

PinotFile[©]

Cabernet is the King of Wines and Pinot Noir is the Wine of Kings

Little Known Marin Pinot Noir

Most people, and even wine aficionados, are unaware of the burgeoning Pinot Noir wine industry in tiny Marin County, California. Only 33 acres are planted to Pinot Noir compared to Sonoma's 6,521 acres, but the potential for great Pinot Noir with unique flavors is becoming evident. Marin County has a climate similar to the Sonoma Coast. The growing season is very long making the risk of rot and winter rains challenging. Most producers are making small quantities (less than 300 cases) and charging moderately high prices. The scarcity and expense of the wines are due to the small amount of suitable land available, the high cost of the land, low yields, and the absence of available workers for the vineyards.

Mark Pasternak is one of the pioneer growers of Pinot Noir in Marin. He farms the McNeil Vineyard for Chalone, the Stubbs Vineyard with Tom Stubbs, and the Devil's Gulch Ranch in Nacasio. Chalone is expecting great things from their new Pinot Noir plantings and have invested a significant amount of money in the new vineyard. The first release will be in a few years. The Stubbs Vineyard was planted in 1996. Winemaker Dan Goldfield (of Dutton-Goldfield; see page 2) made the inaugural release from this vineyard (on sale April, 2004, \$29). The Devil's Gulch Ranch was planted in the early 90's. Prior to 1997, the Pinot Noir was sold to La Crema and Kalin Cellars. In 1997, the Hartford Court label was created to focus on cool-climate Pinot Noir. Less than 300 cases of Marin appellation Devil's Gulch Vineyard Pinot Noir are made each year (\$45). Dutton-Goldfield also bottles a Pinot Noir from this vineyard (\$45).

Sean Thackery, in Bolinas, renown for his Rhone style wines made from grapes sourced from outside Marin, plans to craft his first Pinot Noir with the 2002 vintage using grapes from Pasternak. Jonathen and Susan Pey produce a Pinot Noir from the Stubbs Vineyard (2002 Pey-Marine Trois Filles— \$29). Kalin Cellars has used some Pasternak fruit in a sparkling rose (see next article regarding Kalin Cellars). Mac McDonald, of Vision Cellars in Windsor, has been producing a Pinot Noir from grapes grown on the Chileno Valley Ranch on the Marin/Sonoma border since 1997 (\$36).

Although cattle farming has been the main agricultural pursuit in Marin for many years, the potential for high-end Pinot Noir may gradually alter the landscape. The wines are definitely unique, showing a wilder quality with flavors of olallieberry, leather, and earth. Unique and worth seeking out.

Volume 3, Issue 32

April 5, 2004

"Pinot Noir's soft, seductive textures have the broadest, most complex flavor profile of any wine. A great Pinot Noir has layers and layers of subtle nuances that constantly provoke the taster's awareness and prod him or her to look deeper."

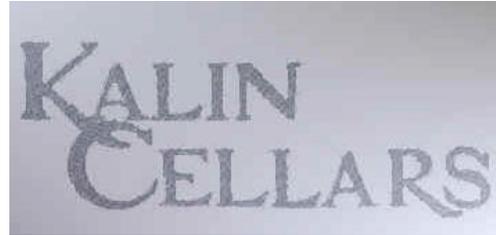
Sonny Martin, Urban Gourmet, Visalia, CA

Inside this issue:

Kalin Cellars	2
Dutton-Goldfield	2
Leroy	3
Pinot Noir in Champagne	3
Love Promotion #9	4
Atkins Diet & Wine	4

Kalin Cellars is Uncompromising

Kalin Cellars was founded in 1977 by Terry and Frances Leighton, a University of California Berkeley molecular geneticist. About 7,000 cases of single vintage and single vineyard wine are produced each year and primarily sold to mailing list customers and a few lucky restaurants. The wines are the best red, white, and sparkling wines made in America that no one knows about. The winery is located in Novato, in suburban Marin County. The grapes are primarily sourced from non-Marin vineyards.



Kalin pioneered the production of unfiltered, sur lies aged white wines in California. All wines are bottled without filtration and the red wines are subjected to no fining or addition of press wine. Winemaking is painstakingly artisanal. Besides a rose sparkling wine (Cuvee Rose) which is 60% Pinot Noir, a Sauvignon Blanc, a Semillon, a Chardonnay, a Cabernet Sauvignon, and a late-harvest dessert wine (Cuvee d'Or), a Pinot Noir is produced which is one of the most Burgundian-style Pinots produced in California. Leighton and his wife also own a couple of parcels in Burgundy and recently began making wine there. He despises the heavy, high-alcohol, oak bombs from California that often overwhelm rather than complement food.

The Kalin credo is, "Produce No Wine With Less Character than Yourself". The Kalins do things at their own pace. The white wines are generally released five to ten years following the vintage—red wines six to ten years after the harvest. Basically every release is a library wine. "When it tastes good, we release it," is Leighton's mantra. The current Pinot Noir release is the 1994 Cuvee DD Sonoma Pinot Noir (\$40). The grape source is David Demostene's Ranch in Alexander Valley (thus the name 'Cuvee DD'). The vineyard is the oldest Pinot Noir planting in the region, and was established with a clone which produces small berries and low yields. Dry farmed, the vineyard is within one mile of the Russian River. The wine is refined and soft, like a Cote de Beaune and not at all like a super-rich California Pinot Noir. I had the pleasure of drinking an older release, the 1990, several years ago, and it was memorable.

"Kalin wines are the wines of a genius. These wines are worth every effort to find in the marketplace."
Robert M Parker Jr

Phone: 415-883-3543 (leave message), e-mail: tjl@ix.netcom.com.

Dutton-Goldfield Winery

After working closely together as winemaker and grape grower since 1990, Steve Dutton and Dan Goldfield merged their talents to create Dutton-Goldfield Winery in 1998. The Winery's first release in 1998 was a Dutton Ranch Pinot Noir. Now, in addition to Dutton Ranch, several other vineyard-designated Pinot Noirs are produced in limited quantities. Steve's father Warren Dutton first planted grapes in 1964 and Steve now manages many of the finest vineyards in the Russian River Valley. The Duttons were among the first to plant Pinot Noir in the colder parts of the appellation and continue to push the limits with new vineyards in the Freestone and Occidental areas. Partner Dan Goldfield is also the winemaker for Stubbs Vineyard and Hartford Court Pinot Noirs. Current releases:

2001 Dutton Ranch (Green Valley-Russian River Valley) Pinot Noir, 1,450 cases, blend of four Dutton Ranch vineyards.

2001 Devil's Gulch Vineyard (Marin County) Pinot Noir, 375 cases, see page 1.

2001 McDougall Vineyard (Sonoma Coast) Pinot Noir, 290 cases, vineyard perched atop a south-facing ridge just off the Sonoma Coast, farmed by the McDougall family.

Leroy



In 1868 Francois Leroy founded Maison Leroy in Auxey-Duresses, a small village near Meursault. When Lalou Leroy's father, Henri, joined the family business in 1919, the firm had already been established as one of the greatest in Burgundy. After considerable financial success, Henri was able to purchase one half of the celebrated Domaine de la Romanee Conti. Lalou took over her father's negociant business in 1964 and became one of the first women to head an important firm in Burgundy. As co-director for many years, she was an important influence at D.R.C.. She stills own 25% of the Domaine.

Today Lalou Leroy is the force behind three companies: *Domaine Leroy* was established in 1988 from the purchase of domains Charles Noellat in Vosne Romanee and Philippe Remy in Gevrey Chambertain. *Maison Leroy* is a negociant house, relying on Lalou's exceptional palate to purchase premium wines. *Domaine d'Auvenay* is the vineyard and home of Lalou and her husband Marcel, producing estate grown village, premier and grand cru wines.

What distinguishes Lalou Leroy from her peers is the relentless pursuit of fine wines that are an expression of their terroir. She makes wine from extremely low yields and bottles without fining or filtration. In addition, the estate vineyards are farmed according to strict biodynamic guidelines, avoiding herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, or any other non-organic material.

9 Grands Crus: Corton-Charlemagne (vin blanc), Corton Renardes, Richebourg, Romanee Saint-Vivant, Clos de Vougeot, Musigny, Clos de la Roche, Latricieres Chambertain, Chambertain.

8 Premier Crus: Volnay Santenots, Savigny-les-Beaunes Les Narbantons, Nuits-St-Georges Les Vignerondes, Nuits-St-Georges Les Boudots, Vosne-Romanee Aux Brulees, Vosne-Romanee Les Beaux Monts, Chambolle-Musigny Les Charmes, Gevrey-Chambertain Les Combottes.

Village appellations: Pommard Les Vignots, Pommard Les Trois Follots, Nuits-St-Georges Aux Allots, Nuits St-Georges Aux Lavieres, Nuits-St-Georges Au Bas de Combe, Vosne-Romanee les Genaivneres, Chambolle-Musigny Les Fremieres, and Gevrey-Chambertain. Also Bourgogne Rouge.

"... ..Ne sacrifiant a aucun compromise, elle produit toute une gamme de vins rouges et blancs qui n'ont de'egal dans le mond". Robert M Parker Jr, *The Wine Advocate*, "20 Years" - Issue 120.

Pinot Noir in Champagne

Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier, and Chardonnay are the three grape varieties used to make Champagne. Usually the amount of each grape is not indicated on the label. If only Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier are used, the Champagne is called a "Blanc de Noirs" (a white wine made exclusively from black— meaning red— grapes). If only Chardonnay is used, the wine is called "Blanc de Blancs" (a white wine made exclusively from white grapes). A red still wine (Pinot Noir) may be blended into the white still wine to produce Rose Champagne. This technique of blending white and red wines together to make rose is permitted only in the Champagne region of France. Often, Champagne producers will invent a special name for a cuvee made with a particular blend of grape varieties, to help buyers identify which wines have which blend. When 100% of the grapes used are from the same year, the winemaker puts the year on the bottle, creating a vintage Champagne. This is only done in the very best years when growing conditions are ideal and grapes fully ripen. A vintage Champagne is of higher quality than a non-vintage Champagne which is a blend of several years.

Love Promotion #9

**I took my troubles down to Madame Bize-Leroy
You know that vigneronne with that great terroir
She's got a parcel of some very ancient wines
She adds a little Frambiose and *viola*, Love Promotion Number Nine**

**I told her how hard it was to make my Brix
My last wine Parker gave a 56
She looked at the glass and with an expression quite feline
She said, "What you need is Love Promotion Number Nine"
She said, "Add this and *voila*, Love Promotion Number Nine"**

**She bent down and turned around and gave me a wink
I thought to myself, "You could even add this to pink"
It smelled like raspberry essence, it looked like Indian ink
I took a snoot, it reeked of fruit, I took a drink**

**I didn't know if it was day or night
I started kissin everything in sight
But when I proposed to Madame that we rumble in her vines
She broke my little bottle of Love Promotion Number Nine**

Love Promotion Number Nine— Bonny Doon Vineyard, Randal Graham 2004

The Atkins Diet and Wine

The number one story in the nation's newspapers these days is the Atkins Diet and variations thereof. The country has been concerned about the rising incidence of obesity and its accompanying health problems such as hypertension and diabetes mellitus. Really the Atkins Diet is the American version of the French Paradox—a diet high in meat, cheese, and fat.

Wine is banished the first two weeks on the Atkins Diet. This has nothing to do with the carbohydrates in wine, since they are minimal (0.8g to 1.8g for each glass of wine according to the USDA). All alcohol is prohibited because it lowers blood sugar, increasing one's appetite. After the two week break-in period, you may add wine back to your diet, counting the wine's carbohydrates as part of your daily total of between 25g and 50g per day.

Wine benefits by increasing good cholesterol (HDL), which rids your system of fats. Also, wine does not have a large amount of calories compared to other alcoholic drinks and because of the way your body metabolizes wine, wine's calories are not likely to produce fat.

The fact that the Atkins Diet addresses wine in the revised books indicates that wine consumption has increased and has become a major part of the American diet. Moderate drinking of wine has health benefits and it makes food taste better.

For more information on Atkins, wine and health, go to www.wine.about.com.