

PINOTREPORT

for people passionate about western pinot noir

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For Details

Delicious Summer Wines...

IN THE HOT, SLOWER DAYS OF SUMMER, there's just nothing like sipping a crisp, cool Pinot Gris or Pinot Noir Rosé. From the bright apple and pear fruit of the Pinot Gris to the explosive tart strawberry, cherry flavors of the Pinot Noir Rosé, no two wines are more enjoyable—or more versatile at the summer table—for people who love Pinot Noir.

I've assembled a **special tasting report** on some of the Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir Rosé wines I've really enjoyed. While this is by no means an exhaustive review, it does represent a wide array of styles and prices.

Also in this issue, I've got reviews of some great new Pinot Noirs from **Baileyana, Fiddlehead, Hartford Court, Mendelson and Siduri**. Meanwhile, **Michael Dotson** sips some rosé and decides that cooking in is out and declares this time of year the "Salad Days of Summer," preparing three incredible salad meals for your enjoyment.

Interesting Response...

Last issue I wrote that **Pinot Noir needed an organization with the sole purpose of promoting the enjoyment and growth of Pinot** through education, research sponsorship, seminars and tasting events—much like ZAP does for Zinfandel. I received some interesting responses—all positive and encouraging me to go for it—but only from those of you involved in the production of Pinot. **I didn't get one response from any of you Pinot consumers out there.** So I'm going to repeat my call for your opinions: **I think that PinotReport should get the ball rolling** to create this combined consumer and producer organization. What do you think? What would you call it? Would you want to be a member? I'd love to hear your thoughts on this—send an email to me at gswalter@pinotreport.com.

As always, I welcome your comments and hope you enjoy this latest issue.

-- **Gregory S. Walter, editor and publisher**



Geyser Peak Buys Wild Horse

Peak Wines International, parent company of **Geyser Peak Winery**, has purchased **Wild Horse Winery** of **Templeton, Calif.**, known for its Pinot Noir, Merlot and Chardonnay. The purchase price was not disclosed though it was estimated at \$35 million, and the sale included the Wild Horse brand and the winery estate which includes 48 acres of vineyards. **Ken Volk**, Wild Horse's founder, will stay on as winemaker and president.

Steinhauer / Beringer Blass Launch TAZ

Beringer Blass has announced the launch of **TAZ**, a brand

focused on wines grown and produced in **Santa Barbara County**. Veteran **Beringer** vineyard guru **Bob Steinhauer** heads up this new venture and the brand carries his nickname "Taz" referring to the "Tasmanian Devil" cartoon character. The new venture's initial release of 7,500 cases will be made up of Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot Gris, Pinot Noir and Syrah, all from Santa Barbara County.

But Steinhauer and TAZ winemaker **Jon Priest** have their eyes on Pinot Noir and the **Santa Rita Hills** AVA as they look to the future. The two have a partnership with **Kathy Joseph** of **Fiddlehead Cellars**, also in the Santa Rita Hills, to develop Joseph's **Fiddlestix** vineyard. The vineyard arrangement between TAZ and Joseph is a bit unusual—they divided up the vineyard blocks equally between them for the first harvest and then will swap blocks each subsequent year. Look for the 2002 TAZ Pinot Noir to be exclusively from the Fiddlestix vineyard.

WINEMAKER MOVES

Reeder leaves Chateau St. Jean

Steve Reeder, Chateau St. Jean's winemaker since 1997, has left the Kenwood winery just weeks before harvest to head up winemaking at **Simi Winery** in **Healdsburg**. Reeder replaces **Nick Goldschmidt** who left in May to join **Allied Domecq's** California properties.

PinotReport

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Gregory S. Walter

Editor and Publisher

Michael Dotson, Contributing Editor

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Editorial Philosophy

PinotReport is an independent newsletter owned, written and published by Gregory S. Walter. All tastings unless otherwise noted are done blind by the Editor. Any and all opinions and analysis expressed in these pages unless otherwise noted belong to Gregory S. Walter, who has no involvement or connection whatsoever in the production, distribution or sales of wine.

Wine Samples

PinotReport accepts wine samples **of Pinot Noir only** for its "In The Market" and special "Tasting Reports." All samples should be sent to the following address:

PinotReport

Attn: Gregory S. Walter
625 Ross Court, Sonoma, CA 95476
Tel: 707.935.0326

Probably best known for continuing the successful production of Chateau St. Jean's "**Cinq Cepages**" Bordeaux-style red blend, Reeder also produced many interesting Pinot Noirs from Sonoma County vineyards, particularly the **Durrell Vineyard in Sonoma Valley**.

Associate winemaker **Margo Van Staaveren** will assume Reeder's duties until a permanent replacement is named.

Shurtleff Takes Helm At Cambria

Denise Shurtleff has been promoted to winemaker at **Cambria Winery** in the **Santa Maria Valley**, according to **Barbara Banke**, Cambria's proprietor. Shurtleff will oversee all aspects of winemaking at the estate. Shurtleff joined Cambria in September 1999 as assistant winemaker. Prior to Cambria, Shurtleff spent 16 years with Corbett Canyon Vineyards where she was winemaker and winery manager. She received her bachelor's degree in Dietetics and Food Administration from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

DIRECT SHIPPING UPDATE

North Carolina Loosens Rules

New state regulations that take effect Oct. 1 will allow consumers in North Carolina to order wine from an out-of-state winery and have the wines shipped directly to their homes. These new regulations are the direct result of a federal court ruling that found the state's direct shipping laws were unconstitutional.

Senate Bill 668 sets up a permit system to control wine shipments. Wineries, whether local or out of state can pay a license fee of \$100 and then ship up to two cases per month to an individual consumer and up to 1,000 cases a year to the state overall. North Carolina residents may also purchase wines at wineries while they are traveling and have the wines shipped to them at home, even if the winery has not purchased the North Carolina shipping permits.

Hawaii Raises Shipping Limits

Residents of the **Aloha State** will have much easier time ordering and having wine delivered to them at home after a bill signed by **Governor Linda Lingle** takes effect.

HB 1465 increased the amount of wine—from two cases to three cases per year—that individuals can order directly from out-of-state wineries. The bill also eliminated the requirement that consumers obtain a permit from county alcohol beverage control authorities to place such orders.

PINOT EVENTS

San Francisco

August 13: Oregon Wine Tasting With The Winemakers. Taste the wines of Bethel Heights and Elk Cove at the tasting bar at William Cross Wine Merchants, 2253 Polk Street. Cost: \$15. Call **415-346-1314** or email **wcwm@earthlink.net** for more information.

Healdsburg, Calif.

August 15-17: Russian River Valley Winegrowers 8th Annual Grapes to Glass. A weekend full of tasting, tours, fine food and wine at some of the Russian River Valley's finest wineries. Cost: varies. Email **info@rvvw.org** for more information.

Chicago

August 18: BIN School – A Night of Pinot Noir. Join BIN 36 wine director Brian Duncan for an exploration of Pinot Noir at BIN 36 restaurant. Cost: \$75. Call Janet Isabelli, **312-902-6900**, email **janet@wagstaffworldwide.com** or visit **www.bin36.com** for more information.

Chicago

August 27: Pinot Envy. Chicago Wine School presents an educational seminar and tasting on red, white and pink wines from the Pinot family. Cost: \$60. Call **312-266-9463** or email **pwfegan@aol.com** for more information.

DO YOU HAVE A PINOT NOIR EVENT COMING UP?

Do you have a Pinot Noir-related tasting or lifestyle event coming up? I'd love to list it in **PinotReport's** events calendar. Send me the details in the format you see above 60 days prior to the event to **gswalter@pinotreport.com**.

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

This Month's Tasting Notes

All wines were tasted blind and scored before knowing anything other than that the general region they were from. My notes and comments follow.

CALIFORNIA

Baileyana Winery *Pinot Noir Edna Valley 2001*

See "Smart Buy" on page 5.

Baileyana Winery *Pinot Noir Edna Valley Firepeak Vineyard 2001*

Deep ruby-purple color; perfumed, black cherry, some spice, somewhat closed aromas; big and full in the mouth with deep concentrated black cherry, spice and oak notes, some tannin, nice structure with a lingering finish. Another winner from Baileyana—big and powerful but balanced.

484 cases made \$38 Score: 92

Fiddlehead Cellars *Pinot Noir Santa Rita Hills Fiddlestix Seven Twenty Eight 2001*

Deep ruby-purple color; black cherry, blackberry aromas with notes of spice and cumin; big, tannic with blackberry, cherry, plum, lots of spice, pepper, cumin notes and a long full finish. This Pinot from Kathy Joseph has the incredible depth and concentration I've come to expect from Santa Rita Hills; it also has a wonderful silky mouthfeel and balance.

1,200 cases made \$38 Score: 93

MAKE ROOM IN THE CELLAR!

"A truly exceptional Pinot..."

Hartford Court *Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Arrendell Vineyard 2000*

Deep, dark ruby purple color; rich black cherry, chocolate, earthy notes on the nose; dry, full, lots of black cherry and plum notes, incredible depth, toasty oak, great balance and a finish that goes on forever. Incredible concentration of flavor, rich and mouthfilling! Hartford Court is making some of the finest Pinots in California. The Arrendell is no exception—truly exceptional Pinot.

300 cases made \$65 Score: 94

Hartford *Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2001*

Deep, dark ruby purple color; full black cherry and plum aromas with a hint of spice; highly concentrated, very clean and full on palate, black cherry, plum flavors, complex with just the right amount of toasty oak; great structure, mineral notes, long finish. WOW! Big style with incredibly deep fruit—this is a terrific Pinot for the cellar at an unbelievably low price!

6,300 cases made \$25 Score: 94

Hartford Court *Pinot Noir Carneros Sevens Bench Vineyard 2000*

Deep, dark ruby purple color; spicy, cinnamon, deep black cherry aromas; deep, full, intense and concentrated black cherry and plum flavors with a touch of bacon, tobacco and spice; very good structure, acidity and balance, finishes with a toasty oak note. One of the biggest Carneros Pinots I've had in a long time, the Sevens Bench bottling still manages to be balanced and complex.

650 cases made \$50 Score: 92

Hartford Court *Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Arrendell Vineyard 2000*

See "Make Room In The Cellar!" below.

Hartford Court *Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Dutton-Sanchietti Vineyard 2000*

Deep, dark ruby purple color; slightly closed cassis, blackberry notes on nose; big and tannic, there is ample blackberry and cassis fruit underneath, great structure and a finish that goes on and on. This Pinot is huge and tannic, but there's no doubt that this is a Pinot of character; I think the fruit is there to reward some patience in the cellar.

300 cases made \$50 Score: 91

Mendelson Vineyard *Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands 2001*

Deep ruby-purple color; deep blackberry, cherry aromas and oak, lots of concentration on the nose; dry deep and concentrated, lots of blackberry and cherry with earthy notes; sweet impression from oak, beautiful balance and structure, long silky finish. This is beautiful Pinot—silky and just packed with flavor. The Mendelsons are off to a great start with this first release of Pinot.

500 cases made \$37.50 Score: 91

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Garys' Vineyard 2001

Deep ruby-purple color; jammy black cherry, blackberry fruit and slight stemminess on nose, young aromas; full flavors of blackberry, black cherry and plum, definite toasty oak notes, good balance, long finish. WOW! Great fruit, big on palate, but with the trademark balance and silkiness you expect from Garys' Vineyard.

449 cases made \$50 Score: 93

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Hirsch Vineyard 2001

Deep ruby-purple color; spicy, cinnamon, with some cherry and strawberry fruit on nose; silky mouthfeel, flavors of red cherry, spice, cinnamon, some pepper, good structure and balance with a little heat on the finish. A big, beautifully complex Pinot from a classic Pinot vineyard.

473 cases made \$45 Score: 91

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Sonoma Mountain Van Der Kamp Vineyard 2001

Deep ruby-purple color; spicy, cinnamon aromas with some

cherry fruit; black cherry and plum fruit, earthy and spicy oak notes, good structure and balance, slightly sharp but lingering finish. This is a great, distinctive Pinot from an equally great and distinctive vineyard.

453 cases made \$45 Score: 92

[PNR]

SMART BUY!

"Beautiful, concentrated Pinot..."

Baileyana Winery

Pinot Noir Edna Valley 2001

Deep ruby-purple color; beautiful, forward black cherry aromas with a hint of spice and oak; medium-full body, lots of pretty black cherry fruit, spicy notes, complex flavors, silky mouthfeel; nice balance and a long finish. Beautiful Pinot—silky and balanced. Baileyana's Pinots, especially this Edna Valley bottling, are just getting better and better. These Pinots are worth searching out.

3,956 cases made \$23 Score: 93

About Our Tastings

Generally, there are two types of tastings that appear in each issue of **PinotReport**. The first are our regular "In The Market" tastings of Pinot Noirs new on the market. The second are our special "Tasting Reports" that focus on a particular appellation, producer or style.

How We Taste

We taste wine in flights of usually no more than 10 wines and no more than 20 wines in a tasting session. Ringers and duplicate wines are inserted in tastings to measure consistency and keep us on our toes.

All tasting unless otherwise noted is done blind by the Editor. From time to time other tasters may participate, but their scores and comments are not part of the official tasting record. The tasting coordinator (who does not taste) arranges and bags all wines, which are then scored and comments recorded before bags are removed.

Our tastings are done under controlled, consistent conditions. We do not under any circumstances use tasting notes from large tasting events or other sub-optimal tasting venues in our published tasting reports.

Wine Prices and Sourcing

Wine prices vary all around the country and can often vary

significantly within the same city. We make every effort to only publish a winery's suggested retail price. This price in many cases will be higher than those you can find in your local markets. The wines we taste either come from the wineries in the form of tasting samples (always finished bottles ready for market) or wines we purchase at retail or at the winery.

Our Wine Ratings

The wines we taste are rated using a 100-point rating system. We fully understand the ongoing debate over the use of the 100-point system and while we respect the right of those who simply despise the system to continue to do so, we believe that the scale has value when used with the accompanying tasting notes as a relative guide to wine quality that has the added benefit of being familiar and truly intuitive for most consumers.

Here is **PinotReport's 100-point scale**:

96-100	SUPERIOR ; it doesn't get better.
90-95	OUTSTANDING ; approaching the best
80-89	ABOVE AVERAGE ; a fine Pinot.
70-79	AVERAGE ; OK if it's all you have.
60-69	BELOW AVERAGE ; not recommended.
50-59	UNDRINKABLE .

Refreshing Wines For Pinot Lovers

Pinot Gris, Rosés Make Great All-Purpose Wines For Summer

WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF SUMMER, the weather's hot and we want to be outdoors as much as possible—not just to beat the heat, but because we **can** and it's **fun**. Elsewhere in this issue, Michael Dotson has dreamed up some terrific salad-based meals for your outdoor entertaining and enjoyment, but what about wine? Where does a self-respecting Pinot Noir fan turn for **refreshing wines that taste good cold?**

Some of you probably turn to **Chardonnay** or **Sauvignon Blanc**. Nothing against those wines (in fact, a juicy **New Zealand** Sauvignon Blanc or a **Sancerre** can really hit the spot), but more and more I'm opening **Pinot Gris** and **Pinot Noir Rosé** for my summer enjoyment.

Following are my notes and reviews on some of the wines I've really enjoyed and wanted to recommend to you. While this is by no means an exhaustive review of the Pinot Gris and Rosé wines available; it does represent a wide array of styles and prices.

Pinot Gris and Rosé of Pinot Noir

All wines were tasted blind and scored before knowing anything other than that the general region they were from. My notes and comments follow.

CALIFORNIA

Babcock Vineyards

Pinot Grigio Santa Barbara County 2002

See "Run, Don't Walk..." on page 7.

Baileyana Winery

Pinot Gris Edna Valley Ecclestone 2002

Pale straw yellow color; slight soapy aromas, crisp, subtle fruit; bright, melon fruit, good acidity and balance, crisp clean finish. Nice lighter style with assertive fruit.

350 cases made \$24 Score: 89

Beringer Vineyards

Pinot Grigio California 2002

Pale straw gold color; light pear fruit with a touch of hazelnut on the nose; dry with ripe pear fruit and slightly nutty flavors, tart, crisp acidity with a bit of nuttiness on the finish. A clean and tasty Pinot Grigio with a touch of hazelnut for added complexity.

30,000 cases made \$8 Score: 88

Bouchaine Vineyards

Rosé of Pinot Noir Carneros 2001

Light salmon-red color; some cherry, berry, herbal aromas, off dry, bright, juicy berry flavors, good acid but not crisp, lingering finish. A pretty, full rosé built for light foods.

272 cases made \$12 Score: 87

Cakebread Cellars

Vin Gris Carneros Vin de Porche 2002

See "Run, Don't Walk..." on page 7.

De Loach Vineyards

Pinot Gris Sonoma County 2001

Pale-light straw gold color; lemony, apple aromas, some spicy notes; dry, clean, crisp fruit, some apple and pear notes with a hint of spice, toasty oak, crisp acidity, balanced, lingering finish. A leaner style with crisp acidity that's a pleasure to sip on its own.

1,031 cases made \$14 Score: 90

De Loach Vineyards

Pinot Gris Sonoma County 2000

Pale-light straw gold color; spicy citrus, apple and toast aromas; dry, crisp, clean fruit, some apple notes toasty oak and crisp acidity, balanced, lingering finish. Nice style of Pinot Gris; barrel fermentation adds complexity; at home with most summer foods.

1,054 cases made \$14 Score: 88

Echelon Vineyards

Pinot Grigio Clarksburg Esperanza Vineyard 2002

See "Run, Don't Walk..." on page 7.

SPECIAL REPORT: Refreshing Wines For Pinot Lovers

Edna Valley Vineyard ***Pinot Gris Edna Valley Paragon 2000***

Light straw gold color; light fruit with a touch of caramel; dry, has some apple and tropical fruit, and some nutty, caramel notes; lingering finish. Fuller in mouth than most Pinot Gris, this wine works well with just about anything off the grill.

3,632 cases made \$18 Score: 88

Etude Wines ***Pinot Gris Carneros 2002***

Pale-light yellow gold color; very clean, bright fruit with a touch of spice on nose; bright, crisp fruit, delightful flavors, lots of spice, apricot and apple flavors, lingering finish. Terrific balance, substantial flavor and acidity make this a perfect match for spicier foods.

860 cases made \$20 Score: 90

RUN, DON'T WALK...

Get These Before They're Gone!

Of the wines I tasted for this special report, these seven really stood out to me in terms of their flavor and great quality. Most of these will be harder than average to find—a call to the winery may be in order to find the retailer nearest you or you may need to buy it direct from the winery. These wines are definitely worth the extra effort!

Babcock Vineyards ***Pinot Grigio Santa Barbara County 2002***

Pale-light straw gold color; fresh clean apple and citrus aromas; dry and crisp with beautiful tart apple and citrus flavors; crisp acidity and terrific balance add to a very long finish. I love the crisp, tart fruit in this wine. It's a pleasure to drink!

850 cases made \$14.50 Score: 92

Cakebread Cellars ***Vin Gris Carneros Vin de Porche 2002***

Light purple pink color; bright, cherry and strawberry aromas, spicy, dry, rich ripe strawberry cherry flavors, lush mouthfeel, good acid and balance, lingering finish. WOW! This is a mouthful of cherry and strawberries—a truly beautiful rosé available only at the winery. Worth the trip!

97 cases made \$16 Score: 93

Echelon Vineyards ***Pinot Grigio Clarksburg Esperanza Vineyard 2002***

Pale straw yellow color; lively appley aromas, crisp on nose; dry, bright, fruity, tart apple flavors, very nicely balanced; lingering finish. A bargain in truly terrific Pinot Grigio! Echelon is one of those brands that doesn't have a lot of the trappings of the expensive brands, but wines under the Echelon label never disappoint me.

1,060 cases made \$10 Score: 93

Inman Family Wines ***Pinot Gris Russian River Valley 2002***

Pale-light straw yellow color; spicy, bright aromas with hints of nutmeg and pear; dry, beautiful fruit flavors of pear and nectarines; crisp acidity, nicely balanced with a lingering finish. This is a delight to drink either by itself or with just about any summer food. Inman Family is a terrific new grower and producer in the Russian River Valley. A Pinot Noir is in the works as well.

70 cases made \$24 Score: 93

Kosta Browne ***Pinot Noir Rosé Sonoma Coast 2002***

Light purple salmon color; bright, cherry and cranberry aromas, spicy, dry, rich ripe cranberry and cherry flavors, lush mouthfeel, crisp acidity, good structure and balance, lingering finish. WOW! This is an incredible rosé with the kind of crisp acidity and bright fruit to make it equally interesting with just about any summer food or as a casual sipper.

140 cases made \$15 Score: 93

Sineann ***Pinot Gris Oregon 2002***

Pale-light yellow gold color; floral, spice and pear, apple aromas, very clean and crisp on nose; dry, clean, very crisp, bright apple flavors, with spice notes, very nice balance and acidity, lingering finish. Delicious flavors, great balance—like biting into an apple! Great alone or with food.

1,200 cases made \$15 Score: 93

Willakenzie Estate ***Pinot Gris Willamette Valley 2002***

Pale-light straw yellow color; very forward aromas of pear, apple and floral notes; dry, very crisp fruit flavors of apple, pear and some citrus notes, great acidity and structure, terrific balance and a long finish. Crisp and structured, this wine is a joy to drink. Serve it with your favorite grilled fish.

5,050 cases made \$18 Score: 93

SPECIAL REPORT: Refreshing Wines For Pinot Lovers

Inman Family Wines

Pinot Gris Russian River Valley 2002

See "Run, Don't Walk..." on page 7.

J Vineyards & Winery

Pinot Gris Russian River Valley 2002

Pale-light straw yellow color; spicy, bright, floral and green apple aromas; dry, crisp acidity, floral, spicy flavors, nice green apple fruit and balanced, lingering finish. Crisp and refreshing, this Pinot Gris will work with many foods.

5,800 cases made \$18 Score: 90

Joseph Swan Winery

Pinot Gris Russian River Valley 2002

Light straw gold color; less than clear appearance; floral, light and fruity aromas; lush melon fruit and mineral notes, lingering finish. An interesting style of Pinot Gris that eschews oak but still has enough body and structure for most summer foods.

75 cases made \$15 Score: 88

Kosta Browne

Pinot Noir Rosé Sonoma Coast 2002

See "Run, Don't Walk..." on page 7.

Morgan Winery

Pinot Gris Santa Lucia Highlands R & D Francioni Vineyard 2002

Pale-light straw yellow color; soft, fruity, melon and tropical fruit notes on nose; dry, crisp but with very assertive melon and tropical fruit flavors; very nice balance and lingering finish. The fruit explodes on the palate in this Pinot Gris, and crisp acidity keeps it balanced.

322 cases made \$16 Score: 91

Saintsbury

Vin Gris Carneros Vincent Vin Gris 2002

Light purple color, attractive but almost too dark for a vin gris; bright, strawberry, raspberry aromas on nose; full, rich strawberry, raspberry and spicy flavors, good crisp acidity, very nice balance and finish. This is a delight to drink—more color than most rosés; very clean and flavorful.

800 cases made \$11 Score: 90

Sanford Winery

Vin Gris Santa Rita Hills 2002

Pale salmon-pink color; light, slight rose petal, strawberry fruit and spice aromas; dry, juicy strawberry, cherry flavors, crisp acidity, rich fruity mouthfeel, lingering tart finish. Tart and

crisp with bright fruity flavors. Perfect with shellfish or light meats.

1,300 cases made \$13 Score: 90

Scherrer Winery

Vin Gris Sonoma County 2002

Light purple-pink color; light fruit aromas with berry and strawberry notes; dry, tart strawberry and berry flavors, crisp yet nice texture in the mouth; very nice balance and a lingering finish. This Vin Gris is a blend of Pinot Noir, Zinfandel and Pinotage—it's equally at home with grilled meats as it is by itself.

270 cases made \$14 Score: 91

Stone Cellars by Beringer

Pinot Grigio California 2001

Pale-light straw gold color; light herbal and mineral notes on nose; dry, light pear fruit with a slight nutty flavor; balanced with crisp acidity and a lingering finish. Solid, clean Pinot Gris—a fine complement to light foods.

15,000 cases made \$8 Score: 86

Wild Horse Winery

Pinot Grigio Central Coast 2001

Pale straw yellow color; light spicy, melon fruit and slightly nutty aromas; dry, crisp, melon and slight hazelnut flavors, crisp on finish. Nicely balanced with great fruit and just a touch of hazelnut, this Pinot Gris is a terrific aperitif.

3,900 cases made \$14 Score: 87

OREGON

A to Z

Pinot Gris Oregon 2002

Pale-light straw yellow color; bright pear and floral aromas on nose; dry, bright, crisp fruit, pear and apple notes on palate, light and fresh, crisp acidity, lingering finish. Ideal for summer sipping, this wine from Hatcher Wine Works is light on the wallet as well.

3,900 cases made \$10.50 Score: 90

Cronos

Pinot Gris Yamhill County 2002

Pale straw yellow color; lemony, slightly oily aromas; dry, crisp, hazelnut flavors, some spice; balanced, lingering finish. A slightly nutty style with nice fruit—great with shellfish.

115 cases made \$12 Score: 87

SPECIAL REPORT: Refreshing Wines For Pinot Lovers

King Estate

Pinot Gris Oregon Reserve 2001

Pale-light straw yellow color; spice, some herbal, citrus notes, light fruit on nose; dry, intense, very clean and crisp on palate, rich fruit, some melon and ripe pear flavors, spicy notes; very nice balance and lingering finish. The mouthfeel on this wine is great—full of lush fruit but also has crispness and balance. Terrific for any summer foods!

4,000 cases made \$20 Score: 92

King Estate

Pinot Gris Oregon 2001

Pale-light straw yellow color; tart, apple and citrus notes on nose; full, citrusy flavors with some spicy notes, crisp acidity, long clean finish. This Pinot Gris is a beautiful, bright and tasty choice for most summer foods and a bargain as well!

50,000 cases made \$15 Score: 91

Oak Knoll Winery

Pinot Gris Willamette Valley 2001

Pale-light straw gold color; light floral, rose and spicy notes on nose with a hint of pear; dry, crisp fruit with pear, floral and apple notes; very nice balance, crisp acidity and a lingering finish. This Pinot Gris has the fruit and the acidity to stand up to summer foods.

7,160 cases made \$10 Score: 91

Sineann

Pinot Gris Willamette Valley Covey Ridge Vineyard 2002

Pale-light yellow gold color; some peach fruit, light, slightly off dry, rich, has nice peach, nectarine, melon fruit with a touch of hazelnut character, good acidity and balance, lingering finish. Very nice, juicy style, lots to like here in this Pinot Gris.

45 cases made \$18 Score: 90

Sineann

Pinot Gris Oregon 2002

See “**Run, Don’t Walk...**” on page 7.

Sineann

Pinot Gris Oregon 2001

Pale-light yellow gold color; spice, pear and floral aromas; dry, crisp, bright melon flavors, with spice notes, very nice acidity and balance, lingering finish. Beautiful crisp flavors, great balance, perfect for summer entertaining.

1,200 cases made \$15 Score: 90

Van Duzer Vineyards

Pinot Gris Willamette Valley 2002

Light straw gold color; light fruity nose, some melon and fruit cocktail aromas; dry, light fruity style, tangy pear flavors, lingering finish. Light, very fruity style; great for sipping or pairing with Asian-inspired cuisine.

1,250 cases made \$14 Score: 88

Willakenzie Estate

Pinot Gris Willamette Valley 2002

See “**Run, Don’t Walk...**” on page 7.

[PNR]

PINOTREPORT

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The Salad Days of Summer...

Cool Preparation, Cool Presentation Help Beat The Summer Heat

By Michael Dotson

I SAT IN THE BACKYARD OF MY GIRLFRIEND'S FATHER'S HOUSE in Modesto, Calif. sipping rosé and thinking about this menu. Those of you familiar with summer in the Central Valley know what kind of weather I was in—HOT. I didn't particularly want to cook—especially indoors—and then it hit me: these are the salad days of summer!

Rosés and salads are two of my secret passions. Rosés are easy to drink, easy to match with foods and they look great on the table. The same goes for the salads I've chosen for this menu. Most any cooking required can be done well ahead in the cool of the morning or at the last minute on a grill outdoors.

This time of year **soft shell crabs** are in their prime and are a natural fit for a decadent light summer meal. Order them ahead from your local fish monger, and stuff them with the sometimes hard-to-find squash blossoms to give a **unique twist** to an already exciting salad. The slightly smoky grilled corn with the coriander scented sundried tomatoes; mint and red onion all woven together by the toasted fennel vinaigrette is a sublime salad on its own. However, when it's paired with the grilled stuffed crab, **the combination is pretty close to nirvana** for me. Finding a wine for this dish would have been a bit of a challenge with the sweet corn but to the rescue comes an intense Rosé of Pinot Noir from the Anderson Valley or Sonoma Coast.

Duck is probably not at the top of the summer foods list for most people. However, when prepared in a style I like to refer to as "**American Provençal**"—rolling up the duck breast around the olive mousse, poaching the duck and then serving it cold takes this dish easily into the light category. The **bold rich flavors** of this salad are best enjoyed with a Rosé of Pinot Noir from the Carneros region.

OK—fruit and summer is natural, fruit and salad is comfortable, but fruit and savory salad with a basil granita...huh? Trust me on this one—it's a tasty combination. I recommend drinking the same wine you use in the vinaigrette—it makes for a **no-brainer pairing**—the only hurdle is choosing the best one. Look to the Russian River for a full-bodied Rosé of Pinot Noir, rich with berry and cherry fruit and great acidity—without it the dish simply will not work.

Michael Dotson is a fellow Pinot Noir lover and chef de cuisine at Euvia Estiatorio in Palo Alto, Calif. His culinary journey has included Au Crocodile in Strasbourg, France; PlumpJack Café and the Slow Club in San Francisco, PlumpJack Squaw Valley Inn and Sonoma's Heirloom Restaurant. Michael can be reached by email at chefdotson@pinotreport.com



M E N U

**THE SALAD DAYS
OF SUMMER**

**Soft Shell Crab Salad
with Squash
Blossoms, Grilled
Corn, Sundried
Tomato and Toasted
Fennel Vinaigrette**

*Kosta Browne Rosé of Pinot
Noir Sonoma Coast 2002*

**Poached Duck Breast
Salad with Black Olive
Mousse, Summer
Beans, Salted
Almonds and Fine
Herb Vinaigrette**

*Saintsbury Vin Gris Carneros
Vincent Vin Gris 2002*

**Musk Melon Salad
With Pickled Onions,
Lemon Shrimp, Basil
Granita and Rosé
Vinaigrette**

*Scherrer Winery Vin Gris
Sonoma County 2002*



ON THE MENU: The Salad Days of Summer

NOTE: All recipes below yield two meal-sized salads. They can be plated as four first-course servings or the recipes doubled to serve four as main courses.

SOFT SHELL CRAB SALAD WITH SQUASH BLOSSOMS, GRILLED CORN, SUNDRIED TOMATOES AND TOASTED FENNEL VINAIGRETTE

Yields 2 meal-sized portions

- 2 fresh soft shell crabs, cleaned
- 3 squash blossoms, diced
- 4 ears fresh corn, silks removed but husks still attached
- 1/3 cup sundried tomatoes, diced
- 1/3 cup red onion, diced
- 2 tablespoons fresh mint, chiffonade cut
- 1/2 head fennel, shaved
- 6 tablespoons Toasted Fennel Vinaigrette (see recipe below)
- 2 tablespoons chives, finely sliced
- Salt and fresh ground pepper
- Olive oil for grilling

1. Place corn in bowl and cover with water seasoned with 2 tablespoons salt and 1/4 cup of sugar. Soak for 45 minutes.
2. Preheat grill on medium high heat.
3. Grill corn until husks are lightly charred. Cool, then cut kernels from the cob and set aside.
4. Lift tops of crab shells from the sides and fill with the squash blossoms. Season the crabs with salt, pepper and brush with olive oil.
5. Place crabs on the grill, top shell down first. Grill 4 minutes per side.
6. While crabs are grilling, toss corn kernels, tomatoes, onion, mint, shaved fennel, 4 tablespoons of fennel vinaigrette in a mixing bowl and season to taste.

FOR TOASTED FENNEL VINAIGRETTE:

- 1/2 head fennel, diced
- 1 teaspoon ground dried fennel
- 1/4 cup shallot, finely diced

- 1/4 cup Champagne vinegar
- 1 cup hazelnut oil
- Salt and fresh ground pepper

1. In a sauté pan over medium high heat, place 2 tablespoons olive oil and diced fennel. Without moving the pan or the fennel, cook until fennel begins to brown.
2. Add ground dried fennel cook for 1 minute. Add 2 tablespoons of water and remove from heat.
3. Pour contents of pan into a mixing bowl. Add shallots, vinegar, salt and pepper.
4. Slowly whisk in olive oil, taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Note: This recipe makes more vinaigrette than the salad calls for but will keep for up to a week.

TO SERVE:

1. Divide salad evenly on 2 plates and top with crab. Drizzle each crab with a tablespoon of vinaigrette, sprinkle with chives and serve.

POACHED DUCK BREAST SALAD WITH BLACK OLIVE MOUSSE, SUMMER BEANS, SALTED ALMONDS AND FINE HERB VINAIGRETTE

Yields 2 meal-sized portions

- 2 duck breasts, skin removed and butterflied open
- 6 ounces Black Olive Mousse (see recipe below)
- 3 ounces yellow wax beans
- 3 ounces green beans
- 3 ounces French green beans
- 3 tablespoons slivered, blanched almonds
- 1/4 cup Fine Herb Vinaigrette (see recipe below)

1. Lay duck breasts open on a cutting board and season with salt and pepper. Spread each breast evenly with 3 ounces of mousse.
2. Roll each breast up and then wrap with 2 layers of plastic wrap. Repeat process with another layer of plastic wrap and then roll in 2 layers of foil. Fold ends of foil in and tape seem on roll with masking tape.

ON THE MENU: The Salad Days of Summer

3. Bring 2 quarts of water to simmer in pot large enough to hold both rolls comfortably. Add duck breasts and lower heat to keep water just below a simmer.

4. Cook for 30 minutes, remove from heat and place in refrigerator to chill through (it's best to chill overnight if possible).

5. Bring 1 gallon of well-salted water to a boil and blanch each type of beans separately until tender and then shock in ice water. Drain beans well and pat dry.

6. In a preheated 350 degree F oven place almonds on a cookie sheet and roast until they are very light brown. Remove to bowl and toss with 1 tablespoon olive oil and kosher salt to taste.

FOR BLACK OLIVE MOUSSE:

- 8 ounces boneless skinless chicken thigh, diced
- 2 ounces oil-cured Kalamata olives, pitted and finely chopped
- 2 anchovy filets, chopped
- 4 ounces whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

1. Place chicken, olives and anchovy in food processor and purée until smooth; scraping down sides of bowl as needed.

2. Add salt and pepper and with motor running add cream in a steady stream letting machine run an additional 30 seconds after all cream has been added.

3. Be careful not to over process with cream or the mixture will turn to butter, effectively destroying your mousse.

4. This recipe makes more mousse than the salad calls for but the recipe doesn't work well in a smaller quantity. Remaining mousse can be formed in plastic wrap without the duck breast and poached at the same time and served along with the salad or in another preparation.

FOR FINE HERB VINAIGRETTE:

- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh chives, finely sliced
- 1 tablespoon fresh tarragon, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh chervil, chopped

2 tablespoons shallot, finely chopped

1 ounce sherry vinegar

3 ounces fruity French extra virgin olive oil

Salt and fresh ground pepper

1. This vinaigrette is best made 15 minutes before you dress and serve the salad; giving all the flavors just enough time to come together without the herbs losing their green color.

2. Mix all ingredients together well and season.

TO SERVE:

1. Toss beans with vinaigrette and season with salt and fresh pepper.

2. Place beans in center of platter, unwrap duck breasts and carefully slice into medallions.

3. Arrange duck around beans, sprinkle salad with almonds and serve.

MUSK MELON SALAD WITH PICKLED ONIONS, LEMON SHRIMP, BASIL GRANITA AND ROSE VINAIGRETTE

Yields 2 meal-sized portions

1 ripe casaba melon, peeled, halved and seeded

1 ripe Charantais melon, peeled, halved and seeded

Pickled Onion (see recipe below)

10 pieces Lemon Shrimp (see recipe below)

7 1-ounce scoops Basil Granita (see recipe below)

1/3 cup Rosé Vinaigrette (see recipe below)

3 tablespoons fruity extra virgin olive oil

1. This dish is best served on a platter and shared; I like to use a rectangular one.

2. Cut the melons into quarters and then slice quarters into thin same size slices in shape of the wedge.

3. Remove the pickled onions from the brine and spread them out in a thin even layer on the bottom of platter.

4. Arrange melon slices over onions beginning a half inch in from outside edge of onions creating a border; alternating types, slightly overlapping.

ON THE MENU: The Salad Days of Summer

5. Place shrimp over melon in any way you would like.
6. With a spoon drizzle vinaigrette over entire salad, spray or drizzle with olive oil, garnish with the scoops of granita where desired and serve immediately.

FOR PICKLED ONION:

- 1 medium red onion, halved and cut into thin julienne
- ¼ cup filtered water
- ¼ cup unseasoned rice wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon madras curry powder

1. Mix all ingredients in a glass bowl and let stand at room temperature for at least 1 hour before using.

FOR LEMON SHRIMP:

- 10 U15 shrimp, peeled, de-veined, with shells reserved
- 2 shallots, sliced
- 1 leek, sliced
- 1 clove garlic, sliced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 5 peppercorns
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 5 sprigs parsley and thyme (optional)
- 2 lemons, juice and zest
- 1 quart filtered water

1. Place shrimp shells, all vegetables, herbs, salt and peppercorns in stainless steel pot with water.
2. Bring to a simmer over low heat, skim any scum that rises to the surface and simmer for 45 minutes. Strain and discard solids.
3. Pour shrimp broth back in pot, add lemon juice and zest.
4. Place over low heat and bring to simmer, skim any additional scum, season with salt if needed, remove from heat and add shrimp. Bring back to simmer. Remove from heat and let sit for 20 minutes and then place in refrigerator to cool.
5. Strain shrimp, saving or freezing lemon shrimp stock to use another time or in another recipe.

6. Remove shrimp to towel and pat dry before using; discard lemon zest.

FOR BASIL GRANITA:

- ½ cup simple syrup
- ¾ cup filtered water
- ½ cup basil leaves
- Pinch salt
- ½ teaspoon lemon juice

1. In 1 quart of boiling salted water blanch basil for 10 seconds and then shock in ice water.
2. Remove basil, squeeze out water, roughly chop and place in blender with simple syrup. Purée well for about 2 minutes, strain through a chinois into a mixing bowl.
3. Combine basil syrup with remaining ingredients and mix well.
4. Pour into glass baking dish and freeze stirring every 30 minutes.
5. Shape with 1-ounce ice cream scoop for salad.

FOR ROSÉ VINAIGRETTE:

- 1½ cups good quality Rosé of Pinot Noir
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoons lemon juice or to taste
- Pinch of salt and 1 twist of fresh ground pepper

1. Place wine in stainless steel pot with honey and reduce to a third of a cup.
2. Add salt, pepper and lemon juice.
3. Cool before using.

[PNR]

DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE SUMMER MENU FOR PINOT NOIR?

Do you have a favorite summer menu for Pinot Noir? I'd love to hear about it! Send me the details as well as the Pinots you like to pair with the menu to gswalter@pinotreport.com.

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