

PINOTREPORT

for people passionate about western pinot noir

ISSUE NO. 24

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"Pinot On The River"

Festival

Oct. 29-31
in Russian
River Valley.

Special Offer
For Subscribers!

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For Details

Summer's Loose Ends...

AS WE WORK OUR WAY THROUGH THE LAST WEEKS OF **SUMMER**, we move into what for me is the prime Pinot season – fall. This is by far my favorite time of year; the cooling temperatures and rich colors, the sights, sounds and smells of harvest all around wine country fill my senses with the promise of a new vintage. But before we can get into full **fall mode**, we've got some loose ends to tie up from the summer. That's what this issue is all about.

A Pinot Pioneer

In August, I was fortunate to be able to attend a special dinner honoring the **40th anniversary** of one of California's true Pinot Pioneers: **David Bruce**.

In 1964, the **David Bruce Winery** was established in the somewhat remote and off the beaten "Pinot path" **Santa Cruz Mountains** above Los Gatos. David Bruce, then a young dermatologist who had developed a love of food, wine and particularly Burgundy as a medical student, purchased 40 acres of land above the fog line at 2,200 feet elevation and proceeded to clear the land and plant 25 acres of mostly Pinot Noir but also Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay and Riesling on the southwestern facing site. At that time, there were really only two other wineries producing what could be considered top-flight, varietal-labeled Pinot Noir: **Martin Ray** and **Hanzell**. Pinot Noir was in fairly wide use, but was **mainly bottled in proprietary blends and labeled Burgundy**. For the next 25 years, Bruce worked two jobs: running his dermatology practice in Los Gatos and toiling at his mountaintop winery. He retired from medicine in 1985 to focus fully on his dream of making the best Pinots in California.

David Bruce's Pinots have always been eclectic and stylistic. The wines—and the winery—have had their share of ups and downs over the years, ranging from a cork-taint problem in the 1980s that affected two thirds of the winery's Chardonnay production, extensive damage and losses in the **1989 Loma Prieta** earthquake and a nearly 100-percent kill of the estate vineyard in 1991 by Pierce's disease.

[Continued on page 3]

Oregon's Jimi Brooks Dies at 38

James F. "Jimi" Brooks, winemaker at **Maysara Estates** and his own **Brooks Winery**, died on Sept. 4 of an apparent heart attack at his McMinnville, Ore. home. He was 38. Brooks began his career as an assistant winemaker at **Willakenzie Estate** and made quite a mark on the Oregon wine community as a man with an intense passion for wine and a compassion for those around him. Brooks is survived by his eight-year old son, his sister, and his grandmother. The family requests that memorials be sent to Pascal Brooks Memorial Fund, Washington Mutual Bank, 3425 S.W. Cedar Hills Blvd, Beaverton, OR 97005.

Bien Nacido's Bob Miller, IV Dies at 59

Bob Miller, co-founder of **Bien Nacido Vineyards** and a pioneer in the Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties' wine grape industry died in Santa Barbara on Sept. 7, surrounded by his family. He was 59. Miller, born in New Orleans, was a fourth-generation descendant of William Richard Broome, who came to Santa Barbara in 1876 and owned the historic Spanish land grant, Rancho Guadaluca in Ventura County. Miller co-founded **Bien Nacido Vineyards**, **French Camp Vineyards**, **the Central Coast Wine Services in Santa Maria** and **the Paso Robles Wine Services**. Bob Miller is survived by his mother, two sisters, a brother, three

nieces and two nephews.

Vintner Moves, Winery News

Steve MacRostie, owner of **MacRostie Winery and Vineyards**, named **Kevin Holt** as winemaker for the Sonoma-based winery. Holt's winemaking experience includes assistant winemaker positions at **Artesa**, **Quivira** and **Testarossa**. He also has experience on the sales side of wine, having spent 10 years in wholesale and retail wine sales in Texas and California.

Don Blackburn was named winemaker for **Brice Cutrer Jones' Goldridge Pinot** winery and vineyard project in western Sonoma County. Blackburn, a veteran Pinot Noir winemaker, was formerly winemaker at **David Bruce Winery**, **Byington**, **Bernardus** and **Elliston**.

Oregon's **Benton-Lane** winery has named **Mike Lambert** president of the Willamette Valley winery. Lambert has held management positions at **King Estate** and **Jordan**.

David Millman has taken over as General Manager at **Domaine Drouhin Oregon**, replacing **Scott Wright** who left to focus his full attention on his own label, **Scott Paul Wines**.

Davis Bynum Winery has appointed **Steven Canter** as its new winemaker. Canter's experience is truly global with stints in Australia, South Africa, Italy, Oregon and California.

[PNR]

PINOTREPORT

For People Passionate About Western Pinot Noir

Gregory S. Walter

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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 financial 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

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Sonoma, CA 95476
Tel: 707-935-0326

OUT IN PINOT COUNTRY...

[Continued from page 1]

Despite all of this, Bruce and his team have persevered and prospered. His most recent Pinots are the best he's ever made.

Currently, the winery produces Pinot Noir in three tiers. The vineyard designated wines—called the “crown jewels” by Bruce—consists of the estate vineyard, and selected vineyard designates in **Russian River Valley, Sonoma Coast, Santa Lucia Highlands** and **Santa Cruz Mountains**. The second tier is made up with the appellation wines—these are blends from the Russian River Valley, Sonoma Coast and Santa Cruz Mountains regions. The third tier is a **Central Coast** Pinot Noir. With the Pinot market full of new labels, David Bruce's Pinots are sometimes overlooked, but they are definitely worth your attention. Look for full reviews of the David Bruce Pinots in an upcoming issue.

Paso Robles Pinot?

A few years ago, a friend and wine writing colleague turned me on to some really interesting Pinot Noirs by **Marc Goldberg** and **Maggie D'Ambrosia** at their **Windward Vineyards** winery on the west side of **Paso Robles**—a wine region in California's Central Coast that is definitely not traditionally known for producing fine Pinot Noir. In the past year, I've visited with Marc and Maggie on a couple of occasions and learned about their quest to make a Burgundian-styled California Pinot and witnessed the difference site and coastal influence can have on an otherwise hot wine microclimate. (For my review of the Windward Pinot, see Issue #22)

Paso Robles' west side is cooled by coastal winds funneled through the **Templeton Gap**. The concept of growing Pinot Noir there is not totally new—in fact there is significant historical precedent. The Pinot Noirs from **Stanley Hoffman's Hoffman Mountain Ranch** made under the supervision of long-time **Beaulieu Vineyard** winemaker **André Tchelistcheff** were widely recognized for their quality and longevity.

I began talking with Goldberg about the region and about others who shared his vision. He told me of a loose organization of **nearly 20 producers** making Pinot from vineyards on Paso Robles west side and this summer he asked me if I'd like to sit in on a tasting of the wines from these producers. Of course, I said yes. Contributing Editor **Michael Dotson** joined me for the tasting at Windward Vineyards.

Paso Pinot producers included (in alphabetical order) **Adelaida Cellars, Calcareous Vineyard, Carmody McKnight Wines, Casa de Caballos, Castoro Cellars, Herder Vineyards, Jack Creek, Kruse, Maloy O'Neill Vineyards, Opolo Vineyards** (for review see Issue #23), **Orchid Hill Vineyard, Rabbit Ridge Vineyards, Silver Stone, Stephen's Cellar, Wild Horse Winery, Windward Vineyard, York Mountain Winery and Zenaida Cellars**. We tasted through the wines and found a wide variety of styles, some very interesting wines and a great deal of potential for this area. I encourage you to visit and see for yourself.

Pinot On The River...

I am proud to be involved as an organizer and sponsor of a new Pinot Noir event. More than 30 small-production artisanal Pinot Noir producers will gather for Sonoma County's first-ever “**Pinot on the River**” Festival October 29th, 30th & 31st at the **Retreat Resort & Spa** in the Russian River Valley town of Guerneville. The event will focus on **highly allocated Pinots** from the **Russian River Valley as well as other West Coast** appellations. “**Pinot on the River**” features in-depth seminars and tastings as well as tours of nearby vineyards in Russian River Valley—all punctuated by sumptuous food prepared by top wine country chefs. I highly recommend that you consider attending and for a limited time, subscribers to **PinotReport** can sign up for a **special weekend package** that includes activities not available to other event attendees. For information, email me at gswalter@pinotreport.com or visit www.pinotfestival.com.

In This Issue...

Pinots from three new producers crossed my tasting table this issue. Be on the lookout for **Ed Kurtzman's August West Wines, Carrefour Vineyards** and Oregon's **De Ponte Cellars**. Add to these reviews a great lineup of Pinots from **Archery Summit, Chalone, Dehlinger, El Molino, Goldeneye, King Estate, Kosta Browne, Landmark, Longoria, Merry Edwards, Morgan Winery** and **Tandem Winery** among others and we've got a lot of great Pinot. “**On The Menu**” looks at end of summer dishes based on chicken.

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

This Issue's Tasting Notes

All wines were tasted blind and scored before knowing anything other than that the general region (i.e. California or Oregon) they were from. My notes and comments follow.

CALIFORNIA

August West

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Rosella's Vineyard 2002

Please see "Make Room In The Cellar!" below.

Carrefour Vineyards

Pinot Noir Carneros 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; bright cherry, earthy and spice aromas, subtle and pretty; lots of cherry pie and spice flavors, silky on the palate, a slightly earthy note with some toasty oak, good structure and balance; long finish. This is a very silky and delicious Pinot; its good core of fruit and great balance make it a terrific wine for the table.

200 cases made \$28 Score: 92

Chalone Vineyard

Pinot Noir Chalone 2002

Please see "Smart Buy!" on page 7.

Dehlinger Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Goldridge Vineyard 2001

Medium ruby purple color; subtle spice and cherry aromas with some oak notes; lush stewed cherry fruit surrounded by spice and earth notes and toasty oak; good structure and

balance, long finish. This wine has a nice dose of many good flavors, fruit, spice and oak and a complexity on the palate.

1,600 cases made \$35 Score: 90

El Molino Winery

Pinot Noir Napa Valley 2001

Medium-deep ruby color; spicy with berry and cherry notes on the nose; full and rich on the palate with lots of stewed cherry and spicy notes; great depth of flavor, a good dose of oak to add complexity, great structure and balance with a long finish. This is one of the best El Molinos I've tasted. A beautiful example of a rarity—Pinot from the Napa Valley.

910 cases made \$51 Score: 92

Goldeneye

Pinot Noir Anderson Valley 2001

Medium ruby purple color; deep, spicy, cherry aromas with a hint of herbs; deep and concentrated with a solid core of reduced black cherry flavor, lots of spice and herbal/earthy notes, all in balance with the oak and moderate tannin; long finish. A big Pinot with a lot of deep and complex flavors—a great choice with a steak.

2,400 cases made \$48 Score: 91

Kali Hart

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands 2002

Medium-deep ruby color; bright aromas of raspberry, cherry and pie spices; bright, lively, juicy raspberry and cherry fruit, spice and a touch of oak add complexity; good structure and well balanced; lingering finish. This lighter styled Pinot is a pleasure to drink. It's bright flavors and crisp acidity make for a great choice for all of your lighter meals. A new label from Robert Talbott Vineyards named for the Talbott's youngest

MAKE ROOM IN THE CELLAR!

"A big, lush Pinot..."

August West

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Rosella's Vineyard 2002

Medium-deep ruby purple color; deep, rich, complex aromas of spice, earth and reduced cherries; big and full, rich, lush flavors, lots of reduced cherry flavor, complex with a touch of toasty oak; good structure and balance; long finish. WOW! This is a big, lush Pinot with a lot to offer now and even more to offer with some bottle age. A terrific new Pinot offering from Ed Kurtzman, former winemaker at Testarossa.

176 cases made \$42 Score: 93

SMART BUY!

"Silky texture, bright flavors..."

Morgan Winery

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Twelve Clones 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; deep red cherry, spice and some mineral and bacon notes; rich, silky and full with spicy, cinnamon, red cherry, and some smoked meat and bacon flavors; good structure and balance, long finish. Well balanced with silky texture and bright flavors—a great Pinot for the table. This "Twelve Clones" designation replaces the "regular" bottling in Dan Lee's Pinot lineup.

8,000 cases made \$22 Score: 90

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

daughter, Kali Hart Talbott.

2,700 cases made \$13.50 Score: 89

Kosta Browne Winery
Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Cohn Vineyard
2002

Please see "Make Room In The Cellar!" on page 7.

Kosta Browne Winery
Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2002

Medium-deep ruby color; deep, spicy, clove, red cherry aromas; rich and full on the palate with beautiful red cherry and spicy flavors; silky texture, great structure and acidity, long finish. Not quite the depth of the Cohn Vineyard, this Pinot just blows me away with its delicious flavors.

300 cases made \$34 Score: 92

Kosta Browne Winery
Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Kanzler Vineyard 2002

Medium-deep ruby color; slightly closed spicy, pepper and dried cherry aromas; dried sour cherry, spice, cinnamon flavors with a silky mouthfeel, moderately tannic, great structure and balance; long finish. Big and full style of Pinot that doesn't miss a beat in terms of depth, suppleness and food appeal.

340 cases made \$48 Score: 93

Kosta Browne Winery
Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2002

Medium-deep ruby color; deep black cherry, mineral, barnyard, pumpkin pie spice, aromas; big and full with some reduced raspberry flavors, cinnamon, nutmeg and other complexing flavors, touch of toasty oak, good structure and balance, long finish. Lots of complex flavors abound in this Pinot—it would make an interesting pair with a mushroom pasta dish.

1,200 cases made \$28 Score: 91

Landmark Vineyards
Pinot Noir Sonoma Mountain Van der Kamp
Vineyards 2001

Medium ruby color; deep, spicy and earthy aromas with clove notes; full and deep, lots of plum and reduced cherry flavor with a complex earthiness and just a touch of meatiness; good structure and balance, long finish. Again Winemaker Eric Stern has made a distinctive Pinot from this distinctive, out of the way vineyard on Sonoma Mountain.

1,100 cases made \$30 Score: 91

Landmark Vineyards
Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Kastania 2001

Medium ruby color; deep black cherry, plum, cassis and sweet

oak on nose; lush core of reduced plum and black cherry flavors with spice and sweet oak notes; great structure and balance, long finish. This bottling from Landmark seems to get better and better each year. Both the winery and the vineyard owners have worked to improve practices and maximize the fruit quality in this vineyard south of the city of Petaluma.

1,150 cases made \$45 Score: 93

Landmark Vineyards
Pinot Noir Sonoma County 2001

Medium ruby color; bright, black cherry aromas with some toasty notes; lush black cherry fruit, cinnamon and spicy notes, rich and lush on finish. A delicious Pinot, lush and silky on the palate, ready made for the table.

1,000 cases made \$25 Score: 91

Longoria
Pinot Noir Santa Maria Valley Bien Nacido Vineyard
2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; deep, closed, lots of reduced berry and pepper aromas; big, full, lots of reduced black cherry, blackberry, spice and pepper flavors; silky despite its size, good balance and a long finish. A big Pinot with deep flavors and silkiness to match.

200 cases made \$36 Score: 92

Longoria
Pinot Noir Santa Rita Hills Fe Ciega Vineyard 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; very deep aromas of earth, barnyard, mineral, reduced cherry fruit, and spice; big, full, lots of earthy flavors with a core of black cherry, pepper and spices, moderately tannic, good structure and balance with a long finish. This Pinot is tannic and deep, with a lot of potential for a patient cellarer; it's also very well balanced now and great for a hearty meal.

446 cases made \$40 Score: 93

Longoria
Pinot Noir Santa Rita Hills Mt. Carmel Vineyard
2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; deep, closed, spicy, violet, pepper aromas with some black cherry notes; intense black cherry, spice and some pepper flavors, big and full with a silky texture, tannic, good acidity and balance; long finish. Rick Longoria has really made a delicious, long-lived Pinot here. Deep fruit, big structure and a lush, silky texture make this a tremendous Pinot for a grilled steak.

61 cases made \$50 Score: 94

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

Longoria

Pinot Noir Santa Rita Hills Sanford & Benedict Vineyard 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; deep aromas of blackberry, smoke, pepper and earth; juicy, intense blackberry flavors, lots of reduced fruit flavor, pepper, spice and earthy notes, good structure and balance; long finish. Although this is a big Pinot, its intense flavors are balanced and approachable.

193 cases made \$42 Score: 91

Merry Edwards

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Olivet Lane Methode a l'Ancienne 2002

Medium-deep ruby purple color; spicy, rich, black cherry, earth and a hint of mint on the nose; deep, concentrated, complex flavors of reduced black cherry, spice and earth with a lush feel on the palate; tannin is there but balanced, long finish. WOW! This is a big, powerful Pinot with a lush, silky mouthfeel and gobs of flavor. It's a sure bet in the cellar.

660 cases made \$51 Score: 94

Merry Edwards

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Windsor Gardens

Methode a l'Ancienne 2002

Medium-deep ruby purple color; bit closed on nose, some spicy and cherry notes; deep, rich, intense, concentrated flavors of spice, reduced black cherry and some lavender and herbal notes; moderate oak and tannin, good structure and a long finish. This Pinot, while being closed and very young feeling, still shows tremendous potential in its great intensity and depth of flavor. Resist the temptation and wait a few years.

600 cases made \$54 Score: 94

Merry Edwards

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2002

Medium-deep ruby purple color; deep, rich aromas of black cherry, spice and lavender; big and full with juicy, lush black cherry fruit, spice and herbal notes; very well balanced, good structure, long finish. Big, full and beautiful—this Pinot is a delight to drink.

1,580 cases made \$27 Score: 93

Morgan Winery

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Twelve Clones 2002

Please see "Smart Buy" on page 4.

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. 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, scored 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 .

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

Robert Talbott

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Sleepy Hollow Vineyard Logan 2000

Medium-deep ruby color; deep aromas of stewed cherry, cumin and some oak; rich and full on the palate with a core of stewed cherry fruit, some savory spices, oak and a meaty note; good structure and balance, long finish. A complex Pinot that has seen some extended time in the winery's cellar. This is not your typical overt style of Pinot—it is a more restrained yet complex style with much to like.

1,100 cases made \$18 Score: 88

Robert Talbott

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Sleepy Hollow Vineyard Case 2000

Medium-deep ruby color; deep earthy/minty aromas with some stewed fruit underneath; stewed fruit, earthy, minty/herbal flavors carry the palate, some woody flavors, balanced with a lingering finish. Overall, the impression I'm left with here is that there are too many discordant flavors and aromas happening here.

1,800 cases made \$40 Score: 84

Russian Hill

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2001

Medium ruby purple color; spicy, savory, with some stewed cherry fruit aromas; rich flavors, spicy, with stewed cherry fruit flavors, good acidity and balance, long finish. Middle weight Pinot with a lot of interesting, complex flavors.

726 cases made \$24 Score: 91

Russian Hill

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Tara Vineyard 2001

Medium-deep ruby purple color; subtle aromas of cherry and spice with some oak; rich and full with lush cherry flavors, good structure and balance with a long finish. Full and rich,

SMART BUY!

"Layers of flavors..."

Chalone Vineyard

Pinot Noir Chalone 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; sage, earth and slightly prune aromas; rich, full, lush black cherry fruit with some earthy, forest floor notes; silky on the palate, good structure, very well balanced; long finish. The depth and layers of flavor here are all in balance and make for an excellent Pinot.

11,800 cases made \$25 Score: 92

this has the body and character to pair with a hearty meal.

208 cases made \$33 Score: 89

Russian Hill

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2001

Medium ruby purple color; spicy, savory notes with some reduced cherry aromas; full, rich, spicy on the palate with a core of reduced cherry fruit; concentrated and complex, good structure and balance; long finish. This Pinot has all the lush complex flavors you want, but I sense that there's much more here waiting to come out with a few years in the bottle.

627 cases made \$24 Score: 93

Tandem Winery

Pinot Noir Green Valley Keefer Ranch 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; spice, black cherry, and toasty oak aromas; rich and lush on the palate with a huge core of bright black cherry fruit, great structure and balance, long finish. Delicious, complex and silky Pinot from a vineyard that is fast becoming a benchmark for the region.

663 cases made \$38 Score: 93

Tandem Winery

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Halleck Vineyard 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; deep aromas of black cherry, cinnamon, and some forest floor; rich and full with lots of stewed cherry, cinnamon, and earthy notes; great structure and really well balanced with a long finish. WOW! A truly great Pinot from the Halleck Vineyard. This one is really tough to find—worst case, get yourself invited over to a friend who has it and ask to pick the wine!

86 cases made \$54 Score: 94

MAKE ROOM IN THE CELLAR!

"SO much depth..."

Kosta Browne Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Cohn Vineyard 2002

Medium-deep ruby color; deep, spicy, rich cherry aromas; big, rich, lush and silky on palate; beautiful black cherry, spice and forest floor flavors; great structure and balance; long, long finish. WOW! This wine has so much depth and layers of silky flavors, you'd almost want to drink it by itself.

320 cases made \$48 Score: 94

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

Tandem Winery

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Sangiacomo Vineyard 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; spicy with aromas of cherry and strawberry; bright, juicy fruit flavors of cherry and strawberry with spicy and toasty oak undertones; good structure and well balanced; long finish. A truly delicious, exquisitely balanced Pinot from the coolest blocks in the Sangiacomo Vineyards on the western border of the Carneros. Wonderful to drink by itself!

500 cases made \$48 Score: 92

Tandem Winery

Pinot Noir Sonoma Mountain Van Der Kamp Vineyard 2002

Medium-deep purple ruby color; spicy, earthy, meaty aromas with some stewed fruit notes; big, ripe, full and rich with stewed fruit, cinnamon, and notes of smoked meat; complex and concentrated, great structure and balance; long finish. A unique style of Pinot seems to come out of the Van Der Kamp vineyard—it's complex and well structured but it always has that slightly funky character to give it some real individuality. This is a Pinot for those who like a non-mainstream wine from a vineyard definitely out of the Pinot mainstream.

n/a cases made \$48 Score: 93

W. H. Smith

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2002

Medium-deep ruby purple color; deep, complex aromas of earth, spice and stewed cherry; deep, full with lots of earthy notes and a sharpness to the mid palate; some tannin and moderate toasty oak; long finish. Big style of Pinot with some nice complex flavors; mid-palate bothers me a little.

1,360 cases made \$24 Score: 88

OREGON

Archery Summit

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Renegade Ridge Estate 2002

Medium-deep ruby red color; plum, spice, earthy and dusty aromas; full, rich and deep with plum and spice and a good dose of earthy, forest floor flavors; moderate tannin and toasty oak, long finish. Big, full Pinot that needs time in the bottle and in the glass.

526 cases made \$60 Score: 91

Belle Vallée Cellars

Pinot Noir Oregon 2002

Medium-deep ruby red color; berry and cherry aromas with a

touch of oak; stewed cherry and berry with moderate oak and tannin on the palate; good structure and balance with a lingering finish. Rich and full flavors make this Pinot a very nice match for a wide range of meals. Belle Vallée Cellars is in Corvallis in the Willamette Valley south of Salem. Winemaker Joe Wright sources fruit from vineyards as far north as Dundee and as far south as the Rogue Valley.

2,274 cases made \$20 Score: 89

Belle Vallée Cellars

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Reserve 2002

Medium-deep ruby red color; berry and spice aromas with lots of toasty oak on nose; big, tannic, lots of oak on palate; berry fruit is there but it is beneath the tannin; long finish. Rich and full of flavor, but the tannin and oak are a bit high.

752 cases made \$30 Score: 85

Bridgeview Vineyards

Pinot Noir Oregon 2001

Medium ruby red color; rich cherry and spice aromas; red cherry and spicy flavors, thin on the mid palate, tart acidity with a short finish. Lacks fruit and body in the middle, tart, crisp flavors otherwise.

10,000 cases made \$9.95 Score: 83

Bridgeview Vineyards

Pinot Noir Oregon Reserve 1999

Medium ruby red color; stewed berry and cherry aromas with some spice; stewed berry and spice flavors with oaky flavors; some bitterness on finish. Wood seems to dominate the flavors, some nice fruit and spice.

500 cases made \$19.95 Score: 85

Bridgeview Vineyards

Pinot Noir Oregon Blue Moon 2001

Medium ruby red color; cherry and spice aromas with some earthiness; rich cherry, spice and earthy flavors with moderate tannin and good structure; long finish. Big style of Pinot that has moderate tannins; pair with a hearty pasta or meat dish. Bridgeview Vineyards is in the Illinois Valley, the coolest part of Southern Oregon's Rogue Valley.

3,500 cases made \$14.95 Score: 87

DePonte Cellars

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2002

Medium-deep ruby red color; earthy, savory spices, some cherry aromas; big, moderate tannin and oak; cherry fruit and spicy notes, good acidity and a long finish. Balanced style with a lot of complex flavors, this Pinot needs a big, hearty dish to tame it.

1,250 cases made \$28 Score: 90

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

King Estate

Pinot Noir Oregon 2001

Medium ruby red color; spice and bright cherry aromas; light, tart cherry fruit, some spicy notes, light in body with nice balance and acidity; lingering finish. Nice lighter style of Pinot with bright fruit to match.

16,754 cases made \$22 Score: 88

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2002

Medium-deep ruby red color; delicate cherry, spice and berry aromas with a hint of herbs; delicate dried cherry flavors, spicy, earthy with a nice elegance to the palate; good structure and balance, long finish. This is an elegant, subtle Pinot with much to offer in complex flavors. Pair this with a less hearty dish, say a delicate pasta.

454 cases made \$25 Score: 91

Willamette Valley Vineyards

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Estate Vineyard 2000

Medium-deep ruby red color; juicy cherry and berry aromas; big and full with lots of cherry and berry flavors, spicy oak and tannin complete the palate; good structure and a long finish. This is a big style of Pinot that needs considerable air to open up. Pair with a substantial meat dish.

800 cases made \$28 Score: 88

Contacting The Winery

Below is contact information for wines reviewed in this issue.

Archery Summit Winery

PO Box 85, Dundee, OR 97115, 503-864-4300
www.archerysummit.com

August West Wines

1300 Montgomery Street #2, Sebastopol, CA 95472, 415-225-2891
www.augustwestwine.com

Belle Vallée Cellars

804 NW Buchanan Avenue, Corvallis, OR 97330, 541-757-9463
www.bellevallee.com

Bridgeview Vineyards

PO Box 609, Cave Junction, OR 97523, 541-592-4688
www.bridgeviewwine.com

Carrefour Vineyards

1180 Monticello Road, Napa, CA 94558, 707-252-9167

Chalone Vineyard

PO Box 518, Soledad, CA 93960, 831-678-1717
www.chalonevineyard.com

De Ponte Cellars

17545 Archery Summit Road, Dayton, OR 97114, 503-537-9150
www.depontecellars.com

Dehlinger Winery

6300 Guerneville Road, Sebastopol, CA 95472, 707-823-2378

El Molino Winery

PO Box 306, St. Helena, CA 94574, 707-963-3632
www.elmolinowinery.com

Goldeneye Winery

9200 Highway 128, Philo, CA 95466, 707-895-3202
www.goldeneyewinery.com

King Estate Winery

80854 Territorial Road, Eugene, OR 97405, 541-942-9874
www.kingestate.com

Kosta Browne

910 Bond Place, Windsor, CA 95492, 707-291-3883
www.kostabrowne.com

Landmark Vineyards

101 Adobe Canyon Road, Kenwood, CA 95452, 707-833-0212
www.landmarkwine.com

Longoria Wines

PO Box 186, Los Olivos, CA 93441, 805-688-0305
www.longoriawine.com

Merry Edwards Wines

830 DenBeste Court, Ste. B, Windsor, CA 95492, 707-838-9950
www.merryedwards.com

Morgan Winery

590-C Brunken Avenue, Salinas, CA 93901, 831-751-7777
www.morganwinery.com

Robert Talbott Vineyards & Winery

PO Box 776, Gonzalez, CA 93926, 831-675-3000
www.talbottvineyards.com

Russian Hill

4525 Slusser Road, Windsor, CA 95492, 707-575-9428
www.russianhillwinery.com

Siduri Wines

980 Airway Court, Ste. C, Santa Rosa, CA 95403, 707-578-3882
www.siduri.com

Tandem Winery

PO Box 1921, Sebastopol, CA 95473, 707-823-2794
www.tandemwinery.com

W.H. Smith Wines

1181 Las Posadas Road, Angwin, CA 94508, 707-965-9726
www.whsmithwines.com

Willamette Valley Vineyards

8800 Enchanted Way SE, Turner, OR 97392, 503-588-9463
www.wvv.com

[PNR]

Chicken Done Three Ways

Two Birds, Wide Ranging Flavors Work With Many Pinot Styles

SPENDING MY SATURDAYS OVER THE PAST MONTH in different farmers' markets searching out ingredients for Sunday dinner I have found myself repeatedly drawn to chicken. It occurred to me that it was time for a menu devoted to chicken.

In my chicken quest, I began to notice that most markets seemed to all have a free range or organic chicken option in addition to the more standard offerings. I tried several different chickens from different sources for this menu ranging from local markets to those provided by a gentleman that raises the quail I use in my restaurant. While all were quite delicious the free range and naturally raised birds were the best. That research complete, I chose two naturally raised chickens and got started.

First, I made a rich, light and aromatic consommé. I added a little shiitake mushroom and dumplings made of whole milk ricotta laced with chives and orange zest. The deep rich and aromatic flavors set up a beautiful match with a rich, balanced Pinot from the Russian River Valley appellation. The berry flavors framed with a little spice and good acid seemed to intertwine with consommé.

For the second dish, I rolled up pieces of green onion in Jamon Serrano and placed them inside the chicken thighs where the bones once were. I tied them up like little roasts, browned and then braised them in chicken stock with freshly shelled beans, aromatic vegetables, olives and saffron. The flavors came together beautifully and more complex than I had envisioned. I sat down with a bottle of Pinot and ended up opening 4-5 before finding one from the Santa Rita Hills was the best fit with bold flavors and aroma balanced by acidity and just enough tannin to bring the two together.

Having breast and leg meat left led me to what seemed a natural conclusion. I took the leg meat and created a play on a red wine sausage. I placed the sausage on the breast under the skin. Seeing so many beautiful peppers I decided on a traditional Basque piperade—a stew of peppers and onion. I wanted it to be a little more ethereal in character so I decided to add a little Szechwan pepper to the stew, only to find none in any store that I checked.

So if you have the same experience, try mixing equal portions of black pepper, star anise and orange peel—I ad-libbed a little with a teaspoon of orange blossom water and a star anise pod in an effort to create the same effect. It wasn't exactly the flavor I had in mind but it worked. I added the chicken breasts back to the pan with the piperade finishing it in the oven. This dish had deep satisfying flavors with a slight floral finish and what I thought was going to be one of the toughest to pair was one of the easiest especially given that I had so many wines open. A Pinot from the Santa Maria Valley with its strong acidity made for a great match with the bold flavors in this dish letting the fruit come forward and shine. This dish and pairing ended up being the highlight of my day.



M E N U

**CHICKEN AND PINOT
DONE THREE WAYS...**

**Chicken Consommé
with Ricotta Citrus
Dumplings, Shiitake
Mushrooms and
Cardamom**

*Hawley Russian River Valley
Oehlman Vineyard 2002*

*Kosta Browne Russian River
Valley 2002*

**Petite Roast of
Chicken en Cocotte
with Fresh Italian
Butter Beans, Green
Olives and Saffron**

*Longoria Santa Rita Hills Mt.
Carmel Vineyard 2002*

*Ortman Family Vineyards
Santa Barbara County 2002*

**Red Wine Sausage
Stuffed Chicken
Breast with Piperade
and Szechwan Pepper**

*Flying Goat Cellars Santa
Maria Valley Dierberg Vineyard
2002*

*August West Santa Lucia
Highlands Rosella's Vineyard
2002*



ON THE MENU: Chicken Done Three Ways

CHICKEN CONSOMME WITH RICOTTA-CITRUS DUMPLINGS, SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS AND CARDAMOM

Yields 4 servings

- 1 quart chicken consommé (see recipe below)
- 4 shiitake mushrooms, stemmed
- 12 ricotta dumplings, room temperature (see recipe below)
- Sea salt
- 4 large warm soup bowls

FOR THE CONSOMME:

- Bones from 2 chickens, chopped into 3 inch long pieces (use bones from Roast of Chicken recipe below)
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 leek, diced
- 1 carrot, diced
- 1 celery stalk, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, quartered
- 1 fresh bay leaf or 2 dried
- 5 pods cardamom
- 15 peppercorns
- 7 cilantro sprigs (with roots attached if you can find them)
- 3 tablespoons grapeseed or other neutral oil
- ½ cup light bodied red wine (a Pinot will do)
- 2 quarts cold chicken stock (homemade or low sodium or no salt if from the store)
- Sea salt

FOR THE RAFT:

- ½ cup onion
 - ¼ cup carrot
 - ¼ cup celery
 - 2 pods cardamom
 - 1 tablespoon garlic
 - 4 chicken tenders
 - 6 egg whites
1. Place a large non-reactive pot over medium heat and brown chicken bones well in oil without burning.
 2. Add onion, leek, carrot, celery, garlic and cardamom from

consommé ingredient list; cook for 10 minutes. Then add bay leaf, peppercorns and wine and cook until wine is reduced to 2 tablespoons.

3. Add chicken stock, cilantro sprigs and a tablespoon of sea salt and bring to a simmer. Then skim scum, lower heat and cook without boiling for two hours skimming any scum that rises to the surface.

4. Strain broth through a fine strainer twice and then strain into a clean pot and place pot in an ice water bath to cool broth to room temperature.

5. Skim fat from surface, remove from ice bath when broth reaches room temperature and place on stove over low heat.

6. Create the raft: place onion, carrot, celery, garlic and chicken tenders in food processor and chop finely.

7. Add egg whites and puree just long enough to break up eggs well but do not whip any air into them. This is the raft.

8. Stir broth enough to make a whirlpool motion then pour in raft. From this point on do not move pot—wait for the raft to slowly rise to the surface and the broth to come just barely to a simmer. This can take anywhere from one to two hours.

9. Once raft is at the surface keep an eye on the broth as you want it to cook long enough to clarify it. The little bit of broth that you see around the edges of the pot should look golden and clear.

10. Turn burner off. Place a moistened cheese cloth-lined strainer over a bowl or pot. Carefully push down on raft with a ladle and fill with consommé and then pour through the cheese cloth.

11. Try to disturb the raft as little as possible as you do this and continue until you get to the bottom and as much of the consommé as possible without getting any of the raft.

12. The consommé can be kept on the back of stove until needed or refrigerated up to 3 days at this point. Simply warm it slowly when you are ready to proceed.

FOR THE DUMPLINGS:

- 1 cup whole milk ricotta
- 2 eggs
- Zest of 1 orange, chopped
- 2 tablespoons chives

ON THE MENU: Chicken Done Three Ways

Sea salt

Freshly ground pepper

1. One day before making dumplings, drain ricotta overnight in coffee filter-lined strainer set over a bowl in refrigerator.
2. Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl, mix well, season and let the batter rest 20 minutes before proceeding.
3. Over medium heat bring 1½ gallons of salted water to a boil, reduce heat so the water stays just below a boil.
4. With your finger or thumb push 1½ tablespoons of batter into the water—about 5 dumplings at a time. Try to keep each dumpling as smooth and as round a shape as you can.
5. When dumplings rise to the surface cook for an additional 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl of cold water for about 30 seconds and then to a plate lined with a paper towel to remove excess water and little pieces hanging off dumplings.
6. This recipe makes more dumplings than are needed. Dumplings are best made the day they are to be used but can be made a day before and brought to room temperature before proceeding.

TO SERVE:

1. Place consommé in non-reactive pot on stove over medium-low heat until very hot but not boiling.
2. Slice shiitakes thinly, placing the slices from one shiitake and 3 dumplings in each warm bowl.
3. Check consommé for salt and season if it needs a little more, then gently ladle 8 ounces of consommé into each bowl and serve. Pass sea salt at table for individual seasoning.

PETITE ROAST OF CHICKEN *EN COCOTTE* WITH FRESH ITALIAN BUTTER BEANS, GREEN OLIVES AND SAFFRON

Yields 4 servings

- 4 chicken thighs, bones removed reserved for consommé
- 4 green onions, trimmed to length of chicken thighs
- 4 slices of Jamon Serrano or prosciutto
- 3 cups (approximately 2 pounds) fresh Italian butter beans
- ½ cup green olives, pitted and torn in half

½ cup onion, diced

½ cup leek, diced

½ cup carrot, diced

½ cup celery, diced

5 sprigs thyme, tied with string

2 tablespoons garlic, sliced

4 whole allspice berries

Pinch saffron

1 fresh bay leaf or 2 dried

3 tablespoons Spanish virgin olive oil

3 cups of chicken stock

Salt

Freshly ground pepper

Cotton kitchen string

Ceramic baking dish just large enough to hold all of ingredients or 4 individual casuelas

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Lay chicken thighs skin side down on cutting board and season with a little salt and fresh pepper. Be sure to season inside the thigh where the bone was.
3. Lay the prosciutto or jamon out flat. Roll each up with a green onion inside and place inside each thigh where the bone was.
4. Cut 4 pieces of string for each thigh long enough to tie around the thigh comfortably. Lay them ½" to ¾" apart and place a thigh skin side down on each section of strings.
5. Tie each thigh up snugly into a round tubular shape to resemble a mini roast and season with salt and pepper.
6. In sauce pan large enough to hold all the vegetables, brown chicken roasts over medium high heat in 1 tablespoon of olive oil until well browned on all sides. Remove chicken from pan to a plate and pour off excess fat.
7. Place pan back on fire, reduce to medium heat. Add remaining olive oil, onion, leek, carrot, celery, garlic, allspice, thyme, saffron, bay leaf and cook without browning just until vegetables begin to soften.
8. Add beans and stock slowly; stock should cover beans by about half an inch. Water can be used if you run out of stock.
9. Bring to simmer, skim any scum that rises to the surface

ON THE MENU: Chicken Done Three Ways

and then season. Pour beans into the baking dish and nestle petite chicken roasts into beans or divide evenly among casuelas.

10. Place into oven and bake until beans are tender and chicken is cooked through -- about 30 minutes.

TO SERVE:

1. Place individual casuelas on a napkin lined plate and serve or bring baking dish to the table and serve family style.

RED WINE SAUSAGE-STUFFED CHICKEN BREAST WITH PIPERADE AND SZECHWAN PEPPER

Yields 4 servings

- 4 chicken breasts with wing bone and all skin intact
- 12 ounces chicken red wine sausage (see recipe below)
- 1 cup red peppers, julienne
- 1 cup yellow peppers, julienne
- 1 cup green peppers, julienne
- 1 cup yellow onion, julienne
- 1 teaspoon Szechwan peppercorns, crushed
- 3 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 cups roma tomatoes, seeded and julienne
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons very good extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 1 teaspoon thyme leaves
- Sea salt

1. Make sausage one day ahead. See recipe below.
2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Carefully separate skin from each breast leaving skin attached at wing end. Evenly spread 3 ounces of sausage over breast, lay skin back and pat back into place. Chill well before proceeding.
3. Place a sauté pan that will comfortably hold all breasts over medium heat; when hot, add 2 tablespoons olive oil, then add chicken breasts skin side down and brown skin well.
4. When skin is well browned, transfer chicken breasts to a platter and discard excess oil.
5. Place pan back over heat, add ¼ cup of fresh olive oil,

onions and garlic; cook until they just begin to soften.

6. Add the Szechwan peppercorns and cook 2 minutes. Then add all the fresh peppers and cook until they begin to soften.

7. Add the tomatoes, season with a little salt and cook for 20 minutes.

8. Place chicken breasts back into pan skin side up and place pan into oven until chicken is just cooked through, about 14 to 18 minutes depending on your oven.

FOR THE SAUSAGE:

- Meat from 4 chicken legs, ground or finely chopped with all tendons removed
- 2 ounces butter
- ¼ cup shallots, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon garlic, finely chopped
- ½ cup red wine
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon fennel seed, coarsely ground
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt

1. Place wine and sugar in a non-reactive pot; reduce by half over medium heat. Chill.
2. In a sauté pan sweat shallot and garlic over low heat until soft. Chill.
3. In a deep bowl mix all ingredients until mixture looks a little sticky.
4. Transfer all of mixture to a zip lock bag, squeeze out air and store in refrigerator for 24 hours before using.

TO SERVE:

1. Divide chicken and piperade between four warm plates and serve.

Michael Dotson is a fellow Pinot Noir lover and executive chef at Evvia restaurant in Palo Alto, Calif. Previous stops on his culinary journey have included working as a visiting chef at Au Crocodile in Strasbourg, France; he was the opening sous chef at the original PlumpJack Café in San Francisco and then held executive chef positions at PlumpJack Squaw Valley Inn, San Francisco's Slow Club Restaurant and Sonoma's Heirloom Restaurant and Lounge. Michael can be reached by email at chefdotson@pinotreport.com.

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