

# PINOTREPORT

for people passionate about western pinot noir

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## The Artisan's Wine...

**WHEN I THINK OF PINOT NOIR AND THE GREAT PINOT VINTNERS AND GROWERS** I've met, one of the first words that pops into my head to describe them is "**artisan.**" **The truth is,** making great Pinot, regardless of the number of cases production, requires the dedication, the passion and the sacrifice **of an artist.**

And although their accountants and investors might want to hear this, it's not about numbers, ratings or ROI. Pinot Noir is most unforgiving to casual or expedient winemaking. **You can screw up Cabernet or Chardonnay** and still make a decent wine, but not so with Pinot.

It seems like I hear about or discover a new Pinot label about every few weeks on average—not a new bottling or a new vineyard designated wine from an existing producer, **but a new, small artisanal label**—someone living his or her dream and hanging his or her posterior way over the edge to make great Pinot.

**Now, don't get me wrong.** I'm not saying that larger wineries or wineries making multiple varieties can't make great Pinot. Clearly that's not the case. There is, however, something to appreciate and admire in the artisanal approach—the focus on detail and the obsession with getting it right as well as the entrepreneurial spirit that seems to be so much a part of many of these vintners.

These are men and women motivated not so much by the burning desire to make millions of dollars; they simply want to do that which makes them (and us by extension) happy.

One Pinot vintner I met recently **truly epitomizes this artisanal approach.** His label is new to the Pinot scene and I'm happy to be able to tell you about it and him.

### ***Eric Sussman, Winegrower, Radio-Coteau***

When I first met **Eric Sussman,** he struck me as quiet, reserved, unassuming, even a bit self conscious. But it doesn't take much time to discover **the intensity and focus that sits just below the surface.**

[ continued on next page ]

## OUT IN PINOT COUNTRY...

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**Eric listens almost obsessively** to you when you speak, and you can see in his eyes the instant analysis and evaluation of what you've said. And when he speaks about Pinot Noir or about one of the vineyards he works with, you get the very definite feeling that a.) he's speaking **from the heart**, b.) his **depth of knowledge** is great, and c.) he has **great respect** for the wines and the people behind those vineyards.

There's also no mistaking Eric's passion for wine—Pinot Noir in particular—and his passion for the unique vineyard sites and their owners along the **Sonoma Coast** that he's worked hard to build relationships with.

Eric's label, **Radio-Coteau**, is a partnership between him and **Bill and Joan Smith** (owners of **W.H. Smith Wines** and former owners of **La Jota Vineyard** in Napa). He first heard the phrase that would become the name of his wine venture from a friend while he was working in Burgundy. "Radio-Coteau" is colloquial French meaning "**word of mouth**" or more literally "**broadcasting from the hillside.**" The name in many ways describes Eric's approach to his wines.

### *The Focus Is Clearly On The Wines...*

At Radio-Coteau, you won't find a fancy winery; there's no six-figure marketing budget, no lavish tasting room and no wildly optimistic talk about obtaining any of the three. Eric rents space at the Taft Street winery just outside of Sebastopol. His focus is clearly on the wines, the vineyards they come from

and making sure that **the former speaks volumes about the latter**. His goal is to sell most of his wine direct to consumers; but he has also placed some with a well-selected list of restaurants up and down the California coast.



Eric is a native of **New York state** where he studied agriculture at **Cornell University**. It was while he was at Cornell that he discovered the **unique connection between wine and its place of origin**. That connection led him to

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### **PINOTREPORT**

For People Passionate About Western Pinot Noir

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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

## OUT IN PINOT COUNTRY...

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pursue his new-found passion for wine first by working for a few years for a small producer in Washington state. He then took off for **France**, where he apprenticed for two years at wineries in **Bordeaux** and **Burgundy**—namely **Baron Philippe de Rothschild** in **Pauillac**, **Domaine Comte Armand** in **Pommard** and **Domaine Jacques Prieur** in **Meursault**.

Returning to the United States, Eric headed for California to work with **Randall Graham** at his **Bonny Doon Vineyard** and then on to four vintages as associate winemaker **Dehlinger Vineyards**. It was that gig—working with **Tom Dehlinger** from the 1998 through 2001 vintages—that focused Eric solidly on the potential for Pinot Noir in **western Sonoma County**.

Eric is meticulous and especially so about vineyard sourcing—his goal is to achieve the best possible expression from a specific site in a particular year. His winemaking philosophy is one that is common to more and more Pinot winemakers—he is clearly **non-interventionist**, he wants the vineyard to speak most and does pretty much anything he can to allow that to happen, **even if that means literally doing next to nothing**.

**Radio Coteau's first vintage**, 2002, yielded four bottlings of Pinot Noir: "**Hellenthal**" from **Gard** and **Lori Hellenthal's** coastal ridgetop Sonoma Coast vineyard between **Cazadero** and **Fort Ross**; "**Marsh**" from a tiny southern-facing Sonoma Coast vineyard west of **Occidental** owned by **Peter** and **Barbara Marsh**; "**La Neblina**," a blend of several Sonoma Coast vineyards (the name is Spanish for **fog**); and "**Savoy**" from **Richard Savoy's** terrific hillside vineyard in the **Anderson Valley**. Eric also produced an **old vine Zinfandel** from the **Von Weidlich Vineyard** and a **Syrah** from the **Timbervine Vineyard**, both in **Russian River Valley**.

During my visit with Eric I tasted the 2002 Pinot Noirs as well as his **2003 Pinots in barrel**. I tasted his 2002 Pinots again back in my office as a part of my regular blind tastings. The reviews from those blind tastings are included in this issue (see "In The Market," page 6). **I loved the 2002s and I think the 2003s may be even better**. In short, I think Eric is making **some of the best Pinots** I've tasted this year, especially from the Sonoma Coast. Not only are the wines terrific, **but his pricing is very reasonable**—ranging from \$30 for "La Neblina" to \$40 for "Savoy." He also offers a great **Vineyard Sampler**—one bottle of each of the 2002 wines—or six

bottles for \$215. (See page 10 for information on how to contact the winery).

**Radio-Coteau** is definitely worth a look—I'd get on board early before everyone else finds out!



SIDURI WINES

*Happy 10th Birthday, Siduri !*

**I'm happy to congratulate Adam and Dianna Lee** as they celebrate the 10th anniversary of **Siduri Wines**, the winery they founded in 1994.

Through a lot of hard work, hectic schedules, relentless travel and the challenges of raising a family, they have built Siduri into one of the **best-known and highest quality producers** of Pinot Noir anywhere. Take a bow (and a rest), you two!

*Congratulations, Michael...*

I also wanted to take a moment to recognize my friend, cohort and colleague **Michael Dotson** who was recently named **Executive Chef** at **Evvia Restaurant** in **Palo Alto, Calif.**, where he has worked for several years as Chef de Cuisine. Michael's remarkable Pinot-matching menus have been a part of **PinotReport** from the beginning and it's great to see him get some well-deserved recognition.

*In This Issue...*

**Since we took the March issue off**, this issue is devoted to wine reviews and it's truly an embarrassment of riches. Wines from **Archery Summit**, **Babcock**, **Bouchaine**, **Kuleto Estate**, **Morgan Winery**, **Patz & Hall**, **Roar**, **Roessler Cellars**, **Shea Wine Cellars** and **Testarossa Vineyards**, to name a few are featured. In the upcoming **two** May issues, we'll go back to our normal format with "On The Menu", our coverage of this year's World of Pinot Noir event, and several more interesting stops Out In Pinot Country.

As always, I thank you for your support and hope that you enjoy this latest issue.

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

## IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

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### This Issue'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

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#### Babcock Winery & Vineyards

*Pinot Noir Santa Barbara / Monterey / Sonoma Counties Tri-Counties Cuvee 2002*

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Deep ruby purple color; sweet black cherry, earthy and spicy aromas; big and rich with black cherry flavors, toasty oak and tannin, good structure and a long finish. This is a very interesting Pinot blended from vineyards in three counties—Santa Barbara, Monterey and Sonoma. Winemaker Bryan Babcock demonstrates with this wine an aspect of winemaking that seems to be less popular with the current focus on single vineyard and individual block selections: making a terrific, delicious Pinot from several very different vineyard sources.

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4,800 cases made      \$18.50      Score: 92

#### Babcock Winery & Vineyards

*Pinot Noir Santa Rita Hills Cargasacchi 2002*

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Deep ruby purple color; rich, lush, juicy black cherry and berry aromas, fresh and lively, rich, deep and concentrated black cherry and berry flavors, lots of spice, silky texture, tannic, toasty oak, balanced with a very long finish. WOW! The silky yet thick dark berry flavors on this Pinot really amaze me. The richness, concentration and depth here are equal statements of the incredible Cargasacchi Vineyard in Santa Rita Hills, terrific winemaking and the quality of the 2002 vintage.

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156 cases made      \$40      Score: 94

### MAKE ROOM IN THE CELLAR!

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*"An incredible Pinot—it's all here..."*

#### Testarossa Vineyards

*Pinot Noir Santa Maria Valley Bien Nacido Vineyard 2002*

---

Medium-deep ruby purple color; deep, dusty, earthy, blackberry, concentrated aromas with toasty oak notes; rich, intense, blackberry, black cherry flavors, silky, sweet oak, spice and a touch of bacon; great structure and balance, very long finish. Testarossa really has a knack for making a big style of Pinot extremely balanced and accessible. WOW! An incredible Pinot—depth, structure, it's all here.

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386 cases made      \$49      Score: 95

#### Bishop's Peak

*Pinot Noir Central Coast 2001*

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Deep ruby purple color; spicy, black cherry and berry, some meaty and herbal notes on nose; rich and ripe black cherry fruit, spicy notes of toasty oak, some meaty and herbal notes add complexity, good structure, balanced with a long finish. Beautiful, lighter style full of great flavors and ready for the table. Bishop's Peak is a second label for Talley Vineyards; fruit for this Pinot comes from San Luis Obispo County.

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1,900 cases made      \$16      Score: 90

#### Bouchaine Vineyards

*Pinot Noir Carneros Gee Vineyard 2002*

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; some plum and spice aromas with complex, reduced notes on the nose; full and complex flavors of clove, cherry and cola, a touch of spicy oak and just a little tannin, good balance and structure, long finish. This Pinot is from the dry-farmed Gee Vineyard and shows that concentration in its complex, interesting flavors. Serve it with duck or anything with mushrooms.

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147 cases made      \$50      Score: 92

#### Bouchaine Vineyards

*Pinot Noir Carneros 2002*

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Medium ruby purple color; black cherry, berry and spice on the nose; full flavors of cherry, spice and cinnamon, nice sweet oak, good balance and structure, long finish. Beautiful, aromatic Pinot from Mike Richmond and his new team at Bouchaine—this wine is an indicator of a bright renaissance for this Carneros winery.

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4,600 cases made      \$23      Score: 92

#### Buchli Station

*Pinot Noir California 2002*

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Medium ruby purple color; forward bright fruit aromas with cherry and berry notes, cinnamon and chocolate; bright, beautiful berry and cherry flavors with spice and just the right amount of oak; good structure and balance, lingering finish. A lighter, fun forward fruity style that I could drink everyday even if it wasn't such a great deal!

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8,500 cases made      \$12      Score: 88

#### Edna Valley Vineyard

*Pinot Noir Edna Valley Paragon 2002*

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Deep ruby purple color; black cherry and spice notes, a touch of herbal and stewed fruit notes; lots of juicy black cherry fruit, lush texture, subtle oak presence, everything in balance; great structure and a long finish. Balance is the key here—this wine has elegance and structure to work with many foods. You can just about always count on this Edna Valley Pinot for great flavor, food versatility and value.

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15,700 cases made      \$15      Score: 91

## IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

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### Fort Ross Vineyard & Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Fort Ross Vineyard 2001*

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; subtle spice, cherry and plum aromas on nose; elegant cherry, spice and plum flavors, some tannin and oak but well balanced and more elegant in style, lingering finish. Elegant, delicious style of Pinot with a complex core of cherry fruit. Lester Schwartz owns Fort Ross Vineyard and while I've had other wines made from this vineyard (Fred Scherrer's come to mind) this is the first release of his wine I've tasted .

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**275 cases made      \$34      Score: 90**

### Fort Ross Vineyard & Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Fort Ross Vineyard Reserve 2001*

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Deep ruby purple color; berry and earthy/herbal notes with oak notes on nose; big, rich blackberry flavors with a good dose of toasty oak, moderate tannin, good structure and a long finish. Big, full and rich style—just slightly one dimensional at this stage because of the toasty oak. A little time in the bottle and the glass brings out the rich, complex flavors.

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**112 cases made      \$39      Score: 88**

### Hunter Hill Vineyard & Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Hellenthal Vineyard 2001*

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Deep ruby purple color; deep red cherry, spice, herbal, vanilla and toasty oak on nose; deep core of red cherry fruit, lots of spicy, sweet oak, notes of cinnamon, good structure and balance, long finish. Hunter Hill does a great job creating a complex and elegantly styled Pinot from the Hellenthal Vineyard.

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**175 cases made      \$30      Score: 91**

### Koehler Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Monterey County 2001*

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Medium-deep ruby color; herbal and savory spices add to a subtle red fruit note on the nose; big and full with stewed red fruit and savory spices, a good dose of toasty oak, slightly tannic, otherwise good structure and a long finish. This is a bigger styled Pinot with some tannin—pair this with a substantial meat or pasta dish.

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**560 cases made      \$18      Score: 88**

### Koehler Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Santa Maria Valley Bien Nacido Vineyard 2001*

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Deep ruby purple color; blackberry, toasty oak and a earthy note on the nose; big and beautiful flavors, lots of complex blackberry, cherry and spice, tannic but balanced, long finish.

Very big Pinot from a great vineyard—elegant and balanced but with plenty of power.

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**500 cases made      \$30      Score: 92**

### Kuleto Estate

#### *Pinot Noir Napa Valley 2002*

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; spicy savory spices, clove, orange peel, cherry and sweet oak on nose; rich, full, lots of savory spices and a bit of clove, sweet oak, caramel, good structure, well balanced and a long finish. Beautifully made, well knit Pinot from restaurateur and restaurant designer Pat Kuleto. Pat has found a terrific and rare micro-site for Pinot high in the hills on the eastern side of the Napa Valley. I've tasted the past two vintages of this wine and it just gets better and better.

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**294 cases made      \$40      Score: 94**

### Moorewood

#### *Pinot Noir Central Coast 2001*

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Medium-deep ruby color; deep plum and red cherry aromas with notes of pepper and other savory spices; deep, reduced red cherry and plum flavors with lots of spice—pepper, cinnamon and cumin—nice toasty oak and a long finish. Beautiful balance, wonderful fruit and a bargain price make this a delightful Pinot for just about any meal. Moorewood is the second label for Testarossa Vineyards.

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**1,120 cases made      \$19      Score: 91**

### Morgan Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Double L Vineyard 2001*

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; subtle aromas with a little cherry and toasty oak; rich and full with complex, reduced black cherry and plum flavors, earthy, dusty notes, a good dose of toasty oak and some tannins, good structure and balance with a long finish. I continue to be very impressed with the Pinots from the Double L Vineyard. Texture, strength and complex, lush flavors are what this wine is all about.

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**650 cases made      \$42      Score: 94**

### Morgan Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Garys' Vineyard 2001*

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; black cherry and berry aromas, dusty, earthy, spice notes; rich, earthy, cherry and plum, reduced and concentrated, nice spicy, cinnamon flavors, silky texture, great structure and balance, long finish. Dan Lee's Pinot from Garys' Vineyard is big, lush and beautiful with just about everything you could want in a Pinot.

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**485 cases made      \$35      Score: 93**

## IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

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### Morgan Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Rosella's Vineyard 2001*

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Deep ruby purple color; blackberry aromas with toasty oak and a slight stemmy note; deep, complex, blackberry and cherry flavors, toasty oak flavors, silky texture, good structure and balance, long finish. Deep and concentrated, this Rosella's bottling is also elegant and silky in the mouth.

---

500 cases made      \$35      Score: 91

### Papapietro Perry Winery

#### *Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Peters Vineyard 2001*

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Deep ruby purple color; subtle, slightly closed on nose, core of cherry fruit and spice; rich and ripe, juicy black cherry fruit, complex spice notes, good structure, tannic but balanced, long finish. This Pinot simply explodes on the palate after a bit of time in the glass—it's beautiful, rich, elegant and complex.

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650 cases made      \$42      Score: 93

### Patz & Hall

#### *Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Burnside Vineyard 2002*

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Deep ruby purple color; somewhat closed with red cherry and spicy notes on nose; rich, red cherry fruit with nice spice and

herbal notes, touch of lavender, sweet toasty oak, big and full in mouth with good structure, long finish. WOW! This is a big, dense, delicious mouthfilling style that definitely needs time in the glass and bottle. The vineyard is owned by the Martinellis and is just outside Sebastopol and the boundaries of the Russian River AVA. This is Patz & Hall's first Pinot from this vineyard.

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547 cases made      \$50      Score: 92

### Patz & Hall

#### *Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2002*

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Deep ruby purple color; slightly stemmy, concentrated berry/cherry, chocolate, lavender and oaky notes on nose; rich black cherry fruit with a reduced fruit flavor, concentrated flavors, toasty oak, good structure and balance with a long finish. This wine is blended from no less than 10 vineyard sources in Russian River Valley and Sonoma Coast. It's big but not overbearing and given time in the glass, it opens up into a beautiful Pinot with delicate, silky flavors.

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3,965 cases made      \$33      Score: 92

### Radio-Coteau

#### *Pinot Noir Anderson Valley Savoy 2002*

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; floral, violets on nose with some deep black cherry notes; big, rich, floral and sweet oak

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### About Our Tastings

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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. Duplicate wines are inserted in tastings to measure consistency.

All tasting unless otherwise noted is done blind by the Editor. 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**:

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

## IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

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flavors, lots of complexity, good structure and a long finish. I love the wonderful floral, violet aromatics in this Pinot (and all of the Radio-Coteau wines). The cold-climate density and reductive nature of the fruit flavors really make this stand out.

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**420 cases made      \$40      Score: 94**

### **Radio-Coteau** ***Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Hellenthal 2002***

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Please see "Make Room In The Cellar" on page 8.

### **Radio-Coteau** ***Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast La Neblina 2002***

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; deep, cinnamon, spice, berry fruit on nose; big and full with lots of tart berry fruit, very nice structure and acidity, well balanced with a long finish. A really bright, deep and fresh Pinot with great structure for food. "La Neblina" is Spanish for fog—this wine is made from several selected coastal vineyards.

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**240 cases made      \$30      Score: 92**

### **Radio-Coteau** ***Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Marsh 2002***

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; floral, spice and waxy, chocolate with some earthy, tobacco notes and blackberry on nose; deep blackberry with spicy, sweet oak, and earthy flavors, lots of depth and character, great structure and balance, long finish. Big, pretty Pinot that's well balanced with classic Sonoma Coast flavors. The relatively new 1.3-acre Marsh Vineyard is located on the southern slope of a coastal ridge west of Occidental. Definitely a wine and a vineyard to watch.

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**76 cases made      \$35      Score: 93**

### **Roar Wines** ***Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Rosella's Vineyard 2002***

---

Deep ruby purple color; deep plum and black cherry, spicy, sweet oak notes; rich, ripe, juicy black cherry and plum fruit, silky texture, spicy, sweet toasty oak, good structure and balance, long finish. The Rosella's Vineyard bottling has incredibly lush fruit and is just about perfectly balanced—a beautifully elegant style.

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**160 cases made      \$44      Score: 93**

### **Roar Wines** ***Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands 2002***

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Deep ruby purple color; rich black cherry and plum aromas, sweet spice notes on nose; big, full, lots of reduced black cherry and plum flavors, silky, complex, light smoked meat or bacony notes, beautiful structure and balance, long finish. WOW! Beautiful, silky, complex, deep and just plain delicious!

This regional Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot is shaping up to be my favorite next to the Roar Garys' Vineyard bottling and no wonder—it's a blend of the Garys', Rosella's and Pisoni vineyards.

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**170 cases made      \$31      Score: 94**

### **Roessler Cellars** ***Pinot Noir Anderson Valley Savoy Vineyard 2001***

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; slight savory spice, bacon, and red cherry on nose; deep, meaty, some cherry and plum with lots of savory spices; big and full with lots of flavor, balanced with a long finish. This is an intense and flavorful Pinot. The complex, reduced flavors with the meaty, smoked bacon notes really make me long for a big steak!

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**347 cases made      \$42      Score: 92**

### **Roessler Cellars** ***Pinot Noir Anderson Valley Bluejay 2002***

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Deep ruby purple color; very deep and intense black cherry, spice, lavender and cinnamon notes on the nose; big, rich, black cherry, very intense fruit, lots of complexing notes and flavors, spice, cinnamon and sweet oak; good structure and balance, very long finish. WOW! This Pinot is so intense, dense and full of complex flavors that you'd be tempted to think it's overdone. The key to this wine is its incredible balance. This is a great Pinot with a long life ahead of it.

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**410 cases made      \$30      Score: 94**

### **Roessler Cellars** ***Pinot Noir Sonoma County 2002***

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; reduced and slightly stewed

## SMART BUY!

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*"Buy a case—while you can..."*

### **Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery** ***Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2002***

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Deep ruby purple color; rich, ripe cherry and berry aromas with a touch of spicy sweet oak on the nose; rich and ripe, full of juicy red cherry and berry flavors, silky texture, nice depth, crisp acidity, well balanced with a long finish. This is a beautifully balanced Pinot with the kind of complex flavors you just don't find in wines from this price range. Most of the grapes for this wine came from the winery's Carneros vineyard holdings combined with the Dutton Ranch in Russian River Valley—thus the Sonoma Coast designation. Buy a case of this wine while you can!

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**17,200 cases made      \$15      Score: 93**

## IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

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cherry notes with some pie spice aromas; lots of stewed, reduced red cherry flavors with spice and sweet oak, nice mouthfeel and balance, long finish. Lots of great flavors and a great price make this Pinot from Roger Roessler a big winner.

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n/a cases made      \$26      Score: 92

### **Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery** ***Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2002***

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Please see "Smart Buy!" on page 7.

### **Talley Vineyards** ***Pinot Noir Arroyo Grande Valley Rincon 2001***

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Deep ruby purple color; bright, complex aromas of black cherry and blackberry, sweet oak and spice on the nose; big, full, deep blackberry and cherry, sweet oak, some tannin, great structure and balance and a long finish. Bigger, more forward and edgy than its other Talley siblings, the Rincon Vineyard bottling cries out for a big steak.

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378 cases made      \$45      Score: 92

### **Talley Vineyards** ***Pinot Noir Arroyo Grande Valley Rosemary's Vineyard 2001***

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Deep ruby purple color; bright, complex aromas of black cherry, sweet oak, cinnamon and spice; big, full, deep black cherry with some plum and cinnamon flavors, sweet oak, some tannin, great structure and balance and a long finish. The Rosemary's Vineyard Pinot is big and full but so well balanced that it's intensity comes off as beautiful, silky flavors. Great for

## MAKE ROOM IN THE CELLAR!

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*"Truly incredible Pinot..."*

### **Radio-Coteau** ***Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Hellenthal 2002***

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; cherry, berry aromas with some spice, clove and cinnamon; rich and full, lots of deep, complex reduced cherry flavors with a touch of sweet oak, great structure, balanced with a long finish. Wines from the coastal side of the Sonoma Coast appellation and vineyards like the Hellenthal Vineyard, located between Cazadero and Fort Ross, have a depth and complexity along with a concentrated and reduced fruit character and incredible aromatics that are just hard to find in other areas. Eric Sussman has taken this character to a whole new level. Truly incredible Pinot.

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320 cases made      \$35      Score: 95

a special meal.

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412 cases made      \$60      Score: 93

### **Talley Vineyards** ***Pinot Noir Arroyo Grande Valley 2001***

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Deep ruby purple color; deep rich aromas of black cherry and plum, cinnamon, stewed fruit and some herbs on nose; rich and full with deep black cherry and stewed fruit notes, lots of spice and sweet oak all in balance; good structure and with a lingering finish. Deep and full of flavor, this Pinot is ideally balanced for the table—grilled salmon comes to mind.

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1,400 cases made      \$28      Score: 91

### **Testarossa Vineyards** ***Pinot Noir California Cuvée Nictaire 2001***

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Deep ruby purple color; spicy red cherry and plum notes on nose; full and rich with abundant red cherry and just a little bitterness from oak; good structure with a long finish. This is a well-structured Pinot with delicious fruit and a silky finish.

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350 cases made      \$72      Score: 90

### **Testarossa Vineyards** ***Pinot Noir Central Coast Palazzo 2002***

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Medium-deep ruby color; spicy, savory red cherry aromas with a hint of oak; spicy red cherry fruit with a stewed plum and savory spice flavor; silky in the mouth, good structure with a nice dose of toasty oak, balanced with a long finish. Silky texture and complex flavors make this a great call for anything with mushrooms—either over a steak or with pasta.

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2,840 cases made      \$32      Score: 92

### **Testarossa Vineyards** ***Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Garys' Vineyard 2002***

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; concentrated berry and black cherry aromas with toasty oak notes; rich cherry and black berry flavors with a hint of savory spice and bacon; silky texture, great balance and a long finish. Testarossa really makes one of the best examples of Pinot from the Garys' Vineyard and the 2002 is no exception—great silky texture and elegant, complex flavors make this a very special Pinot.

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372 cases made      \$49      Score: 94

### **Testarossa Vineyards** ***Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Pisoni Vineyard 2001***

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Deep ruby purple color; savory spices, black cherry, meaty/bacon aromas; big, full and tannic, with a good core of black cherry fruit, spice, sweet oak and bacon flavors; good structure and a very long finish. This is a huge style of Pinot,

## IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

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plenty of oak and tannin but what separates it from other Pinots in this huge style (and other Pinots from the Pisoni Vineyard) is its great core of fruit and silky texture.

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**343 cases made      \$50      Score: 93**

### Testarossa Vineyards

***Pinot Noir Santa Maria Valley Bien Nacido Vineyard 2002***

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Please see "Make Room In The Cellar!" on page 4.

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## OREGON

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### Anne Amie

***Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Hawks View Vineyard 2001***

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; dusty, herbal and cherry aromas with a hint of cumin deep in the background; dusty, earthy notes continue on the palate, cherry fruit is subdued, slight bitterness on the lingering finish. An earthy style of Pinot from the reinvented Chateau Benoit under owner Robert Pamplin and winemaker Scott Huffman.

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**197 cases made      \$40      Score: 85**

### Archery Summit

***Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Arcus Estate 2001***

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Deep ruby purple color; deep, concentrated berry and cherry aromas with an earthy, spice note; rich, juicy black berry and cherry fruit, lush texture, terrific spicy flavors, good structure and balance, long finish. The Arcus Estate is a steep-sloped vineyard planted to self-rooted Pommard and Dijon clones. The wonderful silky texture and beautiful sweet fruit make this a truly delicious Pinot.

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**993 cases made      \$75      Score: 94**

### Archery Summit

***Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Red Hills Estate 2001***

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Deep ruby purple color; deep, reduced black cherry and spice aromas; big and deep, lots of black cherry, spice and toasty oak flavors, long finish. Big, deep and concentrated core fruit with the structure and balance to match.

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**960 cases made      \$75      Score: 92**

### Archery Summit

***Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Renegade Ridge Estate 2001***

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Medium-deep ruby purple color; lots of savory spices, black cherry fruit and earthy notes on the nose; black cherry, herbal, savory and earthy flavors, a good dose of toasty oak and a long

finish. Balanced, deep and elegant this Pinot drinks well now, but will also benefit from a few years in your cellar.

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**400 cases made      \$60      Score: 90**

### EIEIO & Company

***Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Cuvee E 2002***

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Deep ruby purple color; cherry, mushroom, earth aromas with notes of toasty oak; rich, big and full with lots of black cherry, blueberry, herbs, spices and a bacony note on the palate, nice texture, good structure and balance with just the right amount of toasty oak, long finish. Big style, full of fruit and complexity, a lot to like. These EIEIO Pinots are from Jay McDonald (get it? "Old McDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O..."), who also owns and operates the Tasting Room at Carlton, an excellent retailer of small Oregon wines in the Willamette Valley in Oregon. Jay's been intimately involved in the Oregon Pinot business for years and has begun recently to apply this knowledge to his own wines.

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**420 cases made      \$20      Score: 91**

### EIEIO & Company

***Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Cuvee I 2001***

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Medium-deep ruby color; earthy, spicy, earthy notes, some black cherry on nose; full, earthy, some dried fruit, black cherry and cheese rind notes all add complexity, good structure and balance, long finish. Balanced, elegant style with some interesting complexing notes; benefits from an hour or so in the glass.

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**200 cases made      \$25      Score: 90**

## MAKE ROOM IN THE CELLAR!

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*"An incredible array of flavors..."*

### Shea Wine Cellars

***Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Shea Vineyard Pommard Clone 2002***

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Deep ruby purple color; deep cherry, rich, spicy notes and an orange peel note on nose; full, deep black cherry fruit, lush, silky texture, subtle toasty oak, lots of spicy flavors, great structure and balance, long finish. WOW! The great silky texture and the incredible array of complex aromas and flavors make this my favorite out of a very impressive lineup of Shea Pinots. Congratulations, Dick Shea—I'd applaud, but then I'd have to put down my glass!

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**900 cases made      \$38      Score: 94**

## IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

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### EIEIO & Company

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Red Cap 2001*

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Deep ruby purple color; deep, black cherry, spice, toasty oak notes with a hint of herbal notes on nose; big, rich and full flavored, with lots of black cherry, some berry, pepper, herbs and toasty oak; good structure and balance, long finish. Big style of Pinot with lots of stuffing and terrific flavors and texture. This one needs time in the glass and will reward some patience in the cellar.

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**200 cases made      \$30      Score: 91**

### Montinore Estate

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2001*

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Medium ruby color; spice and stewed fruit notes on nose; dry, fruit is a little thin, stewed fruit notes with a bit of savory spice, some tannin, lingering finish. Elegant and restrained style of Pinot; the fruit is just a bit too thin to balance the rest of the wine's components.

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**11,646 cases made      \$13      Score: 84**

### Montinore Estate

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Winemaker's Reserve 2001*

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Medium ruby color; spice, pepper and stewed cherry fruit on the nose; deep, spicy flavors with red cherry, pepper and other savory spice notes, toasty oak, good structure and balance and a lingering finish. This is a big Pinot with lots of depth and nicely developed fruit.

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**1,880 cases made      \$19      Score: 88**

### Montinore Estate

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Parson's Ridge 2001*

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Medium ruby color; spice and herbs dominate the nose with some red cherry underneath; big, full and tannic, lots of oak and some spice and red cherry fruit underneath, good acidity and a long finish. A style for those who really like big Pinots, it also has enough fruit and complexity to keep everyone else interested.

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**450 cases made      \$30      Score: 89**

### Montinore Estate

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Pierce's Elbow 2000*

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Medium ruby color; spice, earthy and cheese rind notes are prevalent, some red cherry is present too; big, full and tannic, lots of earthy, cheese rind flavors with red cherry fruit underneath and substantial oak, good acidity and a long finish. Earthy style of Pinot with some interesting flavors and complexity on the palate.

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**500 cases made      \$30      Score: 88**

### Montinore Estate

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Graham's Block 7 2000*

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Medium ruby color; beautiful aromas of earth, savory spice, stewed red cherry and some oak; big and mouthfilling with ample tannin and a very nice core of reduced red cherry fruit, complex earthy notes and savory spice, good structure and balance with a long finish. Big, full and extremely well balanced, this wine has layers and layers of complex fruit and other flavors.

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**500 cases made      \$30      Score: 92**

### Shea Wine Cellars

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Shea Vineyard Estate 2002*

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Deep ruby purple color; deep, complex aromas of black cherry, earth and some savory notes; big, rich, meaty, savory flavors with reduced and concentrated black cherry flavors and toasty oak; nice structure and balance; long finish. Big, reduced fruit style with great complexity and depth. This Pinot needs some time in the bottle and in the glass; it is most definitely worth the wait!

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**800 cases made      \$35      Score: 91**

### Shea Wine Cellars

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Shea Vineyard Block 23 2002*

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Deep ruby purple color; deep, complex dusty, herbal, black cherry and blackberry aromas, rich blackberry fruit, lush flavors, silky texture, lots of spice, earth and lavender flavors, good structure, great balance, long finish. Beautiful, big and lush Pinot with a seemingly bottomless well of delicious and complex aromas and flavors. This wine needs time in your cellar and most definitely a hour in the glass.

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**205 cases made      \$48      Score: 93**

### Shea Wine Cellars

#### *Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Shea Vineyard Pommard Clone 2002*

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Please see "Make Room In The Cellar" on page 9.

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## Contacting The Winery

Below is contact information for wineries whose wines were reviewed this issue.

### Anne Amie

PO Box 7, Lafayette, OR 97127, 503.864.2991  
www.anneamie.com

### Archery Summit Winery

PO Box 85, Dundee, OR 97115, 503.864.4300  
www.archerysummit.com

### Babcock Vineyards

PO Box 637, Lompoc, CA 93438, 805.736.1455  
www.babcockvineyards.com

### Bishop's Peak

See Talley Vineyards below

### Bouchaine Vineyards

1075 Buchli Station Road, Napa, CA 94559, 707.252.9065  
www.bouchaine.com

### Buchli Station

See Bouchaine Vineyards above

### Edna Valley Vineyards

2585 Biddle Ranch Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401,  
805.544.5855  
www.ednavalley.com

### EIEIO & Company

PO Box 490, Carlton, OR 97111, 503.852.6733  
www.onhisfarm.com

### Fort Ross Vineyard & Winery

1212 Oakland Avenue, Piedmont, CA 94611, 415.701.9200  
www.fortrossvineyard.com

### Hunter Hill Vineyard & Winery

7099 Glen Haven Road, Soquel, CA 95073, 831.465.9294  
www.hunterhillwines.com

### Koehler Winery

5360 Foxen Canyon Road, Los Olivos, CA 93441, 805.693.8384  
www.koehlerwinery.com

### Kuleto Estate

2470 Sage Canyon Road, St. Helena, CA 94574, 707.963.9750  
www.kuletoestate.com

### Montinore Estate

PO Box 490, Forest Grove, OR 97116, 503.359.5012  
www.montinore.com

### Moorewood

See Testarossa Vineyards below

### Morgan Winery

590-C Brunken Avenue, Salinas, CA 93901, 831.751.7777  
www.morganwinery.com

### Papapietro Perry Winery

4441 Westside Road, Healdsburg, CA 95448, 877.467.468  
www.papapietro-perry.com

### Patz & Hall Wine Co.

PO Box 5479, Napa, CA 94581, 877.265.6700  
www.patzhall.com

### Radio-Coteau

P.O. Box 610, Forestville, CA 95436, 707.887.8335  
www.radiocoteau.com

### Roar Wines

32721 River Road, Soledad, CA 93960, 831.595.2098  
www.roarwines.com

### Roessler Cellars

1160-C Hooper Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403, 707.933.8513  
www.roesslercellars.com

### Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery

389 Fourth Street East, Sonoma, CA 95476, 707.933.3232  
www.sebastiani.com

### Shea Wine Cellars

4304 SW Strathfell Lane, Portland, OR 97221, 503.241.6527  
www.sheawinecellars.com

### Talley Vineyards

3031 Lopez Drive, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420, 805.489.0446  
www.talleyvineyards.com

### Testarossa Vineyards

300-A College Avenue, Los Gatos, CA 95030, 408.354.6150  
www.testarossa.com

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