



PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

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*When it's good,
Pinot Noir
is totally sensual*

More Juicy 2010 Oregon Pinot Incoming

In 1988, Robert Drouhin, of the negociant firm Domaine Joseph Drouhin, established vineyards and a winery in the Dundee Hills of the Willamette Valley. He declared that there were only two places in the world he would grow Pinot Noir - Burgundy and Oregon. This initial Franco-Oregon undertaking gave immediate credibility to the Oregon wine industry. Since then, there have been a number of important contributions of Oregon to the success and popularity of Pinot Noir in the New World:

- * Oregon's early winegrowers set the nation's strictest labeling standards in the mid-1970s.
- * Pinot Noir winemakers from all over the world have gathered at the Steamboat Pinot Noir Conference held at Oregon's famous Steamboat Inn on the Umpqua River for over 20 years, encouraging the scope of Pinot Noir production in the New World.
- * Oregon's emphasis on matching variety to climate. Pinot Noir was planted in Oregon only after extensive study of climate and grape ripening.
- * Vertical trellissing has been the standard practice in Oregon for Pinot Noir since the first plantings, following the model of the northern, cool climate vineyards of Europe, particularly Alsace. Oregon also pioneered dense planting of vines which has become widespread in California as well as Oregon.
- * Oregon was the first to import certified Dijon clones of Pinot Noir into North America.
- * Since Oregon was virgin territory for wine grapes, the original vineyards were planted on their own roots allowing evaluation of wines from what are now rare vines.
- * Sustainable viticulture has been the standard in Oregon for decades, and two certifications in particular have been highly successful: the LIVE (Low Input Viticulture and Enology) program initiated by Ted Casteel of Bethel Heights Vineyard and Oregon Certified Sustainable.
- * The Oregon wine industry has embraced gentle handling during winemaking, convinced that it is vital in the successful vinification of cool climate varieties.
- * Oregon, more specifically, Oregon State University, developed a formula for accurately predicting vineyard yields in the early stages of the growing season. This may have been the most important factor in Oregon's wine quality success.
- * Oregon was the first in the New World to embrace the exclusive use of French oak barrels. Oregon is the only place outside of France that a French cooper (Francois Frères) has established a stave mill, conditioning native Oregon oak for use in Burgundy-styled barrels.

In 1985, a tasting in New York compared 15 of the top 1983 Oregon Pinot Noirs with a similar number of high quality French Burgundies of the same vintage. Wines were tasted blind by members of the press and wine buyers from prominent restaurants and wine retailers. Tasters were asked to label the origin of each wine, Oregon or France, and to rank their five favorites. The judges were surprised to find that they were unable to distinguish Oregon Pinot Noir from Burgundy. The number one ranked wine was from Oregon, and all five of the top ranked wines were from Oregon. Similar tastings have followed and often the result has been the same, such that Oregon wines now stand on their own

It is remarkable to consider how far Oregon viticulture has progressed. As Lynn Penner-Ash, who has spent 26 years in Oregon, told me, "Nice to know we've learned a lot and come a long way since the cool, wet year of 1997 which was comparable to 2010 and 2011 in my opinion." That is not to say that every Oregon Pinot Noir was a success in 2010. Some vineyards did not reach full phenolic ripeness which resulted in under ripe aromas and flavors with hi-strung acidity.

A boatload of wonderful Oregon Pinot Noirs from the 2010 vintage have reached me of late and I am privileged to review them so favorably. If you want mature phenolic flavors at lower alcohols, if you prefer elegance and class in the glass, if you embrace refreshing acidity, and if you enjoy Pinot Noir that is charmingly approachable upon release yet age worthy, you have come to the right place. Get poppin'.

A few Pinot Noirs from the solid 2009 vintage are still available in the marketplace and are included here as well. Some early 2011 releases indicate this vintage should be appealing as well.

Alexana Winery Owned by cardiologist, Dr. Madaiah Revana, Alexana Winery is named after his daughter, Alexander Revana. The 80-acre property in the Dundee Hills has 51 acres of Pinot Noir planted to several clones in the Revana Vineyard. The winemaker is accomplished veteran Lynn Penner-Ash. A modern winery and tasting room are located on the property at Northeast Worden Hill Road in Dundee. Annual production is 5,000 cases of Pinot Noir (from estate and sourced fruit), Riesling and Pinot Gris. The website is www.alexanawinery.com.

2010 Alexana Revana Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.1% alc., 1,654 cases, \$42. A blend of eight clones. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Lovely nose offering aromas of black cherries, black raspberries, and subtle oak spice, fading a bit over time in the glass. Modest but appealing richness featuring well-spiced black cherry and dark berry fruits with a hint of dried herbs in the background. A wine of attractive finesse with mild tannins and a fruit-filled finish. Balance is spot on. Very good.*



2010 Alexana Signature Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.2% alc., 236 cases, \$75. A barrel selection from estate fruit. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Shy nose picking up interest and intensity over time in the glass offering alluring aromas of dark red cherries and berries accented with nutmeg spice. Seamless and soft in the mouth, even creamy, with a full-bodied core of deep red cherry and berry fruits backed by well-integrated oak. Similar to the regular bottling in flavor but more stacked and packed. Remarkable phenolic ripeness and intensity at a relatively low alcohol percentage.*



Ayoub Vineyard A small boutique producer of Pinot Noir from the 4-acre Ayoub Vineyard densely planted in the Jory soils of the Dundee Hills to clones 667, 777, 114, 115 and Pommard 4. Mohamad "Mo" Ayoub established his vineyard in 2001. Veteran Robert Brittan (Brittan Vineyard, Winderlea), is the winemaker. Pinot Noir is also produced from purchased grapes. Visit www.ayoubwines.com.

2010 Ayoub Murto Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.1% alc., \$49. *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. The nose starts out with lovely aromas of cherries and balsam, then evolves over time to reveal very ripe fruit aromas including raisin and becomes somewhat pungent. The light weight core of darker cherries and berries has substantial structural bones and an appealing lift of acidity on the lengthy finish. Much better the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle showing resolution of the pungency, more intense fruit expression and becoming overall more enjoyable. Good.*

2010 Ayoub Estate Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$50, heavy bottle, wax closure. *Light ruby red color in the glass. Very seductive aromas of oak-kissed black cherries and dried rose petals. Middleweight charge of black cherry fruit with a citrus underbelly. Seamless and elegant, with good clarity of fruit and very accommodating tannins. Still appealing the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. A bright, crisp, light offering that mirrors the vintage quite well. Very good.*



Bergström Winery In 1999, Josh Bergström returned to Oregon after a postgraduate program in viticulture and enology in Burgundy and founded the Bergström label with his physician father, John Bergström, M.D.. In 2001, Kendall Bergström and her husband, Paul de Lancellotti joined the business, the de Lancellotti Estate Vineyard was planted, and a new winery was constructed at the top of Calkins Lane in the Chehalem Mountains. Bergström Winery now biodynamically farms five estate vineyards and sources fruit from Shea Vineyard and Temperance Hill Vineyard. Production is 9,000 cases annually of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. A tasting room at 18215 NE Calkins Lane in Newberg is open daily. The website is www.bergstromwines.com.

The Bergström Pinot Noirs are usually full-bodied, decadent and powerful expressions of Pinot Noir with generous oak accents. The three 2010 wines reviewed here all have a distinct oak imprint which seems to dominate the delicate fruit core of the wines at this early stage. I would cellar these wines for a year or two to allow for more oak integration.

2010 Bergström Cumberland Reserve Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$42. The winery's flagship blend. Primarily sourced from de Lancellotti, Shea and Bergström vineyards. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Aromas of black cherries, spiced dark berry jam, and mocha java. Fresh and juicy, modest in weight, featuring a core of dark red and black cherries and berries with a noticeable topcoat of oak. About the same the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Decent.*

2010 Bergström Bergström Vineyard Dundee Hills AVA Oregon Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$80. Yields were less than 0.9 tons per acre in this vintage. This 13-acre site was planted in 1999 and is certified Biodynamic®. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Very shy fruit on the nose with primarily oak-driven aromas. Bright cherry core wrapped in supple tannins finishing with flourish of oak. Juicy and vivid with a good cut of citrus peel acidity in the background. The charming fruit is somewhat buried in oak at present. About the same the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Good.*

2010 Bergström Shea Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$50. *Moderately light reddish-purple hue in the glass. The nose has a noticeable oak imprint. Light in weight, even a bit shallow, featuring delicate flavors of dark red fruits buried in coffee-scented oak. An elegant style that needs time to fully integrate the oak, but currently does not have enough Pinot singing. Decent.*

Bomb Wines/Carden Cellars Two labels, Bomb and Carden, targeting different markets. Both are high-end wines with the Bomb label for those who appreciate a modern, artsy approach with labels designed by New York artist Jason Borbay. The Carden labels are sleek and luxe and target a more traditional client. Both labels offer Oregon Pinot Noir and Washington State Cabernet Sauvignon.

Grapes are sourced from top vineyard sites in the Willamette Valley (Pinot Noir) and Washington State (Cabernet Sauvignon). The winemaker is renowned Tony Rynders, formerly the winemaker at Domaine Serene. Currently Bomb/Carden is in the process of acquiring vineyard land to plant as a joint venture with winemaker Tony Rynders. The inaugural Pinot Noir release was from the 2009 vintage. Production in 2012 was 2,000 cases. Visit www.bombwines.com.

2009 Bomb Willamette Valley Oregon Pinot Noir 14.3% alc., 496 cases, \$50. From several vineyards with a range of soils, elevations, vine age and clones. 50% Yamhill-Carlton District, 32% Eola-Amity Hills, 13% Chehalem Mountains and 5% Ribbon Ridge appellations. Aged 14 months in 60% new French oak. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Well-perfumed with scents of black cherry juice, dark berry jam, and dark red rose petals. Delicious black raspberry essence that is well spiced with an earthy, mildly oaky undertone. The fruit really makes an impression on the mid palate. Plenty of body yet soft in the mouth and easy to like. This is the bomb. Very good.*



Carabella Vineyard A top notch Oregon producer of Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris and Chardonnay. The 49-acre Certified Sustainable Carabella Vineyard was planted in 1996 and is located on the southeastern side of Parrett Mountain in the Chehalem Mountains AVA in the Northern Willamette Valley. The vineyard includes seven Pinot Noir clones including Pommard, Wädenswil, Dijon 113, 114, 115, 667 and 777. Proprietor and

winemaker Mike Hallock, who is also a geologist, trained as a winemaker in Colorado, and made his first vintage from the Carabella Vineyard in 1998. Visit www.carabellawine.com.

Mike really nailed it in this vintage. If you like Pinot Noir with aromatic interest, finesse, soft tannins and impeccable balance, in other words, classic Pinot Noir, these are wines you should acquire.



2010 Carabella Estate Chehalem Mountains Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 550 cases, \$37. 6 blocks including Pommard, Wädenswil, and Dijon clones. Each block fermented separately. *Moderately light reddish-purple hue in the glass. The nose wows you with bright, perfectly ripe cherries and dark berries. Very polished and elegant in style, with delicious cherry and strawberry flavors accented with complimentary spice, cola and oak. A high class offering with beautiful balance that reeks of pinosity. Still great the next day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.*

2010 Carabella Dijon 667 Clone Chehalem Mountains Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 65 cases, \$54. First harvest from 667 block. Yield 1/2 ton per acre. *Medium dark ruby color in the glass. Appealing aromas of darker cherries and berries with a touch of brown spice. Impressive attack of black raspberries with a hint of spice and toasty oak. Soft and smooth on the palate with admirable length. A seamless wine that tastes like the best berry jam you have ever had. I have rarely encountered a single clone 667 Pinot Noir this good. Needs a little time to integrate the oak. Very good.*



2010 Carabella Inchinnan Chehalem Mountains Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 150 cases, \$54. Dijon 114,115 and Wädenswil clones cropped to ridiculously low levels. *Moderate light reddish color in the glass. Brightly perfumed with aromas of fresh cherries and sandalwood. Very soft and elegant with marshmallow tannins supporting a well ripened array of red fruits. This wine won't overpower but it will seduce with a sneaky appeal. Not as big a wine in this vintage as usual, but still very charming.*



Cornerstone and Stepping Stone Cellars Napa Valley's Craig Camp and partners enlisted noted Oregon winemaker Tony Rynders to craft Pinot Noir from the Willamette Valley beginning with the 2008 vintage. Camp had already been producing wines from the Napa Valley. Craig uses his contacts from time spent in Oregon to acquire top notch vineyard contracts. A Willamette Valley Chardonnay was introduced with the 2010 vintage. Stepping Stone wines are meant to be easily approachable upon release while the Cornerstone wines have more power and longevity. Tasting is available in Yountville and by appointment in Oregon. Visit www.cornerstonecellars.com.

2010 Stepping Stone Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 137 cases, \$30. The painting on the label is "Color of Life" by Oregon artist Janet Ekholm. Sourced from all six Willamette Valley sub-AVAs with the majority from Yamhill-Carlton and Eola-Amity Hills. Aged 13 months in 35% new French oak. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure aromas of black cherries and toasty oak. Mid weight core of dark cherry fruit becoming more vibrant over time in the glass. Soft in the mouth with mild tannins and some length on the earthy, fruit-driven finish. A straightforward, accessible wine showing a tad more oak than I prefer but otherwise solid. Good.*

2010 Cornerstone Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 498 cases, \$50. Sourced from all six Willamette Valley sub-AVAs with the majority (68%) from the Yamhill-Carlton District. Aged 15 months in 62% new French oak. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Pleasant aromas of black cherries and dark berry compote with a hint of smoky oak. Not as expressive as it will be with more bottle age, yet showing enticing flavors of dark cherries and raspberries pulled into line with fine acidity and tannin. Finishes dry with a flourish of cherries. Nicely composed and balanced and a worthy cellar candidate. Very good.*



2010 Cornerstone Willamette Valley Chardonnay 13.5% alc., 166 cases, \$35. 50% Yamhill-Carlton and 50% Chehalem Mountains. Aged in 24% new French oak for 16 months sur lies. 80% malolactic fermentation. *Light straw color in the glass. Enticing aromas of peach, butter pecan and toasty oak becoming more intense over time in the glass. Flavors of white peach, baked pear, grilled lemon and toffee are broad in the mouth and nicely supported by well-integrated acidity. The finish is dry and refreshing. A polished, very well crafted wine. Very good.*

Elk Cove Vineyards One of the oldest wineries in the Willamette Valley, Elk Cove Vineyards was founded in 1974 by Pat and Joe Campbell, M.D.. The Roosevelt Estate Vineyard was the first planting, established in a protected valley where the namesake Roosevelt elk migrate each spring. Joe made the wine at Elk Cove while practicing medicine for 20 years until his son, Adam, took over in 1999. The winery's focus is on the Pinot "trilogy": Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris and Pinot Blanc, all of which are consistently excellent. A total of 230 acres are farmed. The tasting room offers panoramic views of the Willamette Valley and is open daily. Visit www.elkcove.com.



2010 Elk Cove Vineyards Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 12.5% alc., pH 3.55, 7,227 cases, \$29. A blend from several vineyards including Pommard and Dijon clones. Vine age 9 to 37 years, yield 1.6 tons per acre. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Aromas of fresh, dark red cherries, raspberries and strawberries leap from the glass. The rich flavors echo the nose, with a well-balanced backbone of acidity and tannin, and a strong, firm finish. A showy wine with surprising richness for this vintage and the low alcohol level. One of Oregon's consistently solid value-priced Pinot Noirs. Good (+).*

2010 Elk Cove Vineyards La Bohème Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., pH 3.67, 353 cases, \$48. This vineyard was planted in 1985 and is now a 17-acre high density site composed of vines selected from the original Estate Pommard planting. This vineyard rises to 800 feet, high above the Elk Cove property, making it one of the highest elevation sites in the Willamette Valley. Yield 1.55 tons per acre. *Light reddish-purple hue in the glass. Demure fruit aromas of strawberry and cherry with seasoned oak in the background. Oak-kissed dark red berry and cherry fruits with good intensity, creating an impression on the mid palate and persisting with moderate richness on the finish. A note of red licorice is evident. A sophisticated offering of considerable appeal. Very good.*



2010 Elk Cove Vineyards Clay Court Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., pH 3.60, 352 cases, \$48. This vineyard is located in the Parrot Mountain area of the Chehalem Mountains AVA. Acquired by Elk Cove Vineyards in 2009, this 15-acre vineyard was planted in 2001 to Dijon 115, 777 and Pommard. The soils are dark red Jory in type. Yield 1.75 tons per acre. *Light reddish-purple color in the glass. Uplifted aromas of dark red cherries, spice and sandalwood. Well-spiced mid-weight cherry essence with nicely integrated acidity and*

gossamer tannins. A wine of style and grace with plenty of cherry talking. Much better later in the day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Very good.

Evesham Wood This winery is Russell Raney's legacy, now owned by his protégé, Erin Nuccio. Located in the Eola Hills west of Salem, Raney founded this label in 1986. The 13-acre estate vineyard, Le Puits Sec ("The Dry Well"), has been organically farmed from the beginning and non irrigated since it was established. Raney was heavily influenced by Burgundian winemaking techniques and his admiration for the French is shown in the French names he has used for his wines through the years. The wines are noted for their elegance and restraint, and their full expression of terroir. Since taking over in 2010, Erin has kept all of Raney's winemaking and vineyard management philosophies in place. Three vineyard designated Pinot Noirs from purchased fruit are offered (Temperance Hill, Mahonia, and Illahe) in addition to estate wines. Visitors are welcome for tasting by appointment. Visit www.eveshamwood.com for more information.

2010 Evesham Wood Le Puits Sec Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$36. Unfiltered. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Aromas of cherries, balsam and spice lead to a refreshing and bright mouthful of crisp red berry, red plum and red raspberry fruit with a hint of herbs in the background. Elegantly styled with soft, delicate tannins, lively acidity, and an appealing kiss of cherry on the finish. Not quite as good as other bottles I have sampled, but still Very Good.*



2010 Evesham Wood Cuvée J Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., 150 cases. \$44. Exclusively from Le Puits Sec Vineyard. Aged in 40% new French oak. Unfiltered. *Moderately light purple color in the glass. Wonderfully perfumed with fresh scents of black cherries, briar, compost, rose petal and spice. Well-endowed with attention-getting flavors of black cherries, kirsch and spice. Riper with more body, more structural bones, and less noticeable acidity than the Le Puits Sec bottling. Incredible length on the generous finish. Very age worthy. A real crowd pleaser and one of the best wines I have sampled from Oregon in this vintage.*



Hyland Estates In 2007, Danielle Andrus Montalieu and Laurent Montalieu, along with partner John Niemeyer, added the 204-acre Hyland Vineyard in the McMinnville AVA to their estate vineyard holdings. Hyland Vineyard is one of Oregon's largest and oldest vineyards, dating to 1971 when four families planted this property. The vineyard has been a source of fruit for many notable producers in the Willamette Valley. Over 47 acres are planted to own-rooted Croux "clone" Pinot Noir, with newer plantings that include additional grafted Croux "clone," as well as Pommard and Dijon 777, 115, 667, 828 and 114. Soils are volcanic Jory and Nekia. Noted viticulturist Joel Myers manages the vineyard. The inaugural releases from the 2008 and 2009 vintages were produced at the NW Wine Company in Dundee where an adjacent tasting room is open daily. Visit www.hylandestateswinery.com.



2009 Hyland Estates McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 14.1% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.58, \$35. Aged in 10% new French oak from multiple coopers. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Very shy upon opening and much more aromatically pleasing the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle showing bright Bing cherry and cranberry fruit. Moderately rich, forward and alluring with smooth and supportive tannins and a velvety mouth feel. The core of well-ripened cherries and berries is accented with notes of cola, mocha and spice. The pedigree of the fruit really shines through in this beauty. Very good.*



Patricia Green Cellars Located on a 52-acre estate in the Ribbon Ridge AVA, this winery was launched in 2000 by owners Patty Green and Jim Anderson, producing a broad selection of Pinot Noir wines from vineyards in the Ribbon Ridge, Dundee Hills, Chehalem Mountains, and the Yamhill-Carlton District. Patty began her winemaking career picking grapes at the historic Hillcrest Vineyard outside of Roseburg. She worked her way up to winemaker within two years, and after stops at Ashland Vineyards and Girardet Winery, she became the winemaker at Torii Mor Winery where she established her reputation for outstanding Pinot Noir during her six year tenure. She then launched Patricia Green Cellars with a focus on Pinot Noir. Small amounts of Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc are also produced. The wines are in good retail distribution and available on the website at www.patriciagreencellars.com.

2010 Patricia Green Cellars Wahle Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$42. *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. Oak-driven aromas of mocha java and biscuit. Middleweight flavors of oak-kissed dark red fruits with a strong coffee note. Mild tannins and easily approachable. The oak overwhelms what otherwise is a good wine. Decent.*

2010 Patricia Green Cellars Estate Old Vine Ribbon Ridge Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$40. From the 26-acre Estate Vineyard featuring multiple vine ages and clones. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. The nose is closed for business, only hinting at aromas of cherries and oak. Essence of dark red berries and cherries with complimentary oak in the background. Smooth, with a good cut of acidity on the finish which has some length. About the same the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. This wine is still tight and should benefit from cellaring. Fine but not exceptional. Good.*

2010 Patricia Green Cellars Notorious Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$57. *Medium reddish-purple hue in the glass. Shy, delicate aromas of pie cherry glaze with a hint of java and dark chocolate. Very pretty core of dark cherries and dark red berries with a topcoat of oak-derived vanilla and coffee, showing a glorious finish that persists through several encores. Well-honed tannins, a caressing texture and very evocative in character. Should improve in the cellar. Very good.*



Penner-Ash Wine Cellars Lynn and Ron Penner-Ash craft their impressive lineup of Pinot Noirs in a gravity-flow winery located on 80 acres in Newberg, Oregon. Lynn, whose winemaking career began at Rex Hill Winery in 1988, has a touch with Pinot Noir and her wines have garnered well-deserved praise over the years from the wine press. She is a graduate of UC Davis and first developed her skills in California working at Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, Domaine Chandon and Chateau St. Jean. She has spent 26 years in Oregon.

Penner-Ash has enjoyed tremendous growth, progressing from 125 cases of Pinot Noir in 1998 to 9,000 cases of Pinot Noir, Syrah, Viognier and Reisling in 2011. The estate vineyard surrounding the winery is Dussin Vineyard, planted to 114, 115, 667, 777 and Pommard clones in 2003. Penner-Ash wines are sold through an allocated mailing list with limited retail distribution. Visit www.pennerash.com.

**2010 Penner-Ash Dussin Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

13.0% alc., pH 3.79, TA 0.52, \$60. This estate vineyard is planted in sedimentary and volcanic soils to Dijon and Pommard clones on a southeastern slope. Aged 10 months in 38% new, 29% one-year-old, 29% two-year-old and 4% neutral French oak. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Very shy aromas of dark red and black berries with a hint of oak-derived mocha. Delicious heart of richly flavored spicy black plum and boysenberry fruit with a topcoat of cherry cola, vanilla and mocha java. Well-behaved tannins make for easy approachability. Very silky and seductive. Still great the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.*

**2010 Penner-Ash Shea Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

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



Roots Wines & Vineyard Roots is a family affair owned by Christian (Chris) and Hilary Berg. Chris became interested in wine when his parents bought a manufacturing company in Tualatin, Oregon and the family moved west from Illinois. The Berg family acquired a 20-acre property near Yamhill in the Yamhill-Carlton District located in the same area as Shea Vineyard. In 1999, they planted a 7-acre estate vineyard to Pinot Noir and a small amount of Pinot Gris. Clones 113, 114, 115 and 777 were established in the Willakenzie soil. Chris developed his winemaking skills working at Archery Summit Winery. In 2001, Chris and Hilary moved to the Yamhill property and took over its management when their parents retired to Arizona. They launched their winery, Roots, named after a term derived from the French word racine (Chris was born in Racine, Wisconsin) which means "roots." By 2006, the vineyard was in full production and together with purchased grapes, a total of 2,000 cases were produced under three labels: Roots, Racine and Klee. The couple's goal is to make affordable, quality wines. Besides the wines reviewed here, there are single vineyard Pinot Noirs from Carlton Hill, Leroy, 49 Rows, and Apolloni vineyards and a "Crosshairs Cuvée" from Leroy and Cherry Grove Vineyards. For more information and wine availability, visit www.rootswine.com.

Chris uses indigenous fermentations, endorses some whole cluster, and uses on average 30% new oak. All the wines reviewed are well-mannered with mild tannins, attractive aromatics and easy accessibility. They represent very good value.

2010 Roots "The Dude" Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.2% alc., 50 cases, \$35. Sourced from Saikkonen Vineyard in Ribbon Ridge. *Light reddish-purple color in the glass. Attractive scent of fresh cherries and baking spice. Light, juicy and elegant, but a bit shallow and flat with modest flavors of cherries and raspberries backed by soft tannins. May just be tight, but it doesn't wake up my palate. Decent.*

2010 Roots Fairsing Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.4% alc., 46 cases, \$35. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Bright aromas of black plum sauce, blackberries, cola and oak. Earthy and smoky with a firm backbone of rugged tannins, featuring dark berry and plum flavors. Good.*



2010 Roots Johnson Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., 45 cases, \$35. *Moderately light reddish-purple hue in the glass. Dark red cherries and berries are featured in this wine that has a savory bent as well with hints of spice, briar, herbs and dried flowers. Delicate with supple tannins. Charming and easy to drink. Good (+).*



2010 Roots Estate Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 125 cases, \$35. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. The aromas of black cherries and sandalwood leap from the glass. Very tasty with a moderately rich core of dark red and purple berry preserves finishing long with a good shaft of acidity and notes of cranberries and pomegranates. A generous wine that is very user-friendly. Very good.*



2010 Roots Saffron Fields Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 74 cases, \$35. *Evocative perfume of black cherry pie glaze with hints of oak and slate. Delicious, deeply flavored essence of perfectly ripe dark cherries nicely spiced with a complimentary note of oak-driven mocha. Striking flavor on entry, expanding in waves on*

the palate, and finishing with a taunting, memorable intensity. Still great two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle when I finished the bottle with dinner. Exceptional.



Shea Wine Cellars I recently wrote about my summer visit to Shea Vineyard (www.princeofpinot.com/winery/121/). Here are the reviews of the 2010 Shea Wine Cellars Pinot Noir wines. The wines are all block designated except for the Estate (a blend of grapes from the entire vineyard) and Homer (a barrel selection). I found the lineup a little more uneven in this vintage. Not surprising, as I have found Shea Vineyard Pinot Noir from this vintage produced by other wineries to be uneven as well, with both superb and just average wines. The Shea Wine Cellar wines, even the Homer, are quite approachable now offering restrained tannins and appealingly silky textures. The aromas have not caught up with the flavors yet. I would give them another year or two in bottle and then drink up. The wines don't have the fruit intensity of 2009 and my only concern is that the wines do not have the extraction to match the relatively high percentage of new oak. In two of the wines tasted the following day after opening, the wines had taken on a darker and deeper oak character. That said, there are some appealing wines in the lineup and some of the wines have textures to die for.

2010 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Estate Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.2% alc., 3,475 cases, \$40. All clones planted at Shea Vineyard (Pommard, Wädenswil and several Dijon). Aged in 47% new French oak. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Open and forward on the nose with aromas of red and black berries, black cherries and spice. A charming and likable wine with flavors of blackberries, black cherries and Hoison sauce with a hint of anise. Very soft tannins and a satiny mouth feel. My only nit is that the wine is a bit shallow. Tasted twice. Good.*

2010 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Block 7 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 300 cases, \$56. Wädenswil clone. From a 5.2-acre non-irrigated parcel on a steep, south-facing slope. Aged in 64% new French oak. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Very shy nose offering delicate aromas of blackberry pie, coconut and violets. Very soft and seductive in the mouth, showing admirable elegance. Delicious middleweight flavors of dark red and black cherries and berries wrapped in supple tannins, finishing dry with some length. The silky texture is the most striking feature of this wine. The aromas should appear in this wine over time. Very good.*



2010 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Block 23 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 265 cases, \$56. Pommard clone. From a 3.2-acre non-irrigated parcel on a south-facing slope. Aged in 80% new French oak. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure aromas of black cherries, black raspberries, oak and rose petals emerge very reluctantly over time. Plush core of black fruits with a hint of pepper and tobacco. Earthy and mysterious with noticeable oak. Very soft in the mouth. Even more oaky the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Decent.*

2010 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Block 31 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.6% alc., 240 cases, \$56. 67% Pommard, 33% Wädenswil. Aged in 67% new French oak. *Moderately dark reddish-purple hue in the glass. The most expressive nose in the lineup with glass-filling aromas of dark red and black stone fruits and berries accented with a hint of spice and a floral note. Delicious mid weight essence of blackberries and cherries with a complimentary earthy bent. Well-integrated oak and a velvety mouth feel. Tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, there was more oak intrusion. What this means for the future of this wine is unclear but it is irresistible now. Very good.*

2010 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Block 33 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 250 cases, \$56. Dijon 777. From a steep, south-facing parcel. Aged in 60% new French oak. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Muted aromas of dark berry preserves, tea leaf and balsam. Well-ripened essence of blackberries, allaliberries and plum reduction sauce with faint oak in the background. Soft in the mouth with pillowy tannins and some length on the finish. Solid but not exceptional. Good.*



2010 Shea Wine Cellars Shea Vineyard Homer Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 450 cases, \$82. 56% Wädenswil, 31% Dijon 777, 13% Pommard. Aged in 81% new French oak. A blend of the best barrels in the cellar and always the biggest, most structured wine in the lineup, needing several years to reach a peak drinking window. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure but pleasing aromas of black raspberries, blackberries and spice. The most structured wine in the lineup and built for the long haul. Also, displays the most length on a brambly blackberry finish. Very polished with a velvety mouth feel and complimentary smoky oak. More approachable than usual for this bottling, but should get even better with more time in the cellar.*



Stoller Family Estate Bill Stoller was born into a Yamhill Valley farming family and through his success with Express Personnel Professionals, which he co-founded in 1983, he was able to make investments in the Willamette Valley wine industry. He obtained part ownership of Chehalem Wines in 1993 and the same year he purchased a 373-acre former turkey farm owned by his father and uncle. A total of 200 acres of closely spaced Pinot Noir and Chardonnay have been planted since the property was acquired. It is now the largest contiguous vineyard in the Dundee Hills. Stoller Vineyards was founded in 2001 and the name was changed in 2012 to Stoller Family Estate. The change reflects the evolution of the property, maturation of the winegrowing team, and fulfillment of Bill Stoller's founding vision. Stoller has Oregon's first LEED-certified, solar-powered, gravity-flow winery which opened in 2006. Winemaker Melissa Burr has been on board since 2003. A tasting room was recently opened at the winery which uses 100% of its energy from the site. Production is a little over 5,000 cases annually, all of which is estate grown. The property has three renovated guest homes that can be rented by visitors. Visit www.stollerfamilyestate.com for more information.

2009 Stoller Family Estate SV Estate Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 14.5% alc., pH 3.81, TA 0.51, 3,642 cases, \$45. A selection of the best vineyard blocks and barrels in the cellar. Aged 10 months in

40% new and 60% neutral French oak. Pommard, Wädenswil, and Dijon 115, 667 and 777. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. A medium-bodied wine of considerable charm featuring aromas and flavors of black cherries, kirsch, and spice, well-managed oak and restrained tannins. Quite elegant, yet flavorful, showing the ripe fruit flavors typical of this vintage. Well-crafted and desirable. Very good.*

2009 Stoller Family Estate Cathy's Reserve Dundee Hills Willamette Valley

Pinot Noir 14.5% alc., pH 3.90, TA 0.49, 88 cases, \$100. Sourced from the oldest section of the property, a 4.6-acre block planted to Pommard clone. 100% de-stemmed, 7-day cold soak, native fermentation, aged 10 months in 100% new French oak. Four barrels were selected. *Dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Deep, full-bodied, dark fruited, and earthy, offering a dense core of dark red and black fruits, a firm tannic backbone and impressive persistence on the satiny finish. Soft and luscious on the palate, but rather brooding at this stage. This is a connoisseur's wine that will benefit from several years of cellaring. Very good.*



White Rose Estate Greg Sanders took over the established 12-acre White Rose Vineyard in the Dundee Hills in 2001. The vineyard is well situated with several prominent producers nearby including Archery Summit Estate, Domaine Serene and Domaine Drouhin Oregon. Self-rooted Pommard clone was planted from 1978 to 1981 and Dijon 115 was added in 2001. The soil type is volcanic Jory series. Greg was inexperienced as a winery owner and winemaker when he assumed ownership of the vineyard, but he has made remarkable strides, and today is producing superb Oregon Pinot Noir. Greg is a Burgundy fanatic who uses Burgundy's Grand Crus as his model in crafting his wines. The important difference is that he crafts wines that are more drinkable early than Grand Crus which often need twenty years to open, yet his wines will age extremely well. He began experimenting with whole cluster fermentations in 2004 and today uses a high percentage in his estate wines. His wines since 2008 have been stunning. Greg now works in tandem with Jesus Guillen, a self-taught winemaker who managed the estate since his arrival in 2002. For more information, read my article at www.princeofpinot.com/article1149/. The website is www.whiterosewines.com.

These are distinctive wines with striking aromatics that are exotically spiced, cherry driven and reflective of whole cluster inclusion. Beaune in the USA.

2009 White Rose Estate Winemaker's Cuvée Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.7% alc., pH 3.70, 48 cases, \$N/A. Jesus Guillen's two favorite barrels in the cellar (Block 1 of White Rose Vineyard in Dundee Hills AVA and 1 barrel of Bell Road Vineyard in the Chehalem Mountains AVA). 60% whole cluster. 4-day cold soak, 7 days of post-maceration skin contact. Total 17 days of skin contact. Aged 15 months in 100% neutral French oak. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Lovely perfume of fresh black cherries, black raspberries, gingerbread and stunning spice. Moderately rich core of perfectly ripe black cherry flavor with hints of spice, vanilla cola and new oak. Veers slightly to the ripe side which is understandable in this warm vintage. Silky with enough well-honed tannin to age well but not so much that you can't enjoy the wine now. Very good.*

2010 White Rose Estate Dundee Hills AVA Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., pH 3.71, 239 cases, \$50. Part of the winery's appellation series of wines. 80% White Rose Vineyard (115) and 20% Vista Hills Vineyard (667). 44% whole cluster. 19-20 days of skin contact. Pressed off in an old world, half-ton, wooden basket press. Aged 15 months in French oak. Racked once after malolactic fermentation and then again before blending. *Very light ruby red in color. Delicate but pleasing aromas of red cherries, baking spices, pine resin and sandalwood. A ballet dancer of a Pinot, light on its feet, feminine and very charming. Flavors of slightly confected iced cherries are crisped by bright acidity and supple tannins make for easy drinking. Exotic spices add intrigue. A signature Dundee Hills Pinot Noir. Tasted twice. Very good.*



2010 White Rose Estate Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., pH 3.61, 500 cases, \$30. A blend from 3 sub-appellations of the Willamette Valley, 4 different vineyards (White Rose Vineyard, Durant Vineyard, Luciole Vineyard and Kason Vineyard), 9 different vineyard blocks and 6 different clones. 28% whole cluster. Total skin contact 19-31 days. All wine basket pressed. Aged 15 months in 14% French oak. *Light red rose color in the glass. Effusive aromas of dark red cherries, spice, sawdust and stem. A step up in body and intensity featuring bright red cherry essence with*

gregarious spice including clove, carrying over to the long and refreshing finish fueled by bright acidity. Perhaps a touch under ripe, but I find it irresistible: it's what the vintage gave. Very good.



2010 White Rose Estate White Rose Vineyard Whole Cluster Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.3% alc., pH 3.57, 97 cases, \$95. Yields 0.5 tons per acre from blocks 1 and 3 planted from 1978 to 1982 with self-rooted Pommard clone. 100% whole cluster. 5-day cold soak, 10 day fermentation, 9 day post-maceration skin contact. Pressed off in an old world, half-ton, wooden basket press.

Aged 15 months in French oak. Racked once after malolactic fermentation and then again just before blending.

Moderately light red rose color in the glass. Intoxicating aromas of fresh baked cherry pie and sandalwood. A cherry bombast that is soft and smooth on the palate with mouth-filling presence, tamed and focused tannins, crisp, well-integrated acidity, and an intense, cherry-driven and spicy finish that won't quit. The whole-cluster driven spice is very enticing to me. A beguiling wine that was still remarkable the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.



Willful Wine Co. Daedalus Cellars was formed in 2000 and released wines from purchased grapes for ten years. The owners and winemakers, Aron Hess and his spouse Pam Walden, split up in 2009. She bought him out of the Daedalus and Jezebel labels that they shared when they were married. At about the same time, a 7-acre vineyard they had planted started to bear fruit, so she opted to create a new label, Willful Wine Co. in 2012, to replace Daedalus and feature the estate vineyard rather than purchased fruit that characterized the Daedalus label. Pam now manages the estate vineyard and is one of the few female winemakers in Oregon who also owns her own vines. The vineyard is densely planted to 2400 vines per acre with 12 different clones of Pinot Noir grapes including Pommard and a selection of Dijon clones.

Aron helped out with the first harvest in 2011, her first fully in charge of winemaking, but the fifth harvest she has worked in the cellar. She had a harvest assistant help with some of the Jezebel lots, but she did all the work herself on her estate Pinot Noir. As the name of the label implies, she is determined and pertinacious. The Willful Wine Co. Pinot Noir and Jezebel brand wines (fruit-forward and value-priced) are available for tasting at the Dundee tasting room at 990 Highway 99W. Pinot Noir production is anticipated to increase to 1,500 cases within four years. The website is w14.wineweb.com (or soon, www.willfulwine.com). Also check www.daedaluscellars.com.

2011 Jezebel Oregon Pinot Noir 12.5% alc., 1,900 cases, \$18, screwcap. A blend of fruit from Willamette Valley vineyards and vineyards in the Applegate Valley of southern Oregon. Cropped at 2 to 3 tons per acre. Mostly aged in neutral French oak with a small portion in stainless tanks. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Oak-dominated nose with delicate aromas of darker red cherries and berries. Shallow, but pleasing flavors of deep red cherries finishing with a dry, tart cherry skin flavor. Very light and delicate with bright acidity, showing a topcoat of oak. Decent.*



2011 Jezebel Oregon Blanc 12.5% alc., 595 cases, \$14, screwcap. Riesling, Pinot Gris and Gewürztraminer are co-fermented in stainless steel with periodic lees manipulation. 7% Pinot Blanc and 3% Muscat are included. *This is a wine fashioned in the style of California's Caymus Conundrum and equally appealing. Nearly clear in color, this wine offers an array of scents including muscat grape, white peach, banana and guava. A crowd pleaser with flavors of white peach and tropical fruits with modest richness and length. The flavors are most akin to Pinot Gris of all the varieties included. At 12.5% alcohol, one can enjoy a few chilled glasses of this wine with no repercussions. A great appetitif. Good.*



2011 Willful Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 370 cases, \$35. Released September 2012. First vintage from a 7-acre estate, densely planted, vineyard of 12 clones. 100% de-stemmed. 2-week cold soak. Native fermentations and minimal use of new French oak. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Perfectly ripe black cherries and cranberries are the theme here. Aromatically fresh and well-perceived on the palate, with a generous fruit core and a refreshing spark of lemon peel acidity on the finish. This wine grows on you over time in the glass. The firm tannins are supportive rather than dominating, but will benefit from some time in the cellar. Still solid the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Very good.*



Winderlea Vineyard & Winery In 2006, Bill Sweat and Donna Morris, a wealthy East Coast couple from the financial-services industry, left the East Coast for Oregon and the next year bought the Goldschmidt Vineyard, renaming it Winderlea Vineyard. The name Winderlea is derived from a Vermont property the couple owned and is a German word loosely translated as “valley protected from the wind.” The husband and wife team developed a passion for Burgundies in the 1990s and found Oregon Pinot Noir was the next best thing. They brought on Robert Brittan, the winemaker at Stags Leap Winery for 16 years, to assist Bill and direct the new Pinot Noir program.

A stunning metal and glass tasting room and winery was built and positioned to take advantage of panoramic views of the Dundee Hills and the Willamette Valley to the East. The tasting room is environmentally friendly employing many passive energy management techniques including solar hot water and solar panels for much of their energy needs. In 2008, Winderlea Vineyard earned LIVE and Salmon Safe certifications and in 2009 they began employing biodynamic practices to augment the existing organic farming methods. For more information, visit www.winderlea.com.



The wines reviewed here are all very well crafted, showing restrained tannins for easy approachability and bright acidity for refreshing drinking at the dinner table. An extremely impressive lineup from a diverse number of vineyard sources.

2010 Winderlea Dundee Hills Vineyards Dundee Hills Oregon Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$38. From three old vine vineyards in the Dundee Hills. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Essence of barely ripe red cherry fruit clothed in toasty oak. Modest richness, silky tannins and soft in the mouth. A standard issue Pinot Noir that leans heavy on oak. Decent.*

2010 Winderlea Crawford Beck Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$48. Prominent scientists, David and Jeanne Beck, moved to Oregon from New Jersey in 2005 and bought a 48-acre property with 15 acres of vines in Jory soils. 11 acres of Pinot Noir are planted to 115, 60, Swan and Pommard clones. *Moderately light reddish-purple hue in the glass. The nose and palate feature dark red cherries and berries sprinkled with dried herbs and flower petals. Notes of forest floor and tar are also evident. On the lighter side, but juicy and pleasant with polished tannins. Good.*



2010 Winderlea Meredith Mitchell Vineyard McMinnville Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$48. Planted in 1988 by owners Susan Meredith and spouse Frank Mitchell on a 104-acre site located at 450 to 650 feet elevation in the Coast range foothills of the McMinnville AVA. The 25-acre vineyard is primarily planted to own-rooted Pinot Noir Pommard clone, with smaller blocks of Pinot Blanc (1996) and Pinot Gris (1995). Soils are rocky, broken basalt, sedimentary in type. The vineyard is managed by Susan and Frank. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Lovely aromas of pie cherries with a fragrant floral note. Darker cherry, berry and plum flavors enter strong and finish long. The fruit is striking in purity and made me sit up straight in my chair. A welcome underlying cut of acidity urges another sip. Simply a great wine.*



2010 Winderlea Shea Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.7% alc., \$48. Sourced from Block 21 on West Hill. Wädenswil and Pommard clones. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Brimming with aromas of ripe red cherries and berries with complimentary oak. Plush in the mouth with an explosion of bright fruit on the mid palate, finishing like a three hour movie you don't want to end. Admirable integration of oak which adds a touch of dark caramel and spice. The tannins are lacy and the acidity brings the fruit into focus. A complete wine.*



2010 Winderlea Murto Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$48. Located to the west of Winderlea Vineyard. Owned and farmed by Mike and Robin Murto. Planted in 1978 on a south-facing parcel at 400 to 700 feet elevation. Clones are Wädenswil, Pommard and 115. *Medium purple color in the glass. The nose is quite alluring with the scent of boysenberry jam. Deft balance between richness of black berry and plum fruit flavors, and acidity and tannins. Features the darkest fruit profile in the 2010 lineup. A thrust of citrus-infused berries is featured on the generous finish. Very good.*

2010 Winderlea Winderlea Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.2% alc., \$54. Formerly the Goldschmidt Vineyard. 20 acres planted in 1974 in Jory soils. Ideal southwestern exposure. *Moderate reddish-purple color in the glass. An aristocratic wine with upscale aromas of well-ripened black cherries and black raspberries. The intensely fruity palate features earth-kissed dark cherries, raspberries, plum and purple grapes. A citrus-infused acidity brings lift and vibrancy to the wine. Quite enjoyable now, but has the structure and balance to indicate it will benefit from further cellaring. Very good.*



2010 Winderlea Ana Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.1% alc., \$48. This vineyard is located on a north-south ridge at 350 to 450 feet. Owned and farmed by Andy Humphrey, the vines are own rooted and date to 1976. Pommard and 777 clones. *Moderate light ruby red color in the glass. Cherries are the theme is this outstanding wine. Aromas of fresh pie cherry glaze and rose petals. The discreetly concentrated core of juicy cherries is accented with hints of exotic spices, clove and a kiss of oak. Soft and smooth in texture with gossamer tannins. Finishes with a flourish of cherries. Like cherry pie day at cooking school - cherries, baking spices and very interesting results.*



2010 Winderlea Winderlea Legacy Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.2% alc., \$75. This wine highlights the favorite characteristics of the estate vineyard. *Light reddish color in the glass. The nose offers a terrific blast of crushed cherry perfume with a hint of spice. Delicious essence of ripe, dark red cherries with a sidecar of raspberries and pomegranates. A citrus-laden underbelly brings the wine to life. Lacy tannins, well-integrated oak and an appealing elegance completes the picture. Like red lingerie, sure to attract attention.*



Winter's Hill Vineyard John and Lena Winter resettled in Oregon from Illinois in 1961, acquiring a former fruit and grain farm in the Dundee Hills. Peter and Emily Gladhart (the Winters' daughter) and their son Russell planted 12 acres of own rooted Pinot Noir in 1990. A second phase of planting on phylloxera-resistant rootstocks followed in 1997. The estate vineyard is now 35 acres nestled in a 150-acre farm, and includes Pommard, Wädenswill, 114 and 115 clones of Pinot Noir. Winter's Hill is bordered to the East by Domaine Serene, to the South by Stoller Family Estate, and to the North by Vista Hills. The first wines were released from the 1998 vintage. Production has gradually increased over the years, and includes the Pinot trio of Pinot Noir, Pinot Blanc and Pinot Gris. Peter Gladhart's daughter-in-law, Delphine Gladhart, joined the family business in 2004 and has been the winemaker ever since.

A winery and tasting room are on property and visitors are always greeted by one of the owners. A restored oak savannah surrounds the winery and tasting room and offers the opportunity to enjoy a picnic or talk a walk to view the wildlife. Visit www.wintershillwine.com.



2009 Winter's Hill Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 14.5% alc., 1,200 cases, \$25. Exclusively from estate grapes. 100% de-stemmed, aged 12 months in oak. Offered in both traditional bottle and recyclable 5 gallon keg format. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. The nose holds your attention with an array of scents including dark red cherries and berries, tea leaf, iron and oak. Quite pleasurable on the palate with a discretely concentrated core of darker cherries and raspberries, with a hint of red licorice and oak. Plenty of minerality in this modest wine with appealing restraint. Very good.*



2009 Winter's Hill Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 14.5% alc., pH 3.46, 800 cases, \$34. Exclusively from grapes grown in the Winter's Hill Vineyard. 100% de-stemmed, aged 18 months in oak. *Moderate reddish-purple hue in the glass. More deeply colored and richer in flavor than the Willamette Valley bottling, featuring dark red and purple stone fruits and berries. Very nice earthy underpinning. Well-matched tannins and a long, satisfying finish. A complete, impeccably balanced wine. Very good (+).*



2011 Winter's Hill Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Gris 13.5% alc., 550 cases, pH 3.15, \$16. Whole cluster pressed, fermented in stainless steel tanks, no malolactic fermentation. *Very faint straw color in the glass. Aromas of crabapple, hay and biscuit. Flavors of green apple, grapefruit and lemon with piercing, tart acidity that is electric. Hard to cozy up to the shrillness in this wine. Needs mollifying food. Decent at best.*

Still More Oregon Wines to Savor



2011 Anam Cara Cellars Nicholas Estate Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Chardonnay 13.5% alc., \$26, screwcap. Inaugural Chardonnay from Anam Cara. Estate Dijon clone grapes. Fermented 70% in neutral oak and 30% in stainless steel. *Light straw color in the glass. A ravishing wine with bright aromas of white peach, passion fruit, lemon curd, apple cider and fir tree. Delicious, fresh, crisp and lively, with*

flavors of nectarine, baked apple, lemon, and a little nuttiness and minerality. The oak is kept under wraps, the texture is seamless, and the finish is long and refreshing. One of the best Oregon Chardonnays I have had in my recent memory.



2010 Arterberry Maresh Maresh Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 12.6% alc., \$58. Non-irrigated vines. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. Marked reduction upon opening which resolves by the following day from an opened bottle. Light and elegant presentation of red cherries, raspberries and cranberries with a dried herb note in the background. Hi-strung with delicate tannins finishing with a tart cherry theme. The fruit seems under ripe. This wine has received considerable favorable press, but honestly, I don't get it. Good.*

2010 Brick House Cuvée de Tonnelier Ribbon Ridge Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., \$45. Biodynamic® estate grapes. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure aromas of cherries, brewed tea and seasoned oak. Red cherries and berries are featured with subtle notes of spice and oak and a slight vegetal bent in the background. Elegantly styled with fine-grain tannin. Slightly more expressive the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Good.*

2009 Cameron Abbey Ridge Vineyard Willamette Valley Chardonnay 13.2% alc., \$47. *Medium straw color in the glass. This is a really strange wine and perhaps I got an anomalous bottle. Aromas of yeasty bread, oak toast and peanut butter. Styled with piercing lemon drop acidity. Citrus-driven flavors with notes of oak-derived banana, toast, nuts and peanut butter. Leaves a lemony trail on the finish. This producer's Chardonnay was recommended to me but I need to reserve judgement since I did not have a second bottle to sample.*

2010 Colene Clemens Vineyards Estate Reserve Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 14.1% alc., \$38. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Very enticing nose offering hi-tone aromas of berries on the vine, oak spice and BBQ smoke. Light in weight and soft on the palate with a core of exotically spiced dark berries and grilled plums underlain with a smoky, peppery note, backed by ripe tannins. An interesting wine that is different from the Oregon norm. Even better the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle show plenty of intriguing spice on the nose and palate. Very good.*



2010 Crowley Entre Nous Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., 225 cases, \$32. The winery's flagship blend of selected barrels. 60% LaColina Vineyard and 40% Tuckwilla Vineyard, both located in the Dundee Hills. Aged 19 months in neutral oak. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Aromas of oak-kissed black cherries, fresh herbs and wet earth. Very polished with a tasty, sweet cherry core and an earthy, herbal undertone. Very delicate, with a peppery note on the silky finish. Good.*

2010 J. Christopher Nuages Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., 375 cases, \$35. Unfiltered. Named in tribute to one of winemaker and guitarist Jay Christopher's favorite gypsy jazz tunes. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with aromas of red berries, dark cherries, hard red candy and the slightest smoky oak. Easy to like with a discrete concentration of dark red fruits wrapped in mild fine-grain tannins and well-integrated acidity. A touch of earthiness, herbs and oak adds interest. Good.*



2010 Haden Fig Cancilla Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., \$30. Produced and bottled by Evesham Wood Vineyard & Winery. Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. This wine definitely needs decanting if you drink now. Upon opening it offered shy but alluring aromas of dark red cherries, briar and marzipan. The core of red fruits was accented with spice and herbs and although the tangy red cherry finish showed promise, the wine seemed a bit dilute and flat. The following day it was tasted from a previously opened and re-corked bottle and had undergone an amazing transformation. The intensity of well-spiced cherry flavor had ramped up, the finish had picked up more generosity and length, and the wine became thoroughly enjoyable. Very good.



2009 Harper Voit Strandline Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$35. From Drew Voit, former winemaker at Shea Wine Cellars (Declan Wine Co. in Newberg). Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. A bit of reduction upon opening which resolves. Aromas of dark berries, plums, wood spice and rose petals. Full-bodied and rich with a plethora of darker fruits in a California style. Substantial tannins make for tough slogging and a strange oiled wood note in the background probably from oak spoils the experience for me. Not what I would expect from Drew who is an excellent winemaker so I will reserve judgement on this one bottle.

2010 Love & Squalor Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 12.8% alc., 315 cases, \$21. Love the name and label, but can't rave about the wine. Moderately light reddish color in the glass. Pleasant aromas of red fruits, red licorice, bramble and spice. Mid weight core of cherry, raspberry and red plum flavors fashioned in a silky, elegant style. Oak peeks out the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Decent.



2010 Matello Souris Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 165 cases, \$42. A barrel selection from Whistling Ridge Vineyard, Durant Vineyard and Bishop Creek Vineyard. Non-irrigated vines. Light reddish-purple color in the glass. Delicate aromas of cherries and strawberries unfold nicely over time in the glass. Rather austere and "Burgundian" in style if you will, featuring red fruits with hints of oak, redwood and herbs in the background. Finishes with mellow red cherry flavor. Elegant, like see-thru red lingerie. Some may find the wine too tight, light and tart but they may miss the point of this acid-charged wine. Very good.



2010 Matello Durant Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir

13.5% alc., 100 cases, \$42. Winemaker Marcus Goodfellow's first vintage from a vineyard planted in 1974 to Pommard clone, and non-irrigated. Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Very light but charming array of red fruit flavors including cherries, strawberries and cranberries. Highly aromatic on approach, and comes at you like an arrow upon entry. Elegantly styled with well-matched tannin and acidity, offering interesting hints of anise and baking spice. Shows off the vintage beautifully.



2010 Saffron Fields Vineyard Yamhill-Carlton District Oregon Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$48. Vinified by Rynders. Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Very fragrant reminiscent of fresh blackberry jam. Juicy and easy to drink, with a tasteful array of berry flavors backed by a complimentary barrel presence. Broad in the mouth with good ripeness, supple tannins. a very soft and velvety mouth feel, and a generous, fruit-driven finish. This vineyard is very impressive in 2010 (see also 2010 Roots Saffron Fields Pinot Noir). Very good.



2010 Scott Paul Les Gourmandises Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.1% alc., 93 cases, \$40. Sourced from special 20-year-old blocks at Nysa Vineyard. "Les Gourmandises" is a French term for "Delicacies." Natural fermentations, aged 10 months in 25% new French oak. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light reddish color in the glass. Scents of dark red berry jam, fresh cherries, dried herbs and oak. Light and silky with a delicate array of red fruits backed by gossamer tannins. High voltage acidity with a citrus peel infused finish. Somewhat herbal in character probably due to under ripeness. Better the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle showing more expressive red cherry fruit but still sporting zingy acidity. Good.*



2010 Soter Vineyards Mineral Springs Ranch Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.4% alc., \$50. Exclusively from the estate vineyard planted to 20 acres of Pinot Noir just east of the town of Carlton. 100% de-stemmed, 3-4 day cold soak, 7-10 day extended maceration, aged 12-15 months in 33% new French oak and an additional 6 months in bottle before release.

Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. Penetrating and uplifting nose offering aromas of Bing cherries and spice. Rich attack of delicious black cherry, plum and boysenberry fruits, impressing the mid palate and finishing long and generous. Seamless, soft and silky with well-mannered tannins. Highly enjoyable now but has the balance to evolve over many years.



2009 Stilstone Guadalupe Vineyard Oregon Pinot Noir

13.9% alc., 230 cases, \$30. Vineyard owners are Jim Stonebridge and Kathleen Boeve and the vineyard is managed by Joel Myers of Vinetenders whose family produces this wine.

Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Intense and very appealing aromas of black cherries, black raspberries, allalieberries and dark chocolate. Soft, smooth and ambrosial, with middleweight flavors of well-ripened dark cherry and berry fruits with complimentary accents of Asian 5-spice, cinnamon and toasty oak. Balanced, ripe tannins and a powerful, lasting finish complete the picture. I have been very impressed by this wine over the past three vintages. It seems to fly under the radar, yet is deserving of a bigger audience. Remarkably, the winery is still offering the 2007 and 2008 vintages of this superb wine.



2009 The Eyrie Vineyards Daphne Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$78.75. From a 1.5-acre block planted at the crest of the Dundee Hills by John Sonetky in 1974. Rocky soils, and densely planted vines. Typically the grapes from this block go into the Estate blend but the excellence in 2009 led to declaring it as a single block reserve. This wine has been made only three times since the vines were planted. The 2009 wine is dedicated to Daphne and John Sobetky. *Moderately light reddish-purple color in the glass. The nose is not very giving, showing some smoky oak. A middleweight core of fruits including plum, pomegranate and blueberry are backed by bright acidity and caressed by firm tannins. Currently showing more oak trim than I like and unusual for a wine made by Jason Lett. The most impressive feature is the length on this wine which is of Grand Cru quality. Tasted again later in the day and the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the wine improved slightly but not at all like a bottle I sampled at the winery in July which led to my purchase. I suspect an off bottle and withhold judgement.*

2010 Van Duzer Estate Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.3% alc., pH 3.53, TA 0.56, 4,300 cases, \$30. The first vintage made start to finish by a new winemaking team consisting of winemaker Jerry Murray, assistant winemaker Florent Merlier, and vineyard manager Bruce Sonnen. Aged 11 months in 35% new French oak. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Demure aromas of black cherries, briar, spice, and cedary oak. Flavors of earth bound cherries and plums wrapped in well-mannered tannins, finishing dry with a reasonable intensity. Nothing to criticize but doesn't wake up my palate. Good.*

Newest USB Winery Marketing

Van Duzer and other wineries are now taking advantage of the USB drive to provide printed and video background educational material about their wines to wine critics and prospective customers. The Van Duzer drive attached to the wine that was sent to me for review included a sale sheet for the Van Duzer 2010 Estate Pinot Noir and videos on the winery's vineyard, winery and results of their pursuit to produce world-class Pinot Noir. Co-owner Carl Thoma, winemaker Jerry Murray and vineyard manager Bruce Sonnen play a prominent role. The filming is professional, highly informative and puts the winery in a very favorable light.



2011 Walter Scott La Combe Verte Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$23. *Medium reddish-purple color in the glass. Primarily aromas of charred oak and barnyard upon opening, revealing shy black cherry fruit over time in the glass. Mid weight core of darker red cherries and raspberries and pomegranates with firm tannins taking over the finish. Endowed with bright acidity. Noticeable oak in the background. This wine is out of sorts now with too much acidity, tannins and oak in the limelight. Perhaps more bottle aging will be beneficial but the balance is suspect. Decent.*

Many Oregon Wineries Offering Pinot Noir for a C-Note or More

Gary Andrus of Archery Summit Estate was the first to push the price of Oregon Pinot Noir (Arcus Estate) into the triple digit range in the 1990s. He was confident that his wine was worth it and wanted to bring notoriety to Oregon and generate respect for the high quality of Oregon Pinot Noir. No other Oregon producer was bold enough to follow his precedent for many years. Recently, a number of Oregon wineries have begun producing special, limited release Pinot Noirs priced at a C-Note or more, many of which are from the excellent 2009 and 2010 vintages.

The wineries justify the exalted prices based on a number of reasons. The small quantities (usually 4 to 6 barrels) demand extra attention to detail and more time consuming winemaking techniques. Only superior wine from the best barrels in the cellar are included. 100% new French oak is not unusual. Often the wine comes from a special site or has an old vine pedigree. The wines, because of their vinification, are built for exceptional long-term cellaring in anticipation of improvement over time.

Usually these special wines are intended for connoisseurs or committed pinotphiles and are primarily sold only at the winery or to wine club members. They have quickly become cult collectables. I have listed the wines offered in the C-Note or above range I am aware of below, most of which are still currently available.

Interestingly, this trend has not caught on in California with the same fervor. I am only aware of a few such bottlings including those from Bouchaine, Hanzell, J. Rochioli, Paul Hobbs, and Williams Selyem, all of which are vineyard-designated wines (or block-designated in the case of J. Rochioli).

2010 Adelsheim Vineyard Quarter Mile Lane Vineyard Chehalem Mountains Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$105 (\$225 magnums) 75 cases. A single vineyard Pinot Noir from the 2.4-acre Block 1 planted in 1974 at Adelsheim's original vineyard site and thus is the oldest estate vineyard. The cuttings were obtained from Charles Coury and were sold to David Adelsheim as "Pommard" clone, but is more likely "Martini" clone or a mix of the two. Expected aging from 2013 to 2025.

2009 Adelsheim Vineyard Winderlea Vineyard Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$105 92 cases. Mailing list customers only. This vineyard was managed by Adelsheim when it was known as Goldschmidt Vineyard. All varieties except Pinot Noir were grafted over to densely spaced Dijon clone vines on devigorating rootstocks or removed. Farming was transitioned to sustainable and organic. In 2006, Goldschmidt Vineyard was purchased by Donna Morris and Bill Sweat and renamed Winderlea Vineyard. This wine is sourced from one acre of clone 667 that Adelsheim planted in the 1990s. The wine can age from 2012 to 2024.

2008 Adelsheim Vineyard 31 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$185 112 cases. Best of Vintage series which dates to the 2006 vintage. The 2006 Vintage 29 Pinot Noir is still available (\$140) and a Vintage Vertical of Vintage 29, 31 and 32 Pinot Noir is available for \$500.

2010 Antica Terra Antikythera Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$100 185 cases. Sold out. Antica Terra Estate Pinot Noir. Aged 12 months in 100% new French oak.

2010 Archery Summit Estate Arcus Estate Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$100 735 cases. Aged 10 months in 50% new French oak. Arcus means "bow" in Latin and describes the estate vineyard that wraps around both sides of a small valley in the heart of the Dundee Hills. Age ability predicts improvement over the next 5 to 10 years.

2010 Beaux Frères The Upper Terrace Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$100 Large Formats also. 552 cases. The site has sedimentary soils and a slightly higher elevation than the original Beaux Frères Vineyard. Planted on a steep south facing slope to Dijon clones 113, 114, 115, 667 and 777.

2010 Bergström Hommage Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$100 150 cases. Produced since the 2008 vintage, this wine represents the finest barrels in the cellar.

2006 Domaine Serene Monogram® Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$250 50 cases. Aged 20 months in 100% new French oak. A hand-selected blend from the finest barrels of the vintage.

2009 Evening Land Summum Seven Springs Vineyard Eola-Amity Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$120 100 cases. Sourced from self-rooted Pommard clone planted in 1984.

2009 Joseph Dobbles Cuvée Exceptionnelle Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$100 25 cases. A barrel selection blend from several vineyards. Aged 20 months in 100% new French oak.

2009 Lange Estate Winery 25th Anniversary Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$125 (\$260 magnums) 35 cases. Presented in a screen printed bottle with the winery's 25th Anniversary logo.



2010 Penner-Ash Pas de Nom Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$100 240 cases. Aged 10 months in 40% new French oak.

2010 Ponzi Vineyards Aurora Pinot Noir \$100 100 cases. Aged 20 months in 50% new French oak.

2010 Ponzi Vineyards Avellana Pinot Noir \$100 100 cases. Aged 20 months in 50% new French oak.

2010 Stoller Family Estate Cathy's Reserve Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$100 88 cases. Sourced from the oldest Pommard plantings on the estate. Aged 10 months in 100% new French oak.

2007 The Eyrie Vineyards South Block Reserve Dundee Hills Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$189 David Lett's last wine. From the original planting of vines at The Eyrie Vineyard.

2007 WillaKenzie Estate Reserve Yamhill-Carlton District Willamette Valley Pinot Noir \$150 100 cases.

A tasting of selected "Triple Digit" Pinot Noir wines was conducted by *Oregon Wine Press* and the results published in the November issue. The tasting panel recommended decanting if these special wines are opened now, but advised cellaring. Visit www.oregonwinepress.com.

Station Imports Brings In the Best from New Zealand

It seems appropriate to include the wines from two notable New Zealand producers in this issue as many writers have pointed out similarities in Oregon and New Zealand Pinot Noir.

Rippon Vineyard is celebrating 100 years on the land and 30 years of wine growing in 2012. In 1912, Sir Percy Sargood, part of a successful Australasian merchant family, purchased Wanaka Station in a remote area of New Zealand. Here, he and his wife Lucy pioneered irrigation and bred quality stock. In 1913, they planted 8,000 fruit trees to establish Wanaka Orchards, demonstrating that the country was ideally suited for fruit growing.

Rolfe Mills, Sir Percy's grandson, had a vision that the Wanaka soil would sustain quality wine grape production. In 1982, he planted the first commercial vines in Central Otago, establishing Rippon Vineyard.

Today, thirty years after its planting, Sir Percy's great-grandson, Nick Mills, is celebrating his tenth year on the farm as Rippon Vineyard's winemaker. With Nick as the fourth generation on the land, it shows a continuity of direction and focus.

Earlier this year, over 200 people gathered in Wanaka Station homestead's old gardens - now Wanaka Station Park - to celebrate this centenary year. Rippon Vineyard is marking this event by rereleasing the 2003 Rippon Pinot Noir, Nick's first vintage as winemaker on his family's vineyard. Nick is pictured below in his compost pile, part of the biodynamic farming program at Rippon.



Quartz Reef is located in Cromwell, Central Otago, where Austrian born winemaker Rudi Bauer farms 37 acres of vineyards at Bendigo Station. Bauer, who has degrees in viticulture and winemaking, arrived in New Zealand in 1985, joining New Zealand's oldest winery, Mission Estate as an assistant winemaker. He subsequently worked in wineries in California and Oregon, but longed to return to New Zealand.

In 1989, he became Rippon Vineyard's first certified winemaker. He left Rippon and New Zealand in 1992 for a vintage in Burgundy, returning to craft wine at Giessen Wines in Canterbury for four years. In 1996, he founded Quartz Reef. Bauer was named New Zealand Winemaker of the year in 1999 and 2010 and in 2000 he helped found the first Central Otago Pinot Noir Celebration. Quartz Reef was a featured winery at the 2012 International Pinot Noir Celebration in McMinnville, Oregon.

The Quartz Reef Estate Vineyard at Bendigo Station is underlain with the largest quartz reef deposit in New Zealand. The vineyard is farmed biodynamically, and Quartz Reef Estate Vineyard achieved Demeter® farming certification in November 2011.


Two Pinot Noirs are offered from Quartz Reef: a Central Otago blend of two vineyards and a more expensive Bendigo Estate Vineyard Pinot Noir. Pinot Gris and Methode Traditionelle sparkling wine round out the lineup.

Andy and Penny Loving of Station Imports adopted New Zealand as their second home in 1998 and have become fully invested in the country and its life style. Station Imports in Colorado Springs, Colorado (www.stationimports.com) has brought 12 cases of this special rerelease 2003 Rippon Pinot Noir into the United States (\$99), and also has the wines reviewed below available. Penny and Andy are pictured at the 2009 World of Pinot Noir in Shell Beach, California.



The Rippon wines are fermented with resident yeast. They are aged 10 months in 25%-30% new to 4-year-old French oak barrels. After malolactic fermentation, the wines are racked into barrel and spend a second winter in neutral barrels. They are bottled without fining or filtering. Nick recommends cellaring and decanting the wines. Aging potential is 10+ years.

2009 Rippon Vineyard Mature Vine Lake Wanaka Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir 13.0% alc., pH 3.67, TA 0.60, 1,325 cases, 140 cases imported, \$58.25, Diam closure. Vines planted 1986-1991. Clones 5, 6, 2/10, 10/5, 13, Linc, 667 and 777. Parcels fermented separately. 25% whole cluster. Aged 15 months in 30% new to 4-year-old French oak barrels. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light reddish color in the glass. Expressive nose immediately upon opening with aromas of alpine strawberries, red cherries, and baking spices. A complete wine with a satisfying core of fresh red fruits, well-mannered tannins and an impressively long finish flush with cherries and nervy acidity. A classy wine that is quite enjoyable now, but has the balance to age beautifully.*

 **2009 Rippon Vineyard Emma's Block Lake Wanaka Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir** 13.0% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.62, 107 cases, 14 cases imported, \$80.25, Diam closure. From a vineyard parcel with an eastward facing aspect located on the lakefront with clay reefs running through schist gravels. Named after the great-great-great-grandmother of the current generation of the Mills family through which the name Rippon entered the family. Clones 5, 6, 13 and Linc. 22% whole cluster. 21 days skin contact. Aged 17 months in 25% new to 4-year-old French oak barrels. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light, slightly hazy, ruby red color in the glass. The nose is alive and expressive with scents of fully ripened dark red cherries and red berries. A charming wine that is light on its feet, with ambrosial red cherry flavor, supple*



tannins, and a good cut of acidity on the cherry-driven finish. This feminine wine shows deft balance between richness of flavor, acidity and tannin and is a pleasure to drink.



2009 Rippon Vineyard Tinker's Field Lake Wanaka Central Otago

New Zealand Pinot Noir 13.6% alc., pH 3.67, TA 0.60, 105 cases, 14 cases imported, \$99. From a unique parcel within Rippon Vineyard that contains the oldest vines on the property. Named after Rippon's founder, Rolfe Mills, known as "Tink" to his friends. Clones 5, 6, 2/10, 10/5, 13 and Linc. 35% whole cluster. Aged 15 months in 42% new to 4-year-old

French oak barrels. Unfined and unfiltered. *Moderately light, slightly hazy, ruby red color in the glass. A savory wine with aromas of dark red and blue fruits, exotic spices, earth, compost, and stem. A little more structured and intensely fruited than the Emma's Block Pinot Noir, with layers of flavors including cherry, cranberry, blueberry, spice, sandalwood and the faintest oak. The acidity is crisp and well-integrated and the fine-grain tannins are ripe and sturdy. The finish is remarkable in length, like a 3-hour movie you don't want to end. The most backward of the three 2009 Rippon Pinot Noirs, but still enough precocious tease to attract your attention.*



The Quartz Reef wines are vinified separately according to clone. A small percentage of whole cluster is retained with the rest de-stemmed. A 5 to 7-day cold soak precedes indigenous fermentation. Up to 12 days of post maceration is performed to ensure optimum tannin extraction. Aging is in 30% new French oak barrels. Malolactic fermentation is natural and the wines undergo egg white fining before bottling. Cellaring potential is 6 to 10 years.

2010 Quartz Reef Bendigo Central Otago Pinot Noir 14.0% alc., pH 3.67, TA

0.51, \$36.25, screwcap. Clones 10/5, 5, 115, 777 and Abel. Yields 1.8 tons per acre. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. Well-scented with bright aromas of dark berry jam, spice and subtle oak. Juicy flavors of blackberries and kirsch with complimentary oak in the background. Structurally sound and very soft on the palate. Picks up interest and intensity over time in the glass. Very good.*



2010 Quartz Reef Bendigo Estate Vineyard Central Otago New Zealand Pinot Noir 14.5% alc., pH 3.66, TA 0.55, \$96, screwcap. Aged

in 15% new and 85% one-year-old French oak barrels. *Moderately dark reddish-purple color in the glass. This is an enthralling wine with lovely aromas of dark red and black berries and a hint of oak vanillin. The striking middleweight fruit enters with aplomb and fans out nicely on the mid palate, finishing with generosity. Very soft and polished, even velvety in the mouth. Commendable oak and tannin integration, and appealing earth and mineral imbued notes add to the pleasure.*



Pinot Briefs

Thirteenth Annual World of Pinot Noir Tickets Now Available Pinotphiles flock to this event, so get your tickets early! WOPN is slated for March 1 & 2, 2013 at the Cliffs Resort and Dolphin Bay Resort in Shell Beach, California. The schedule includes an in depth tasting of Kosta Browne wines, a Williams-Selyem Winemaker Dinner, a seminar on Minerality and Alcohol & Balance Part II, Grand Tastings on both days, the annual Burgundy Seminar on Saturday, and the Gala at Chamisal Vineyards on Saturday evening. Visit www.wopn.com for information and tickets.



WORLD OF PINOT NOIR

3L and 5L bottles of Davis Family Vineyards Pinot Noir This holiday season, Davis Family Vineyards in Healdsburg is offering 3 liter and 5 liter bottles of 2011 “Soul Patch” Russian River Valley Pinot Noir. The labels are etched and can be personalized with a message etched into the glass. Each bottle is signed by winemaker Guy Davis. The bottles will be released in the fall of 2014. Large formats of this size are rarely offered for sale by wineries and make a great holiday gift. For photos, visit www.daviswines.com/wines/2011LFPinot.htm. Contact annie@daviswines.com.

Turncoat Wine Co. Josh McFadden heads a 31-year-old company, Proof Wine Collective, that develops small production, critically acclaimed wineries. His company has developed labels for such notable producers as Herman Story, Sans Liege, Alta Maria and Force of Nature. His latest venture, Turncoat Wine Co., is a wine bar located in the Central Coast of California. The 4,000 square foot space will also offer a restaurant, lounge area, wine shop, tasting room, and will serve as an event location. Located in downtown San Luis Obispo, the Turncoat Wine Co. is set to open in early 2013. 500+ wines will be offered sourced from both local and global artisan producers. In preparation for Turncoat Wine Co., a campaign to raise money has been set up on the crowd-funding site, Kickstarter.com. For more information, contact Sarah Berger, sarah@proofwinecollective.com.

Hip Hop Ode to Wine Country The hottest hardcore rap song of 2012 is about wine. The music video, “Wine Country,” is for connoisseurs of fine wine with a gangsta sensibility. It can be viewed on YouTube under “Wine Country.” *Huffington Post* said, “The most bad ass version of Wine Country we’ve ever seen.” *Terroirist* remarked, “It’s as catchy as 2Pac’s ‘California Love,’ but more relevant to the wine crowd.” The track features Vallejo emcee Moe Green, San Francisco based emcee, Jairo “Rojah” Vargas of Bayonics and Hot Pocket, and Cameron Washington. The track is now on iTunes.

Jackson Family Wines Acquires Saralee’s Vineyard & Richard’s Grove According to the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* (November 16, 2012), the 260-acre ranch owned by Saralee and Richard Kunde was sold to Jackson Family Wines following a statement by Barbara Banke, chairperson of Jackson Family Wines. The vineyard was planted in 1988 and has more than 200 acres of vines. Grapes are currently sold to 45 wineries (long-term contracts will still be honored). The Grove has been a frequent site for charity auctions, fundraisers, and other events.

Amazon Offering Wine for Sale Amazon has launched its internet wine sales store, shipping wine to 12 states and D.C. currently. Amazon does not sale the wine directly, depending on wineries to ship after an order has been placed on amazon.com (Amazon takes a 15% fee from the winery for the sale). Wines from

different wineries cannot be shipped together. I visited the wine store recently, and I don't get it. There were 115 Pinot Noir wines offered, and the wines were priced at what an individual would pay at a retail store or at the winery. Why not just purchase the wines directly from a winery where more wines are offered from that producer and discounts are often given to purchases of six or 12 bottles? Apparently the only advantage of buying from Amazon is a reduced shipping rate that Amazon can negotiate because of its huge shipping volume. Recognizable Pinot Noir labels offered included Anaba, Angelina, Bouchaine, Canihan, CoHo, Francis Coppola, Gracianna, J, Lost Canyon, Roadhouse Winery, Saintsbury, Scherrer, Schug, Torii Mor, and Willamette Valley Vineyards.

Oregon Pinot Noir Featured in Latest *Wine Spectator* The cover of the magazine promises the scoop on Oregon Pinot Noir but there isn't much information in this review article that hasn't been published previously in more detail elsewhere. There are some interesting quotes from notable winemakers and a good summary of the sub-appellations of the Willamette Valley. The article by Harvey Steiman points out that as of 2011, there are 20,400 acres of vineyards in Oregon, 62% of which, or 12,560 acres, are Pinot Noir. There are a total of 418 wineries selling about 1 million cases of Pinot Noir (about as much Pinot Noir sold from Sonoma County and slightly more than the amount sold from the Côte d'Or in Burgundy). Surprisingly, the article includes no reviews of currently released Pinot Noir, but does touch on older vintages and age ability (very good in Oregon).

¡Salud! The Oregon Pinot Noir Auction The 21st two-day event raised over \$640,000. Highly prized, exclusive cuvées of Pinot Noir crafted by 42 wineries in the Vintners Circle generated bids in excess of \$1,000 on a majority of the 210 case lots. Proceeds support access to healthcare services for Oregon's seasonal vineyard workers and their families. The mission touched over 3,600 lives in 2011. Pioneering winemaker, Dick Erath, received the 2012 Legacy Winemaker Award for his contributions to the Oregon wine industry and steadfast support for ¡Salud!



Ponzi Releases Four Single Vnyd Bottlings Maria Ponzi talks about 2010 Ponzi single vineyard Chardonnays (Avellana and Aurora) and 2010 Ponzi single vineyard Pinot Noirs (Avellana and Aurora) in two videos posted on YouTube. These wines are only released in special vintages. Visit the video on the Pinot Noirs at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa8lCvv7qU8&feature=youtu.be>. A new tasting room is scheduled to open in the summer of 2013 at the Ponzi winery (Collina del Sogno). Inquire about Ponzi 2010 releases at www.ponziwines.com.