

PINOTREPORT

for people passionate about western pinot noir

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For Details*

Harvest 2002 Is Here...

WE ARE IN PERHAPS THE MOST EXCITING AND EXHAUSTING TIME OF YEAR for winemakers in the Northern Hemisphere—harvest time. And all up and down the West Coast, winemakers and growers alike are watching their grapes for the right time to pick and watching the skies for any unexpected surprises weather wise.

This issue of *PinotReport* is a bit shorter than normal and that's due primarily to the timing of the harvest. Rather than wait any longer to give you a complete preliminary harvest report as was my original plan, I've decided to release this issue now and follow it up in the next week or so with a special supplemental harvest report issue. I will update the report as necessary in the October issue and then publish a final wrap up in November.

On to this issue. Our "In The Market" tasting report features wines from producers such as Davis Bynum, Scherrer, Siduri Wines, J. Wine Co., Lynmar and a first release from Flying Goat Cellars, a new label from Norman Yost of Foley Estates.

Michael Dotson's menu this month is a late-summer celebration of bold, simple flavors and preparations, including one of my favorite combinations, a roasted duck breast and Pinot Noir. He urges us to take advantage of the waning summer and break out our creativity and pretty platters for a festive party with friends.

I hope you enjoy this issue and as always please feel free to send me any questions, comments or suggestions you have.

Best regards,



Gregory S. Walter, Editor and Publisher

Four Overcome By Fumigant

Owner **Hampton Bynum** and Winemaker **David Georges** of **Davis Bynum Winery** were among four people hospitalized on Sept. 11 after exposure to **methyl bromide**, a highly toxic fumigant used to rid soil of pests and diseases, when the chemical apparently drifted from a neighboring vineyard site on Westside Road in the **Russian River Valley** near **Healdsburg**.

All four were treated for shortness of breath, dizziness, drowsiness and blurred vision at **Healdsburg General Hospital** where they spent most of that day before being released to recuperate at home.

The exposure may be the most serious case of methyl bromide exposure in at least 30 years, according to Sonoma County agricultural officials.

The vineyard land being fumigated is owned by Williams-Selyem Winery and was being developed and prepared for planting by Lloyd Vineyard Management of Geyserville. According to a spokesman for the fumigation contractor, Tri-Cal of Hollister, Calif., conditions for the fumigation were ideal and all precautions and regulations were followed. None of the fumigation personnel were affected

and neither the contractor nor the vineyard management company could explain how the accident might have happened.

Both Hampton Bynum and David Georges are concerned about long-term health effects of the exposure and upset that the whole incident could have been avoided, as the use of methyl bromide is being phased out by the federal **Environmental Protection Agency** and the chemical has been abandoned by most growers because of environmental concerns. Ironically, the Davis Bynum vineyards are farmed organically.

Brewer Buys New Zealand's Wither Hills

Australian-based brewer **Lion Nathan** has joined a growing list of overseas owners of **New Zealand** wineries through its purchase of **Wither Hills**, a well-regarded producer of Pinot Noir and Sauvignon Blanc from the **Marlborough** region, for US\$26 million.

Included in the purchase are a newly constructed winery and nearly 1,000 acres of land in Marlborough, 370 acres of which are established vineyards, giving Lion Nathan a solid presence in the largest—and best known—New Zealand wine region.

PinotReport

For People Passionate About Western Pinot Noir

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." Please follow these guidelines:

1. Samples should be in fully finished packaging, ready for market.
2. Please submit two bottles of each wine (this allows us a second bottle for retastes, etc.).
3. Each sample should include at least one label, suggested retail price, production and distribution data.
4. All samples should be sent to the following address:

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

Wither Hills started out small in 1996 producing only 500 cases of wine but has grown dramatically since then. The winery produced 80,000 cases from the 2002 vintage. Lion Nathan has left current management in place with former owner **Brent Marris** continuing under contract to manage the business and his father, **John Marris** continuing to manage the vineyards.

Lion Nathan began its wine acquisitions in 2001 and has amassed a portfolio of brands in Australia and Oregon. Australian brands include **Hillstowe**, **Knappstein**, **Mitchelton**, **Petaluma**, **St. Hallett**, **Stonier's** and **Tatachilla**. In Oregon, Lion Nathan owns **Argyle Winery**.

Cahill Joins Soter Vineyards

James Cahill has been named operations manager and associate winemaker for **Soter Vineyards**, the Oregon-based winery founded by **Tony Soter**. Cahill was formerly at **Elk Cove** and **Beaux Frères** wineries.

Soter, founder of **Etude Winery** in Napa Valley, purchased the **Beacon Hill Vineyard** in the Chehalem Mountains above **WillaKenzie Estate** in 2000 to establish his foothold in Oregon. His first wine from the venture have been made at Etude, but this fall, Soter moves his production to the new **Carlton Wine Studio** in Carlton, Ore. (see **PNR**, Issue #5).

Earnings Up At Willamette Valley

Willamette Valley Vineyards (Nasdaq: WVVI) reported a profit of US\$3,817 on revenue of US\$1,369,593 in the second quarter of 2002 as compared to a loss of US\$39,810 on revenues of US\$1,519,404 for the same period in 2001.

While the company produced only a small profit for the quarter, significant gains were made in fundamental aspects of its operations. Willamette Valley Vineyards experienced significant increases in revenues in retail sales; retail revenues increased 22 percent in the three months ending June 30, 2002 over the same period in 2001. The company continued to deal with excess inventories held by its distributors resulting from lower than expected depletions (wine sales) to the retail trade in the prior year.

Willamette Valley Vineyards also owns **Tualatin Estate Vineyards** and **Griffin Creek** wines.

PINOT EVENTS

San Luis Obispo, Calif.

September 22: Edna Valley Vineyard's Harvest Brunch. Celebrate the harvest in Edna Valley with seminars and a brunch buffet at the Jack Niven Hospitality Center from noon to 3 pm. Call 805.544.5855x22 or visit www.ednavalley.com for more information.

San Diego, Calif.

September 28: Russian River Pinot Noir Tasting. Taste "California's Côte d'Or" in this informative tasting at the Winesellar & Brasserie restaurant and wine shop. Call 858.450.9557 for more information.

Cleveland, Ohio

September 28: New Releases Tasting From Morgan Winery. Stop by between 2 pm and 5 pm to taste the new releases from one of Monterey County's best at Western Reserve Wines in Moreland Hills. Call 216.831.2116 for more information.

Santa Rosa, Calif.

September 29: Russian River Wines Tasting Dinner. Sassafras Restaurant presents this salute to the wines and produce of Russian River Valley. Call 707.578.7600 for more information.

Campbell, Calif.

September 29: Winemaker Dinner: Testarossa Vineyards. Buca Restaurant presents its winemaker dinner featuring the wines of Testarossa Vineyards. Call 408.871.3135 for more information.

New York City

October 8: Killer Kistlers. Taste 17 of the best Pinot Noirs and Chardonnays from Kistler Vineyards in this tasting presented at the Warwick Hotel by Executive Wine Seminars. Call 800.404.9463 for more information.

[PNR]

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

Tasting Notes For September

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

Davis Bynum Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2000

Deep ruby purple color; intense blackberry, spice and oak on nose and yet nose seems closed; very intense and flavorful with notes of blackberry, plum and spice; complex and layered flavors; balanced with a long finish. WOW! I like the subtle intensity of this wine.

1,738 cases made \$30 Score: 89

Davis Bynum Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Allen Vineyard 2000

Deep ruby purple color; floral, spice aromas, otherwise slightly closed on the nose; tart and tasty red berry flavors, spice notes, moderate body and well structured; lingering finish. This Pinot seems to sneak up on you and then screams Russian River Valley.

353 cases made \$45 Score: 90

Dunnewood Vineyards

Pinot Noir North Coast 1999

Medium-deep ruby color; raspberry and spice aromas, distinct berry notes; lots of tart berry fruit, soft on the palate but with a note of bitterness that lingers through the finish. A softer, lighter style of Pinot at a great price; the bitterness detracts a bit.

9,000 cases made \$9 Score: 86

MAKE ROOM IN THE CELLAR!

"Very compelling... a bold Pinot"

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Garys' Vineyard 2000

Medium-deep ruby purple color; notes of spice, plum and wood on nose with a slight meaty note; big, concentrated, plum flavors, intense flavors of spice and black fruits, lush yet balanced. WOW! Very compelling, intense fruit and oak component makes for a bold Pinot.

312 cases made \$48 Score: 93

Flying Goat Cellars

Pinot Noir Santa Maria Valley Santa Maria Hills Vineyard 2000

Medium-deep ruby color; bit of spice and pepper on nose, otherwise, plum and cherry aromas with a touch of oak; rich, ripe plum and cherry fruit, lush mouthfeel, good structure and a lingering finish. Rich and lush in the Santa Maria style, this Pinot is destined for a great meal with friends. A great debut wine for Norman Yost who is also on the winemaking team at Foley Estates.

250 cases made \$30 Score: 91

J. Wine Company

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2000

Medium ruby color; some plum and blackberry aromas, also a bit of stemminess on nose; big, lots of intense berry flavors, with spicy notes and moderate oak, good structure and a long, lingering finish. Big, distinctive style of Pinot with lots to offer. J Wine Company seems to be focusing more attention on its table wines -- the result is this and other excellent Pinot Noirs.

9,500 cases made \$20 Score: 90

J. Wine Company

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Nicole's Vineyard 1998

Medium ruby color; faint aromas of berry and spice; light body, clean and pleasant raspberry and strawberry flavors, very nice balance and finish. A lighter style of Pinot that works -- has character, good acidity and balance.

3,200 cases made \$35 Score: 88

J. Wine Company

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Robert Thomas Vineyard 1999

Medium ruby color; dusty, spicy, cumin notes with black cherry notes; rich, medium-bodied style with lots of spicy flavors and a good dose of cherry flavors; well balanced, slightly silky mouthfeel. Russian River style thread runs through this wine -- a silky, elegant Pinot that is ideal for more subtle foods.

470 cases made \$42 Score: 91

Lynmar Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 1999

Medium-deep ruby red color; spice, berries, and very pleasant aromas; rich, concentrated berry/cherry flavors, good acidity and a long finish. Deep and complex, this wine offers much to contemplate and a great price to boot!

951 cases made \$28 Score: 90

IN THE MARKET: Pinot Reviews, New and Otherwise

Lynmar Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Quail Cuvee 1999

Medium-deep purple color; hard, spicy oak aromas, mostly closed on nose; big, full, rich, very intense blackberry, black cherry and toasty oak flavors; long, long finish. This Pinot has the structure and stuffing to make a patient wine lover proud down the line.

1,180 cases made \$35 Score: 90

Lynmar Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Reserve 1999

Medium-deep ruby color; oak and tea aromas with some berries; big and tannic, berry and cherry flavors with tea notes but lots of oak and moderate tannin on palate. Interesting complex style -- the tea note really adds to the complexity and flavor component.

498 cases made \$50 Score: 89

Lynmar Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Requiem 2000

Medium-deep ruby purple color; grapy, slightly stemmy, minty aromas, otherwise mostly closed; intense, bold

blueberry fruit flavors, lots of structure and acidity; long finish. Concentrated and intense, this Pinot needs time to really show its potential.

266 cases made \$60 Score: 93

Scherrer Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2000

Deep ruby purple color; plummy, cherry aromas, spice and a little oak; raspberry, strawberry fruit, tart flavors, bit lean on palate, lingering finish. Lush style with lots of flavor.

300 cases made \$35 Score: 89

Scherrer Winery

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Helfer Vineyard 2000

Deep ruby purple color; spicy, red cherry aromas; full red cherry flavors, nice depth, good structure, clean, long finish. This Pinot has the balance, structure and silkiness I've come to expect from Russian River Valley.

55 cases made \$30 Score: 91

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 "Tasting Reports" that focus on a particular appellation, producer or style. The mechanics behind both of these tasting types is the same.

How We Taste

We taste wine in flights of usually no more than 10 wines. These flights are organized appropriately based on the particular type of tasting. We generally taste no more than 20 wines in a tasting session. Ringers and duplicate wines are inserted in tastings to measure consistency of results.

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

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

Wine Prices and Sourcing

Wine prices vary all around the country and can often vary significantly within the same city. We make every effort to only publish a winery's suggested retail price. This price in many cases will be higher than you can find in your local store. 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

Scherrer Winery

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Fort Ross Vineyard 2000

Deep ruby purple color; spicy, cheese rind aromas with some red berry notes; lots of berry fruit, juicy flavors, good balance and acidity; lingering finish. This bottling was a first harvest from young vines. Fred Scherrer says that very little will be for sale this year, but it's one to watch in the future.

Production and price not available **Score: 90**

Scherrer Winery

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Hirsch Vineyard 2000

Medium-deep ruby purple color; nose has floral, rose and spice notes along with black fruit; the same notes follow through to the palate with good structure and a long finish. This wine has Pinot character and is true to its Sonoma Coast appellation from start to finish.

110 cases made \$45 Score: 89

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Anderson Valley Cerise Vineyard 2000

Medium-deep ruby purple color; slight mint and spice, with berry notes on nose; big, balanced, lush blackberry and plum flavors, tannic with a lingering finish. Intensity of flavors and tannins makes for an assertive style of Pinot.

207 cases made \$50 Score: 89

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Sapphire Hill Vineyard 2000

Deep ruby purple color; intense spicy nose, cloves, mint and pepper with cherry fruit underneath; rich and lush mouthfeel with cherry and plum fruit notes and a definite spicy base flavor; nice balance and a lingering finish. Spicy notes on nose and palate make this a distinctive and interesting Pinot.

164 cases made \$48 Score: 91

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Pisoni Vineyard 2000

Deep ruby purple color; deep, spice, chocolate notes on nose; deep, plummy, black cherry, pepper, spicy flavors; bold on palate, yet balanced and finishes with a slight bitterness. A big, deep Pinot that has more complexity and finesse than its bold flavors would lead you to believe.

587 cases made \$50 Score: 92

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Santa Rita Hills Clos Pepe Vineyard 2000

Deep ruby purple color; deep, extracted aromas of cherry and toasty oak; tart black cherry flavors, full toasty

component and full tannin; long finish. A "big boy" wine with lots of depth and tannin to match.

110 cases made \$45 Score: 89

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Sonoma Mountain Van der Kamp Vineyard 2000

Medium-deep ruby purple color; spice, moderate cherry and dusty aromas; rich cherry and berry flavors with spicy notes and good acidity and structure and a silky mouthfeel; lingering finish. Nicely balanced, this Pinot has lots to offer.

141 cases made \$45 Score: 89

Talus

Pinot Noir California 2000

Medium-deep ruby color; bit of plum and cherry fruit aromas; juicy fruit, lots of red cherry flavors, light body, slightly soft with a lingering finish. Softer, lighter style, very nice flavors and all at a bargain price!

63,000 cases made \$9 Score: 89

OREGON

Carabella Vineyard

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2000

Deep ruby purple color; slight musty aroma, spice and berry underneath; big, full and tannic, lots of berry flavor without a lot of complexity; tannic with a long finish. Big tannic style; slight mustiness on nose tends to distract me from the more attractive flavors.

550 cases made \$33 Score: 86

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Oregon Muirfield Vineyard 2000

Deep ruby purple color; deep black cherry, spice and pepper aromas, some wood as well; deep black cherry, spice and pepper flavors on palate, very nice concentration and reduced fruit flavors, great structure and balance. Big, full flavored Pinot with great concentrated fruit flavors.

459 cases made \$48 Score: 92

Siduri Wines

Pinot Noir Oregon Shaw Vineyard 2000

Medium-deep ruby purple color; mostly berry fruit with a slight stewed character on nose; tart berry cherry flavors, forward and fruity without a lot of complexity; good structure and balance, lingering finish. Well balanced, pleasant flavors, this Pinot has a lot to like.

91 cases made \$48 Score: 90

[PNR]

The Bold And The Beautiful!

These Delicious Dishes Call For Creative, Fun Presentation

By Michael Dotson

BOLD AND ELEGANT FLAVORS AND EYE-GRABBING PRESENTATION—that’s what this month’s menu is all about. This easy-to-cook menu relies on strong individual ingredients that when combined and served with a nice glass of Pinot really make for a very satisfying experience. The simplicity of preparation allows you the opportunity to stretch and explore the presentation of each dish. This is a great time to experiment with different plate shapes, styles and colors. Treat a small group of friends to a family-style presentation on unique platters or plate everything individually using a mix of plates and tableware. Have fun!

The first dish is a combination of an old favorite ingredient—chorizo—and a new one—sardines. If you’ve always stayed away from sardines (c’mon, admit it!), this preparation will surely change your mind. The bold flavors in this dish provide you with lots Pinot options. The rich oily flavor of the sardines and the chorizo makes it a great match for a fruity and well-structured Pinot but a well-structured Rosé of Pinot Noir will work nicely as well.

There’s really no better wine with duck than Pinot Noir and after you’ve tasted the Thyme Roasted Duck Breast, you’ll never doubt that statement again. The ingredients in this dish not only pair well together but also play off against each other as well creating for me a really interesting taste experience. The sweetness of the sunchoke, the salty bite of the olives, the richness of the duck and the herbal note of thyme create a harmony of flavors. A Pinot with great structure and balance is the only answer here—anything less will not stand up to the bold flavors in this course.

The final course is very easy to prepare, but also quite reliant on quality ingredients. Try and stay with organic ingredients and be sure to use a whole-milk, thick Greek-style yogurt. The flavor of the sweet figs cut by the rich, tart cinnamon-scented yogurt makes for a truly sinful experience. This dish is so good, my first inclination is to enjoy it by itself. However, try a glass of dry Madeira or Oloroso Sherry.

Michael Dotson is a fellow Pinot Noir lover and chef de cuisine at Evvia in Palo Alto, Calif. Previous stops on his culinary journey include Au Crocodile in Strasbourg, France; PlumpJack Café and the Slow Club in San Francisco, PlumpJack Squaw Valley Inn and Sonoma’s Heirloom Restaurant and Lounge. Michael can be reached by email at chefdotson@pinotreport.com.



M E N U

**THE BOLD AND THE
BEAUTIFUL!**

**Grilled Fresh Sardines
with Chorizo Hash
and Hazelnut Oil**

*Davis Bynum Winery Russian
River Valley 2000*

*J. Wine Company Russian
River Valley 2000*

**Thyme Roasted Duck
Breast with Sunchoke
Fricassee and Oil-
Cured Olive Purée**

*Siduri Wines Santa Lucia
Highlands Garys’ Vineyard
2000*

*Lynmar Winery Russian River
Valley Requiem 2000*

**Lavender Honey
Roasted Figs with
Cinnamon-Scented
Organic Yogurt**

*Madeira
Oloroso Sherry*



GRILLED FRESH SARDINES WITH CHORIZO HASH AND HAZELNUT OIL

Yields 4 servings

8 Sardines (headed, gutted and butterflied by your fish monger)

8 ounces fresh Spanish chorizo

¼ cup onion, minced

¼ cup potato, minced

¼ cup chile pepper, minced (your choice)

¼ cup cherry, minced

1 cup chiffonade of arugula

4 tablespoons hazelnut oil

1 lemon

Extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

1. Turn grill on high to preheat or start your coals before you start cooking your hash.

2. In a pan on medium heat cook sausage until all fat has rendered and meat begins to crisp. Remove to towel to drain and pour off half of the fat.

3. Add onion, pepper and celery and cook until moisture has evaporated. Add potatoes and cook until *al dente*.

4. Add sausage back to pan, heat through and adjust seasoning and keep warm.

5. Brush sardines generously with olive oil and a little lemon juice, then season with salt and pepper.

Lay fish on a well-oiled grill skin side down and cook until they are medium, never turning.

TO SERVE:

1. Make a little mound with two ounces of hash, then lay one sardine against it propping its tail up in the air. Create another mound with two ounces of hash in front of the head end of the first sardine and prop another sardine up against it. Repeat with remaining sardines and hash on a platter for family style or four individual plates for portions. Toss the arugula with a little olive oil, lemon juice and salt and pepper, then divide evenly among plates creating a mound at the

head end of the last sardine.

THYME ROASTED DUCK BREAST WITH SUNCHOKE FRICASSEE AND OIL-CURED OLIVE PURÉE

Yields 4 servings

4 duck breasts, 8 ounces each, cleaned of silver skin and excess fat

½ cup fresh thyme, chopped

2 cups sunchokes, peeled and cut into small dice

½ cup onions, diced small

½ cup carrot, diced small

1 clove garlic, minced

½ cup Chardonnay

1 tablespoon crème fraîche

¼ cup fresh Italian parsley, chopped

2 tablespoons olive oil

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

8 ounces oil-cured olive purée (recipe below)

1. Sequence: Make the olive purée, then cook the duck. While duck is cooking, make the fricassee. Have olive puree warming while making the fricassee.

2. Score skin side of duck breast and coat with thyme, fresh ground pepper and season with salt.

3. Lay duck breasts in a sauté pan large enough to fit all breasts comfortably. Place over low heat and cook until skin becomes deep brown and is rendered of most fat.

4. Turn breasts over and cook until duck is medium rare (this will not take more than a couple of minutes).

5. Let duck rest on back of stove to keep warm. Be careful to not let it get too hot or it will overcook.

6. While duck is cooking, make fricassee. In a large sauté pan heat olive oil and add onion, carrots and garlic and cook until onions begin to turn translucent.

7. Add sunchokes, a little salt and pepper and cook, stirring frequently, until all moisture has evaporated and sunchokes begin to get tender. Add chardonnay and cook until wine has reduced completely.

ON THE MENU: The Bold And The Beautiful

8. Turn off heat and stir in crème fraîche; keep warm until ready to serve. When ready to serve, stir in parsley and adjust seasoning.

FOR OLIVE PURÉE:

1 cup oil cured olives pitted

1½ cups beef stock

1 clove

Salt and freshly pepper to taste

1. Place olives in small pot, covering with cold water 1 inch over top of olives and bring to simmer over low heat.
2. Simmer olives for five minutes, drain and cool.
3. Place olives in saucepan with rest of ingredients and bring to simmer over low heat. Cook until olives are tender. If liquid reduces by more than a cup or below the top of the olives, add a little water.
4. Place all ingredients in blender and purée until smooth; adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Keep warm on back of stove or reheat when ready to serve.

TO SERVE:

1. Divide fricassee evenly among four large plates and mound. Ring fricassee with an ounce (or more if needed) of the olive purée.
2. Cut duck breasts in half on the bias and prop up against the fricassee. Garnish with a sprig of thyme and serve. (For a

little extra richness you can drizzle a little of the duck fat from the cooking of the duck breasts on the olive purée.)

LAVENDER HONEY ROASTED FIGS WITH CINNAMON-SCENTED ORGANIC YOGURT

Yields 4 servings

12 black mission figs

½ cup lavender honey

1 vanilla bean, split

8 ounces organic whole milk yogurt

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1. Prick figs with a knife and place in sauté pan or baking dish with honey and vanilla bean. Bake in preheated 350 degree F oven until just soft and hot. Let cool slightly before plating.
2. While figs are roasting, mix yogurt with cinnamon. If your yogurt is not thick enough, place in a strainer lined with a coffee filter and drain overnight.
3. On four plates line three figs on an angle just left of center on each plate. In front of figs place two one-ounce quenelles of yogurt propping one against the other and drizzle with the honey from the pan. This dish can be served with a cookie of your choice if desired.

[PNR]

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