity over time. Delicious raspberry and cherry cola flavors cloaked in ripe, fine-grain tannins leading to a pleasingly aromatic and persistent finish. A sophisticated wine that is both sensual and beautifully crafted. This wine will find many fans.*

2008 Carabella Mistake Block Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 90 cases, \$55 *All the Pinot fruits are represented in the nose with some added floral interest and spice. Very tasty melange of dark red berries, black cherries and plums with an earthy undertone. Constantly intriguing, revealing nuances with every sip. Pleasingly smooth in the mouth with firm but silky tannins. I just love the seamless texture of this beautiful wine.*

2008 Lange Estate Winery & Vineyards Freedom Hills Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 250 cases, \$60 *Restrained aromas of black cherries and blackberries with smoky oak taking charge. Big and juicy, thick and viscous, with serious fruit intensity. Dark fruits dominate the profile with an underlying earthiness. Mildly firm tannins reel in the massive fruit, and should soften with aging. This is a huge wine that will make many California Pinots seem wimpy in comparison. Needs time to shed its oak, integrate the tannins and tame the explosion of fruit. An amazing gulp of old vines fruit. Ride this wine to heaven in a few years.*

2008 Laura Volkman Jacob Estate Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$50 *An alluring nose of exotic scents including dark red raspberries, rose petals, Asian spices and seasoned oak. A challenge to adequately describe. Very tasty essence of fresh fruits including plums, berries and pomegranates veering more to the purple spectrum. Ridiculously silky and almost ephemeral, like swallowing flavored air. A wonderful wine with mature dry tannins perfectly balanced by the ripe fruit and lively acidity. Can be drunk now for its hedonistic fruit, but will reward further cellaring and provide several years of drinking enjoyment*

2008 LaVelle Vineyards Matthew's Reserve Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 430 cases, \$36 *Moderate reddish-purple hue in the glass. Somewhat brooding initially, but opening nicely with coaxing to reveal an intense perfume of fresh darker berries and cherries with a subtle savory and floral note. More structured and intense than the winery's regular Willamette Valley bottling, with tasty flavors of cassis, black cherry and anise augmented by a note of loamy earth and oak in the background. The impressive depth of flavors really grabs your attention. Drinks easily now but will be better with another year or two of cellaring. A Pinot Noir that deserves the Reserve designation.*

2008 Pali Wine Co. Momtazi Vineyard McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 150 cases, \$44 *This is a charming wine with pleasing aromas of dark stone fruits and raspberries with an undertone of sweet oak. Ornate and well-delineated flavors of juicy cherries and berries with a subtle loamy undertow that is typical of the McMinnville appellation. Very slick with a soft texture much like a baby's bottom. Everything sings in harmony with perfectly balanced t n' a. Still drank beautifully the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle indicating age ability.*

2008 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Block 5 Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$55
Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. You can really cozy up to this wine. Lovely perfume of blackberry jam, spice, mocha and that floral Sheaness. Like greased lightning on the palate with a delicious red and black berry core including alpine strawberries and red plums. Very harmonious with ripe, firm tannins and a generous, slightly warm finish that sails along. Even better the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. I am not usually a fan of single Dijon clone (777 in this case) Pinot Noirs, but it definitely works here.

2007 Sineann Wyeast Vineyard Columbia Gorge Pinot Noir \$35
Patience is required to fully enjoy this wine. I found that it grows on you as it becomes significantly better over time in the glass. Appealing aromas of dark red cherries and berries with a hint of toasty oak emerge. On the palate, there is a delicious essence of fresh cherries and berries with a hint of soy and cherry skins. Beautifully balanced with bright acidity on the showy finish which sails along. This wine clearly shows the promising potential for Pinot Noir in the Hood River region of Oregon.

2008 Willamette Valley Vineyards Fuller Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 25 cases, \$100
Moderately intense reddish-purple color in the glass. Shy but pleasing aromas of berry compote, currants, raisins and supporting oak. Impressive core of juicy darker berry fruits framed by bright acidity and wrapped in soft fruit tannins. Discreetly proportioned in body and weight with deft use of oak. Flat out terrific four days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. A very special collectable wine that will reward the patient.



2010 Oregon Pinot Noir All-Americans Honorable Mention

- 2008 Anne Amie Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$35
- 2008 Antica Terra Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 185 cases, \$75
- 2009 Big Table Farm Resonance Vnyd Yamhill-Carlton Dist. Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 190 cases, \$48.
- 2009 Big Table Farm Cattrall Brothers Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$45
- 2008 Cornerstone Cellars Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 50 cases, \$45
- 2007 Domaine Drouhin Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$40
- 2006 Domaine Drouhin Lauréne Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$65
- 2008 Et Fille Kalita Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 206 cases, \$38
- 2008 Et Fille Maresh Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 100 cases, \$42
- 2008 Ken Wright Cellars Shea Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$42
- 2008 Lenné Estate Sad Jack 777 Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 49 cases, \$52
- 2008 Lenné Estate Karen's Pommard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 49 cases, \$55
- 2008 Penner-Ash Dussin Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$40
- 2008 Phelps Creek Cuvée Alexandrine Columbia Gorge Pinot Noir \$40
- 2008 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Homer \$80
- 2007 Soter Mineral Springs Ranch Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$40
- 2008 St. Innocent Shea Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$42

2010 Value Priced Pinot Noir All-Americans

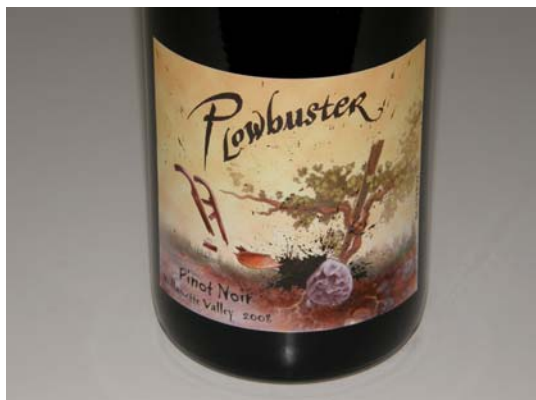
**“Times getting rough I ain’t got enough
To buy me a bottle of wine”**

Bottle of Wine, Tom Paxton

With the economic pinch, many more producers have entered the value priced marketplace and there are many solid drinkers now available in the under \$35 category. Wineries are frequently offering discounts for six or twelve bottle purchases and even reduced or free shipping, making these wines even more value priced. The wines listed here give you the most Pinot for the buck.

Oregon

- 2008 Alchemist Cellars Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$25
- 2008 Benton Lane Estate Grown Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 16,670 cases, \$26
- 2008 Cardwell Hill Cellars Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$24
- 2008 Coeur de Terre Vineyard McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 473 cases, \$20
- 2008 Coeur de Terre Vineyard Estate McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$34
- 2008 Cristom Mt. Jefferson Cuvée Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$26
- 2007 Et Fille Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 931 cases, \$24
- 2008 Evening Land Vineyards Oregon Pinot Noir \$25
- 2008 Fox Farm Vineyards Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 292 cases, \$28
- 2008 Haden Fig Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$25
- 2008 Laura Volkman St. James Estate Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$25
- 2008 La Velle Vineyards Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 635 cases, \$24
- 2008 Le Nez Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$30
- 2008 Longplay “Jory Bench Reserve” Lia’s Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 287 cases, \$30
- 2008 Plowbuster Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$21
- 2008 St. Innocent Temperance Hill Eola-Amity Hills Pinot Noir 656 cases, \$29
- 2006 Tye Wine Cellars Estate Barrel Select Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$30
- 2008 Westrey Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$20
- 2008 Westrey Oracle Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$25
- 2008 WildAire Cellars Timothy Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$20



California

- 2007 Anaba J McK Vineyard Carneros Pinot Noir \$28
- 2007 Buena Vista Carneros 25,213 cases, \$25
- 2007 Calstar Cellars Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$22
- 2006 & 2007 Cambria Julia's Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir \$25
- 2005 Copeland Creek Vineyards Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir \$30
- 2007 Domaine Carneros Carneros Pinot Noir \$35
- 2007 Eric K James Carneros Pinot Noir \$25
- 2007 Etude Estate Grown Carneros Pinot Noir \$30
- 2007 & 2008 Fogdog Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 8,000 cases, \$35
- 2007 Forchini Vineyards & Winery Proprietor's Reserve Est Grown Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$26
- 2007 Handley Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 4,029 cases, \$30
- 2007 Grey Stack Bennett Valley Cuvée Sonoma County 175 cases, \$26
- 2007 Husch Anderson Valley Pinot Noir \$23
- 2007 J Vineyards & Winery Russian River Valley Pinot Noir \$35
- 2007 Kendall-Jackson Vintner's Reserve California Pinot Noir \$16
- 2007 Kendric Vineyards Marin County Pinot Noir 368 cases, \$34
- 2008 Mark West California Pinot Noir \$10
- 2008 Melville Estate Verna's Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir \$20
- 2008 Pali Wine Co. Summit Central Coast Pinot Noir 252 cases, \$29
- 2006 Philo Ridge Vineyards Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 410 cases, \$19
- 2006 River Road Vineyards & Winery Stephanie's Vineyard Green Valley of Russian River Valley \$16
- 2008 Rivers-Marie Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 225 cases, \$25
- 2006 Roederer Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 397 cases, \$23
- 2008 & 2009 Sean Minor 4 Bears Winery Carneros Pinot Noir \$17
- 2006 Soquel Vineyards Partner's Reserve Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir \$20
- 2008 The Line Wines "The Racing Line" Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 150 cases, \$34
- 2008 Thomas Fogarty Santa Cruz Mountains Pinot Noir 1,593 cases, \$29
- 2008 Trinitas Cellars Carneros Pinot Noir 880 cases, \$28
- 2007 Verve Carneros Pinot Noir 410 cases, \$24
- 2008 Verve Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 100 cases, \$28



2010 New Zealand Noteworthy Imports

Top Performers

2006 Dry River Martinborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$80 *Syrah-like color and structure. Very contemplative nose showing nuanced scents of a variety of wild dark berries, with considerable oak-derived notes of spice, browned marshmallow, brandy and vanilla. Utterly amazing intense and saturating sun-kissed flavors of plums, blackberries and currants with a savory, woody undertone, and a hint of tangerine peel on the extremely long finish. Easy to mistake for a young Grand Cru Burgundy with the biggest tip off being the amazing persistence at the end. Beautifully balanced for the long haul. Still exceptional the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle displaying more softness and harmony. A truly unique wine of great distinction that stands out from the New Zealand crowd. Serve this wine blind to any of your Pinot geek buddies, let them try to guess where it is from, and you will find many surprised winos.*

2008 Dry River Martinborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$95 *Moderately deep reddish-purple hue in the glass. Amazingly vivid array of dark fruit aromas including hi-tone raspberry with nuances of tea and dried rose petals. Delicious and well-mannered complex of cherry and berry flavors with a very subtle leafy note. Seamless and seductive with flavors that caress the mouth and fan out beautifully on the lush and generous finish. More elegant and approachable than some vintages of this wine. One of the world's greatest Pinot Noirs and one of the most spellbinding Pinot Noirs I have sampled this year.*

2008 Felton Road Calvert Vineyard Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir \$59 *Darker in color than the regular blended bottling. Subdued aromas of black cherries, plum sauce and woodshed. Delicious core of black cherries and dark berries front and center with complimentary savory herbs and spices. Well-structured with a balancing edge of acidity and moderate tannins. Velvety and very sensual in the mouth. Still very young and will need some cellaring to shed and integrate the tannins.*

2008 Felton Road Cornish Point Vineyard Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir \$50 *Moderately dark ruby in the glass. Haunting perfume of dark stone fruits with hints of oak, compost and pine. Mouth watering and juicy with bright flavors of earth-kissed black cherries, plum sauce, cola, and nutmeg. Well-proportioned tannins and acidity with pleasing persistence of the fruit flavors on the finish. Drinkable now, but can cellar with confidence as it will age effortlessly. The stuff that Pinot dreams are made of.*

2008 Felton Road Block 3 Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir \$65 *Darkest of the 2008 Felton Road wines reviewed. Brooding and tight with a hint of smoky black fruits and toasted oak. Picks up fruit intensity and interest over time in the glass. Moderately dense core of earth-laden black plum and cassis fruit with accents of oak. Grand Cru Burgundy flavor intensity and finish. The tannins are still flamboyant and the wine is reluctant to give up its charm now, but will be great in several years. Still closed the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Don't even think about popping the cork for three to five years.*

2008 Felton Road Block 5 Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir \$65 *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Aggressive aromas of dark Bing cherries, forest floor, spice and pencil lead. Dense and unctuous black cherry core with citrus in the background. Fine-tuned tannins buffer the acidity beautifully. An exceptional wine that is really big and really good, but needs time for full expression. Tasted the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the fruit was more giving but cellaring is definitely indicated. For grown-ups only.*

2007 Neudorf Moutere Nelson New Zealand \$48 *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure but pleasing aromas of darker cherry and berry fruits including black currants with a subtle underpinning of oak. The dark fruit veers to the ripe side but is very tasty. Seamless with a refreshing acid tang on the finish. Even better the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle offering an impressive display of fruit and a peacock finish. Worth a search.*

2008 Palliser Estate The Great Walter Martinborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$55 *Moderately reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure aromas of dark berry jam and subtle oak. Delicious dark berry core that really attacks the mid palate with a vengeance. Hints of Dr. Pepper and tobacco add interest. Oak has a*

definite presence but is beautifully married to the fruit. Soft in the mouth, this wine really grows on you over time in the glass.

2007 Pyramid Valley Vineyards Growers Collection Calvert Vineyard Central Otago New Zealand

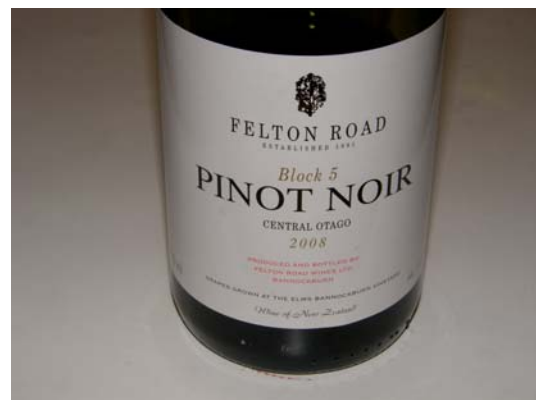
700 cases, \$44. Deeply colored trending to the purple spectrum. Lovely black cherry and blackberry fruit aromas initially, fading some over time revealing a more savory spectrum of scents including underbrush, green garden and the slightest oak. The moderately dense red and black fruits have an earthy side and a presence on the palate that demands your attention. Juicy and silky textured with fine-grain tannins and a clean finish, with a beautifully harmonious composition that can age. A metrosexual wine: fairly masculine intensity with a soft and elegant presence.

2008 Rippon Mature Vine Lake Wanaka Central Otago Pinot Noir 1,989 cases, \$54 Charming aromas of dark stone fruits and berries, exotic woods and subtle oak spice. Moderately rich and mouth filling essence of dark grapes and berries with a hint of spice and minerals. Soft and satiny leaving a satisfying impression on the generous and lively finish. The most forward of the three 2008 Rippon Pinot Noirs tasted and quite showy for this vineyard.

2008 Rippon Emma's Block Mature Vine Lake Wanaka Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir \$74 Shy but very pleasing scent of dark fruits, dried rose petals and leather, gathering intensity with time in the glass. Delicious mouthful of dark red cherries and berries. Very crisp and juicy with fine proportioned tannins and a silky follow through. A seductive drink now, but tremendous upside potential.

2008 Rippon Tinker's Field Mature Vine Lake Wanaka Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir \$92 This wine smells of the outdoors with scents of wooded forest, wet leaves, darkly colored berry jam and a hint of oak. Very tasty attack of dark cherry and berry fruit and cherry skins, all with a subtle earthiness. Moderately rich with fine-grain polished tannins, a welcoming tug of acidity, and impressive persistence on the bold finish. The wine glides across the palate with a dreamy silkiness. Hard to put this wine into words: suffice it to say you know it when you experience it. Greater later in the day after opening. A New Zealand old vine Pinot Noir epiphany.

2007 Seresin Sun & Moon Marlborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$60 Terrific aromatic interest sporting dark berries, especially black raspberries, and black cherries, rose tea, oak spice and vanillin. I wanted to go on sniffing this one. Moderately rich and very tasty with flavors of plums, dark berries and toast. Smooth as a baby's bottom in the mouth with moderate tannins and bright acidity in perfect harmony. There is a pleasing citrus note on the finish. The impeccable balance predicts long term aging potential.



Value-Priced Performers

New Zealand dominates the under \$20 value priced Pinot Noir category. How do they do it? There are some amazingly good wines in this list for less than a Jackson.

- 2008 Craggy Range Te Muna Road Martinborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$33**
- 2008 Deep Cove Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir \$19**
- 2008 Kawarau Estate Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir \$16**
- 2008 Nautilus Marlborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$26**
- 2008 Over the Edge Martinborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$13**
- 2008 Russian Jack Martinborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$13**
- 2007 Saint Clair Family Estate Omaka Reserve Marlborough New Zealand Pinot Noir \$28**
- 2008 Waipara Springs Premo Reserve Waipara New Zealand Pinot Noir \$20**





Vintner's Night Before Christmas

The harvest was perfect, the crush was A-1
Total production was up by a ton
The Pinot 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 morning
You've earned a respite
A cool glass of Pinot
And to all, a Good Night!