

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™
Focus on Sineann Winery

By Christina Kelly
 Avalon Editor/Writer



For the past four years, Peter Rosback produced small quantities of intense, often powerful, bright and impressive wines for Sineann, his Newberg, OR winery.

This fifth year, says Rosback, is his best.

"The wine is surpassingly good—this is the fifth year in a row of great crops, great weather and great wine," Rosback said. "In fact, this year's Pinot Gris is the best I've ever made."

A powerful boast from a winemaker who consistently produces high scoring, handcrafted wines described as over-the-top, exuberant and complex.

Exciting Winery from the Beginning

Sineann is easily one of the Northwest's most exciting wineries. Rosback and his partner David O'Reilly scoured Washington and Oregon for the best vineyards they could find. Their first commercial effort, in 1994, produced an amazing old vine Zinfandel from one of the oldest producing vineyards in the Northwest.



"Where the fruit comes from is a big deal to us," Rosback explained. "We select farmers who not only have pride in their work, but take pride in the end product. Our producers have low yields, high elevations and are able to ripen the fruit reliably."

Rosback and O'Reilly Partnership

Rosback, with his fiery red hair cropping his face like a lion's mane, is surprisingly low key and unassuming. He is intense and passionate about wine and his family (daughters Sydney, 15, Casey-Jane, 6, and wife Nancy) but less comfortable with the daily marketing and chest thumping associated with selling premium wine. It is where the partnership developed with O'Reilly, whom he met in the early 1990s while O'Reilly worked as a marketing director for Elk Cove Vineyards and Rosback helped out with crush and harvest.

In fact, O'Reilly has performed such a good marketing job that some people are confused and believe O'Reilly is the winemaker for Sineann. To confuse the issue further, Rosback is consultant for Owen Roe Winery, where O'Reilly is the winemaker, and O'Reilly wines, the value-priced label of the group.

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NW Big Reds Club™
Focus on Owen Roe Winery

By Christina Kelly
 Avalon Editor/Writer



If there is such a thing as the luck of the Irish, winemaker David O'Reilly has found a pot of gold underneath his Willamette Valley, Oregon rainbow.

O'Reilly is a dapper man- meticulous in appearance and in his work. When he smiles, there is mischief in his eyes and smile crinkles-a sign that smiling is a frequent behavior.



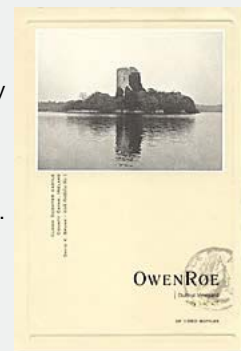
Everything O'Reilly touches has to be the best. It is almost an obsession with him. From huge, gorgeous wines to hand-numbered bottles and objects of art gracing his labels, O'Reilly spends the money for a total package.

"Every thing we do is meticulous," said O'Reilly, 37, one of 12 children born in Belfast, Ireland. "What we do is totally uncompromised. It is a lifestyle that includes hard work, but the product is thoroughly rewarding."

Everything O'Reilly does is also thoroughly Irish. The wineries associated with O'Reilly-Sineann (pronounced Shen-ay-yan), Owen Roe, and O'Reilly's -all have ties to his former homeland. Sineann is Gaelic for Shannon River, considered the lifeblood of Ireland. The name stems from a mythical princess of the Leprechauns, who drowned in the river. Owen Roe was named for Owen Roe O'Neil, a great Irish patriot. And, of course, O'Reilly's, which features a drawing of a huge Irish wolfhound on the label.

"I like to tell people that I got involved in the business to follow an Irishman's dreams," said O'Reilly with a wink and an Irish brogue that comes and goes. "Imagine making a living by drinking!"

He jokes of course, because O'Reilly is dead serious about wine making. Although he enjoys the high ratings bestowed on his wines, O'Reilly says he is more satisfied with great taste.



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November 2003
541-752-7418

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™
Focus on Sineann Winery
 Resonance PN 02 \$42
 Phelps Creek PN 02 \$42
 Jezebel PN 02 \$20

Northwest Big Reds Club™
Focus on Owen Roe Winery
 Dubrul Syrah 02 \$42
 Zinfandel Hillside 02 \$36
 Sinister Hand Grenache/Syrah 02 \$20

New Discoveries Club™
 Patit Creek Merlot 00 \$33
 Hells Canyon Retriever Red \$15

Dessert Wine Club™ Combined Nov and Dec Club
 Kestrel Chardonnay Ice Wine \$45
 Honeywood Marionberry Wine \$10

Owen Roe page 2

"If you want to study truth and reality, it's grounded in nature," O'Reilly said. "The wine business is drawn intrinsically to nature and soil. You don't get into this business to make a fortune-I was drawn to it."

For more than six years, O'Reilly worked for Elk Cove performing marketing tasks. However, he was leaning more and more about winemaking. The urge to make his own wine was singing inside his head. It was at this time that he met Peter Rosback, an amateur winemaker who helped the winery during crush.

Rosback was also bitten by the urge to produce wine. With Irish heritage and love of good wine in common, they struck a partnership and created Sineann.

"David has a great palate and is one of the best marketing people in the state," Rosback said. "We're a good team. Each of us brings talents to the table to produce the best wine we can. Of course, it starts with great fruit, and that also has to be the best we can get."

"Peter brings an irrepressible passion to everything he does," O'Reilly said. "I think that's why we are such good partners."

O'Reilly and Rosback left Elk Cove in 1998 to produce wines in relatively small quantities. While Sineann is produced at Medici, O'Reilly has a new winery to produce Owen Roe and O'Reilly's. He spends a great deal of time on the road, from spot to spot, overseeing vineyards. He and Rosback purchase grapes from the Willamette Valley to Hood River to Walla Walla and Columbia valleys in Washington state.

The good news comes in the form of a converted barn, his own facility for Owen Roe and O'Reilly's. Sineann will continue production at Medici for the time being.

"I will be happy to have one location to produce my wines," he added.

Owen Roe "Sinister Hand" Syrah Grenache Blend

\$20 sold out, only available to Wine Club members

A new affordable wine from Owen Roe, rather limited. The word is out on this wine and it has been racing out the door.

David often says- it's what's inside the bottle that counts, and he's done a great job on that account here. The wine is a delightful medium-full bodied fruity red that makes me smile when I drink it. Really, you cannot be depressed and drink this wine. It's "exuberant"!

\$19.99
Quantity

Winemaker's Notes, Avalon Tasting Notes, Reviews

This Rhone inspired wine is a fresh blend of the exuberant bright fruit of the Grenache grape, and the wild spice and big dark cherry fruit of Syrah. The wine has wild and gamey notes of bacon fat suggesting the wines of the Northern Rhone.

The label shows the severed hand of Owen Roe O'Neil- the Irish patriot whose severed hand appears on the coat of arms of winemaker David O'Reilly's family.

This wine is a blend of grapes from the Columbia River Valley. The Grenache grapes and 75% of the Syrah grapes are from the Elerding vineyard in Alderdale, Washington. The remaining grapes are from the Lewis Vineyard near the Dalles, Oregon.



The Wines

Owen Roe Syrah Dubrul Vineyard 02

very very limited- Sexy!
\$42.00

Winemaker's Notes, Avalon Tasting Notes, Reviews

This wine is made with grapes from two vineyards located in what David O'Reilly describes as a "magical area" in the Rattlesnake Hills in Northern Yakima Valley. Having been there recently for the first time, I can see why he calls it "magical".

The region is eerily wild, with vast expanses of dusty high desert suddenly broken by valleys, high cliffs breaking steeply to the fringe of green along the wide blue grey river. You drive for miles past mile long fields of apple trees, then veer into military test ranges, regimental formations of massive power poles marching into the distance, and occasional tiny pockets of buildings, including one that announces "you are now in the middle of nowhere" with great pride.

Owen Roe's Syrah is uniquely its own style. It has a burly, wild, gamey yes frankly sexy quality that I find irresistible.

From the winemaker: "These two vineyards are located in a magical area in the Rattlesnake Hills in Northern Yakima Valley. The combination of high elevation, intensive vineyard management, and a small crop yielded superbly balanced fruit. The wine is polished and rich all the while being burly with heady pepper aromas and plenty of structure. A huge Syrah that will reward with a few years of cool cellaring.

Owen Roe Hillside Zinfandel 02

Sold out, only available to Wine Club Members
\$36.00

Winemaker's Notes, Avalon Tasting Notes, Reviews

This wine is pretty irresistible. When I think of Zinfandel, I used to think of California- let's face it, they pioneered the wine. But with the right vineyard site and a winemaker who understands the grape, awesome Zinfandels are being made in the NW.

To my palate, the best Zins from the NW have more complexity and rich, hugely textured backbone, than the (to me) high alcohol fruit bombs of that state south of here. The cold nights and clear sunny days of fall in Washington State particularly work their magic and build complexity and healthy acidity that translates to backbone and big dark complex fruit flavors.

David made his new Zinfandel 02 from fruit that he says "may be the best flavored grapes that we have ever tasted - the night that we destemmed the fruit we couldn't keep our families from eating a portion of their weight of the incredible fruit".

The wine is a monster, and does have a pretty high alcohol content- 16.5%. But there is not a hint of "heat" and the gushingly rich fruit flavors are balanced with big, balanced tannins and exotic, intense scents.

From the winemaker: "This Monster Zin (16.5% alcohol) is one of our favorite wines of the vintage. It is at once huge with incredible fruit flavors yet it has absolutely delightful fragrance and textures. Lonnie Wright provided us with maybe the best flavored grapes that we have ever tasted - the night that we destemmed the fruit we couldn't keep our families from eating a portion of their weight with the incredible fruit."

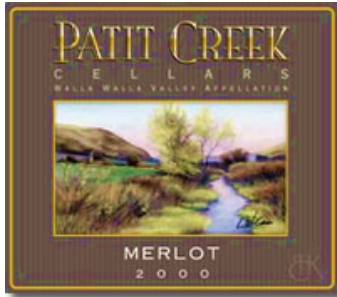


New Discoveries Club

Patit Creek Merlot 00 \$33

Wine Press Northwest, Summer 2003, described this 2000 Merlot as:

"A huge red wine from a new winery...that opens with aromas of black cherries and smoky oak and dark chocolate flavors with rich tannins and well-balanced acids."



This rich Merlot is crafted from grapes grown in the Seven Hills and Pepper Bridge vineyards of the Walla Walla Valley appellation.

Patit Creek's grapes are selected from vines trained on a split canopy trellis and irrigated with a state-of-the-art computerized system which adjusts for temperature, humidity, wind, and sun energy units. Along with meticulous monitoring of the vines in ideal grape-growing weather, Walla Walla's unique soils and climate contribute to the grapes' exceptional flavor.

The three couples who own and operate Patit Creek Cellars have been friends for over thirty years. They named their winery after the nearby Patit Creek (pronounced "PAT-it"). In the early 1800's, French traders named the stream "Petite Creek". By mid-century, pioneer farmers had changed its name to "Patit Creek".

If you ever have a chance to visit the winery, you are in for a treat. The tiny town of Dayton is charming, and the vast wheat fields of the Palouse, which surround and tower over the town, (pictured at right) are something to see!



Hells Canyon Retriever Red \$15.00

Featuring a painting of a "ready, willing, and able" black Lab, the wine is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (70%) and Sangiovese (30%). It is a perennial favorite among customers for its rich flavor and reasonable price. Steve says that the Sangiovese, from Balcombe & Moe's vineyard in Washington, had an intense floral component- "It was like drinking violets", Steve says.

He has used the Sangiovese's qualities to create a very easy to drink wine, one that is not obviously floral, but is soft, approachable, and easy to enjoy. A nice value, especially for lovers of Labrador Retrievers. We value all the Hells Canyon wines for rich flavors and easy to handle prices. Retriever Red has all the soft, rich flavors you'd want for having with steak on the grill. Enjoy!

Dessert Wine Club

Kestrel Chardonnay Ice Wine \$45

Very limited, highly recommended. Sold out.



The Vintage

Simply stated, 1999 was a phenomenal year for growing grapes and making wine regardless of grape variety. Due to Ray Sandridge's tremendous successes making world class Ice wine and Trockenbeereauslese (TBA) wines in Germany, the wine trade suggested frequently and with great passion that should the proper conditions exist in the vineyard, Kestrel Vintners must make an Ice wine. We gambled with two and one-half acres of Chardonnay and were handsomely rewarded with one of nature's great winemaking treasures.

The Grapes

As one might expect, our Winemaker and cellar crew were quite busy from late-September through mid December bringing in the seasons "regular" harvest and working with the young wines. The Chardonnay left hanging on the vine for the Ice wine gamble was rarely visited as we were watching weather forecasts in hopes of cold weather. On December 28, 29 and 30th, cold weather did occur. We discovered to our delight not only were the grapes frozen but they also had raisened due to a gorgeous botrytis (noble mold) infection. A mere 7.04 tons of frozen Chardonnay fruit was harvested from the 2.5 acres. The harvest Brix was an unheard of 51.6! The acidity was 12.6 grams/liter and the pH was 3.39 (pure perfection).

The Winemaking

The naturally frozen grapes were painstakingly whole cluster pressed over a three-day period. The highly extracted, fragrant, rich juice (syrup actually), was cold settled two days and racked to a stainless steel tank. Normally, between 160 and 170 gallons of juice per ton are pressed from Chardonnay grapes during the regular harvest. The yield from our frozen grapes was only 61 gallons per ton. The Swiss cultivated yeast strain "Wadenswil 27" was utilized to conduct the fermentation. A very long-cool fermentation period finally ended on April 18, 2000. The wine was settled and sterile filtered.

Winemaker Notes

I personally feel this is the GREATEST Ice wine I have made to date. It is massive in structure, extremely full bodied and seamless in presentation. Despite the 29.7 grams/liter (29.7%) residual sugar, the wine is perfectly balanced with 11.4 grams/liter acidity. The nose is of luscious tree ripe peaches, dried apricots, honeycomb, and lemon zest. The flavors are again, very ripe peach, honey and lemon zest with a generous ripe Anjou pear note. This wine has the potential to cellar decades quite possibly 50 plus years.

Honeywood Marionberry Wine \$10.00

The Oregon Marionberry is known for its aromatic bouquet and an intense blackberry flavor. The flavor is called "earthy cabernet" and "sweet with notes of tartness". To us, it's just intense, rich, farm fresh berry flavor that's hard to come by.

Honeywood has made fruit wines since 1935, and their Marionberry is their most popular. Enjoy with chocolate cake, or mix with tonic water and a squeeze of lemon for a lovely aperitif.



Sineann continued from page 1.....

Rosback Influences Many Wineries

Despite his aversion to basking in the spotlight, Rosback quietly makes wine for Medici Vineyards where Sineann is produced, and made Zinfandel and Merlot for "The Pine 1852", a new label. He is the consultant for Helvetia in Portland, and assists a number of vineyard owners with small productions of wine from each crop.

Abacela winemaker and owner Earl Jones, who produces Tempranillo, Syrah, Dolcetto and other varieties at his Southern Oregon vineyards, says Rosback helped him during his first year in business.

"Peter is a great winemaker with a great passion," said Jones. "He was supportive when we wanted to plant Tempranillo and advised us along with way. We drink his wines."

O'Reilly also praises Rosback and the skills he brings to the partnership.



Commitment to Quality

Rosback says he enjoys good wine and will go out of his way to make the best he can. The secret to his success, he says, is to bottle his wines young in order to hold on to the pretty fruit. Wines with too much oak will sometimes lose the brightness of that fruit.

He gets good texture, good color and supple tannins by cold soaking the fruit and starting with native yeast. The grapes are pressed gently—all hand punched. Everything is meticulously

monitored. Even the labels are handcrafted, with a woodcut design and wax seals.

"There is an ocean of mediocre wines out there, and we try to rise to the top," said Rosback, a former mechanical engineer from Tektronics who took a voluntary lay-off to concentrate on wine production. "I don't think we've made our very best wine yet, but we're always working on it."

Even with the economic downturn and foreign affairs causing uncertainty in the market, Rosback says he will continue to drop fruit in order to obtain the intensity with his wines. He is spending more money for less fruit these days, but he has a goal to make the best Northwest wines possible. He added another Gewurztraminer vineyard this year with the goal "to make the best Gewurztraminer in the country."

Although the sinewy winemaker with a passion for bike riding doesn't look like a bulldozing giant, his tenacity to get what he wants from the vineyards continues to hold true. His production is currently 6,000 cases per year, and like his crop size, he wants to hold the line, and even reduce the amount.

Sineann wines can be hard to find and are often sold out because of low yields and limited bottling of some varietals. Rosback says he would rather produce small amounts of great wine, rather than increase the quantity and lose the meticulous control of the process.



The Wines

Sineann Pinot Noir Phelps Creek 02

\$42.00

From the winery: "Every year, the Resonance Vineyard turns out our best Pinot. The competition was very close in 2002 because of this blockbuster. We reduced the crop size to half of previous years. What a result! The already distinct "terroir" was greatly intensified. Many feel this is our finest Pinot both now and for extended aging. It'll be fun finding out.

Sineann Pinot noir "Jezebel" 02

\$19.99

From the winery: "A joint (negociant) effort of two Oregon winemakers, Aron Hess and Peter Rosback. We had a chip on our shoulders as several local negociant blends have been put together recently, enjoying varying degrees of success in the market. We felt we could destroy those puny efforts with a highly approachable \$20 blend. We did."



Sineann Pinot Noir Resonance (Reed & Reynolds) Vineyard 02

\$42.00

Peter's best, 100% Pommard clone, deep plummy richness, the Pinot Noir clone that put Oregon on the map. From Kevin Chamber's vineyard, silk on the nose, hints of coffee and violets, tremendously appealing yet will benefit from cellaring 2-7 years. A real winner from the "Big Pinot" school of wine-making.

From the winery: "This vineyard produces our best Pinot Noir - one of Oregon's best Pinot Noirs - every year. 2002 is no exception. The growers, Kevin and Carla Chambers, use biodynamic techniques to tend their vineyard. The result is a wine with deep color, full, rich taste and a remarkably mouth-filling texture. I like to say our growers achieve the potential of their respective vineyards. Kevin exceeds his."

