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Statement of Principles

It is important that readers understand how I collect and evaluate the information that is reported in the pages of **Burghound.com** (the tasting notes and information are the sole responsibility of the author).

- I am personally responsible for all of my business expenses without exception. This includes airfare, hotels and effectively all of my meals. The purpose is as clear as it is simple: No conflicts of interest. *I do not accept nor do I seek any subsidy, in any form, from anybody.*
- Sample bottles are accepted for evaluation and commentary, much as book reviewers accept advance copies of new releases. I insist, however, that these sample bottles represent the final wines to be sold under that particular label.
- Finished, bottled wines are assigned scores as these wines are market-ready. Wines tasted from barrel, however, are scored within a range. This reflects the reality that a wine tasted from barrel is not a finished product.
- Wines are evaluated within the context of their *appellations*. Simply put, that means I expect a *grand cru* Burgundy to reflect its exalted status.

While the concept of *terroir* remains a controversial issue in the opinion of many people, it is not controversial to the Burgundian mindset—or to me, either. I attempt to convey, where appropriate, how certain wines are particularly good, or particularly bad, at expressing their underlying *terroir*. This is admittedly a difficult thing, rightly open to discussion among the Burgundians themselves, never mind an outside observer such as myself. Nevertheless, it is fundamental to great Burgundy. Mere "hedonism" is just that: empty pleasure seeking. Burgundy can deliver so much more—if it is asked.

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A Brief Word About Scores:

Numerical scores are endlessly debated among wine lovers. Inevitably, critics tend to emphasize certain characteristics at the expense of others. What follows is an explication of scores at **Burghound.com** and the underlying taste values they reflect.

Simply put, Burgundies that emphasize purity, elegance, overall balance and a clear expression of the underlying *terroir* are rated more highly than Burgundies that don't deliver these qualities. Other important characteristics include typicity, richness, balanced extraction, length and harmony. For example, a Volnay should taste like a Volnay and a *grand cru* should deliver a *grand cru* drinking experience.

The score is a summation of the taster's thoughts about a wine. It does not actually express those thoughts. Clearly, a mere number cannot fully represent the nuanced, detailed impression conveyed by a tasting note.

Please note: Wines are scored based on their expected quality at peak drinkability. Many *grands crus* that will, I believe, "be" a 92 may not necessarily taste like a 92-point wine when young, thanks to the tannins or general inaccessibility.

Wines rated 90 points or above are worth a special effort to find and cellar. Wines rated 85 or above are recommended, **especially among regional and villages level wines**. There will be relatively few 90+ point wines, simply because there are relatively few outstanding and superlative wines. Finished, bottled wines are assigned specific scores as these wines are market-ready. Wines tasted from barrel are scored within a range. This reflects the reality that a wine tasted from barrel is not a finished, market-ready product.

95 – 100:	Truly incomparable and emotionally thrilling. A wine so rated is as good as a wine gets. By definition, it is reference standard for its <i>appellation</i> .
90 – 94:	Outstanding. Worth a special effort to purchase and cellar and will provide memorable drinking experiences.
85 – 89:	Good to High quality. Wines that offer solid quality in every respect and generally very good typicity. "Good Value" wines will often fall into this category. Worth your attention.
80 – 84:	Average to Good quality. The wine is "correct", displays no noticeable flaws and will provide pleasing, if straightforward, drinking.
76 – 79:	Barely Acceptable quality. The wine is not worth your attention nor is it a good value.
75 and Below:	Don't Bother. A wine with noticeable, irremediable flaws.

Estimated Maturities:

Estimating a window of when any given Burgundy will be at its peak is an extremely difficult thing to do with precision. The time frames that you see after the score is my best estimate as to when any given wine will likely be at its best. This is of course simply an educated guess about how the wine will evolve and assumes that the wine will have been responsibly shipped and stored, which as long-time collectors know is not always the case. Just as importantly, the time suggested windows are based on how I personally prefer my Burgundies. This effectively means that for reds, there is still obvious freshness and vibrancy remaining to both the fruit and the flavors and while the tannic structure will be largely resolved, it by no means suggests that a completely smooth palate will exist devoid of any firmness. Especially tannic and or concentrated wines will necessarily have wider windows for obvious reasons. For whites, the windows are designed to indicate that point at which youthful fruit has passed into secondary nuances with more fully developed complexity as well as when the textures have rounded out and the sometimes pointed acidity has mellowed. Important note: what the estimated maturities do NOT suggest is how long a wine will remain structurally sound and still capable of providing some enjoyment as many Burgundies are capable of remarkably long periods of graceful decline; however, beyond a certain point they will have passed their peaks and should be drunk, no matter how intellectually interesting they may be. As with anything this subjective, there is no substitute for your own experience and I offer these estimated maturities as a general guideline, not gospel and as the saying goes, your mileage may vary.

The 201 Producers Reviewed in This Issue

Chablis:

Azo, Hervé
Bessin, Jean-Claude
Billaud, Samuel
Billaud-Simon
Brocard, Jean-Marc
Chablisiënne, La
Chenevrières, des
Damp, Daniel
Damp, Sébastien
Damp, Vincent
Dauvissat, Jean et Sébastien
Dauvissat, Vincent
Defaix et Fils, Bernard
Droin, Jean-Paul et Benoit
Drouhin, Joseph
Durup, Jean/Château de Maligny
Ellevin
Fèvre, William
Goisot, Guillem et Jean-Hugues
Grossot, Jean-Pierre
Laroche
Long-Depaquit
Malandes, des
Michel, Louis
Moreau Père et Fils, Christian
Moreau-Naudet
Picq, Gilbert
Pinson Frères
Piuze, Patrick
Pommier, Denis
Raveneau, François
Servin
Simonnet-Fèbvre
Temps Perdus, les
Tribut, Laurent
Villiers, Elise

Mâconnais:

Barraud, Daniel
Chalet Pouilly, du
Cordier, Christophe
Cordier, Roger
Ferret, J. A.
Folie, de la
Fuissé, Château de
Garenne, de la
Guffens-Heynen
Lafon, Héritiers des Comtes
Lavernette, Château de
Manciat-Poncet

Rijckaert, Jean
Robert-Denogent
Rontets, Château de
Saumaize-Michelin
Soufrandière, La/Bret Brothers
Thibert Père et Fils
Verget

Côte Chalonnaise:

Cellier Aux Moines, du
Chamirey, Château de
Cognard, Laurent
Dureuil-Janthial, Vincent
Ferté, de la
Jaeger-Defaix
Joblot
Juillot, Michel
Meix-Foulot, du
Villaine, A. & P. de

California Pinot Noir:

Alma Rosa
Alta Maria Vineyards
Alysian Wines
Ampelos Cellars
Arista Wines
Babcock Winery and Vineyards
Baileyana Winery
Bennett Valley Cellars
Benovia Winery
Black Kite
Bluxome Street Winery
Bohème Wines
Bonaccorsi Wine Company
BR Cohn
Brewer Clifton
Bruliam Wines
Byron Estate Winery
Calera Wine Company
Cameron Hughes
Center of Effort Wines
Clos Pepe Estate
Clouds Rest Vineyards
Cobb Vineyards
Cru Wine Company
Cutruzzola Vineyards
Davis Bynum
Dehlinger Winery
Deovlet Wines
Dragonette Cellars
Dutton-Goldfield Winery

Easton
Evening Land Vineyards
Fess Parker
Flying Goat Cellars
Fog Crest Vineyard
Foxen Winery and Vineyard
Frank Family Vineyards
Fulcrum Wines
Furthermore Wines
Gainey Vineyard
Goldeneye Winery
Grey Stack Cellars
JCB
Kenneth Volk Vineyards
Kosta Browne Winery
La Crema Winery
La Fenêtre
Longoria Wines
MacPhail Family Wines
Melville Vineyards and Winery
Montpellier Vineyards
Morgan Winery
Nagy Wines
Native⁹
Ojai Vineyard, The
Paul Lato Wines
Picket Fence
Presqu'île Winery
Radio-Côteau Vineyards
Rarus Cellars
Rivers-Marie Wines
Robert Stemmler Winery
Rodney Strong Vineyards
Rusack Vineyards
Saintsbury
Sandhi Wines
Sanguis Wines
Solomon Hills Vineyard
Sonoma-Loeb
Spell Winery
Storm Wines
Talisman Wines
Talley Vineyards
The Hilt
Thomas Fogarty Winery
T. R. Elliott
Tyler Winery
VML Wines
Windy Oaks Estate

Oregon Pinot Noir:

Bergström Wines
Brick House Wine Co.
Brooks Wines
Chehalem

Cooper Mountain Vineyards
Dion Vineyard
Evening Land Vineyards
J. K. Carriere Wines
Purple Hands
Roco Winery
St. Innocent Winery
Soter Vineyards
Tendril Wine Cellars
Torii Mor Vineyards & Winery
Trisaetum Winery
Tye Wine Cellars
Walnut City WineWorks
Walter Scott Wines
White Rose Estate
WillaKenzie Estate

En Plus - Champagne:

Ayala
Bollinger
Bruno Paillard, Champagne
Charles Ellner
Delamotte
Diebolt-Vallois
Gonet-Médeville
Jacquesson
J. Lassalle
Lallier
Paul Bara
Pierre Moncuit
Pol Roger
Saint-Chamant
S. Coquille, Champagne
Veuve Fourny et Fils

En Plus:

Amiot, Guy et Thierry
Butterfield, David
Capitain-Gagnerot
Chartron et Trebuchet
Decelle-Villa
Evening Land Vineyards
Giboulot, Emmanuel
Glantenay, Bernard et Thierry
Heart & Hands Wine Company
Jadot
Langoureau, Sylvain
Magnien, Stéphane
Marchand, Denis
Marchand Frères
Moillard
Moulin-à-Vent, Château du
Perdrix, des
Prieuré, du

Here are a few sample California reviews from Issue 48:

“Tasted without Commentary”: For U.S. pinot samples submitted for review that have *not* been specifically solicited that obtain a score of 86 or below, while those wines will be tasted and reviewed, we may choose to not provide a narrative/commentary, however the wines will be listed and included in the database so readers know they have been reviewed. The majority, though not all, of the US pinots were tasted in the home office.

Note: Wines receiving a ➤ symbol are particularly outstanding for their respective *appellations* and especially merit your attention; readers should note that *grands crus* stand on their own.

Calera Wine Company (Hollister, CA)

2010	Pinot Noir – Central Coast	red	88
2009	Pinot Noir – de Villiers Vineyard	red	88
2009	➤ Pinot Noir – Jensen Vineyard	red	90
2009	Pinot Noir – Mills Vineyard	red	89
2009	➤ Pinot Noir – Reed Vineyard	red	90
2009	➤ Pinot Noir – Ryan Vineyard	red	92
2009	➤ Pinot Noir – Selleck Vineyard	red	91

In 1974 winemaker Josh Jensen purchased a limestone rich parcel in Hollister; also chosen for its 2,200 elevation above sea level providing cooler temperatures, and produced his first wines in 1975. Calera’s multi-level (7 tier), gravity-flow winery built into the side of a mountain “allows wines to be moved in the gentlest possible way, by the natural force of gravity. This, along with Calera’s other non-interventionist techniques, such as the use of native yeasts, whole cluster fermentations and minimal racking, insures the bottled wines express all of the natural greatness of their vineyard origins.” For further information, contact: (707) 996-3705 or visit: www.calerawine.com.

2010 Pinot Noir – Central Coast: (7,688 cases, the label notes “35th Anniversary Vintage”, SRP \$24, 14.9%). A ripe but attractively fresh nose features notes of plum and a mix of red berry fruit scents. There is good vibrancy and reasonably good detail to the supple, round and delicious flavors that terminate in a dusty and forward finish. 88/2014+

2009 Pinot Noir – de Villiers Vineyard: (Mt. Harlan, 1,460 cases, SRP \$35, 14.4%). This is materially more subdued and introverted at present though there is good complexity to the red and dark pinot fruit aromas where a black cherry note is prominent. The lush and round middle weight flavors possess good volume, indeed to the point where there is a certain opulence to them, all wrapped in a mouth coating finish. This could easily be enjoyed now or held for a few years first depending on your preferences. 88/2014+

2009 Pinot Noir – Jensen Vineyard: (Mt. Harlan, 281 cases, SRP \$73, 14.5%). A pleasingly well-layered, spicy and fresh nose offers up aromas of primarily mixed red berries and a background note of ripe plum. There is good verve to the medium-bodied flavors that possess an attractive mouth feel that is aided by the velvety texture of the tannins. This delicious effort is presently on the reserved side, in fact there is even a mild hint of austerity on the firm, balanced and lingering finish. This is less accessible than certain other wines in the range and will definitely require medium-term cellaring to be at its best. 90/2016+

2009 Pinot Noir – Mills Vineyard: (Mt. Harlan, 1,599 cases, SRP \$45, 14.9%). A very pretty and admirably pure nose that is quite ripe yet manages to retain a good sense of freshness to the red and blue pinot fruit scents. There is fine richness to the relatively powerful medium weight flavors that possess an abundance of mouth coating extract on the complex finish that evidences hints of both warmth and a touch of bitterness. I like the complexity but there isn’t the same fine interplay between the fruit and finish compared to the best in the range. 89/2015+

2009 Pinot Noir – Reed Vineyard: (Mt. Harlan, 1,277 cases, SRP \$52, 14.8%). Medium ruby. There is an intense floral component to the spicy and relatively high-toned red berry fruit nose that includes a top note of cranberry. There is a lovely sense of energy to the supple and round barely medium weight flavors that display fine detail. This is lighter than its 2009 stable mates and while there is a mild touch of backend warmth the overall impression is one of a harmonious and well-integrated wine. 90/2016+

2009 Pinot Noir – Ryan Vineyard: (Mt. Harlan, 2,318 cases, SRP \$40, 14.1%). A more deeply pitched nose of red and dark berry pinot fruit, blue berry and black raspberry introduces delicious, fresh and lively flavors that are supple and round yet also

possess a sophisticated mouth feel. There is plenty of mouth coating dry extract that buffers the firm tannic spine on the balanced finish that offers excellent depth and length. This is really very good. 92/2017+

2009 Pinot Noir – Selleck Vineyard: (Mt. Harlan, 420 cases, SRP \$78, 14.1%). This is compositionally similar to the Ryan but the aromas are not quite so deeply pitched. There is excellent volume to the generous and round flavors that retain a lovely sense of detail as well as wonderfully appealing depth and fine length on the balanced and impressively long finish. This can match the Ryan's persistence but not quite its depth but to be clear, this is still first rate. 91/2016+

Clos Pepe Estate (Buellton, CA)

2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Estate	red	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills	red	88
2009	Pinot Noir – Estate	red	89
2009	Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills	red	89

Clos Pepe is a family owned vineyard and winery. Of the 29 acres planted in vines, 25 are planted to pinot noir, resulting in about 800 cases of Estate pinot each year with a large percentage selling through their mailing/allocation list. Vineyard manager and wine maker, Wes Hagen, does not source fruit but uses 100% Clos Pepe grapes and uses a combination of hand labor and sustainable/organic biodynamic farming methods with a goal of low yields to obtain “flavor, complexity and intensity.” Hagen said that “I love 2009 but 2010 is perhaps a bit too ripe relative to what I’m trying to achieve with our wines.” For further information, contact: (805) 736-5907 or visit www.clospepe.com

2010 Pinot Noir – Estate: (915 cases, 14.5%). An exceptionally pretty nose of ripe red cherry, raspberry and spice hints introduces delicious, intense and pure medium-bodied flavors that possess both good energy as well as an opulent mouth feel before terminating in a focused, balanced and impressively persistent finish. I like this as it manages to be generous yet reasonably well-detailed as the same time. 91/2015+

2010 Pinot Noir – Sta Rita Hills: (14.5%). A notably fresh nose combines notes of red berry liqueur, plum and discreet spice notes that merge seamlessly into detailed and relatively refined flavors that possess good vibrancy and fine persistence. This is ever so mildly sweet compared to the 2009 version and while it’s more elegant, I prefer the '09 if only slightly. 88/2014+

2009 Pinot Noir – Estate: (500 cases, 14.1%). This is quite ripe with aromas of red berry fruit liqueur and hints of red pinot fruit. There is a lushness to the large-scaled yet reasonably well-detailed flavors that possess a hint of warmth on the finish yet this manages to carry its alcohol relatively well. In sum, this attractively persistent effort is not only quite pretty but offers good underlying depth to go with it. 89/2016+

2009 Pinot Noir – Sta Rita Hills: (14.1%). A wonderfully spicy and beautifully complex nose of black cherry, plum and cassis gives way to delicious, round and solidly intense middle weight flavors that possess a seductive mouth feel and fine length. The finish is agreeably dry and persistent and overall, this is really quite pretty plus it is a wine that could easily be enjoyed now or held for 3 to 5 years first. Worth a look. 89/2014+

Dragonette Cellars (Lompoc, CA)

2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Fiddlestix Vineyard	red	91
2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills	red	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills – Black Label	red	88
2009	Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills	red	88

Dragonette Cellars is a partnership between Brandon Sparks-Gillis and brothers John and Steve Dragonette. 2005 was their first commercial vintage for this 100% hands-on venture. There are no employees as the partners are committed to personally handling all aspects of production. The wines are bottled unfiltered and unfiltered and for further information visit: www.dragonettecellars.com.

2010 Pinot Noir – Fiddlestix Vineyard: (Sta. Rita Hills, 150 cases, SRP \$54, 14.3%). Background hints of smoke, earth and spice add breadth to the otherwise mildly somber dark pinot fruit aromas. There is both good size and weight to the delicious,

intense and suave medium weight flavors that possess excellent complexity on the mouth coating, balanced and solidly long finish. There is a slight touch of backend warmth but overall this is very good juice and worth a look. 91/2015+

2010 Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills: (300 cases, SRP \$42, 14.5%). A deeply pitched and slightly somber nose of dark cherry, raspberry and briar merges into lush, round and delicious medium-bodied flavors that possess good levels of palate coating dry extract. There is solid complexity and lovely balance on the persistent and dusty finish. Fine quality here. 90/2015+

2010 Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills – Black Label: (100 cases, SRP \$75, 14.4%). A distinctly spicy dark berry fruit nose leads to round, forward and suave middle weight flavors that doesn't possess the mid-palate density of the best here. On the plus side there is a wonderful silkiness to the mouth feel as the tannins are quite fine. On the less interesting side, there is noticeable wood on the persistent if moderately tangy finish. 88/2014+

2009 Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills: (225 cases, 13.7%). This is also quite spicy with black cherry and ripe plum aromas introducing lush and round, indeed even opulent medium-bodied flavors that possess excellent volume before terminating in an agreeably dry, clean and delicious finish that also displays a hint of tanginess. 88/2014+

Evening Land Vineyards (Eola Hills, OR [California])

2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Bloom's Field Vineyard	red	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Estate	red	89
2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Evening Land Cuvée	red	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Memorious Vineyard	red	89
2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Tempest Vineyard	red	91

(Also see Oregon and En Plus reviews herein). This venture is “A trio of singular terroirs” – Eola-Amity Hills, Sonoma Coast and Santa Rita Hills and was started by Mark Tarlov and partners Danny Meyer, the Prieur family of Domaine Jacques Prieur and Dorothy Cann Hamilton. Evening Land reunited a vineyard that had been split into two (The Seven Springs Vineyard at the top and Anden at the lower portion). Now, at 80 acres, it is the largest of the Evening Land Vineyards with old vines and new plantings in the Eola-Amity Hills AVA. For Oregon, the winemaker is Isabelle Meunier with consulting winemaker Dominique Lafon; the California winemaker is Sashi Moorman. For more information, visit www.eveninglandvineyards.com or call (707) 320-9372.

2010 Pinot Noir – Bloom's Field Vineyard: (Sta. Rita Hills, 13%). An expressive and ripe nose of red cherry liqueur exhibits subtle spice hints that add a bit of breadth. There is lovely freshness and purity to the refined, delicious and voluminous flavors that display fine detail and vibrancy to the equally complex, balanced and lingering finish. This is an understated effort that should reward 5 to 7 years of cellar time. 90/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Estate: (Sta. Rita Hills, 13%). This is also quite deeply pitched with a plethora of dark berry fruit aromas that are cut with hints of briar, spice and earth. There is good richness to the opulently textured, generous and fleshy middle weight flavors that possess fine mid-palate concentration. The moderately long and reasonably complex finish is both dusty and mouth coating. This is certainly attractive though it doesn't rival the best here. 89/2015+

2010 Pinot Noir – Evening Land Cuvée: (Sta. Rita Hills, 13%). This is slightly riper than the Bloom's with distinct floral and spice notes to the very fresh red berry fruit aromas. There is a textured and lush mouth feel to the mid-palate but the finish tightens up significantly with fine depth, precision and focus. There is an abundance of palate coating dry extract and this balanced effort should also amply reward mid-term cellaring. 91/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Memorious Vineyard: (Sta. Rita Hills, 13.5%). A deeply pitched nose of dark berries, plum and a hint of smoke leads to rich, round and well-concentrated flavors that possess a lush mouth feel before terminating in a clean, dry, focused and firm finish. I like the style and the delivery as it's ripe but harmonious but it just doesn't have the depth necessary to rise to the next level. There is however at least some reason for optimism as there is clearly good underlying material plus the structure to age well. If this can add depth with bottle age my score will be overly conservative. 89/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Tempest Vineyard: (Sta. Rita Hills, 13%). This is notably ripe yet fresh with similar aromatic profile to that of the Memorious except that here there is a distinct hint of menthol. There is good richness to the suave and round middle weight flavors that tighten up nicely on the reasonably well-detailed, impressively complex and palate coating finish that exhibits fine persistence. Despite the description this is actually on the understated side and while not a wine of finesse, there is no excess either. 91/2015+

Fulcrum Wines (Napa, CA)

2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Floodgate Vineyard	red	90
2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Gap’s Crown Vineyard	red	90
2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Londer Vineyard	red	91
2010	Pinot Noir – On Point Christinna’s Cuvée	red	88

2006 was the inaugural vintage for David Rossi, owner, winemaker and founder of Fulcrum Wines. For further information, contact (732) 610-9602 or visit: www.fulcrumwines.com

2010 Pinot Noir – Floodgate Vineyard: (Russian River Valley, SRP \$54, 14.3%). An elegant and very pretty combination of red and blue pinot fruit aromas introduces fresh, vibrant, detailed and solidly well-concentrated medium-bodied flavors that possess fine depth on the balanced and persistent finish. While this lovely effort could easily be enjoyed now it should also reward 3 to 5 years of cellar time. 90/2015+

2010 Pinot Noir – Gap’s Crown Vineyard: (Sonoma Coast, SRP \$56, 14.2%). A pure and airy nose of cranberry and cherry liqueur aromas enjoy added breadth from the presence of plum and spice nuances. There is very good richness to the polished and clean middle weight flavors that possess impressive mid-palate concentration before culminating in a complex, intense, balanced and admirably persistent finish. Worth considering. 90/2015+

2010 Pinot Noir – Londer Vineyard: (Anderson Valley, SRP, \$54, 14.1%). A highly seductive and spicy nose of red berry fruit liqueur aromas slides gracefully into utterly delicious, fresh and vibrant flavors that possess both good size and weight. There is excellent depth to the dusty, pure and balanced finish that delivers fine persistence. This is really very good and it would be my preferred choice among the Fulcrum 2010s. 91/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – On Point Christinna’s Cuvée: (North Coast, SRP \$35, 14%). An attractively fresh and relatively high-toned mélange of cranberry, raspberry and cherry aromas blends into naturally sweet, delicious and admirably vibrant flavors that possess acceptable complexity and good if not special length. I like the understated delivery and clean finish though at the same time it would be accurate to say that this doesn’t have the same overall depth as its stable mates though in fairness, it is not priced like them either. 88/2014+

Grey Stack Cellars (Santa Rosa, CA)

2010	Pinot Noir – Four Brothers Vineyard	red	85
2009	Pinot Noir – Bennett Valley Cuvée	red	87
2009	Pinot Noir – The Fisherman - Four Brothers Vineyard	red	88

Peter Young is the proprietor of Grey Stack Cellars. Young founded their property in 1999 just before Bennett Valley became a new appellation. The vineyard was planted in 2001 and the first grapes were harvested in 2005 with the first wines released in 2007. Pat Sullivan became their winemaker in 2009. For more information, contact (707) 228-1338 or visit: www.greystackcellars.com

2010 Pinot Noir – Four Brothers Vineyard: (Bennett Valley of Sonoma County, 100 cases, 14.8%). A very ripe nose evidences notes of menthol, cherry cough syrup, mocha and plum. The medium-bodied flavors are exceptionally rich, round and velvety with a distinctly tangy character to the mildly bitter and warm finish. This is not especially well-balanced and the tangy quality is pronounced. 85/now

2009 Pinot Noir – Bennett Valley Cuvée: (Sonoma County, 175 cases, 14.3%). Background notes of wood, menthol, spice and very ripe dark berry fruit lead to rich, intense and enveloping flavors that possess a velvety mouth feel before terminating in a mouth coating and reasonably persistent finish that, like the '10 Four Brothers, displays noticeable if more subtle tanginess. This isn't quite monolithic but neither is there much in the way of breadth though perhaps this will come with a few years of bottle age. 87/2014+

2009 Pinot Noir – The Fisherman – Four Brothers Vineyard: (Bennett Valley of Sonoma County, 100 cases, 14.4%). Here the menthol character is pronounced on the nose of violets, dry port and very ripe plum aromas. There is good mid-palate density to the suave, round and quite supple flavors that possess reasonably good depth, all wrapped in a persistent and

mouth coating and mildly warm finish. There is a trace of tang here as well but it's significantly less obvious relative to its two stable mates. This is a big wine and will best please those who enjoy bold pinots. 88/2015+

Picket Fence Vineyards (Hopland, CA)

2010	Pinot Noir	red	83/NC
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Another wine hailing from the Bronco Wine Company. From winemaker Alison Crowe. For more info visit: www.picketfencewine.com.

2010 Pinot Noir: (Russian River Valley, SRP \$18, 13.8%). Rated without commentary. 83/NC

Presqu'ile Winery (Santa Maria, CA)

2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Presqu'ile Vineyard	red	92
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Founded and owned by two generations of the Murphy family with a property that includes 72 acres of certified sustainably farmed vineyards on their 193 acre property that was purchased in 2007. In addition to their own estate production, they source fruit as well. Construction has begun on a permanent winery and tasting room that are slated for completion in 2012. The winemaker is Dieter Cronje. Note that the winery name is pronounced "press-keel" and is French for "almost an island". Cronje noted that the 2010 was vinified with 100% whole clusters and was raised in 25% new wood. For more information call 805.937.8110 or visit www.presquilewine.com.

2010 Pinot Noir – Presqu'ile Vineyard: (Santa Maria Valley, 300 cases produced, SRP \$55, 13.4%). An intensely floral and highly spiced nose leads to phenolically ripe medium-bodied flavors that display excellent detail as well as outstanding depth and length on the balanced, pure and energetic finish. The supporting tannins are moderately firm and impressively fine-grained and this should amply repay mid-term cellaring. This is well worth considering. 92/2015+

Rarus Cellars (Santa Barbara, CA)

2008	Pinot Noir – Turner Vineyard	red	88
2007	Pinot Noir – Turner Vineyard	red	85

Rarus was established by vineyard owners Henry and Marjorie Schimberg. Ryan Carr, of Carr Vineyards, manages Turner Vineyard, a 21 acre site, and is also the winemaker for Rarus. For more information call (805) 965-7985 or visit: www.raruswinery.com.

2008 Pinot Noir – Turner Vineyard: (Sta. Rita Hills, 14.5%). A ripe and deeply pitched nose of dark raspberry liqueur aromas exude a subtle spiciness that continues onto the rich, round and seductively textured medium-bodied flavors that possess fine concentration. There is a suave character to the persistent finish where the only nit is a hint of bitterness. 88/2014+

2007 Pinot Noir – Turner Vineyard: (Sta. Rita Hills, 181 cases, 14.5%). A notably ripe nose offers notes of dark berry fruit, menthol and soft spice hints. There is good richness to the mocha-infused, soft and very round medium-bodied flavors that possess a distinctly tangy, indeed even slightly sharp finish that is notably drying. While I did not try it with food it's possible that a rich dish with a certain amount of fat or sauce could dampen the sharpness. 85/now

Rivers-Marie Wines (Angwin, CA)

2010	Pinot Noir – Gioia Vineyard	red	89
2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Occidental Ridge Vineyard	red	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Silver Eagle Vineyard	red	NR

2010	Pinot Noir – Sonoma Coast	red	89
2010	➤ Pinot Noir – Summa Old Vines	red	92
2010	➤ Pinot Noir – Summa Vineyard	red	91

This relatively new but exceptionally promising winery is the pet project of Thomas Rivers Brown and Genevieve Marie Welsh. Brown and Welsh have been successful in negotiating the purchase of the Summa Vineyard, and now fully control the production. As I have recommended to readers before, if you haven't done so already, this is definitely a mailing list that you want to be on. For further information, contact: (707) 942-2172 or visit www.riversmarie.com.

2010 Pinot Noir – Sonoma Coast: (14.1%). An overtly ripe and slightly macerated nose of slightly jammy dark cherry and plum aromas gives way to agreeably rich, concentrated and utterly delicious medium-bodied flavors that possess excellent depth, balance and length. Readers should note that this benefitted enormously from extended aeration, in particular in the area of complexity so be sure to allow at least an hour and preferably 2 to 3 if you're going to try one young. 89/2015+

2010 Pinot Noir – Gioia Vineyard: (Sonoma Coast, 14.1%). This opened with noticeable reduction though here it passed relatively quickly to reveal very ripe plum and dark cherry aromas. There is fine richness and concentration to the medium weight, velvety and attractively textured flavors that possess lovely balance and very good persistence. At present there is only slightly better than average complexity but there is sufficient depth of material that I would expect more to develop with a few years of bottle age. 89/2015+

2010 Pinot Noir – Occidental Ridge Vineyard: (Sonoma Coast, 14.1%). A beautifully fresh, bright and complex nose of mix red berries, spice and violets leads to attractively rich and plush flavors that possess excellent complexity and fine length on the impeccably well-balanced finish. I very much like the delivery here as there is good concentration as well as good detail plus terrific persistence. This is one of those wines that is so vibrant that it's a pleasure to drink now but at the same time it's clear that there is so much underlying material that it should age well too. I'm not 100% sure that this will catch the Old Vines Summa cuvée but this has perhaps the most upside potential relative to my score. 91/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Silver Eagle Vineyard: (Sonoma Coast, 14.2%). This was troubled by noticeable reduction and even extended aeration, double decanting and a retaste 24 hours later did not cause it to completely dissipate. The reduction was strong enough to extend to the palate and while there appears to be fine concentration, very good phenolic ripeness and well-integrated structure, this clearly was a very odd showing, particularly given how well the other wines in the range showed. Two bottles were sampled with identical results. Not rated.

2010 Pinot Noir – Summa Vineyard: (Sonoma Coast, 13.8%). A ripe and moderately pitched nose of dark berry fruit, plum, dried flowers and spice nuances leads to rich, delicious and round medium-bodied flavors that possess fine depth on the succulent but focused and mouth coating finish. There is good mid-palate concentration and ample amounts of dry extract that imparts a real sense of volume to the backend. While there is already very solid complexity it seems reasonably clear that there is much more to come and though this presently suave and seductively textured effort could be drunk now with pleasure, I would advise cellaring it for at least 5 to 7 years first. 91/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Summa Old Vines: (Sonoma Coast, 13%). Not surprisingly the nose is similar to that of the straight Summa *cuvée* though in this case it's a bit riper and more complex. There is excellent richness to the lush, even opulent flavors that possess the same outstanding depth as displayed by the nose. I very much admire the concentration as the mid-palate brims with dry extract that imparts a velvety texture to the impressively persistent finish. This clearly needs time to develop its full potential but it should be well worth the wait. 92/2017+

Here are a few sample Oregon reviews from Issue 48:

“Tasted without Commentary”: For U.S. pinot samples submitted for review that have *not* been specifically solicited that obtain a score of 86 or below, while those wines will be tasted and reviewed, we may choose to not provide a narrative/commentary, however the wines will be listed and included in the database so readers know they have been reviewed. The majority, though not all, of the US pinots were tasted in the home office.

Note: Wines receiving a ➤ symbol are particularly outstanding for their respective *appellations* and especially merit your attention; readers should note that *grands crus* stand on their own.

Bergström Wines (Newberg, OR)

2010	Pinot Noir – Bergström Vineyard	red	89
2010	➤➤ Pinot Noir – Cumberland Reserve	red	91
2010	➤➤ Pinot Noir – De Lancellotti Vineyard	red	92
2010	➤➤ Pinot Noir – Gregory Ranch	red	91
2010	➤➤ Pinot Noir – Shea Vineyard	red	92
2010	➤➤ Pinot Noir - Temperance Hill Vineyard	red	93
2010	➤➤ Pinot Noir – Winery Block	red	93

Bergström Wines, which is family-owned and operated, was started in 1999 by Dr. John and Karen Bergström with the help of their son Josh and his wife Caroline. Josh Bergström is general manager, vineyard manager and winemaker. All five estate vineyards are farmed biodynamically. For more information, contact: (503) 554-0468 or visit: www.bergstromwines.com

2010 Pinot Noir – Bergström Vineyard: (Dundee Hills, 13.5%). Floral and spice notes add breadth to the pretty mix of red and dark berry fruit aromas that display a background hint of briar. The rich, intense, delicious and well-concentrated flavors possess both good size and weight before culminating in a mildly austere, agreeably dry and dusty finish where a touch of wood surfaces. This attractive effort isn't nearly as complex as the best wines in this very impressive range but the balance is impeccable plus this should age well. 89/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Cumberland Reserve: (Willamette Valley, 13.5%). A pure and wonderfully elegant nose offers up a ripe mélange of various red berry fruit scents that are liberally laced with dried floral nuances. There is excellent detail and vibrancy to the silky-textured middle weight flavors that display a tight, focused, dusty and mildly austere finish that delivers impressive length. This built-to-age effort is complex and harmonious. Good stuff and well worth a look. 91/2017+

2010 Pinot Noir – De Lancellotti Vineyard: (Chehalem Mountains, 13.5%). Here the nose is actually quite similar to that of the Cumberland Reserve and every bit as elegant with even more floral and spice influence. The fresh and energetic medium-bodied flavors possess really lovely purity and perhaps the best delineation of any wine in the range. Like virtually all of these 2010s, the finale is tight but beautifully focused and balanced while delivering outstanding length. This should amply reward 6 to 8 years of cellar time. Check it out if you can find it. 92/2017+

2010 Pinot Noir – Gregory Ranch: (Yamhill-Carlton, 13.5%). A broad and exceptionally pretty nose of rose petal, spice, red currant and dark berry is trimmed in subtle oak notes. There is arresting intensity to the beautifully well-detailed middle weight flavors that terminate in a mouth coating, austere and impeccably well-balanced finish that displays really admirable persistence. This is already impressively complex and if it adds more depth with time in bottle, my score may seem unduly conservative. 91/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Shea Vineyard: (Yamhill-Carlton, 13.5%). A discreet application of wood sets off a more deeply pitched nose of dark berry fruit suffused nose that also exhibits notes of dried flowers and a panoply of spice nuances. The round, supple and quite velvety medium weight flavors possess reasonably good detail even though there is a suave mouth feel that continues onto the dusty, long and impressively complex finish. This is first rate and a classic example of Shea Vineyard, which is to say not especially refined, in fact this is robust but the overall depth is genuinely striking. 92/2017+

2010 Pinot Noir – Temperance Hill Vineyard: (Eola-Amity Hills, 13.5%). A restrained, cool and pure nose of stunning complexity features scents of red pinot fruit, spice, dried flowers, earth and soft wood hints. The equally cool and pure medium weight flavors possess absolutely knockout delineation as well as very fine grained tannins on the explosive, precise and palate staining finish. Wow, this is dazzlingly good and while there is a bit of oak on the finish I doubt that it will take much time for it to be successfully integrated as the underlying material is certainly present. One to buy if you can find it. 93/2017+

2010 Pinot Noir – Winery Block: (Chehalem Mountains, 13.5%). Here too the broad-ranging nose is restrained with its ultra-pure aromas of rose petal, anise, clove, red currant, plum and red pinot fruit. The gorgeously refined, intense and tension-filled flavors also possess outstanding delineation thanks in part to the same impressively fine-grained tannins as displayed by the Temperance Hill. The dusty, precise and remarkably persistent finish is austere and notably dry in the best sense of the term as the tannins coat the mouth. This is really quite classy though note that it will require an ample amount of cellar time. In a word, terrific. 93/2018+

Brick House Wine Co. (Newberg, OR)

2010	➔ Pinot Noir - Boulder Block	red	91
2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Cuvée du Tonnelier	red	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Evelyn's	red	89

This winery was founded in 1990 with 40 acres on Ribbon Ridge, and is owned and operated by Melissa and Doug Tunnell, with the latter serving as winemaker. In 1993 they received full organic certification and had their first commercial harvest. In 2005 they were certified Biodynamic by Demeter USA. From the 19 acres devoted to pinot noir, Tunnell produces pure, intense and structured wines clearly intended for long aging. For more information, contact: (503) 538-5136 or visit: www.brickhousewines.com

2010 Pinot Noir - Boulder Block: (Ribbon Ridge, 13%). Light ruby. There is a distinct floral component to the relatively high-toned raspberry, cherry and herb-infused nose. There is excellent delineation to the energetic and precise middle weight flavors that possess good depth and fine length on the balanced finish. There is lovely depth to the dry but not astringent finish and this should age well. 91/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir - Cuvée du Tonnelier: (Ribbon Ridge, 13%). Light ruby. This also displays distinct floral and herbal notes that add breadth to the fresh and elegant mix of red berry fruit aromas. The vibrant middle weight flavors possess striking complexity and punch before culminating in a balanced, intense, complex, mildly austere and lingering finish. This is still very much a baby and will need time to flesh out but the delivery is lovely. 91/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir - Evelyn's: (Ribbon Ridge, 13%). Classic light ruby. An expressive and relatively high-toned nose features notes of pure red pinot fruit and a hint of briar before merging seamlessly into detailed, vibrant and refined flavors that possess a lovely sense of underlying tension and fine finishing balance. This is light on its feet but displays good flavor authority on the dusty, agreeably dry and lingering finish. If this can add depth with time in bottle, my score will seem unduly conservative. 89/2016+

Dion Vineyard (Cornelius, OR)

2009	Pinot Noir	red	88
2009	Pinot Noir – Winemaker's Reserve	red	88

Kevin Johnson is the founder and winemaker while also farming 60 acres where some of the vines are over 30 years of age. For more information, visit: www.dionvineyard.com or call 503.292.3263.

2009 Pinot Noir: (Willamette Valley, 200 cases, SRP \$21, 14.5%). A refined, pure and attractively complex nose of dark berries, spice and floral hints leads to rich and succulent medium-bodied flavors that possess an abundance of dry extract. The delicious, persistent and ever-so-mildly austere finish is appealingly dry if only moderately deep. Readers in search of good value pinot should consider this effort. 88/2014+

2009 Pinot Noir – Winemaker's Reserve: (Chehalem Mountains, 97 cases, SRP \$32, 14.6%). This is both more complex and more elegant with a perfumed nose of dark cherry, spice and sandalwood. There is good precision to the opulent middle weight flavors that possess both better depth and length than the straight pinot though here there is just enough sweetness to somewhat diminish the overall appeal. Note that sweetness usually only becomes more apparent with bottle age and as such I would not advise cellaring this for any appreciable period. 88/now+

St. Innocent Winery (Salem, OR)

2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Freedom Hill Vineyard	red	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Justice Vineyard	red	89
2010	➔ Pinot Noir – Momtazi Vineyard	red	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Shea Vineyard	red	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Temperance Hill Vineyard	red	89
2010	Pinot Noir – Villages Cuvée	red	88
2010	Pinot Noir – Zenith Vineyard	red	90

The St. Innocent Winery was founded in 1988 by Mark Vlossak, who is the current winemaker and president, along with eight investors. In 2006, St. Innocent purchased an interest in Zenith Vineyard (formerly O'Connor Vineyard) located in the Eola-Amity Hills, which is also where the winery is located. This 133 acre site has 81 acres planted. They now have a total of 13.5 acres of pinot planted at the estate for their exclusive use and current production is 8-10,000 cases per year. I have long admired Vlossak's work but if anything he seems more consistent than ever. Moreover this is not only an excellent group of wines but they also offer simply terrific values. For further information, contact (503) 378-1526 or visit: www.stinnocentwine.com

2010 Pinot Noir – Freedom Hill Vineyard: (Willamette Valley, 776 cases, SRP \$42, 13%). An elegant, beautifully complex and admirably pure nose of black raspberry, cherry, plum and subtle spice notes precedes rich, delicious and vibrant medium-bodied flavors that possess fine size and weight. There is a touch of youthful austerity on the dry, long, dusty and quite serious finish where the balance is impeccable. This attractively priced effort should repay extended aging. 91/2017+

2010 Pinot Noir – Justice Vineyard: (Eola-Amity Hills, 271 cases, SRP \$50, 13%). A pungent nose of dark berry fruit, menthol and briar notes leads to impressively rich broad-shouldered flavors that possess plenty of size, weight and punch yet the mouth feel is really quite refined, even silky. There is an attractive hint of austerity to the dry, clean and dusty finish that is balanced but not as deep or persistent as that of the Freedom Hill though to be sure, this is certainly a very attractive effort. 89/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Momtazi Vineyard: (McMinnville, 1,069 cases, SRP \$32, 13%). A restrained and notably cool nose features somewhat somber notes of briar, plum, earth and a mix of both red and dark pinot fruit scents. There is good vibrancy to the plush yet beautifully well-detailed flavors that are supported by ripe tannins that are already well-integrated on the complex, balanced and strikingly long finish. This delicious effort is really quite forward yet has the underlying material necessary to reward medium-term cellaring. **This delivers excellent value.** 91/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Shea Vineyard: (Yamhill-Carlton, 922 cases, SRP \$45, 13.5%). A beautifully layered nose combines notes of menthol, spice, briar with intensely floral aromas that also display scents of plum and black raspberry. There is lovely richness and volume to the solidly well-concentrated middle weight flavors that possess firm structure that is phenolically mature, all wrapped in a burly, even robust finish where the barest hint of warmth can be discerned. This is not especially refined but the always frank character of the Shea Vineyard is very much in evidence. 90/2017+

2010 Pinot Noir – Temperance Hill Vineyard: (Eola-Amity Hills, 583 cases, SRP \$32, 13%). Here there is enough reduction to render the nose difficult to assess and if you're going to try a bottle young I would strongly advise decanting it. The lush medium weight flavors possess a sophisticated mouth feel yet the dusty and mouth coating finish is not especially complex and the finish falls off relatively quickly. This is presently showing quite awkwardly and given what I have seen from this vineyard in the past as well as the generally outstanding quality of the St. Innocent range in 2010 I am inclined to offer the benefit of the doubt. A second bottle also displayed mild reduction but less than the first. 89/2016+

2010 Pinot Noir – Villages Cuvée: (Willamette Valley, 2,250 cases, SRP \$24, 13.5%; note that this is the only wine in the range bottled with a synthetic cork). An ultra-pure and high-toned nose of essence of red berry fruit and violet nuances is followed by round, supple and very forward flavors that possess an attractively dry finish. This is not especially complex but I very much like the sense of verve and impressive persistence. Fine value here. 88/2014+

2010 Pinot Noir – Zenith Vineyard: (Eola-Amity Hills, 704 cases, SRP \$36, 13.5%). An expressive nose of dark berry fruit and earth aromas sees added breadth in the form of a pungent combination of briar, tar and menthol scents. There is plenty of volume, size, weight and punch to the textured and robust flavors that culminate in a somber, serious and mouth coating finish. This delicious effort is well-balanced if not especially refined. Excellent value in a built-to-age style. 90/2017+

Here are a few sample Champagne reviews from Issue 48:

Bollinger (Aÿ)

NV	Brut Rosé	Champagne	89
NV	Brut – Special Cuvée	Champagne	90
2004	Brut – La Grande Année Rosé	Champagne	93
2002	Brut – La Grande Année	Champagne	93

The history of Bollinger goes back centuries and currently comprises 163 hectares of vines. Bollinger only produces two types of blends, both from the first pressing, the “cuvée” or first run juice – non-vintage blends and vintage blends. The wines that make up the reserve magnums or the blend of La Grand Année are always vinified in oak barrels. (Terlato Wines International, www.terlatowines.com, Lake Bluff, IL).

NV Brut Rosé: (62% pinot noir, 24% chardonnay, 14% pinot meunier, 5-10% of the blend comes from reserve wines aged from 5-15 years in magnums under natural cork, 1,400 cases, SRP \$110.). An overtly fruity nose speaks of high-toned aromas of raspberry, strawberry and spicy cherry nuances. The effervescence is quite prominent, indeed this is borderline foamy though the mousse falls away rather quickly to reveal delicious and generous flavors that are easy-to-like but not quite as complex as one might like. Still this is very pretty and I like the dry, cool and clean finish. 89/now

NV Brut – Special Cuvée: (60% pinot noir, 25% chardonnay, 15% pinot meunier, SRP \$90). An expressive and attractively layered nose offers up notes of brioche, yeast and baked apple scents. Much like the Brut Rosé the effervescence is prominent to the point of being foamy yet it is not aggressive as the bead is quite fine on the moderately complex, round and delicious flavors that deliver fine if not truly exceptional persistence on the intensely yeasty finish. 90/now+

2004 Brut – La Grande Année Rosé: (62% pinot noir, 38% chardonnay, 23 crus include 73% *grand crus* and 27% *premier crus*, aged on the lees for at least 6 years, 250 cases, SRP \$230). A gorgeously complex, pure and refined nose of delicate red berry fruit, yeast and brioche aromas introduce delicious, fresh and strikingly intense flavors that are supported by an extravagant mousse that imparts a real sense of vibrancy to the dry, yeasty and again impressively complex finish. This is a really impressive rosé that is drinking well now though depending on your taste preferences could also just as easily be held for another 5 to 10 years. 93/now+

2002 Brut – La Grande Année: (60% pinot noir, 40% chardonnay, 100% *grand* and *premier crus*, SRP \$150). In contrast to the heightened expressiveness of the 2004 Grande Année Rosé this is actually quite restrained with discreet notes of green apple, pear and citrus peel. The delicious, intense and voluminous flavors enjoy a prominent effervescence that is almost foamy yet the bead is strikingly fine, all wrapped in a distinctly yeasty, dry and admirably complex finish that goes on and on. This too could be enjoyed now or held for a number of years to come depending on how much yeast character you like. 93/now+

Charles Ellner (Epernay)

NV	Brut Cuvée de Reserve	Champagne	88
NV	Brut Rosé	Champagne	88
2002	Brut – Prestige	Champagne	89
2002	Brut – Seduction	Champagne	89

Charles Emille Ellner, the founder, began acquiring small vineyards in Epernay while he was at the start of a career as a professional "riddler". The house is now comprised of 54 ha of vineyards in 15 different villages located in the main wine growing areas of Champagne. As a grower/producer, his four sons and wife all take part in the various business activities. The cellars have approximately 2 km of tunnels and contain a permanent stock of 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 bottles. (Massanois Imports, www.sherbrookecellars.com, Washington DC.).

NV Brut Cuvée de Reserve: (60% chardonnay, 40% pinot noir, SRP \$48). A perfumed nose of soft floral, citrus and brioche hints leads to an aggressively effervescent palate impression, indeed this is borderline foamy. The flavors are on the fruity side without the requisite depth necessary to be at the next level though I do like the agreeably dry finish. 88/now

NV Brut Rosé: (50% each chardonnay and pinot noir, SRP \$48). Here the nose is really quite pure and refined with a pretty mix of red berries, rose petal hints and citrus peel. This is also almost foamy and again the delicious and crisp flavors possess only moderate depth. I like the style as well as the moderately dry finish but would like to see more complexity. 88/now

2002 Brut - Prestige: (63% chardonnay, 37% pinot noir, SRP \$60). A very mild touch of reduction does not materially detract from the otherwise elegant and pure nose that mixes citrus blossom, yeast and pear aromas. The delicious and round flavors possess better depth as well as an interesting, and distinct, hint of anise on the slightly soft finish. 89/now

2002 Brut - Seduction: (60% chardonnay, 40% pinot noir, SRP \$65). An attractively fresh nose of green apple, pear and lemon peel merges into foamy, delicious and vibrant flavors that possess acceptable but not truly distinguished complexity on the appealingly dry finish that offers average length. This is perfectly good if not special. 89/now

Delamotte (Mesnil-sur-Oger)

NV	Brut	Champagne	89
NV	Brut Blanc de Blancs	Champagne	88
NV	Brut Rosé	Champagne	86

Champagne Delamotte is a small producer of Champagne, along with its "sister" winery Champagne Salon. The estate was founded in Reims 1760 and is the fifth-oldest Champagne house in the region. Delamotte produces predominantly Blanc de Blancs. (Vineyard Brands, www.vineyardbrands.com, Birmingham, AL).

NV Brut: An attractively complex nose offers up yeast, apple, spiced pear and soft floral scents. There is equally good complexity on the moderately effervescent flavors that possess good character and persistence. This delicious effort is not particularly refined but it is both satisfying and refreshing. It could be enjoyed now or held for a few more years first. 89/now+

NV Brut Blanc de Blancs: A beautifully pure and admirably refined nose of citrus blossom, green apple and toast hints leads to similarly refined flavors where the effervescence is quite fine. This is a wine of finesse that is both stylish and clean but unfortunately doesn't offer the complexity that it needs to be at the next level. To be sure, this is delicious and the refinement is indeed attractive but the finish leaves you wanting more depth. 88/now+

NV Brut Rosé: An airy, cool and overtly fruity nose of raspberry, cherry and strawberry is very much in keeping with the fruit-driven character of the effusively effervescent flavors that terminate in an agreeably dry but disappointingly simple finish that is on the short side. 86/now

Gonet-Médeville (Bisseuil)

NV	Brut Blanc de Noirs Premier Cru	Champagne	90
NV	Brut Tradition Premier Cru	Champagne	88
NV	Extra Brut Rosé Premier Cru	Champagne	92
2003	Extra Brut Cuvée Théophile	Champagne	90

Xavier and Julie Gonet have managed this family estate in Champagne since 2000 when they took over running 8 hectares of vineyards from his parents. All parcels are farmed organically and there is no malolactic fermentation and dosage is minimal. (Martine's Wines, www.martineswines.com, Novato, CA).

NV Brut Tradition Premier Cru: (70% chardonnay, 25% pinot noir, both from Bisseuil, and 5% pinot meunier, SRP \$55). An expressive nose of yeast, green apple and discreet spice notes introduces delicious and relatively round flavors that are distinctly fruity but don't have the depth of the other wines in the range. In sum this is perfectly good but not truly distinguished. 88/now

NV Brut Blanc de Noirs Premier Cru: (100% pinot noir from Bisseuil, SRP \$60). An impressively layered nose offers up cool notes of lemon, green apple, rose petal and baked bread. The delicious and exceptionally rich flavors possess a moderate mousse and fine finishing character on the moderately dry finale. A full-bodied effort that is drinking perfectly. 90/now

NV Extra Brut Rosé Premier Cru: (60% chardonnay from Mesnil sur Oger, 30% Pinot noir from Ambonnay *grand cru*, SRP \$69, disgorged October, 2011). Pale pink but clearly a rosé. An elegant, airy and very fresh nose of strawberries and cool pinot fruit leads to delicious and quite crisp flavors that possess an almost aggressive effervescence before culminating in a delicious, clean, bone dry and impressively complex finish. This is really well made and I quite like it but be aware that in this case the notation of “Extra Brut” is spot on because this is very, very dry and intense. But if your taste runs to very dry rosé, this is well worth a look. While it could be drunk now with considerable pleasure, for my taste I would allow it a few years in the cellar first. 92/2014+

2003 Extra Brut Cuvée Théophile: (60% chardonnay from Mesnil sur Oger “Champs d’Alouettes”, 40% pinot noir from Ambonnay “Grandes Ruelles”, bottled in April 2004 and aged in 30% new oak barrels for 49 months, disgorged in May 2008, SRP \$175). Moderately golden. A ripe, mature and penetrating nose of citrus, floral notes and white peach introduces rather rich, round and voluminous flavors that possess a moderate effervescence along with excellent complexity while terminating in a mouth coating finish. This is clearly a 2003 in character and the Extra Brut treatment works well here as it offsets the natural tendency towards sweetness that the 2003 vintage often displays. For my taste this is fully mature and I would stress that this will most please those looking for depth and mature flavors rather than crispness or tartness. 90/now

Jacquesson (Dizy)

NV	Brut – Cuvée 735	Champagne	93
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The firm of Jacquesson was founded in 1798 though in 1974 the Chiquet family purchased it and established its headquarters in Dizy in the midst of their own vineyard holdings. Jacquesson directly controls 30 ha of vineyards and sources fruit from an additional 10 ha that are owned by contract growers who have holdings in both the Grande Vallée de la Marne and the Côte de Blancs. (Vintage '59 Imports, www.vintage59.com, Washington D.C.).

NV Brut – Cuvée 735: (72% from the 2007 harvest and reserve wines; from *grands* and *premiers* crus in the Grande Vallée de la Marne and the Côte des Blancs; 47% chardonnay, 33% pinot noir and 20% pinot meunier, bottled without filtration, dosage 3.5 gr/l, disgorged September 2011). An overtly yeasty and positively stunningly complex nose is comprised of apple, pear and soft floral aromas. The firmly effervescent flavors enjoyed the same striking complexity as telegraphed by the nose and the sheer persistence is seriously impressive. A knockout and a great value. 93/now+

Pierre Moncuit (Les Mesnil-Sur-Oger)

NV	Brut Blanc de Blancs Grand Cru	Champagne	93
2004	Brut Blanc de Blancs Grand Cru	Champagne	92

Pierre Moncuit was established in 1889 and comprises approximately 15 hectares of chardonnay vineyards, mostly older vines that average 30 years of age. Nichole Moncuit and Yves Moncuit have directed the activities since they took over from their father in 1977. (Charles Neal Selections, www.charlesnealselections.com, Richmond, CA).

NV Brut – Blanc de Blancs Grand Cru: A complex, strikingly elegant and airy nose features notes of baked bread, yeast, pear, green apple and lovely spice notes. The refined character continues onto the absolutely delicious flavors that possess a moderately exuberant mousse before terminating in a dry, crisp and slightly austere finish that is clean, refreshing and persistent. This knockout is drinking perfectly now and is highly recommended. 93/now+

2004 Brut – Blanc de Blancs Grand Cru: The barest hint of reduction is not enough to hide the otherwise pure and pretty pear and green apple aromas that are trimmed in touches of white flowers and toast. The supporting mousse is very prominent, indeed it borders on being foamy, with delicious, cool and restrained flavors that possess fine precision on the impressively complex, yeasty and very dry finish. This is still developing and while it could certainly be drunk now with enjoyment for my taste I would continue to cellar this attractively pure effort for another 2 to 4 years. 92/2014+

Pol Roger (Epernay)

NV	Brut Pure	Champagne	90
NV	Brut Réserve	Champagne	91
2004	Brut Rosé	Champagne	91
2002	Brut	Champagne	92
2000	Brut	Champagne	90
2000	Brut Blanc de Blancs	Champagne	93

Family owned since 1849. Pol Roger owns 200 acres of vineyards and has cellars that extend over 4 miles on 2 levels and is one of only a few Grande Marque Champagne houses that remains family owned and operated. The cooler than the norm cellars "slows the second fermentation, encouraging a finer mousse or bubbles." Pol Roger owns close to 50% of the vineyards used for their Champagne production and grapes are sourced exclusively from *premier* and *grand cru* vineyards that rate at an average of 95 points on the Échelle des Crus classification system. (Frederick Wildman, www.frederickwildman.com, NY, NY).

NV Brut Pure: (First released in 2007, Pure is a zero dosage champagne, 33% each chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot meunier, SRP \$75). A wonderfully elegant very pretty nose of citrus, brioche and floral nuances gives way to robust flavors that possess a borderline aggressive effervescence. There is a real sense of vibrancy here that is enhanced by the clean, crisp and lightly citrus-infused finish that displays just a hint of bitterness that good Champagne sometimes does. 90/now+

NV Brut Réserve: (As an interesting note, this is the champagne that was served at the reception following the marriage of His Royal Highness Prince William of Wales to Catherine Middleton in 2011, 33% each chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot meunier, SRP \$50). This is, not surprisingly, actually quite similar to the Pure but with just a bit more complexity and a hair more toastiness. This is also intensely effervescent with a mouth feel that is exceptionally vibrant before culminating in clean, cool, persistent and impressively refreshing finish. This is a pleasure to drink and it could be enjoyed now or held for additional development though I like the energy it offers now. A fine value. 91/now+

2004 Brut Rosé: (From 20 *grand* and *premier cru* vineyards in the Montagne de Reims and the Côte des Blancs, 65% pinot noir, 35% chardonnay, SRP \$120). A discreetly fruity nose offers up cool and agreeably fresh notes of raspberry and strawberry. The mousse is quite generous, indeed foamy is not over the top to describe the sensation on the mid-palate yet the clean, pure and crisp finish is decidedly refreshing. This moderately dry effort is not the most complex vintage-dated rosé on the market but I very much like the style. 91/now+

2002 Brut: (Produced from 20 *grand* and *premier cru* vineyards in the Montagne de Reims and the Côte des Blancs, 40% chardonnay, 60% pinot noir, aged 9 years in the cellars before being released). This is beginning to display the initial hints of maturity with a hint of reduction to the otherwise pretty notes of baked bread, lemon rind and green apple. There is excellent complexity to the reserved and moderately austere finish that is not quite bone dry but it's close to it. This is a very classy but aloof effort that will most please those who enjoy a certain restraint and understatement to their bubbles. As the description would suggest this could be enjoyed now or held for a few more years first. 92/now+

2000 Brut: (Sourced from *grand* and *premier cru* vineyards in the Montagne de Reims and the Côte des Blancs, 40% chardonnay, 60% pinot noir, SRP \$115). A pretty and attractively complex nose features notes of brioche, yeast, floral and citrus nuances. There is good vibrancy to the delicious and crisp flavors that possess a moderately fine bead to the effervescence, all wrapped in a solidly lingering finish. This is pretty but frankly I expected more as the palate impression lacks the same depth as the nose. For my taste this has essentially arrived at its peak and I would not expect further upside development. 90/now

2000 Brut Blanc de Blancs: (Sourced exclusively from *grand cru* vineyards of Cramant, Les Mesnil, Oger, Avize and Oiry and only released in the finest of vintages, SRP \$130). A restrained, indeed almost discreet nose of primarily citrus-inflected scents though there are background nuances of brioche, green apple and pear. There is lovely complexity to the subtly layered, intense and refined flavors that possess a relatively fine mousse, all wrapped in a very dry though not overtly austere finish. This is an admirably pure effort that is still quite tight and linear and as such I would be inclined to continue to cellar it for another 3 to 5 years first. 93/2015+

Additionally for each California and Oregon issue, Allen includes his top pinot noir selections. Here is a portion of his top 59 California list from issue 48:

Burghound.com's 59 California Pinot Noir Selections

2010	Pinot Noir – Precocious	Babcock Winery and Vineyards	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Psi Clone	Babcock Winery and Vineyards	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Mount Carmel	Brewer Clifton	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills	Brewer Clifton	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Estate	Clos Pepe Estate	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Fiddlestix Vineyard	Dragonette Cellars	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Sta. Rita Hills	Dragonette Cellars	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Bloom's Field Vineyard	Evening Land Vineyards	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Evening Land Cuvée	Evening Land Vineyards	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Tempest Vineyard	Evening Land Vineyards	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Floodgate Vineyard	Fulcrum Wines	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Gap's Crown Vineyard	Fulcrum Wines	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Londer Vineyard	Fulcrum Wines	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Russian River Valley	La Crema Winery	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Bien Nacido Vineyard	Longoria Wines	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Carrie's	Melville Vineyards and Winery	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Estate – Sta. Rita Hills	Melville Vineyards and Winery	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Presqu'île Vineyard	Presqu'île Winery	92
2010	Pinot Noir – Alberigi	Radio-Côteau Vineyards	90

And from his top 41 Oregon list from issue 48:

Burghound.com's 41 Oregon Pinot Noir Selections

2010	Pinot Noir – Cumberland Reserve	Bergström Wines	91
2010	Pinot Noir – De Lancellotti Vineyard	Bergström Wines	92
2010	Pinot Noir – Gregory Ranch	Bergström Wines	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Shea Vineyard	Bergström Wines	92
2010	Pinot Noir – Temperance Hill Vineyard	Bergström Wines	93
2010	Pinot Noir – Winery Block	Bergström Wines	93
2010	Pinot Noir – Boulder Block	Brick House Wine Co.	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Cuvée du Tonnelier	Brick House Wine Co.	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Sunny Mountain	Brooks Wines	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Ridgecrest Vineyards	Chehalem	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Stoller Vineyards	Chehalem	91
2010	Pinot Noir – Reserve	Cooper Mountain Vineyards	90
2010	Pinot Noir – Freedom Hill Vineyard	St. Innocent Winery	91