



# PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

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*If you drink no  
Noir, you Pinot  
Noir*

## Report from the Front Lines: 2017 Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival

I made my yearly trip to the Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival, May 19-21, 2017, sponsored by the Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association. This year, the event was celebrating twenty years, and was sold out as always.

I always look forward to the first presentation of the Technical Conference, "Annual State of Pinot Noir," prepared by Glenn McGourty, the Winegrowing and Plant Science Advisor for the University of California Cooperative Extension of Mendocino and Lake County. Glenn was traveling, so the presentation was given by Bernadette Byrne, Executive Director of the Mendocino WineGrowers, Inc.. This talk is always focused on Pinot Noir in Mendocino County and comparison to other Pinot Noir growing regions in California. I have reconfigured all but one slide for easy reading.

### 2016 Crop Summary

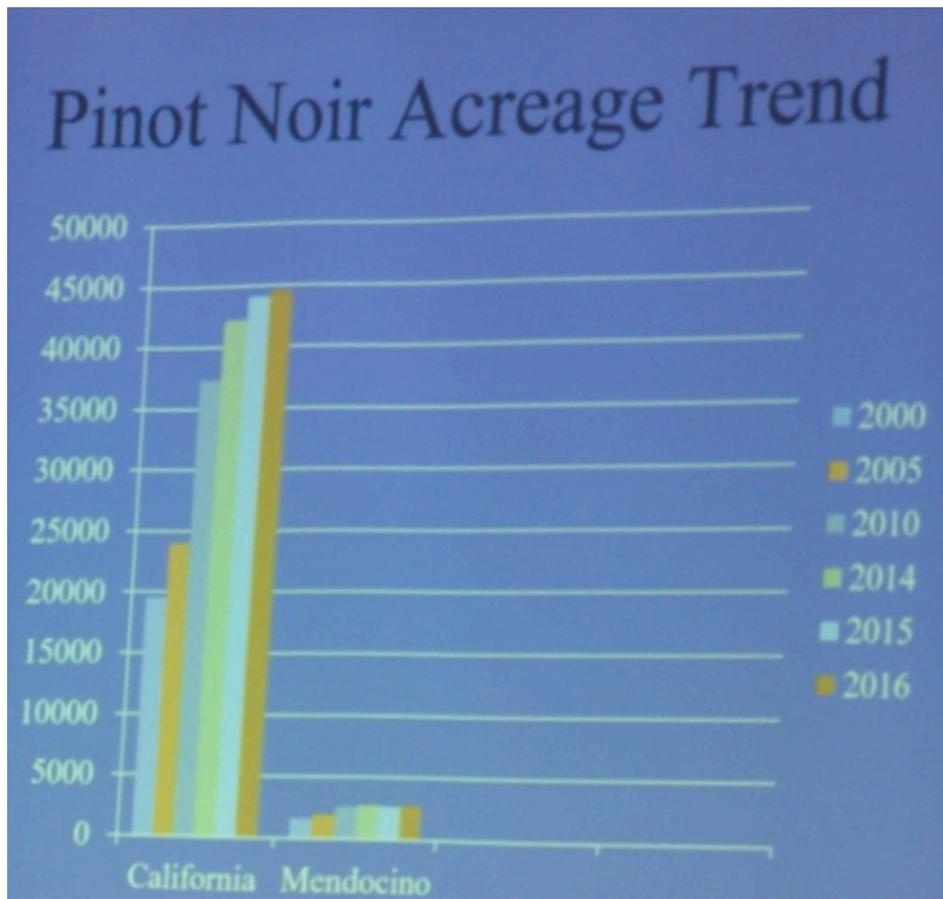
	Tons Crushed 2016	Tons Crushed 2015	Percent Change	Percent Change vs 5-Year Average
<b>North Coast</b>	511,970	420,399	22% increase	1%
<b>Central Coast</b>	509,728	370,987	37% increase	4%
<b>Northern Interior</b>	1,031,577	857,779	20% increase	16%
<b>Southern Interior</b>	1,922,764	2,033,858	5% decrease	0%

### California Pinot Noir Harvest 2014-2016

2014	2015	2016
245,751 tons	184,235 tons	253,994 tons

## Top California Pinot Noir Counties 2016

County	Acreage	Tons Produced	Average Price Per Ton
Sonoma	12,527	25,862	\$3,680
Monterey	9,720	40,630	\$1,896
Santa Barbara/SLO	5,272/2,051	15,925	\$3,014
Napa	2,838	5,346	\$2,779
Mendocino	2,720	4,000	\$2,920
Total Coastal	35,128	99,040	\$1,896-\$3,680
Central Valley	Approx. 15,000	154,954	\$419-\$774



## California Wine Grapes Average Price Per Ton and Total Tons, 2015

Variety	Total Tons Crushed	Value Per Ton
Pinot Noir	253,995	\$1,636
Cabernet Sauvignon	565,573	\$1,468
Merlot	268,968	\$740
Zinfandel	416,615	\$575
Syrah	114,297	\$785
Rubired	242,153	\$278
Chardonnay	718,023	\$788

### Market Outlook

- \* Good California Coastal Pinot Noir is in short supply
- \* Prices are strong for bulk wine (\$25-\$30 a gallon for Russian River Valley and Anderson Valley Pinot Noir), but there are not many transactions
- \* Central Cost Pinot Noir demands good prices and there is bulk movement
- \* California appellation bulk Pinot Noir is so-so, with more interest in the 2017 vintage

# Results of Exclusive Press Tasting of Anderson Valley Pinot Noir (Mendocino Fairgrounds)

This is an opportunity for press to taste a variety of Anderson Valley Pinot Noirs. Not every Anderson Valley producer submits a wine for tasting and the vintages of wines offered for tasting varied from 2010 to 2015 making comparisons more challenging. Like the ambiance of the Anderson Valley, everything is laid back.

Located at 39 degrees latitude, the Anderson Valley appellation is located in northwestern Mendocino County along Highway 128. As the crow flies, the Anderson Valley is 10 miles from the Pacific Ocean and 15 miles in length, and opens to the Pacific Ocean via the Navarro River.

There are fourteen varieties of wine grapes grown in the Anderson Valley, primarily Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer. Approximately 2,500 acres are planted to wine grapes with 91 vineyard properties having a median vineyard size of 11.5 acres. The climate is mostly Winkler Region I (the coolest). Soils are bedrock Franciscan sandstone.

61 bonded wineries are members of the Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association, all using Anderson Valley fruit. There are 28 wineries with tasting rooms in the Anderson Valley.

Stylistically, the Pinot Noirs of Anderson Valley are difficult to get a fix on since the winemaker's imprint is on many wines and the resultant styles vary from low ABV and minimal to no new oak use, to ripe-fruited, high ABV wines with significant new oak use. Being a cool growing region, bright acidity, particularly if the grapes are harvested at lower Brix, is a prominent feature.

Regarding vintages:

**2013** Ideal growing season with moderate temperatures and no rain or heat extremes. Growing season started early and ran about two weeks ahead of most previous years. Water for irrigation was scarce. Acidities were elevated at harvest.

**2014** Third drought year in a row. Dry winter (driest on record) and warm spring with some storms, early bud break, early harvest, lower yields.

**2015** Early bud break long flowering period during cold, rainy and windy weather reducing yields. Small crop of concentrated fruit. Early harvest in August.

**2014 Walt The Corners Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 15.1% alc., \$75. Winery is located in Sonoma. Walt also offers Anderson Valley Pinot Noir from Savoy Vineyard, Anderson Valley single vineyard Pinpoint Extreme, and an Anderson Valley AVA blend "Blue Jay." Winemakers are Megan Gunderson Paredes and Steve Leveque. Aged 10 months in French oak barrels, 45% new Francois Frères. *Moderate ruby red color in the glass. Reserved aromas of muddled black cherry and oak char. Sappy, oak-infused black fruits saturate the palate. A Caliesque styled wine with a smooth mouthfeel, well integrated alcohol and a fruit driven finish. A no-holds barred, hedonistic Pinot Noir. 89.*

**2014 Waits-Mast Wentzel Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 120 cases, \$47. Released November 2016. Sourced from a 10-acre, organically farmed vineyard located in Philo. Dijon clones harvested at 23.5° from a block situated up a steep hillside benefiting from long afternoon sunlight, tempered by cool offshore breezes. Native yeast fermentation, 25% whole cluster. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 25% new. Bottled unfinned and unfiltered. *Light ruby red color in the glass. Engaging perfume of cherry, strawberry, spice, tobacco and earth. Light to mid weight in style, featuring darker red fruits on the palate. Well-crafted, with juicy acidity, but a bit shallow on the mid palate and lacks finishing purpose. 89.*

**2013 Toulouse Vineyards Weir Vineyard Yorkville Highlands Pinot Noir** 14.0% alc., pH 3.67, TA 0.54, 150 cases, \$55. Clones are a DRC selection and Wädenswil 2A. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 30% new. *Moderate ruby red color in the glass. Shy, but pleasant aromas of red cherry and sandalwood. Light to mid*

*weight in style, with easy going character, displaying an array of red fruits, a petrol note, modest tannins, and a juicy finish. 87.*

**2013 Roma's Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.0% alc., pH 3.92, TA 0.64, \$N/A. Vineyard is located at 1,800 feet elevation on Lone Tree Ridge in Boonville and planted in 1992. Harvest yield 1.8 tons per acre. Winemaker Dean Carrell. 33% whole cluster added to bottom of fermentation bins. 15% of juice drained from bottom of bin to concentrate the must. 14-day post fermentation maceration. Basket pressed into French oak barrels and aged on the lees for 18 months. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. *Moderate ruby red color in the glass. Comforting in all aspects, with aromas of cherry, rose, brioche and a hint of oak. Nicely balanced, but a bit shallow and flat, featuring an array of red fruits in a middleweight style. 88.*

**2014 Roederer Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** No tech sheet available. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. Perfumed with delicate aromas of cherry, brown spices and graham. Light to mid weight flavors of red fruits in a simple but pleasing style with a bit of oak in the background. Supportive tannic backbone, with a crisp cherry fueled finish leaving the slightest alcoholic warmth behind. Seems like an afterthought to the outstanding sparkling wines. 87.*

**2012 Philo Ridge Vineyards Marguerite Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., pH 3.55, TA 0.62, 190 cases, \$50. This vineyard is located at 1,500 feet elevation and is 40-years-old. Entirely dry farmed, sustainably managed, with naturally mined minerals and amendments added to the soil. Harvest Brix 23.5° average. 100% de-stemmed, 3-day cold soak, feral fermentation. Basket bladder pressed into French oak barrels, 30% new, 70% neutral, where it was aged for 26 months. Racked up to three times before bottling, unfiltered and unfiltered. Bottled aged 9 months before release. *Light orange red color in the glass. Aged aromas of dried cherry, spice, leather and tobacco. Lighter in weight, with austere fruit and very bright acidity, falling off quickly on the finish. 87.*

**2014 Phillips Hill Cerise Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.0% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.62, 75 cases, \$52. Released April 20, 2016. Cerise is a 40-acre vineyard located at 800-1200 feet elevation. Soils are sandstone and fractured shale with a shallow gravelly loam topsoil that is marginal and sparse. Dijon 115. Harvest Brix 23.5°. 15% whole cluster, 4-day cold soak, 14 days on skins, native yeast fermentation. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 33% new. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. *Light ruby red color in the glass. Aromas of exotic spices, red cherry and smoky oak. Light weight flavors if oak-infused black cherry. Rather earthy and rustic, with good balance. The wine lacks some enthusiasm and interest and the finish lacks persistence. 87.*

**2014 Pennyroyal Farm Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., pH 3.66, TA 0.66, 900 cases, \$39. Clone 667. Harvest Brix 26.5°. Estate grown fruit. Aged 10 months in new and 1-year-old French oak barrels. Bottled unfiltered. *Moderate ruby red color in the glass. Shy, but appealing aromas of black cherry and herb garden. Fruit driven and rather monotone, but with good balance and some charm, featuring dark stone and berry fruit flavors. Very modest finish. 88.*

**2015 Navarro Vineyards Deep End Blend Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** No tech sheet. *Aromas of cherry, spice, rose, grass and pennyroyal lead to a light to mid weighted wine offering vibrant red fruits with a compliment of oak. Beautifully balanced and easy to like, with a cherry charged finish. 91.*

**2015 Long Meadow Ranch Winery Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., 2,500 cases, \$40. Estate grown, organically farmed using sustainable methods. Aged in French oak barrels, 25% new and 75% neutral. Winemaker is Stephane Vivier. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. The nose offers a fusion of black cherry and oak aromas, leaning more on leaf and vegetal notes over time. Modest in weight, with savory herb flavor dominating, and a rush of tannins showing up on the finish. 87.*

**2014 Lichen Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., pH 3.48, TA 0.56, 182 cases, \$65. Sourced from seven acres of estate vines overlooking Highway 128 on the 203-acre Lichen Estate. Vineyard is farmed organically. Grapes are de-stemmed, 14-17 day fermentation after 5-6-day cold soak, 2-3 day post fermentation extended maceration. Aged 16 months with lees stirring during first 9 months of barrel aging. Total time in French oak barrels was 17 months. Moderately light reddish purple color in the glass. Perfumed and sensuous, with deep aromas of cherry, spice, brier and earthy flora. Lush and satisfying on the mid weight palate, with robust cherry flavor accented with a subtle thread of cola and spicy oak. Beautifully balanced, with silky tannins and a bright, juicy finish. Very classy juice. **93.**

**2015 Lazy Creek Vineyards Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.4% alc., pH 3.75, TA 0.56, 286 cases, \$58. Heritage selections and Dijon clones planted in one of the oldest vineyards in the Anderson Valley. Vineyard is certified California sustainable. Fermented in macro bins and small, open-top tanks. 3-day cold soak, yeast introduced for complexity. Wines racked to barrels and final blend assembled in July and bottled in August. Cooperage was 54% new French oak. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Demonstrative aromas of cherry, spice and earthy flora really entice. Beautifully composed, with a plethora of spiced black cherry and black raspberry fruit flavors framed by ripe tannins and deft oak enhancement. A savory note plies the background of this highly enjoyable wine that finishes with impressive length.* **93.**

**2010 Harmonique Delicacé Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., pH 3.68, TA 0.60, \$46. **90.**

**2010 Harmonique Elegancé Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., pH 3.70, TA 0.60, \$48. **89.**

**2010 Harmonique The Noble One Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., pH 3.68, TA 0.63, \$39. **91.**

Harmonique is unique among California wineries in that its current releases are from the 2010 vintage. Vineyard sources include Ferrington, Conzelman, Klindt and Oppenlander. The three wines offered for tasting at the Grand Tasting progress in extraction from Delicacé, the most elegant and red fruited, to The Noble One, the most concentrated and dark fruited. Veteran Robert Klindt is the winemaker. The wines are just beginning to show tertiary characters yet are still fresh and should maintain another five years at least. Moria Conzelman is a fresh face at every Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival and mans the winery's tasting room in Boonville. The 2011 vintage wines will be released in the fall 2017.

**2013 Husch Knoll Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., pH 3.60, TA 0.60, \$40. A limited bottling from vines that were the first planting of Pinot Noir in the Anderson Valley. Many original vines remain. Harvest Brix 25.4°. 20% whole cluster. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 50% new. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. Muted fruit aromas of cherry and strawberry with added notes of wood and tobacco leaf. A structured wine, with lighter fruit flavors in proportion of red berries and cherry. A bit shallow on entry and finish with tannins and alcohol sticking out more than one would like at the end.* **87**

**2014 Handley Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., pH 3.75, TA 0.54, 2,245 cases, \$32. Released February 1, 2017. 68% Handley Estate, 17% RSM, 12% Ferrington and 3% Helluva vineyards. Gently de-stemmed and crushed, retaining about 40% whole berries. 3-day cold soak, proprietary yeast inoculation. Aged 10 months in French oak barrels (25% new) and sterile filtered before bottling. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Lovely perfume of fresh cherry, spice and sandalwood. Easy to like, with a polish demeanor, offering a core of juicy black cherry fruit back by modest tannins. Forward and engaging with solid balance.* **92.**

**2014 Greenwood Ridge Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., pH 3.47, TA 0.65, 100 cases, \$30. Native yeast fermentation. Aged 18 months in French oak barrels, 35% new and bottled unfined. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Alive with flavors of oak-kissed cherry. Flavors of bourbon-soaked cherries, brown spice and graham. Nicely composed with supportive tannins and a brilliant finish that goes on and on.* **92.**

**2015 Fulcrum On Point Christina's Cuvee Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.0% alc., 198 cases, \$36. Pommard, 667, 115, 113. Aged 15 months in French oak barrels, 25% new. Winemaker David Rossi. *Moderate light garnet color in the glass. Aromas of cherry compliment wilted rose notes. Lighter in weight, with appealing flavors of cherry and spice. A bit shallow on the mid palate but tries to satisfy. A firm tannic structure is evident.* **89.**

**2015 Ferrari Carano Sky High Ranch Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir** 14.5% alc. \$N/A. Sky High Ranch Vineyard is surrounded by towering redwoods and forest above the fog line at 1,600 feet elevation. De-stemmed, fermented in stainless steel open-top and small bins. 3-day cold soak, proprietary yeast strains, aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 53% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Very sexy nose full of pheromones and spice along with fruit scents of black cherry that are knee bending. This wine really emotes, with a core of beautifully ripened black cherry fruit and gently folded in oak. Perfectly balanced with a grand finish that lasts until the next sip. This is a wine I want to spend some time with.* **97.**



**2014 Fathers & Daughters Ferrington Vineyard Ella's Reserve Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.8% alc., pH 3.45, TA 0.62, 110 cases, \$N/A (2013 vintage was \$42). Pommard, "828," and 667. Grapes 70% de-stemmed, 30% whole cluster. Native yeast fermentation, punch downs for 19 days twice a day. Basket pressed, aged 18 months in neutral French oak barrels. Winemaker Phillip Baxter. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. Enticing aromas of cherry, spice and sandalwood draw your nose into the glass. Striking fruit presence with a deft touch of spice and oak. The wine finishes with good generosity. Well-structured for long term drinking.* **93.**



**2015 Foursight Wines Charles Vineyard "Clone 05" Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.4% alc., pH 3.64, TA 0.60, 125 cases, \$52. Released May 2017. 100% Pommard 05. 20% whole cluster, 80% de-stemmed. Native yeast fermentation. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. Aged in 60% new French oak barrels. *Light garnet color in the glass. Wealthy aromas of fresh berries, dark rose petal and baking spices. Gorgeous fruit core with some unresolved oak overlay. Noticeable mid palate intensity and finish with commendable balance.* **92.**

**2014 Eike Donnelly Creek Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.7% alc., pH 3.70, TA 0.61, 196 cases, \$N/A. 18th vintage under the "Blue Diamond" family label. 20-year-old vines rooted just outside town of Boonville. 100% de-stemmed, brief cold soak, proprietary Burgundy yeast fermentation, aged 11 months in Francois Frères oak barrels, 35% new. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. *Light garnet color in the glass. The nose presents scents of purple grape, black raspberry and spice. Light to mid weight in style, with an array of purple fruit flavors encased in supportive tannins, and finishing modestly with good polish.* **89.**

**2015 Drew Fashauer Vineyards Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.4% alc., \$50. Anderson Valley and Mendocino Ridge appellation. Clones 115 and 667. Native yeast fermentation, 50% whole cluster, aged in French oak barrels, 30% new. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. Shy aromas of cherry, red berry, sous-bois and wooded path. A savory wine with some wildness, offering juicy, mid weight flavors of red fruits. Still young and not full engaged, but loaded with interest. Modest tannins, bright acidity and structured tannins.* **93.**



**2014 Donum Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., pH 3.88, TA 0.55, 459 cases, \$72. Pommard, Swan, Martini, David Bruce, 2A, and Dijon 115, 667, 777 and "828." Aged in French oak barrels, 59% new. Sourced from Angel Camp Vineyard in the "deep-end" of the Anderson Valley north of Philo. A barrel selection from several blocks. Winemaker Dan Fishman. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Shy, but pleasant aromas of black cherry, blackberry, blueberry, spice and bittersweet chocolate. Full-bodied, with a charge of blackberry and prune flavors underlain with healthy oak-driven notes of coffee and dark chocolate. There are noticeable fruit and oak tannins in the Donum style, a certain earthiness, and a slight bit of alcoholic warmth on the finish.* **89.**

**2013 Domaine Anderson Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** \$39. Sourced from 50 acres of estate vineyards including the newly certified organic and biodynamic Dach Vineyard. Fermented in open-top bins, basket pressed. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 30% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Lovely perfume of black cherry, black raspberry and warm spices. Admirable balance in a mid weight, harmonious style, with a core of black cherry and blueberry fruit flavors infused with svelte tannins.* **90.**

**2013 Champ de Rêves Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.2% alc., pH 3.68, TA 0.57, 4,995 cases, \$45. Sourced from an 85 acre vineyard planted in 2006 at 1,400-1,800 feet elevation in shallow, sandy loam soils. Clones 667, 777 and 115. 100% de-stemmed with 60% whole berries fed by gravity into open-top fermenters. 6 to 7-day cold soak, fermented 14-16 days on skins. Aged 9 months in French oak barrels, 32% new. Winemaker Eric Johannsen. *Moderate ruby red color in the glass. Aromas of cherry, rose and complimentary oak lead to a concentrated presence on the palate of darker fruits, prominent oak notes, some drying tannins, and a sweet fruited finish.* **88.**

**2014 Bravium Wiley Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 12.7% alc., pH 3.53, TA 0.63, 960 cases, \$39. Vineyard is located in the "deep end" of the Anderson Valley and is one of the coolest sites in the region. Shallow topsoil over Franciscan sandstone (Bearwallow-Wolfey series). Clones are Pommard (planted in 1982), 37, 115, 538, 667 and 777. 15% whole cluster, 5-day cold soak. Feral yeast fermentation in open-top one-ton fermenters, basket pressed and aged 10 months in Francois Frères 4-year, air-dried barrels, 16% new. Winemaker Derek Rohlffs. *Light ruby red color in the glass. The nose is particularly engaging, with hi-tone aromas of cherry, dried rose and burnt tobacco. Lighter in weight, but highly flavorful, with tastes of cherry, cranberry and raspberry. A thread of savory herbs and oak plies the background. The wine sports balanced, unobtrusive tannins, and a bright, slightly tart cherry finish.* **91.**

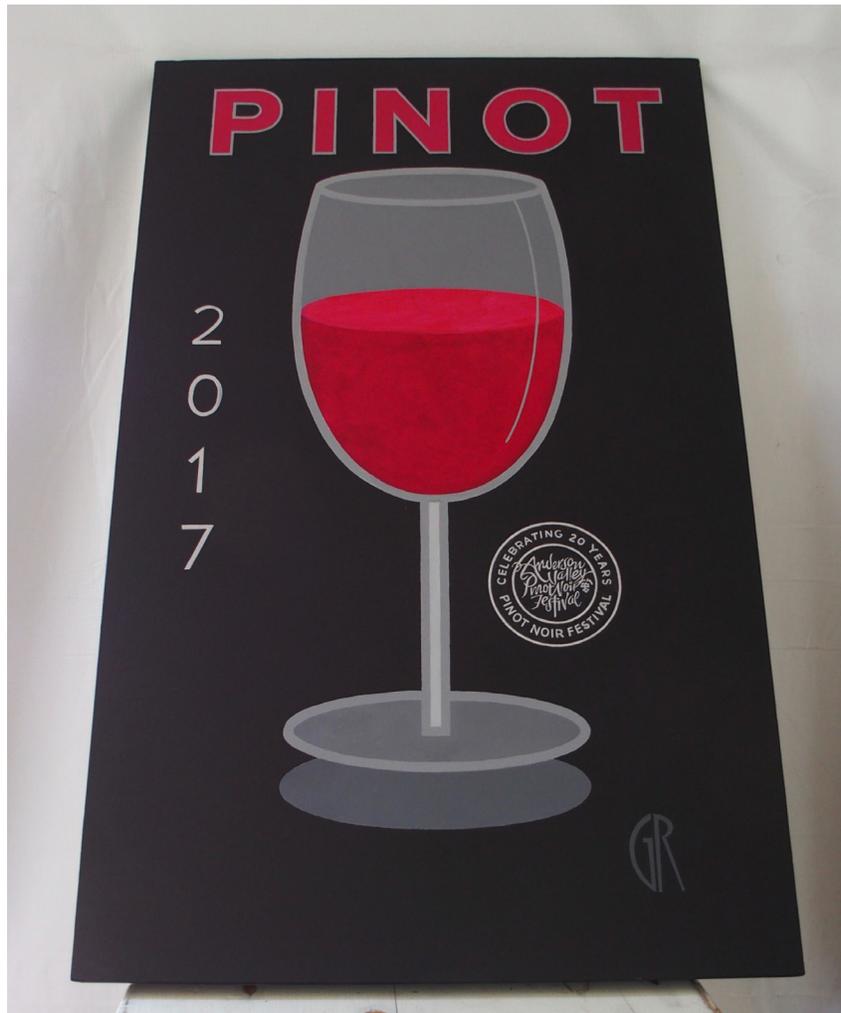


**2014 Baxter Ferrington Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., pH 3.42, 65 cases, \$52. Clones 2A, 667, Pommard and "828." 25% whole cluster, native yeast fermentation. Aged in French oak barrels, 10% new. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. Exceptional aromatic presence, with soaring scent of raspberry, strawberry, rose petal and spice. More earthy and rustic on the palate, yet offers vivid fruit flavors of red and purple berries with a mushroom accent. The intensity and appeal builds in appeal over time. The juicy finish really satisfies. 94.*

**2015 Balo Vineyards Estate Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., pH 3.39, TA 0.62, 352 cases, \$45. From the 8-acre, family owned vineyard near Philo. Planted in 1998 at a low vigor site. Most of vineyard planted in Perry Gulch loam soil. 60% whole cluster. Aged in French oak barrels, 35% new. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. Very shy aromas of red berries and spice. More expressive on the palate, with middleweight flavors of pomegranate, cranberry and strawberry. Juicy and vibrant, with welcome spice accents, good harmony, and a juicy finish. 92.*

Other wineries participating in the 2017 Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival Grand Tasting at Goldeneye Winery: Ardzrooni Family Wines, Artevino/Maple Creek Winery, Black Kite Cellars, Brutocao Cellars, Copain Wines, Expression, FEL Wines, Goldeneye, Halcon Vineyards, Husch Vineyards, La Crema, Littorai Wines, Lula Cellars, MacPhail Wines, Maggy Hawk Vineyard, Maryetta Wines, Navarro Vineyards, Pangloss Cellars, Panthea Winery & Vineyard, Roederer Estate, Scharffenberger Cellars, Smith Story Wine Cellars, Twomey Cellars, Williams Selye, WindRacer Wines, Witching Stick and The Withers Winery.

# Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival Grand Tasting



I have a few notes to share from the 2017 Grand Tasting. This tasting is held annually in a large tent at Goldeneye's Confluence Vineyard in Philo. It is a highly popular affair, with good times had by all, but not ideal for serious wine tasting. That said, I had some impressions.

## **Pangloss Cellars and Texture Wines**

Pangloss Cellars is based in Sonoma and the winemaker is Erich Bradley, well-known for his highly-lauded Pinot Noirs from Sojourn Cellars. The winery is named after Dr. Pangloss, the eternal optimist in Voltaire's novel, *Candide*. The wines (Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon and Zinfandel) are made at the winery's facility at Moon Mountain Vineyard (the old Chalone property) and only available at the Pangloss Cellars Tasting Lounge in Sonoma.

I tasted the 2014 Pangloss Anderson Valley Pinot Noir, the 2014 Pangloss Charles Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir and the 2015 True North Anderson Valley Pinot Noir. The wines were solid, with the True North bottling being the most rustic and savory.

These are wines of interest. Visit [www.panglosscellars.com](http://www.panglosscellars.com).

Texture Wines are more high-end offerings of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay also crafted by Erich Brandley at Moon Mountain Vineyard. Erich is focused on mouthfeel in these wines. In the case of Pinot Noir, that means

fine tannins balanced by tangible acidity. With Chardonnay, lively tension and persistent minerality. The first vintage was 2012.

I tasted the 2015 Texture Anderson Valley Pinot Noir (Deer Meadows and Ferrington vineyards), the 2015 Texture Ferrington Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir and the 2015 Texture Deer Meadows Anderson Valley Pinot Noir. The latter two wines were among the most outstanding that I tasted at the Grand Tasting. The Ferrington was more fruit driven with an array of dark fruits and an incredibly long finish, while the Deer Meadows, with a low ABV of 12.8% and large whole cluster inclusion was more aromatic and savory in a “Burgundian” style.

These are wines of great interest. They are sold exclusively through a mailing list at [www.texturewines.com](http://www.texturewines.com). Intimate, comparative tasting is available in an elegant tasting salon in a 115-year-old building on the Sonoma Square. Seasonally inspired food pairings are prepared by a culinary manager to complement each wine. By appointment only.

## Littorai

Ted Lemon continues to offer magnificent wines from the Anderson Valley. In the rush to seek out the newest producer, Littorai may not receive the recognition it is due. Several 2014 Pinot Noirs were offered for tasting and they all showed tremendous potential. Ted’s wines usually are not flashy at an early stage, and these wines clearly need a few more years in the cellar. The 2014 Littorai Roma’s Vineyard Pinot Noir was the lightest in weight, featuring red fruits and harmonious acid-tannin balance. The 2014 Littorai Savoy Vineyard Pinot Noir was a very pretty wine, with more concentration, more charm and polished tannins. The 2014 Littorai Cerise Vineyard Pinot Noir was typical for this vineyard with a grudging core of fruit and muscular tannins. The 2014 Littorai One Acre Pinot Noir was the most seductive, oozing charm and nuance even at this early stage.

Littorai wines are sold exclusively through a mailing list at [www.littorai.com](http://www.littorai.com). A Single Vineyard Tasting and Gold Ridge Estate Tour & Tasting are offered by appointment.



# Tasting 2015 Pinot Noir at Drew Estate in Elk with Jason Drew



I met up with Jason Drew at his Drew Family Wines Estate in Elk to tour his newer estate vineyard and taste through his 2015 Pinot Noir lineup.

Jason has been crafting wine since 1991. In 2000, he founded the Drew label with his spouse Molly while he was an associate winemaker at Babcock Vineyards & Winery in the Santa Rita Hills. In 2002, he left Babcock to concentrate solely on his own label, and in 2004, he acquired a 25-acre ridge top property in Elk that was a noted, dry-farmed apple orchard. The site overlooks the Anderson Valley to the East and the Pacific Ocean three miles to the West at 1,250 feet elevation in the Mendocino Ridge appellation.

A 7.5-acre vineyard was eventually planted (as yet unnamed) and is one of the most westerly vineyards on the North Coast. The soils are ideal ocean floor decomposed sandstone and shale, high in iron and quartzite, with a perfect ratio of sand, gravelly loam and clay. The site's marginal fertility is combined with excellent water holding capacity and good drainage. Clones planted include Pommard, Dijon 943, 115 and 667, Mt. Eden, and a Swan selection. The first Pinot Noir from this vineyard was released from the 2014 vintage.

Vineyard sources have changed through the years with new vineyard ownerships, but Jason continues to seek out the best possible sites that he deems suitable for his style of winemaking. He has sourced fruit from the Anderson Valley, Mendocino Ridge, Sonoma Coast and Yorkville Highlands appellations. (For a definitive article on the Mendocino Ridge, refer to Volume 8, Issue 9 and Volume 9, Issue 8 of the *PinotFile*).

Jason vinifies with feral yeasts, employs a variable but usually significant amount of whole cluster inclusion, and ages in about 30% new French oak barrels.

Production is 1800-2000 cases per year, increasing with the 2017 vintage to an estimated 2800 cases due to increased fruit from the estate vineyard. Wines are released in February, June and the fall. The Morning Dew Ranch bottling is sold out.

Vintage 2015 offered low yields, with production at some vineyards off 50% or more. The result was small berries with concentrated sap, pronounced acids and increased tannins. The flavors arrived at relatively Brix and trended more red fruit.

Drew wines are available for tasting at 9000 Hwy 128 in Philo in the Madrones Friday through Monday. The website is [www.drewwines.com](http://www.drewwines.com). To guarantee access to all wines, join the mailing list or the wine club.



**2015 Drew “The Fog-Eater” Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 350 cases, \$45. Goal is a quintessential Anderson Valley wine. Vine age averages 20 years. Yields 1.1-2.2 tons per acre. A blend of 30% Valenti, 21% Balo, 21% Fashauer, 15% Perli and 10% Joshua’s vineyards. Rochioli, Pommard, 115, 667 and 777. Native ferments, 20% whole cluster. Aged 11 months in seasoned oak. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Plenty of cherry and spice on the nose. Charming strawberry and cherry flavors in a mid weight style with easy tannins. Accents of spice, mushroom and botanic notes add interest.* **91.**

**2015 Drew Joshua’s Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 50 cases, \$50. A new project from a 1-acre vineyard located in the “deep-end,” planted in the mid 1970s and farmed both organically and without irrigation. Clone(s) planted on own roots and unknown. Yield 1.1 tons per acre. Native ferments, 30% whole cluster, aged 11 months in Francois Frères oak barrels, 50% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Aromas of cherry, wild berry, underbrush and pine are echoed in the flavors on the palate with added notes of raspberry and stem. The layered fruit has noticeable depth, the mid palate intensity is grand, the fine grain tannins are nicely proportioned, and there is a lift of acidity on the finish. A suede texture adds to the appeal.* **92.**

**2015 Drew Valenti Ranch Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.5% alc., 125 cases, \$50. Jason leases this vineyard and has taken over the farming. Average vine age 18 years. Yield 1.6 tons per acre. Clones are Rochioli, 667 and 115. Well-drained soils with decomposed sandstone and high iron. Native ferments, 10% whole cluster, aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 20% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. This wine unfolds nicely over time in the glass. Perfume of dark red cherry, peppery spice, underbrush, balsam and flower. A bit tight, but offering an array of savory dark red fruits with impressive intensity in the mouth. The wine has a woody, mushroom tone. Nicely balanced, with agreeable tannins and an uplifting, citrus driven finish.* **92.**



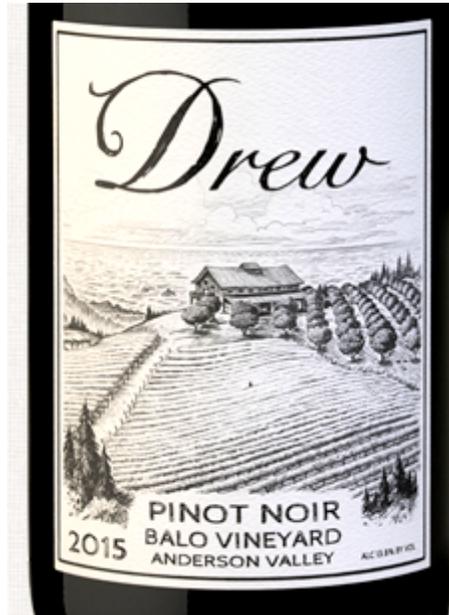
**2015 Drew Morning Dew Ranch Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.1% alc., 75 cases, \$60. Average vine age 15 years. Rochioli and La Tache selections. Yields 0.5 tons per acre. Well-drained, light silty sand to silty clay based dark loam with high iron. Native ferments, 50% whole cluster, aged 11 months in Francois Frères oak barrels, 50% new. With sale of vineyard, this may be last vintage for Drew although negotiating for 2017. *This wine exudes pure class. Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Gorgeous nose with soaring aromas of Bing cherry, pomegranate and sous-bois. Velvety and lush in the mouth, with a mid weight core of delicious red fruits that are vivid and charged with goodness. The wine displays impeccable balance and a lingering finish that is memorable.* **96.**

**2015 Drew Fashauer Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.8% alc., 50 cases, \$50. This 8-acre vineyard is along the Greenwood Ridge and falls within the Mendocino Ridge appellation as well as the outer boundary

of the Anderson Valley. Near Valenti Vineyard. Average vine age 16 years. Yields 2.2 tons per acre. Clones 115 and 667 planted in well-drained, sedimentary silty clay loam with high mineral content and marginal fertility. Native ferments, 25% whole cluster, aged 11 months in Sirugue oak barrels, 50% new. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Revealing aromas of pie cherries and spice. Noticeable concentration of sappy dark red cherry and berry fruits along with structural firmness. The fruit is embellished with notes of earth, game and minerality. A bright, cherry fruited finish completes the charm. 93.*



**2015 Drew Balo Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 50 cases, \$50. Jason has worked with this vineyard since 2006. Average vine age 19 years. Yields 2.0 tons per acre. Clones are Pommard, 777 and 115. Perrygulch and Boontling loam soils. Native ferments, 40% whole cluster, aged 11 months in 2 and 3-year-old Francois Frères and Sirugue oak barrels. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Very lovely and enticing aromas of spiced cherry and earthy flora. Noticeably juicy on the palate, featuring a mid weight array of cherry, Damsel plum, and botanic flavors. Both savory and fruity, with firm fruit tannins, and an extremely long, quenching finish. An age worthy wine that will rise above with more time in the cellar. 94.*



**2015 Drew Estate Field Selection Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 75 cases, \$60. Third vintage. Vineyard is three miles from Pacific Ocean. Average vine age 6 years. Yields 0.3 tons per acre. Clones are 943, 115, 667, Mt. Eden, Pommard and a Swan selection. Soils are Ornbaun, Yellowhound and Zeni, well-drained, silty sand clay loam with marginal fertility. Native ferments, 40% whole cluster, aged 11 months in Francois Frères and Sirugue oak barrels, 33% new. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Enchanting aromas of black cherry, mushroom and forest. Savory black cherry and raspberry flavors in a mid weight plus styled wine with sinewy tannins. Complex, with nuances evolving over time in the glass, revealing a unique streak of minerality and bloodied game notes. Very good tension, with impressive power at a relatively low ABV, and a long, mineral-infused finish that is ingratiating. 94.*

# More Recently Tasted Anderson Valley, Mendocino Ridge and Mendocino County Pinot Noir

## Mojave Wines, Calistoga, California

Rebecca George is the winemaker for Kelly Fleming Wines in Napa Valley, focusing on Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc. She spent several years working with Burgundian-style wines, including stints at Domaine Meo-Camuzet in Burgundy, and Williams Selyem and Marcassin in Sonoma County. Pinot Noir is her true passion and her focus for her personal label, Mojave. She plans to pursue more cool climate sources for Pinot Noir in the near future. Visit [www.mojavewines.com](http://www.mojavewines.com).

**2015 Mojave Monument Tree Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.1% alc., 48 cases, \$60. Released March 2017. Clones 115 and 667 planted in 1999 in loamy clay and decomposed sandstone soils. 100% de-stemmed, 3-day cold soak, fermented in open-top bin with a mixture of pump overs and punch downs for 2 weeks. Aged 15 months in French oak barrels, one once-used Chardonnay barrel and one neutral Pinot Noir barrel. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. The nose is primary even when checked two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. There are demure, pleasant aromas of well-ripened dark fruits. Mid weight plus on the palate with a core of black raspberry and blackberry fruits framed by balanced tannins. Satiny and sleek in texture, with charming fruit, good vibrancy and deft oak integration. The wine is searching for expression at this stage, and presumably will benefit from more time in bottle. 91.*



## Navarro Vineyards & Winery, Philo, California

This winery needs no introduction because it is one of Anderson Valley's longest tenured wineries. The entire lineup of red and white wines have always been consistently agreeable and often even exceptional, and priced sensibly. Visit [www.navarrovineyards.com](http://www.navarrovineyards.com).

**2014 Navarro Vineyards Deep End Blend Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.3% alc., \$55. Sourced from estate, hillside, ocean-view vineyards (Garden Spot, Marking Corral, Winery & South Hill and Middle Ridge) with cool marine influence. A cuvée created by blending the twelve best lots from these hillside vineyards. Four different vineyard sites, four different Pinot Noir clones, and four different rootstocks. Aged in French oak barrels, 50% new, for 16 months. Bottled unfiltered. *Moderately dark garnet color in the glass. Welcoming aromas of black cherry, baking spices and a hint of toasty oak. Mid weight in style, featuring generous waves of black cherry, blackberry and spice flavors that envelope the palate. Velvety in the mouth with soothing tannins and an opulent black cherry driven finish. The wine can be described in one word: ephemeral. Even better when tasted two days later from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. Decant this one to integrate the new oak and bring out the wine's best side. 93.*



## Waits-Mast Family Cellars, San Francisco, California

Brian Mast and spouse Jennifer Waits experienced the romance of wine with visits to the wine regions of Europe, New Zealand and California. They remark, "Like a verse that haunts you, Pinot Noir kept on finding us, tapping our shoulder. It was always and remains our favorite varietal."

In 2005, they began crafting their own Pinot Noir under the guidance of winemakers Scott Shapley and Chris Nelson at Crushpad in San Francisco. Their early efforts were rewarding, so they launched Waits-Mast Family Cellars in 2007. The Pinot Noirs are usually 100% de-stemmed and fermentation may be native or inoculated.

The winery looks to vineyard-designated Pinot Noirs from special vineyards in Mendocino County. Multiple wines are offered that are produced in small 50 to 100-case lots. The wines are sold through a mailing list, online through the website at [www.waitsmast.com](http://www.waitsmast.com), and through a limited number of fine retailers and restaurants. I believe all the wines reviewed here are still available.



**2016 Waits-Mast Mendocino County Rosé of Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., 20 cases, \$25. A saignée from multiple vineyard lots across Mendocino County. *Moderate salmon color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with aromas of blood orange, strawberry and pear. Somewhat robust, with flavors of peach, orange peel, baking spice and cream soda. Nicely balanced and an easy going summertime quaff. 88.*

**2014 Waits-Mast Mendocino County Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 72 cases, \$35. Released June 2016. A blend of grapes from Mariah Vineyard in Mendocino Ridge and Oppenlander Vineyard in Mendocino County. Harvest Brix 23° and 24°. Clones 114, 115, 667 and Pommard. Aged 11 months in neutral French oak barrels. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Heavily oaked on the nose with aromas of toast and campfire. Soft in the mouth, with forward, mid-weight cherry flavor underlain with a thread of oak (less oak on the palate). Agreeable tannins and a very modest finish. 86.*

**2014 Waits-Mast Oppenlander Vineyard Mendocino County Pinot Noir** 13.4% alc., 165 cases, \$45. Release September 2017. Harvest Brix 22.2°. Clones 115, 667 and Pommard. Aged in French oak barrels, 37.5% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Pleasant, but very subdued aromas of dark cherry, spice, fertile earth and oak. Inviting vibrancy and cut on the finish in a middleweight styled wine with flavors of dark cherry and berry. An underlying earthy tone and firm tannic support engage the fruit core. Unchanged when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. 89.*

**2013 Waits-Mast Oppenlander Vineyard Mendocino County Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 153 cases, \$44. Released November 2015. This vineyard is well known although located remotely in the small town of Comptche, about 8 miles from the Pacific Ocean as the crow flies. The vineyard is owned by the Shandel family who are fifth generation owners of the property. The vineyard is exposed to marine influence and is quite cool. Harvest Brix 23.5°. Clones 114, 115 and Pommard, Aged in French oak barrels, 1 and 2-year-old and neutral. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Subdued aromas of black cherry, black berry and Christmas spices. Earthy and a bit rustic, with mid weight flavors of black cherry and blackberry with a green bramble undertone. Put together with good harmony, but doesn't emote. 88.*

**2014 Waits-Mast Wentzel Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.4% alc., 120 cases, \$47. Released November 2016. Harvest Brix 23.5° Clones 114, 115, 667 and 777. Aged 11 months in French oak barrels, 25% new. Production was doubled in 2014 and 25% whole clusters added to the fermentation (a rare technique for this winery). *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The nose leads with aromas of cherry, pine, wood shed and dried herbs. A little more sap, body, structure and finish in this vintage compared to 2013. Mid weight flavors of dark red cherries and berries set off with complimentary oak spice. Texturally interesting, with fine-grain tannins and overall welcome harmony. 90.*

**2013 Waits-Mast Wentzel Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.6% alc., 120 cases, \$47. Released May 2016. This 10-acre vineyard is organically farmed by Roland and Barbara Wentzel. Located near Philo at 900 feet elevation. Fruit for this wine is sourced from a block situated up on the hill and less than an acre in size. Clones 114, 115, 667 and 777. Some fruit is also sourced from Lookout block, Dijon 667. 100% de-stemmed. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 50% new. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Pleasant aromas of leaf, barrel, and red cherry with a subtle medicinal note. Light to mid weight in style, with flavors of red raspberry, cranberry, blueberry and Crimini mushroom. Modest tannins, with some finishing purpose. This wine has some charm, but not the flavor to full entice. 88.*

**2014 Waits-Mast Deer Meadows Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.4% alc., 144 cases, \$58. Released March 2017. This vineyard is located at 1,600 feet elevation above Boonville with a southeastern facing view of Anderson Valley. Owned and farmed by Rich Savoy. Clones 115, 777 and Calera selection. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 33% new. *Moderately light ruby red color in the glass. The nose opens over time in the glass, revealing opulent aromas of dark red berries and Asian spices. Polished and light on its feet, with vivid flavors of red cherries and berries framed by engaging tannins and juicy acidity. A good example of power without muscle that makes Pinot Noir so seductive. 93.*

**2013 Waits-Mast Deer Meadows Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 13.9% alc., 120 cases, \$58. Released May 2016. Harvest Brix 24.5°. Clones 115, 777 and Calera selection. Native yeast fermentation. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 40% new. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. The pedigree of this vineyard is clearly evident in this wine. Well-appointed aromas of black pie cherries and spice lead to a mid weight plus style wine with delicious flavors of black cherry, dark raspberry and spice. The wine offers juicy acidity, modest tannins and welcome generosity on the finish. 92.*

**2014 Waits-Mast Mariah Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir** 13.4% alc., 96 cases, \$42. Released June 2017. This vineyard is located at 2,400 feet elevation and is owned by Dan Dooling and Vicki Tomola. Clones 667 and Pommard on Syrah rootstock (the vineyard was originally planted in the 1970s to Syrah, Petite Sirah, and Zinfandel). Harvest Brix 25.1°. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 25% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Lovely and nuanced in the glass, with aromas of strawberry, red cherry, sandalwood, wine cave, and floral bouquet. Intense on the attack with mouth coating flavors of dark red berries and cherries filling the mouth with goodness. A wine of character with a good grip on the finish that really holds on. 91.*



**2013 Waits-Mast Mariah Vineyard Mendocino Ridge Pinot Noir** 13.4% alc., 91 cases, \$42. Released November 2015. Harvest Brix 26°. Clones 667 and Pommard. Native yeast fermentation. Aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 25% new. *Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Very little fruit aromas on the nose that features scents of peppery spice, rose petal, potpourri, sweet pipe smoke and toasty oak. Very juicy,*

*middleweight cherry core with accents of spice, and BBQ smoke. Polished in the mouth with integrated tannins and a modest finish. 88.*



**2014 Waits-Mast Nash Mill Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir** 14.5% alc., 67 cases, \$40.

Released November 2016. Vineyard owned by Zac and Krista Robinson, whose family also owns Husch Vineyards. Harvest Brix 26.5°. A mix of 115 and 667 and Pommard clones harvested from this fog-bound, deep end site. Fermented whole berry with native yeasts and aged 16 months in French oak barrels, 33% new. *Moderate garnet color in the glass. Enticing aromas of cherry, cranberry, wilted rose and pipe smoke. Flat-out great on the palate with a delicious core of black cherry fruit. Elegantly composed and satiny in texture, with modest tannins and a sleek, polished demeanor. The oak lends a helping but not intrusive hand. This wine simply stands out immediately upon tasting and continues its peacock tail finish when tasted over a two day period. 94.*

# Visit Anderson Valley

## Upcoming Anderson Valley Winegrowers events:

5th Annual Anderson Valley Barrel Tasting Weekend, July 22-23, 2017

2nd Annual Anderson Valley Holiday Wine Passport, December 9-10 and 16-17, 2017

13th Annual International Alsace Varietals Festival, February 23-24, 2018

21st Annual Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival, May 18-20, 2018



## Lodging:

Anderson Valley Inn, Philo, [www.AVInn.com](http://www.AVInn.com)

The Boonville Hotel, Boonville, modern roadhouse with restaurant, [www.BoonvilleHotel.com](http://www.BoonvilleHotel.com)

Indian Creek Inn, Philo, 15 rooms, [www.IndianCreekInn.biz](http://www.IndianCreekInn.biz)

The Madrones, Philo, upscale lodging, tasting rooms, Stone and Embers restaurant, [www.TheMadrones.com](http://www.TheMadrones.com)

Other Anderson Valley lodging - [www.AndersonValleyChamber.com](http://www.AndersonValleyChamber.com)

Mendocino is a 45 minute drive along a winding road through towering redwoods. Healdsburg is a 60 minute drive away long a picturesque winding road.

## Recommended Wineries & Tasting Rooms:

Wineries with tasting rooms along Hwy 128 from south to north: Pennyroyal Farm, Foursight Wines, Harmonique, Lichen Estate, Domaine Anderson, Goldeneye, Balo Vineyards, Navarro Vineyards, Lazy Creek Vineyards, Husch Vineyards, Roederer Estate, Handley Cellars, Lula Cellars.

Tasting rooms in Philo area: Smith Story Wine Cellars, Bink Wines, and Drew Family Cellars at The Madrones. Nearby, Baxter Winery and Witching Stick.

A couple of my favorite Anderson Valley Pinot Noir producers, Black Kite, FEL and Maggy Hawk do not have tasting available in the Anderson Valley.

Map available from Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association at [www.avwines.com](http://www.avwines.com) or inquire at [info@avwines.com](mailto:info@avwines.com).

# Two Anderson Valley Icons Retire: Mary Elke and Milla Handley

## Milla Handley

Milla was the owner and winemaker of Handley Cellars for thirty-six years. Her pioneering efforts in environmental sustainability laid the groundwork for many other Anderson Valley wineries to follow. She said recently, “We at Handley firmly believe in caring for our social and environmental community through sustainable and organic farming. Our goal has been to preserve the land for future generations.”

She was one of the first female graduates in Fermentation Science at the University of California at Davis in 1978. After working with Richard Arrowood at Chateau St. Jean and Jed Steele at Edmeades, she started her own brand at a time when Mendocino County’s Anderson Valley was largely uncharted and considered by many too cold for growing wine grapes. Along with her late husband, Rex, she chose Anderson Valley because of its rural lifestyle and the chance to follow their own path, somewhat removed from the entrenched winemaking culture elsewhere in California.

While raising her older daughter Megan, Milla started making wine in the basement of her house and set forth to create her own wine brand. In the 1980s, the California wine industry was experiencing a renaissance with new varietals, new techniques and new standards of wine quality, and she was at the forefront. In 1982, she crafted 250 cases of Chardonnay, becoming the first woman winemaker and owner to establish a wine label with her own name in the United States. She has since served as a role model for women winemakers and entrepreneurs in a highly charged, highly competitive, and male-dominated industry, while always staying true to her art.

Milla’s conviction that organic farming helps reveal a wine’s expression of regional and varietal character led her to pursue organic certification for the Handley Estate Vineyard in 2003 (granted in 2005), long before such practices were commonplace.

To carry on the legacy of Milla’s winery with Milla’s retirement, her daughters, Lulu McClellan and Megan Handley Warren will become co-owners of the winery, with Lulu acting as National Sales Manager. (pictured)



Lulu remarked, "It is an honor to live, farm and make wine here in this community and beautiful valley. At the core of my mother's and this family's history is a love of Anderson Valley and a desire to connect people with this beautiful place we call home."

Co-winemaker since 2012, Randy Schock has been promoted from Co-Winemaker to lead Winemaker. He will continue the standard of Handley Cellars wines. The whites, which have been free of animal products since the 2012 vintage, will still be created with minimal intervention. The Pinot Noirs will still have balance, proper acidity and minimal oak influence.

In honor of Milla's retirement, the winery is releasing a 2015 Estate Blanc de Blanc.

The photo below from my archives shows Milla pouring her wines at an Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival Grand Tasting and talking with John Winthrop Haeger, author of *North American Pinot Noir*.



Handley produces small lots of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Pinot Gris, Riesling, Gewürztraminer, Syrah, Zinfandel, and sparkling wines. The tasting room, garden courtyard, and folk art gallery on Highway 128 in Philo are open daily. The website is [www.handleycellars.com](http://www.handleycellars.com).

## Mary Elke

Mary began her farming career growing organic apples in the Anderson Valley and making Mary Elke Apple Juice. Some people in California still know Mary more for her apple juice than her wine. In recent years she gave up her apple farming but still made her revered apple juice from Jason Drew's estate in Elk. Unsweetened, with no additives or preservatives, the juice flash pasteurized to preserve the flavors.

She began growing wine grapes in the Napa Valley in 1979 and the Anderson Valley in 1990. The 60-acre Donnelly Creek Vineyard, located just east of Boonville at the confluence of Donnelly and Anderson Creeks, has accrued very popular status among pinotphiles. Chances are, you have wines grown by Mary, including Mumm Napa, Roederer Estate, Radio-Coteau, Copain, Londer Vineyards, Au Bon Climat, Mendocino Wine Company, Far Niente, ICI/La BAs, Franciscan, Breggo Cellars, Saintsbury, Goldeneye, Fulcrum On Point, Wilde Farm Wines, Manross Wines, and FEL Wines.

In 1997, Mary and her late husband, Tom, started Elke Vineyards, holding back some grapes for Elke wines, most notably Elke Vineyards Blue Diamond Donnelly Creek Vineyard Anderson Valley Pinot Noir. One of her two sons, Matt, manages the family's home ranch.

At the recent Anderson Valley Pinot Noir Festival, Mary sold me her last vintage of Donnelly Creek Vineyard Pinot Noir was 2015. She is retiring, and selling off her inventory. Every year she generously shared older vintages of her wines, and they consistently aged beautifully.

She represents much of what is good about Anderson Valley people. Part farmer, part wine lover, always charming, and a proud and tireless spokesperson for Anderson Valley Pinot Noir.

The winery's website is at [www.elkevineyards.com](http://www.elkevineyards.com). I am uncertain how long the tasting room will be open.



## Jeff Hansen: Another Veteran Anderson Valley Based Winemaker Retires

Jeff Hansen has stepped down as winemaker at Lula Cellars, after more than three decades making California wines. The Lula label was named after his grandmother. Jeff will retain the title of Founder and will also serve as Winemaker Emeritus and assist Lula Cellars for special projects, grower development and production tastings.



Jeff began his career in wine in 1987 when he worked in the tasting room at Spring Mountain Vineyard in Napa Valley. That same year, he made his first wine at home, a Cabernet Sauvignon, using grapes from Spring Mountain. He soon discovered the Anderson Valley region and fell in love with this ruggedly beautiful area, famed for Pinot Noir. In 1991, Jeff produced his first Anderson Valley wines for Amici Cellars in Calistoga and continued as winemaker for that winery for twenty years.

In 2009, he sold his interest in Amici and founded a small lot Anderson Valley winery called Lula Cellars. He opened the winery in 2010 as a tribute to his grandmother's tenacity and optimism in the face of adversity. She was born in the Oklahoma Territory in 1879 and raised three children by herself while working multiple jobs. Jeff cites her as his inspiration in life.

Lula Cellars was lauded from the start and Jeff's annual production of 2,800 cases of Mendocino County Pinot Noir, Zinfandel, Dry Gewürztraminer, Sauvignon Blanc and Rosato have won loyal fans. The wines have always been sold only directly to consumers. The winery makes its home on a 22-acre property in Philo next door to Handley Vineyards and the tasting room offers a unique experience. The tasting room is open daily. Visit [www.lulacellars.com](http://www.lulacellars.com).

# Pinot Briefs

**Gregory V. Jones New Director of Wine Education at Linfield College** Gregory V. Jones is known as one of preeminent wine climatologists who focuses his research on how terroir influences wine production. He regularly conducts research for the wine industry in Oregon, was a contributing author to the 2008 Nobel Peace Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report, and has authored many book chapters, reports and articles on wine economics, climate change and climatological assessments of viticultural potential. Jones replaces Ellen Brittan, the founding Director of Wine Education at Linfield. Linfield is the first college in the country to offer an interdisciplinary liberal arts degree in wine studies. It is in the process of developing a wine and sustainable systems major. Benefitting from its location in the heart of Oregon's Willamette Valley, Linfield also offers wine management and wine marketing certificates online, provides a summer wine-industry immersion program, and annually hosts the International Pinot Noir Celebration each summer.

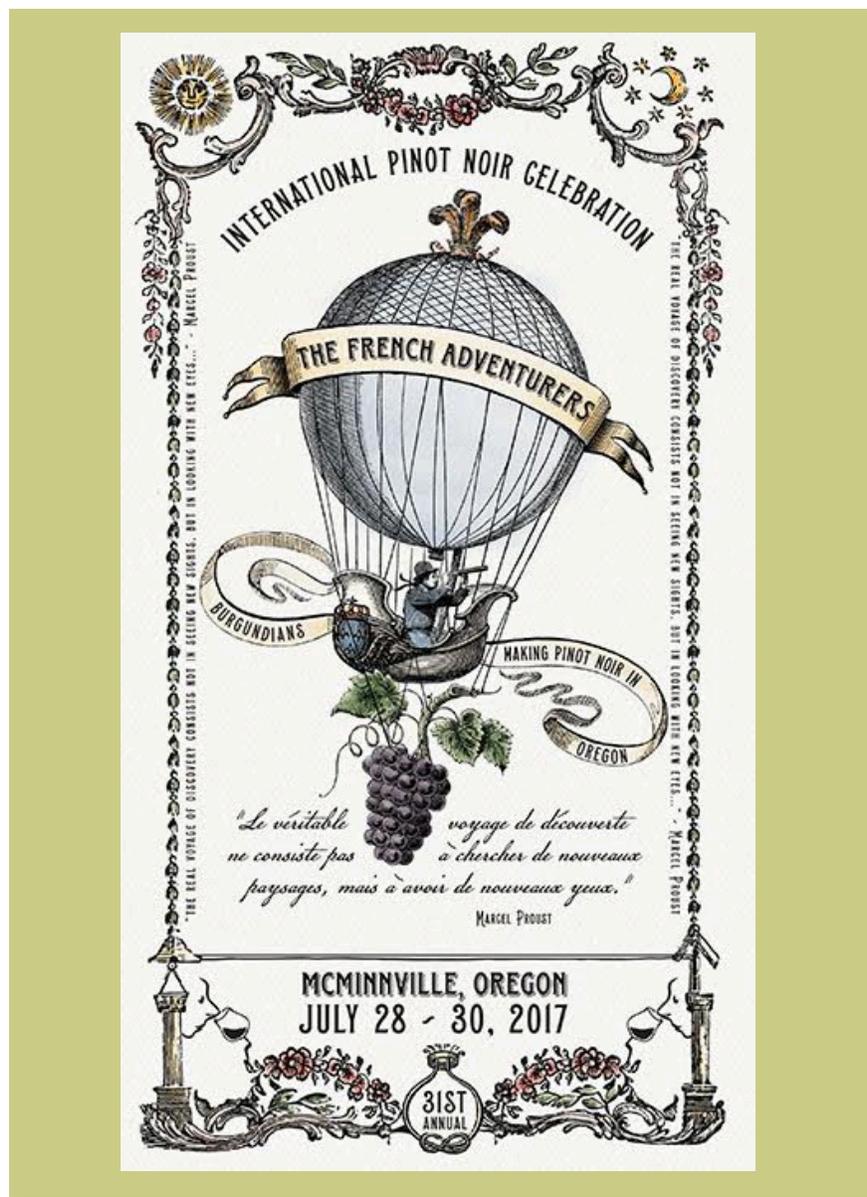
**Wine Shipping Update from Tom Wark , Executive Director of NAWR** There are still state laws that prevent wine drinkers from receiving wine from out-of-state. 45 states allow wine shipments from out-of-state wineries, but only 14 states allow wine shipments from out-of-state wine stores and retailers.



The consequences of bans on retailer-to-consumer wine shipments is that because only retailers are permitted to sell imported wines and when states ban shipments from out-of-state wine retailers, they ban consumers from receiving any shipments of any imported wines. States leave millions of potential tax dollars uncollected by banning shipments from out-of-state retailers. Consumers access to wines is diminished considerably. A website, [www.WineFreedom.org](http://www.WineFreedom.org), has been established and is supported by the National Association of Wine Retailers (NAWR), consumers and free market advocates. The site provides wine consumers across the US with background on the wine shipping issue and the opportunity to easily contact their state representative and ask for changes to the archaic and protectionist policies that ban consumers and America's specialty wine retailers from doing business legally. A bill is now in legislation in New York that would create a reciprocal law allowing New York consumers to receive shipments of wine from retailers in states that allow shipments of wine from New York retailers. Those living in New York may want to get involved by sending letters to their state representatives.

**New Study of Health Benefits of Alcohol** The National Institutes of Health is embarking on a \$100 million clinical trial to study the risks and benefits of alcohol. The research is being funded by five large alcoholic beverage manufacturers which raises eyebrows among those who point out that industry-sponsored research almost always sheds a favorable light on the research outcome for the sponsors.

**New Book on Grape Health Benefits** This review of the current science linking the consumption of grapes to better health is titled, *Grapes and Health: A Monograph*. The book is directed at health and science professionals and discusses peer-reviewed grape-specific research. It is not a book on grape-based alcoholic beverages per se.



## 2017 IPNC

There are already approximately 830 registered attendees for the 2017 IPNC weekend, including 140 representatives from the 72 featured wineries. **A few Full IPNC Weekend tickets are still available.**

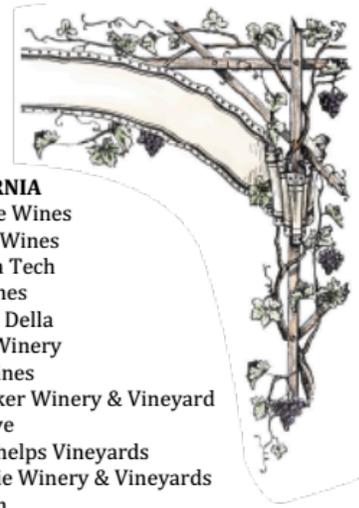
Held on the beautiful campus of Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon, the IPNC offers Full Weekend guests three days of tastings, seminars, vineyard tours and gourmet meals. Pinotphiles revel in this joyous, ultimate Pinot Noir lover's event featuring plenty of Pinot Noir and unpretentious camaraderie.

The 2017 IPNC Full Weekend Ticket includes: 2 Grand Outdoor Tastings, Numerous Weekend Seminars, Friday Night Grand Dinner and Saturday Night Salmon Bake, A Vineyard Tour and Winery Lunch, An afternoon University of Pinot Course, An Array of Wine Related Activities and Small Format Tastings, Friday and Saturday breakfast on the patio, Sunday Sparkling Brunch Finale, and the opportunity to celebrate with renowned international Pinot Noir winemakers and sixty Northwest chefs and the chance to taste over 250 Pinot Noirs.

The 72 Pinot Noir producers hail from Alsace, Burgundy, California, Canada, Champagne, Italy, New Zealand and Oregon. Here is a list of this year's participating featured wineries:



International Pinot Noir Celebration  
**2017 Featured Wineries**



**OREGON**

Amity Vineyards  
Anderson Family Vineyard  
Angela Estate  
Antica Terra  
Argyle  
Beckham Estate  
Belle Pente  
Bethel Heights Vineyard  
big table farm  
Brick House Wine Company  
Brooks Wines  
Cameron  
Dobbes Family Estate  
Domaine Drouhin Oregon  
Dusky Goose  
Evening Land Vineyards  
Fairsing Vineyard  
The Four Graces  
Fox Farm Vineyards  
Hawks View Cellars  
Holloran Vineyard Wines  
Hyland Estates  
Iris Vineyards  
Lenné  
Lingua Franca  
Maysara Winery  
Montinore Estate  
Nicolas-Jay  
Penner-Ash Wine Cellars  
Phelps Creek Vineyard  
Résonance  
Domaine Roy et fils  
Saffron Fields Vineyard  
Seven of Hearts  
Stoller Family Estate  
Van Duzer Vineyards  
Westrey Wine Co.

**CANADA**

LAFRENZ  
Norman Hardie Winery &  
Vineyard

**CALIFORNIA**

B. Kosuge Wines  
Banshee Wines  
Clos de la Tech  
Cobb Wines  
Domaine Della  
DuMOL Winery  
Etude Wines  
Fess Parker Winery & Vineyard  
Goldeneye  
Joseph Phelps Vineyards  
MacRostie Winery & Vineyards  
Migration  
Miner Family Winery  
Pellegrini - Olivet Lane  
Saintsbury  
Three Sticks Wines  
Two Sisters

**FRANCE – Alsace**

Domaine Albert Mann  
Domaine du Clos Saint Landelin - Muré  
Domaine Valentin Zusslin

**FRANCE – Burgundy**

Maison Ambroise  
Domaine Charles Audoin  
Domaine Simon Bize et Fils  
Maison Fougeray de Beauclair  
Domaine Jean Grivot  
Domaine de Montille  
Domaine Marc Roy  
Domaine des Terres de Velle

**FRANCE – Champagne**

Champagne Jean Josselin

**ITALY – Alto Adige**

J. Hofstätter

**NEW ZEALAND**

Aurum Wines  
Mount Edward  
Prophet's Rock

Allen Meadows of *Burghound.com* will be the Master of Ceremonies. The Grand Seminar will be moderated by Eric Asimov of *The New York Times*, featuring Oregon wines made by visionary French winemakers Véronique Boss-Drouhin, Dominique Lafon, Jacques Lardière, Jean-Nicolas Méo, and Alexandrine Roy.

James Beard Award winner and Portland food legend, Vitaly Paley of Headwaters at the Heathman Hotel will prepare the main course for the Grand Dinner. 2017 James Beard Foundation Best Chef Northwest winners Greg Denton and Gabrielle Quiñónez-Denton of Superbite and Ox are preparing bites and dishes for this year's guests.

The University of Pinot course offerings can be viewed at [www.ipnc.org/university-of-pinot-2017/](http://www.ipnc.org/university-of-pinot-2017/).

To register as a guest for the 2017 IPNC Full Weekend, visit [www.ipnc.org](http://www.ipnc.org). Non-refundable tickets are now \$1,295.00. For questions, call 800-775-4762.