

**Pinot Noir
Makes for an
Elusive Kind of
Romance**

PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Devoted to Pinoaficionados

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J. Lynne Wines

Jennifer Lynne Wall is best known as the “Barefoot Winemaker” for she makes wines for Barefoot Cellars Winery. A native Californian, she originally planned to pursue a career in medicine (an anecdote found in numerous winemaker’s resumes). After graduating from college, she moved to Sonoma County, and found a job in a custom wine processing facility called Vinwood Cellars. After one harvest, she was hooked on becoming a vintner. Jennifer learned her trade under the distinguished winemaker, Erin Green, now winemaker at Pahlmeyer. Vinwood Cellars was sold to Kendall Jackson and the original principles created a new company where Jennifer was Lab Director. Here she was mentored by Master Winemaker Kerry Damskey, who has been a winemaker in Sonoma County since 1985. and a two time recipient of the Sonoma County Harvest Fair Sweepstakes award.



In 1995, Jennifer became the winemaker at Barefoot Cellars Winery and led the winemaking and production operation there for almost ten years. Barefoot Cellars, founded in 1986, was one of the original “value” brands of wine. Gallo purchased Barefoot Cellars in early 2005. The winery releases several varietals (but no Pinot) produced in a soft, approachable style for everyday drinking. In 2004, Barefoot Cellars sold 600,000 cases of wine. Since 1995, Jennifer has received an astonishing number of medals for her wines. In 2004, alone, she was awarded 361 medals and since 1995 has accumulated over 2000 medals!

Like most accomplished winemakers, she yearned to have her own label. The owners of Barefoot Cellars allowed her to develop her own brand. With the assistance of husband Mike, they debuted their first wines in 2003: 2002 J. Lynne Russian River Valley Chardonnay and 2002 J. Lynne Russian River Valley Pinot Noir. Success and accolades were immediate. Both wines won many medals in notable competitions.

The J. Lynne wines are sourced from the Cameron Ranch in the Russian River Valley. Jennifer is very familiar with this vineyard as she has been buying grapes from here for over six years. The vineyard manager is David Cornelssen.

Barefoot Cellars Winery has won more gold medals than any other wine in its price category. It has consistently been named one of the top 30 wine companies by *Wine Business Monthly*.



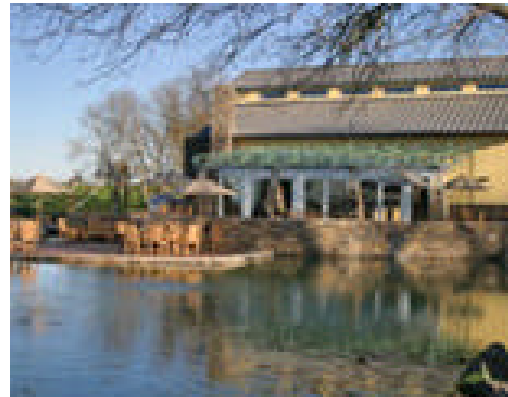
2004 J. Lynne Russian River Valley Pinot Noir 14.5% alc., 341 cases, \$20. I am convinced that woman winemakers really have a way with Pinot. After tasting literally thousands of Pinot Noirs over the last several years, I have found that women veer toward an elegant and balanced style that I find very appealing. The wines are bottled under an unusual blue capsule (the only other one I have seen is on Patrice Rion Burgundy). This wine has alluring aromatics with cherry cola, cranberry and a touch of oak. It is light in color, but packed with flavor. The Pinot fruits were presented on an elegant platform and the wine finished smoothly with a touch of toast.

Like all good young wines, it picked up structure and character with air time. My wife tastes some of the wines I sample, and she was noticeably impressed. We finished off a bottle with penne pasta with fresh tomatoes and basil from our garden and a mild Italian sausage. A great wine with food. As my Mexican gardener would say, "I'm like theeez one."

J. Lynne wines can be purchased by the case on the website: jlynnewines.com. There is also some retail distribution. The 2004 Russian River Valley Chardonnay won a Gold Medal at the recent Orange County Fair Wine Competition (less than 500 cases, \$220 a case). We are talking value here. You can contact Jennifer at California Wine Creations, Inc., PO Box 2337, Windsor, CA 95492. 707-838-2353.

Bianchi Winery

The Bianchi family has been involved in the wine business since 1974 when Glenn Bianchi and his father, Joseph, invested in a winery and vineyard in the Central Valley of California. The family had dreamed of eventually producing ultra-premium wines and in 2000, the Bianchis purchased forty acres of vineyards on the east side of Paso Robles. Here they have built a stunning winery and hospitality center on the property. The facility sits on a waterfall-fed lake with commanding views of the area.



The estate vineyard is planted to Cabernet, Zinfandel, Syrah, and Merlot as befits the Mediterranean climate here. The winery's Pinot Noir is sourced from Steve Encell's vineyard located in a very cool site in the shady eastern base of York Mountain. This is one of the coolest microclimates in Paso Robles. Winemaking is in the capable hands of Tom Lane. Tom is a native Californian who grew up playing in abandoned wineries when he was a child. In his later years, he assisted local home winemakers in making garage Zinfandel. During his graduate studies at U. C. Davis, he investigated differences in aroma compounds among twenty different Pinot Noir clones. He started his winemaking career at Navarro Vineyards in 1985. Tom subsequently joined Concannon Vineyards and over his twenty years of winemaking, has accumulated many prestigious awards including Dan Berger's Winemaker of the Year (1997) and Jerry Mead's Winemaker of the Year (1996).

2004 Bianchi Signature Selection Paso Robles Pinot Noir 15.2% alc., 264 cases, \$25. This is a hardy version of Pinot Noir that I rather enjoyed. A deep, dark cherry nose leads to flavors of ripe darker fruits with some soy and plummy overtones. Sturdy, saucy and fat, yet well-balanced. The high alcohol is well integrated. This wine will appeal to those who enjoy 'pumped up' Pinot. This wine reminds me of a quote (author unknown), "Faced with a lush, richly extracted bottle of Pinot Noir, it's tough to argue dogma. It's a little like complaining of a lover that he or she is too beautiful."



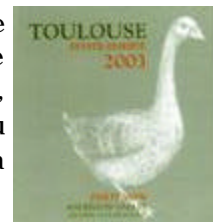
Bianchi Winery & Tasting Room is at 3380 Branch Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446. The website is bianchiwine.com, and the phone 805-226-8230. The Bianchi Pinot Noir is not offered on the online store. Contact the winery or sales at 949-646-9100.

Toulouse Vineyards

Toulouse Vineyard is owned and farmed by Vern and Maxine Boltz. Vern is a retired Oakland Fire Department Captain and home builder. Maxine is a former flight attendant and real estate professional. In 1997, they decided to retire and bought seventeen acres near the teeny town of Philo, in the Anderson Valley AVA (Mendocino County). They planted Pinot Noir (clones 115, 667, 777, and 2A) and named the vineyard "Toulouse." A toulouse is a huge goose up to thirty pounds or more. A placid giant, the Toulouse label proclaims that the toulouse thrives in the tranquility of the vineyard. Vern supplies his neighbor, Pacific Echo, with sparkling wine grapes, and MacPhail, which has bottled a highly-touted Pinot Noir in recent vintages. Baxter and Oak Arbour have also released a Toulouse Vineyard Pinot Noir. Some of the grapes are retained by Vern for his own bottlings which began with the 2002 vintage.



2003 Toulouse Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 14.1% alc., 1625 cases, \$30. The wine was aged a lengthy 23 months in French oak. This beauty is in an elegant style which I much admire. The nose is a little subdued but still offers delicate rose, raspberry and cherry perfume. The sweet cherry and raspberry fruit keeps you coming back. Despite a lengthy time in barrel, the oak is nicely integrated. There is a good acid backbone and the finish is soft and lingering. Like Maria, "Oh, so pretty!"



The label indicates that the website is toulousevineyards.com, but I could not locate it. The phone is 707-895-2828. There is retail distribution including HiTime in Costa Mesa, CA (hitimewine.net). There is also a 2003 Toulouse Vineyards reserve estate bottling available (200 cases).

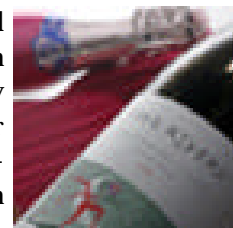
Pinots of Merit for Under \$20

Everyone who enjoys fine Pinot Noir needs a go-to wine that serves as a daily drinker, a wine you can serve your beer-loving relatives, a training Pinot for friends who are newbies to the Pinot world, and if you are me, a wine you can suggest to people who are always asking: "What's a good Pinot for under \$20?" Pinot Noirs that retail for under \$20 are never quite the epiphanic experience offered by more complete and expensive Pinot Noirs. They do not send your epinephrine flowing. As Miles said about a wine in *Sideways*, "quaffable, but not extraordinary." The point is, though, that many Pinot Noirs now offered for under \$20 can be extremely satisfying and worthy table wines. The quality level of Pinot Noir in this price range has increased markedly over the last few years. Sure, you have to try a number of them to find a pleasing one. But, it's not a job. Let it be an adventure. Most of the wines are produced in high quantity and distributed widely. The one caveat is that with rising grape prices, the under \$20 Pinot Noir may be an endangered species (see Navarro) I tasted through a number of Pinot Noirs recently in the under \$20 category and can recommend several.

2005 A by Acacia California Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., 58,000 cases, \$17. This is the inaugural vintage of A by Acacia which also has a companion California Chardonnay (\$11). The Pinot Noir is a blend of grapes from vineyards in Monterey (contributing floral aromas and minerality), Sonoma County (providing cherry flavors), and Carneros (lending spiciness and velvet texture). The idea here is a fruit-expressive wine that is a great value and reflect the 25+ years of wine-making expertise of Acacia. Acacia has over 150 acres of vineyards in Carneros and farms some of the oldest Pinot Noir vines in the United States. The current winemaker is Matthew Glynn. The nose features ripe wild strawberries, exotic woods, and spice. This medium-bodied wine offers sweet tasting dark fruits and spice box. The short finish has lively acidity and fine oak tannins.



2005 Five Rivers Central Coast Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$13. The winery's name, "Five Rivers," comes from the five major rivers that define the essence of the Central Coast of California (San Benito, Salinas, Santa Maria, Santa Ynez, and Sisquoc Rivers). This label is part of the Brown-Forman lineup. Winemaker Steve Peck chooses grapes from several outstanding Central Coast vineyards (Bien Nacido Vineyard, Premiere Coast Vineyards, Laetitia Vineyard, and Zabala Vineyard). Winemaking is traditional for Pinot Noir, with aging in French oak for one year (20% new). Clones include Pommard, Dijon, 2A, 4 and 5. A very drinkable Pinot Noir that is true to the varietal. Aromas are sweet with Jolly Rancher cherry and floral notes leading to a bounty of dark berries, sandalwood, and earthiness. The medium-bodied texture is soft and the wine finishes clean. Great with fresh gazpacho. www.FiveRiversWinery.com.



2004 Pinot Evil Reserve Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$19. Quite an impressive bottle for a supermarket wine displaying great heft and a large punt. The name is catchy and the label quite humorous with a picture of the Three Wise Monkeys (See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak no Evil). The back label notes that "Pinot Noir often seems possessed if not downright evil. We prefer to view Pinot Noir as a guilty pleasure." This wine's aromas are very comforting - like warm toast slathered with berry jam. Raspberry is the prominent fruit on the palate. The flavors are a little shy and shallow, but still decent. The texture is velvety and the finish has brisk acidity. As the label also says, "good when you just monkey around." Pinot Evil Cellars, San Luis Obispo, CA.

2003 Parasio Santa Lucia Highlands Monterey County Pinot Noir 14.5% alc., 3990 cases, \$15. The Parasio (pa-rye-zo) estate vineyard is high in the Santa Lucias. The name, "Paraiso," was given to the mountainside by early Spanish explorers. The Smith family has lived on the 400 acre estate for three

decades. Rich and Claudia Smith came here in 1973 after training at U.C. Davis. Today they are prominent and respected grape growers in Monterey County. The winemaker is David Fleming. This Pinot Noir won a Gold Medal at the 2006 Orange County Fair Wine Competition. A decent Pinot Noir featuring dark stone fruits, dark berries, and oak on the nose and palate. Medium-bodied in structure. Like many Pinots in this price range, the finish wants for more. Still, a satisfactory Pinot from the Santa Lucia Highlands where many Pinots are priced at \$50 and up.



2004 Navarro Mendocino County Pinot Noir 13.4% alc., \$16. This wine is sourced from several local family-owned vineyards. The quality here is very high considering the price. In the Anderson Valley, prices for Pinot Noir grapes rose 12% in 2003 and 2004 and another 25% in 2005. The Navarro website notes: "Moderate-priced Pinot Noir is getting as rare as family-owned farms." This Pinot is made in the same fashion as the winery's high end and more complex bottling ("Deep End", \$50) and is aged in French oak for 10 months. A very stylish effort from a consistent and respected Anderson Valley producer. The wine is like a teddy bear: soft, cuddly, and comfortable with no hard edges. The aromas are dreamy with cherries, strawberries and vanilla prominent. The Pinot fruits are presented with delicacy and the finish, while not lingering, has lively acidity. A steal at this price. www.navarrowine.com.

2004 Carpe Diem Firepeak Vineyard Edna Valley Pinot Noir 14.1% alc., \$19.99. This wine won a 4-Star Gold Medal at the 2006 Orange County Fair Wine Competition. The Firepeak Vineyard was planted to seven Dijon and Pommard clones in 1995. Winemaker is Frenchman Christian Roquenent (formerly Maison Deutz). This is an oak-themed Pinot Noir from start to finish. It is crafted in a lighter, softer style. I wanted more fruit and less oak. www.hitimewines.net.

2004 Elk Cove Vineyards Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 14.5% alc., \$19. This winery was founded in 1974 by Pat and Joe Campbell and is one of Oregon's oldest and most distinguished producers. It remains a family-owned and operated winery, with Adam Godlee Campbell the winemaker. This is a very nice wine for what it is. A toasty oak and fruit-scented nose leads to luscious cherry and raspberry flavors kissed with oak. The mouth feel is viscous and the whole package is beautifully balanced. You would be hard-pressed to find a better Pinot for under \$20 than this one. Vitamin P with a capital P. www.elkcove.com. 877-ELK-COVE.



2005 O'Reilly's Oregon Pinot Noir 13.5% alc., \$14. One of the first Oregon releases from the 2005 vintage. Winemaker David O'Reilly says this vintage is his favorite of all he has made beginning in 1997. The problem is, there is significantly less of it in this vintage. O'Reilly's is the second label of Owen Roe and is sourced from several small vineyards. This Pinot has very nice smoke, spice, and red and black fruits in the nose. Light in body, it has a great kick of spice on the back end. An excellent summer sipper.



2003 Freja Cellars Estate Willamette Valley Pinot Noir 13% alc., \$18. Freja was the Goddess of Love and Fertility for Burgundian 8th century settlers. She traveled the heavens on a chariot drawn by two felines. Winemaker here is Willy Gianopoles, who interestingly enough grew up in Woodstock, New York during the '60s and '70s. He bought property on a Chehalem Mountain hillside in Northern Willamette Valley in 1987. The estate vineyard was planted here in 1988 to Wädenswil (75%) and Pommard (25%) clones. Production is about 1,000 cases. This Pinot Noir was aged in a combination of Oregon, Hungarian and French oak (30% new). The aromas are deep and fruity. On the palate there are notes of red and black fruits, herbs and wet leaf. Bright acid dances on the back end. A decent Pinot. www.frejacellars.com and The Tasting Room in Carlton.



Vino V Wines

Michael Meagher is a young Central Coast (Ventura) winemaker who learned his trade under two very accomplished teachers: Jeffrey Patterson at Mt Eden Vineyards (8 years) and Adam Tolmach at Ojai Vineyards (5 years). In 2004, he decided to develop his own label, and with his wife Anita, started Vino V Wines.

I knew Michael was a family man when I met up with him on a recent trip in the parking lot of In-N-Out Burgers in Ventura. He had his young daughter in tow and treated her to french fries after our chat. Michael gave me a bottle of each of his inaugural releases to sample. He is still developing his logo and label, so they were adorned with masking tape labels. It is always a privilege to taste the efforts of a young winemaker on his way up.

In 2004, he obtained three tons of grapes - 1 ton each of Pinot Noir, Grenache and Syrah. Production was 200 cases. They will be available for purchase soon.

2004 Vino V Wines Clos Pepe Vineyard Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir 15% alc., 70 cases, \$42.50. This wine spent 19 months in oak barrels (33% new). Clos Pepe fruit tends to produce decadent Pinot Noirs and this one is no exception. Dark purple in color, this wine offers a plush nose of dark fruits, tea, and earth. A very tasty and hedonistic style of Pinot Noir with layered flavors and sweet fruit. It is nicely composed and the alcohol peeks out only a skosh in the nose.

2004 Vino V Wines White Hawk Vineyard Santa Barbara County Syrah 15% alc., 75 cases, \$42.50. No this isn't a misprint, I do occasionally dabble in Syrah and the excellence here bears reporting. This wine spent 21 months in oak (33% new). This is one deep, dark mother. It leads off with a huge, rich nose of black fruit and tar. Beautiful dark, plummy fruit dances on the palate. The tannins are reeled in, and the massive structure is surprisingly velvety. Shall we liken this one to Agassi pumped?



2004 Vino V Wines Confundido Santa Barbara County 14.5% alc., 50 cases. This is a blend of Grenache with kegs left over of Pinot Noir and Syrah. 50% Grenache (Vogelzang Vineyard), 25% Pinot Noir (Clos Pepe Vineyard) and 25% Syrah (White Hawk Vineyard). I don't have any reference point for this unusual blend but I can say it is well-crafted. A little barnyard shows up in the nose. It is less fat on the palate than the other two wines. It finishes nicely with refreshing acidity. A nice wine, but not exceptional.

Michael is still searching for reliable grape sources (there is no Pinot Noir in 2005). His website, www.vinov.com, has a mailing list sign up. This represents an excellent opportunity to get on board at the beginning and support a young and talented vintner.

More New Pinot Noir Releases: Strike While You Can

Halleck Vineyard 2004 Halleck Vineyard Estate Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir 40 cases, \$75. Critics have praised this wine as the best yet from Halleck. The small production reflects a limited harvest and careful fruit quality selection. There will be no Estate Pinot Noir for the 2005 vintage, as the vineyard was drenched by late season rains. In 2006, Halleck will be adding two single vineyard Pinot Noirs to the lineup which now includes the Estate and Three Sons Russian River Valley Pinot Noir. The wine is available on the website, www.halleckvineyard.com, or by phoning 707-738-8383. Ross Halleck has a Estate Club which offers members first crack at his wines and an automatic three bottle shipment of every new release three times per year. The Club also offers invitations to winery events and a chance to travel on excursions (the first trip will be to Tuscany; future trips include Burgundy). An excellent newsletter is also sent out by e-mail.



Anthill Farms Winery Three friends, Anthony, David, and Webster, have begun another Williams Selyem legacy. While working at Williams Selyem, they all had a dream to produce their own wines from vineyards they loved. They chose the coastal range of Sonoma as having the perfect combination of diverse soil types and the climate necessary to grow Pinot Noir. **2004 Anthill Farms Winery Abbey-Harris Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 23 cases, \$39, sold out. The vineyard is owned by Abbey and Dan Harris with the three amigos as partners. The forty acre vineyard is located on a hillside facing south over the town of Boonville, 110 feet above sea level and 600 feet above the Anderson Valley floor. **2004 Anthill Farms Winery Demuth Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** \$35, 123 cases. The Demuth Vineyard sits only about a mile away from Abbey-Harris, but the wines from the Demuth vineyard are quite different. Here the vines are nearly twenty years old, the vineyard is at a higher elevation, and is exposed to more wind. Clones are Pommard and Wädenswil. Wines from this vineyard tend to age very well. **2004 Anthill Farms Winery Peters Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** \$35, 52 cases, sold out. Randy Peters and his father-in-law, Tom Mukaida, farm this vineyard just outside of Sebastopol in western Sonoma County. The vines were planted fifteen years ago on a steep, east-facing slope. Soils are Goldridge. This Pinot is more sensual than the Anderson Valley wines at this point (according to the website). This is a newcomer that has serious intentions. The website is www.anthillfarms.com. The phone is 707-490-5191. Sorry, I am a little late on this one, but there is always another vintage.

Dain Wines Four Pinot Noirs are being offered for the 2005 vintage. The goal here is to produce wines that reflect the area where they are grown, making each wine distinctive. Each wine is linked to the Dain family heritage (see previous review of Dain Wines in the *PinotFile*, Vol 5, Issue 15). Each wine is named after a family member to honor those who came before. The wines are produced at Crushpad in San Francisco and are the first commercial Pinot Noirs from this urban crush facility. The 2005 vintage in general was cooler so the wines are lighter in color with a red fruit profile and fresh acidity combined with lower alcohol levels. I tasted barrel samples of the Pinot Noirs at Pinot Days in San Francisco recently and came away impressed, particularly with the Hein Vineyard and Rancho Ontiveros Vineyard bottlings. **2005 Dain Wines American Beauty Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** \$42 (price includes ground shipping from California). **2005 Dain Wines Savage Juliet Hein Vineyard Mendocino Pinot Noir** \$42. **2005 Dain Wines Dandy Brousseau Vineyard Chalone Pinot Noir** \$42. **2005 Dain Wines Rebel Rancho Ontiveros Vineyard Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir** \$42. The wines may be ordered from the website: www.dainwines.com. Business office phone is 417-860-2715.



Woodenhead Vintners A high quality Sonoma County producer who cut his teeth at Williams Selyem. Highly recommended. The following Pinot Noirs are available at klwines.com (not available on the Woodenheadwine.com website as yet). **2004 Woodenhead Buena Tierra Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** \$44, **2004 Woodenhead Morning Dew Ranch Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** (one of three producers getting fruit from Burt Williams's vineyard including Brogan Cellars and Whitcraft) \$45, and **2004 Woodenhead Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** \$35.

MacPhail The last two Pinot Noirs from the 2004 vintage have been released today. James MacPhail has burst on the Pinot Noir scene in California with the last two vintages. His distinctive label features three grape wagons. He has acquired a new vineyard source in the Anderson Valley, 2 acres of Pinot Noir planted to Martini clone (farmed by Michael and Susan Addison). Last month James bottled the 2005 vintage Pinot Noirs - Ferrington Vineyard Anderson Valley (321 cases), Toulouse Vineyard Anderson Valley (396 cases), Sangiacomo Vineyard Sonoma Coast (255 cases), and Pratt Vineyard Sonoma Coast (489 cases). **2004 MacPhail Family Wines Goodin Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** \$55 and **2004 MacPhail Family Wines Pratt Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** \$55. Any self-respecting pinophile will have his name on this winery's mailing list at www.macphailwines.com (www.grapewagon.com),



Merry Edwards Four vineyard designated Pinot Noirs from the 2004 vintage have been released. **2004 Merry Edwards Meredith Estate Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** \$51 Meredith Estate Vineyard is owned and farmed by Merry and husband Ken Coopersmith. **2004 Merry Edwards Klopp Ranch Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** \$51 Klopp Ranch Vineyard is planted in the Goldridge soils of Laguna Ridge, farmed by Ted Klopp. **2004 Merry Edwards Coopersmith Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** \$45 From a nine-acre vineyard in the Laguna Ridge planted in 2001 to primarily UCD 37, a selection identified by Merry in 1975 during her tenure as winemaker for Mt Eden. Remaining vines are the newest Dijon 828 clone. **2004 Merry Edwards Tobias Glen Russian River Valley Pinot Noir** \$45 The premier vintage from this six acre vineyard in Forestville, the coolest site from which Merry sources her Pinot Noir in the Russian River Valley. Clones 113, 114, 115, 777. Magnums of all wines are available. The wines are sold primarily through a mailing list and there is no significant retail distribution. The website is www.merryedwards.com. The phone is 888-388-9050.

Sineann This is the exciting Oregon label from talented winemaker Peter Rosback. His Pinot Noirs are full-bodied and layered with luscious fruit. **2005 Sineann Wyeast Vineyard Hood River Valley Oregon Pinot Noir** \$42 This is a unique Pinot Noir sourced from a vineyard from the Columbia Gorge region of Oregon. The distinguishing feature is the high acidity allowing the wine to age well. The vineyard was planted in 1990 with eight acres of Pinot Noir. Rosback thinks the Hood River Valley may turn out to be one of the choice spots for Pinot Noir in Oregon. **2005 Sineann Schindler Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** \$42 The Schindler Vineyard is in the Eola Hills region and the fourteen acres are farmed biodynamically. Grape grower Robert Schindler is also a practicing physician. According to Jean Yates at Avalon Wine in Corvallis, Rosback used Schindler fruit to craft a private label Pinot Noir for The French Laundry Restaurant. **2005 Sineann Resonance Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** \$48 Most followers of Sineann consider this Pinot Noir to be the best in the lineup year after year. **2005 Sineann Able Vineyard Hood River Valley Pinot Noir** \$42 This inaugural vineyard designate wine is from a small vineyard planted in 2000. **Sineann Maresh Vineyard Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** \$45 The Maresh Vineyard is a one of Oregon's heritage vineyards, planted in 1970 by Jim and Loie Maresh. A first for Rosback. **2005 Sineann Oregon Pinot Noir** \$30 This is a blend from several vineyards and is fully drinkable on release. Think of it as your Sineann back porch wine. More details about the wines and to order go to www.avalonwine.com or phone the gang at Avalon Wine, 541-752-7418.



Still more.

Pali Wine Company A new winery started by a group of wine enthusiasts who agreed to finance a winery in exchange for Brian Loring's expertise in winemaking. The new winery should be ready for the 2007 harvest. Luckily, Pali was able to acquire fruit from Dick Shea in Oregon. Shea was looking for a California winery to take over the block of vines he had been sending to Sine Qua Non (Manfred Krankl decided to stop making Oregon Pinot Noir but will release an Arita Hills Vineyard Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir in the Fall of this year). Loring Wine Co will also be receiving some Shea Vineyard Pinot Noir fruit. Loring helped Pali obtain grapes from Olivet Grange Vineyard (now Inman Olivet Vineyard) in the Russian River Valley, Durell Vineyard in the Sonoma Coast, Cargasacchi Jalama Vineyard in Santa Barbara County, and the new Turner Vineyard in the Santa Rita Hills located behind Clos Pepe. The wines initially will be made identically to Loring wines. Eventually, Pali will develop its own style. You can join the mailing list at www.PaliWineCo.com.

Goldens Wines Another new label making Pinot Noir in Brian Loring's winery in Lompoc. The first wines will be released in the Fall of 2006 from Turner Vineyard in the Santa Rita Hills and Rancho Ontiveros Vineyard in the Santa Maria Valley. Get the full story and sign up for the mailing list at www.GoldensWines.com.

Loring Wine Company Brian says the 2004 vintage produced Pinot Noirs that are not quite as "big" as previous vintages, "but that is a relative thing given our traditional Loring style." All wines are \$48 and include shipping.

2005 LWC Keefer Ranch Vineyard Green Valley Pinot Noir 13.7% alc., 650 cases, **2005 LWC Durell Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir** 13.3% alc., 525 cases, **2005 LWC Rosella's Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., 825 cases, **2005 LWC Garys' Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noir** 13.8% alc., 825 cases, **2005 LWC Brosseau Vineyard Chalone AVA Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 600 cases, **2005 LWC Naylor Dry Hole Chalone AVA Pinot Noir** 13.0% alc., 150 cases, and **2005 LWC Hungry Like the Llama, California Pinot Noir** 13.8% alc., 200 cases (a blend centered around three barrels of Durell Vineyard). Most of Loring Wine Company Pinot Noirs are sold through a mailing list, but there is some retail distribution. The website is www.loringwinecompany.com. The phone is 877-LWC-WINE.



Ernst Loosen Pinot Noir

Ernst Loosen is known for his outstanding German Rieslings and his consulting work at Chateau Ste. Michelle in Washington State where he makes Erioca Riesling. He has been thinking about buying property to produce Pinot Noir and considered Australia. However, since he must be in Washington on a regular basis, and runs a distribution company in Portland, it seemed only natural to set up operations in neighboring Oregon. Since vineyard prices are dauntingly high in Oregon, at present, he plans to initially source grapes and gradually ease into his Pinot Noir program.

Loosen will be partnering with friend Jay Somers, a well-known producer of Oregon Pinot Noir under the J. Christopher label.

According to decanter.com, Loosen says, "I have great respect for the Pinot Noir grape. Most Riesling lovers also love Pinot Noir, as they share many similarities in terms of elegance and aromatic finesse."





PrinceofPinot.com

Read about Summer Pinot Camp
next week in the PinotFile

**Pinot Noir Makes for an
Elusive Kind of Romance**

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Sonoma 2006 Harvest Fair

On October 6,7, and 8, 2006, the Sonoma County Harvest Fair will be held at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds. This is the only fair in the world where you can taste and buy over 550 award-winning wines under one roof and all wines are made from Sonoma County grapes. On Friday, October 6, \$40 gets you into the Fair and unlimited tastes of gold winning wines and foods. On October 7 and 8, wines are poured by each individual winery. All winning wines are sold on site with a 10% discount on six wines, and 15% discount on a case. Wine seminars will be held all three days of the fair. Awards night is Saturday, September 30th (\$65). For more information: www.harvestfair.com.

Pinot Noir is California's REAL Wine

On August 29, 2006 Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed Senator Carole Migden's SB 1253, which would have designated Zinfandel California's historic wine. Senator Migden lamented that one of the reasons for introducing the bill was that Zin yields a "darn good bottle" for about \$20. She forgot to mention the fact that Zin forms the backbone of the monstrous California jug wine industry, generating big bucks for the state's coiffeur. And it is Zin's white incarnation that saved the grape's skin from extinction. However, let's get real here. Cabernet is the grape that really put California (read Napa Valley) on the map. And even though Cabernet collectors outnumber Pinot Noir enthusiasts by 50 to 1, isn't it Pinot Noir that is the current darling of California wine lovers? Zinfandel has one festival (ZAP), Pinot Noir has several in California and twelve worldwide. Who really "collects" Zinfandel? When people speak of The Holy Grail, they are always talking about Pinot Noir.

Pinot noir has been cultivated for over 20 centuries, more than any other grape. Pinot Noir provides the base for some of California's most exquisite sparkling wines. Pinot Noir goes most easily of any wine with the widest range of foods. Pinot Noir has historic parentage, with the Pinot Noirs (Burgundies) of the Cote de' Or the measure against which all great wines of the world are compared. Pinot Noir shows its terroir more than any other variety. Pinot Noir will never be mistaken for Merlot. Pinot Noir is like a Hollywood starlet: very temperamental, often causing heartbreak, very finicky about how it is groomed, and the sexy star of noir. Pinot Noir provides the most ethereal wine drinking experience bar none. Zin is the "Horatio Alger" grape. Pinot Noir is the grape that men want so bad they would do anything for it.

Finally, it is always reasonable to defer to the gospel when arguments arise. In the words of that noted wine preacher, Matt Kramer: "Pinot Noir and passion are intertwined and Pinot Noir is the voice of God." I would add, Zin is sin.