

Avalon Wine Club News November December 2002

Andrew Will Winery

Featured in Nov/Dec Big Reds Club



Chris Camarda, whose Andrew Will Winery produces some of the highest scoring Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Bordeaux blends in Washington state will be reducing his offerings in the next few years to concentrate on blends from some of Washington's finest vineyards.

In the next two to three years, Camarda plans to reduce his inventory from about 11 different varieties to three or four. He will discontinue bottling single vineyard varietals, such as Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon after the 2001 bottling. Instead, he plans to "zone in" on the types of blends he prefers, such as his Sorella (Italian for sister) and his Champoux Vineyard Red Wine.

"I don't want to make just one wine from each vineyard anymore," Camarda said in a recent interview. "I want to put the emphasis on the vineyard because that is what makes the wine special. The blends are much more interesting to me. In the end, it's not a Merlot or a Cabernet Sauvignon-it's the blend we develop from our sources."

The result will be fewer wines, but Camarda says the wines will be better than ever, as he and his wife Annie focus on blending Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. He may add some Syrah to the mix and plans to add his own fruit on 30 acres planted in Zillah, WA.

When Camarda started his winery on Vashon Island, near Seattle, in 1989, he admitted he was "just making wine" because he wanted to be in the industry after spending years working in the culinary arts and managing restaurants in the Seattle area.

"Now, more than 10 years later, we can follow our road map, see how we've evolved and how our wines developed," Camarda said. "We're ready to zone in on what we've got, from the state's best vineyards, rather than go through the vineyards every year, trying to pick the best block of Cabernet or Merlot."

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Tasting Notes

Nov/Dec Reserve Pinot Noir Club

1. 2001 Balcombe Block 1B \$39.99  
Quantity made- 170 cases

Vineyard sources- One block of Balcombe Vineyard, 1B, a block of 12 year old vines with such unique characteristics that is best processed and bottled as a single block

Oak- 57% new oak, rest neutral barrels  
Yeast- Native yeast

**Avalon Comments:** This 1 ½ acre part of the Balcombe vineyard has a vein of soil running through it that is shallower and rockier than the surrounding land. The result from the grapes grown in this block is a wine that is darker and denser, that exhibits more of the characteristics usually called "terroir", and a distinctive and very impressive finish with intense berry, cassis, creamy fruit, nuts, and licorice.

There is a wonderful gamey note to the wine, a heavier black fruit, muscular quality. Balance and ageability are top notch with this wine, it is well structured and should age up to 10 years.

Ann says this wine would go well with barbecued raccoon (her father was a coon hunter). I think personally, I'll look for a different recipe, but for you coon hunters, this is your wine!

**From the winemakers:** "We have decided, in an effort to show the site as distinctly as possible, to divide the bottling of Balcombe up. This bottling is made up entirely of one of the five blocks in the vineyard. As in the 2000 vintage Block 1B tends to produce the darkest, deepest and most tannic fruit in the vineyard. There were only 7 barrels of this wine. The wine is incredibly dark in color and has a big nose of ripe, succulent black cherries, blueberries, mocha, iron, red spices and, depending on the barrel, well integrated sweet French oak.

This is a fairly muscular, powerful wine with a deep mid-palate and fine tannins on the back of the wine. If you like them chewier, big and age-worthy this is your wine. It has characteristics that are in line with the normal bottling of Balcombe but we feel there is not only a greater sense of depth and strength in this wine but a greater sense of terroir as well. It all comes out to just about 165 cases of wine.

This is EASILY our most popular wine."

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Big Reds Club

Andrew Will Champoux  
Red Table Wine 2000

Andrew Will Klipsun  
Cabernet Sauvignon  
2000

Col Solare 97

Sineann Baby Poux  
Cabernet Sauvignon  
2000

Sineann Old Vine  
Zinfandel 2000

Reserve PN Club  
Bethel Heights  
SE Block 2000

Patricia Green  
Balcombe 1B 2001

Cristom  
Louise Vineyard 2000

Soter  
Brut Rose 98

Ken Wright  
Guadalupe 2001

Pinot Gris Club  
Ankeny White

Cristom 2000

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New Discoveries Club

Columbia Crest Walter  
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Waterbrook Merlot 98

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Duvk Pond Pinot noir  
Seven Hills Riesling 01  
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Dessert Club  
Eola Hills Vin d' Epice  
and Vin d'Or  
Made in Oregon Nog  
Ch Lorane Port 96

## Reserve Pinot Noir Club

### 2. Bethel Heights S.E. Block Reserve 2000

It's continued cold here and "hearty" is the word for what's on the sink- potatoes instead of tomatoes, red meat instead of salads, and big reds that warm the cockles of my heart... Bethel Heights SE Block Pinot Noir 2000- I'm in love!. Had the wine at a tasting lunch and could not believe it, thought I must have been under the influence of the wonderful food, but no- even with my questionable cooking, the wine is amazing. So silky-- sooo silky- viscous, plush, hints of exotic spices, big cherry fruit, lovely rose petal and violet hints in the nose and the palate, and a very very long lush finish. Ready to drink but very ageable. I'm laying down some of this one for 4-8 years. If I can resist.....

### 3. Soter Vineyards "Beacon Hill" Brut Rose

From the famed Tony Soter of Etude Winery in CA, this is an exquisite Rose Brut made from Oregon Pinot noir. Avalon highly recommends, only available to Wine Club subscribers.

### 4. Cristom "Louise" Vineyard Pinot noir 2000

Wine Advocate (Parker)91 points:  
"From 7 year old vines, the medium to dark ruby-colored 2000 Louise is a deep, layered wine. Its intense, concentrated core of cherries, spices, and plums lingers throughout its wonderfully long finish. Medium-bodied, its soft velvety texture caresses the taster's mouth. Projected maturity: 2003-2010." - Pierre Rovani

from the winemaker:

This is the oldest of our estate Pinot Noir vineyards that we began planting in 1993 to new clones and at high density. It is a selection of our favorite barrels from the vineyard. The vineyard now consists of Dijon clones 113,114, and 115 along with the Pommard clone all planted at 2300 vines to the acre. The site has a southeast slope and is comprised primarily of Ritner soil which is volcanic in origin.

**WINEMAKER'S NOTES** This dark ruby colored Pinot Noir has a nose of ripe dark fruits along with hints of cloves and cedar. The flavors are forward and complex with lots of juicy, ripe cassis and black cherries. The texture of this wine is silky smooth with lots of fine tannins and plenty of acidity to balance everything out. The amount of fruit and tannin in this wine should allow it to age gracefully for up to ten years.  
Steve Doerner, Winemaker

### 5. Ken Wright Guadalupe Vineyard Pinot Noir 2001

Released 11/02- tasted in barrel and 11/02 tasted a bottle- This has always been the wine I describe as like a boxer on toe shoes- a huge wine that is still light on its feet, with that amazing lively quality that Ken creates in his wines. The 2001 is a lighter vintage, but retains intense fruit flavors, nuanced tannins, and a delightful long finish. Will not age as well as previous years, drink within 6 years.

## BIG Reds Club

### 1. Andrew Will Klipsun Vyd Cabernet Sauvignon 2000

Chris Camarda, winemaker and owner of Andrew Will Winery, is featured on the cover of this month's newsletter- read all about him there.

Klipsun Vineyard produces fruit for some of the NW's finest wines, and Chris's 2000 Cab is one of the best. He can take pride in this very limited release (196 cases).

The interplay of power and finesse that comes through in the wine is very satisfying as well as the wine's almost black color. This is a wine with a strong and deep flavor profile.

### 2. Andrew Will Champoux Red Table Wine 2000

Winemaker Chris Camarda has made what we think will be considered his finest wine ever with the 2000 Champoux Vineyard Red Wine. The wine is 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, and 19% Cabernet Franc.

The winemaker says: "We think that 2000 is the best vintage we have had since 1989 when we started Andrew Will. We like the concentration and balance and feel that this wine offers the best potential for ageing of any we have made.

This is not a wine the Press will go for, as it will show more in the future than now. Increasingly, wine writers are breaking wines down into one category, those that fit into the "international mode". 100% new oak barrels and lots of forward fruit get the nod. Because there are so few writers, this Australian Palate model is currently dominating the media, but not the customers, who are increasingly buying wines that have more balance rather than vanilla and charcoal flavoring added to them."

Last year, the 99 Champoux Vineyard Cab received a score of 93-95/100 from Robert Parker:

"The magnificent, dark ruby-colored 1999 Cabernet Sauvignon Champoux Vineyard contains 20% Cabernet Franc. An extraordinary nose reminiscent of a coulis of cassis leads to a hugely concentrated, broad, candied, medium to full-bodied personality. It is a satin-textured wine crammed with juicy black fruits whose flavors last for 45 seconds or more.

An astonishing value given its competition in the \$50 range from California, it is exuberant and boisterous, yet deep and refined. A stunning wine, it is loaded with prodigiously ripened tannin. Anticipated maturity: 2004-2015." Robert Parker

### 1999 Vintage Wine Spectator Rating 93 Points

Wine Spectator says: "Dense, juicy and vibrant, a virtual cascade of flavor, offering currant, blackberry, raspberry, and touches of cedar and herb on a firm-textured but fine-grained frame. Best from 2003 through 2010. 240 cases made." Harvey Steiman May 2002

## Big Reds Club

### 3. Col Solare 1997



#### Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wines

This keenly crafted offering results from collaboration between Antinori of Italy and Washington State's Chateau Ste. Michelle, and it is a resounding success whose deep fruit, very supple texture and complexing loam and sweet spice aspects place it among the leaders. . . in this year's class. Rich in body, but always smooth and particularly well-polished, it is long and ever fruity on the palate with unintrusive, fine-grained tannins providing just a bit of necessary grip. It is bound to grow for many years to come, but its bent to roundness makes it most enjoyable even now.

#### Wine Gazette

Col Solare is the top red wine produced by the partnership between Piero Antinori of Tuscany and Washington state's Chateau Ste. Michelle. This cross-

Atlantic sharing of vineyard and cellar technique has for the 1997 vintage blended 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 13% Merlot, and 3% Syrah into a svelte and sleek red wine combining depth, complexity and richness with polished elegance. It doesn't bludgeon the palate with sheer bulk; instead it seduces with subtlety and nuance and a long, evolving finish--always the hallmark of great wine. Try with your most elegant roasted beef tenderloin or with a rack of lamb.

**Recommendation : Luxurious**

#### California Grapevine

Medium-dark ruby; attractive, spicy, cedary, very ripe red cherry fruit aroma with notes of green olive and vanilla; full body; big, dense, cedary, ripe red currant and blackberry fruit flavors; medium-full to full tannin; lingering aftertaste. Deserves several more years of bottle aging.

**Recommendation : Very highly recommended**

### 4. Sineann Baby Poux Cabernet Sauvignon 2001

2000 notes: Great structure, good blackberry Bordeauxlike Cassis, cedar, good weight, silky tannins. Cabernet from the Baby Poux Vineyard has the usual gushing, over the top flavors that characterize the wines of Sineann. A Columbia Valley vineyard, older vines, there are complex flavors here that hint at much to come. Best 2003-2006, although most of it won't last that long. Only 100 cases made.

2001 has JUST been released and tasting notes are not available but will be posted on the website as soon as we get them.

### 5. Sineann Zinfandel Old Vines 2001

Made from 100 year old vines, this wine is one of David's most popular, and is in relatively good supply this year. A huge, massive, gushingly intense zinfandel. See last month's newsletter for a detailed interview with winemaker David O'Reilly.

## Pinot Gris Club

### 1. Ankeny White Wine

Ankeny Vineyard is one of the oldest vineyards in the Willamette Valley, and has sold grapes to big name wineries across the NW for many years. Many of the vines are still self-rooted, and the winery is mature and producing wonderful quality grapes. Joe has recently started making wine under the vineyard's name, and this blend is a wonderful value, lovely table wine made from primarily 30 year old Pinot Gris, with chardonnay and a little chenin blanc to balance and lighten.

### 2. Cristom Pinot Gris 2000

This wine comes from just two vineyards: the Celilo Vineyard in Washington, and our estate vineyard here in the Willamette valley called Emilia. Hence, the Oregon/Washington appellation. The 2000 was the third in a string of very good vintages in Oregon. Normal yields and complete ripeness ensured wines with good varietal character.

**WINEMAKER'S NOTES:** This pale straw colored Pinot Gris has slightly shy aromas of ripe melons and pears. The straightforward clean ripe fruit flavors are more assertive with nuances of anise and flint. The complete malo lactic fermentation helps give this wine a velvety texture yet there is enough acidity left to make this wine a fine foil for a variety of foods, especially seafood. There is also a hint of minerality in the finish perhaps from the Celilo portion of this wine which is a characteristic of that vineyard.

### 3. Chateau Lorane Certified Organic Pinot gris 2000

What began over 20 years ago in Southern California as a small Backyard hobby has for Linde and Sharon Kester, become a second career and a new way of life. In 1984 they planted a 30-acre vineyard in the historic Lorane Valley at the very southern end of the Willamette Valley. Their first commercial wines were produced in 1991 and then in 1992 the Chateau Lorane tasting room was opened on their 200-acre estate with tall green stands of fir trees and a beautiful private lake.

Linde's winemaking style has been described as being somewhat unconventional. He admits that he likes to make non-traditional blends, he also enjoys utilizing obscure grape varieties, and in general tries to make his wines as distinctive as possible. His latest project is this delightful organic Pinot Gris.

### 4. Ryan Patrick Winery Vin d'Ete

Vin D' Été is the french term for Summer Wine. This light, fruity blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon is delightful with seafoods and salads.

Ryan Patrick Vineyards Winery is located in Rock Island, Washington adjacent to Highway 28, just 7 miles east of Wenatchee. Their vineyards are located in Trinidad, Washington. Ryan Patrick wines are the embodiment of a dream woven into years of dedication and hard work. Terry Flanagan initiated this "path" but is directly influenced by the support of his family. Vivian, his wife of over thirty years helps coordinate administrative aspects of the business while Flanagan's two sons- Ryan and Patrick, served as the inspiration for the company's name. Both sons work within the wine industry- one as an apprentice cellar master, the other as a Contract Administrator.

## New Discoveries Club

### 1. Columbia Crest Walter Clore Red Wine

Avalon recommends highly!

Wine Spectator 92 Points! 9/2002

"Just delicious, round and generous, a plush mouthful of pepper- and mocha-scented black cherry, blackberry, and smoky flavors, which echo on the fine-grained finish. Drink now through 2007. -H.S."

From the winemaker:

"Our Reserve Red is now designated Walter Clore Private Reserve to recognize the pioneer who did the unexpected in Washington State: prove that premium vinifera grapes could flourish in the Columbia Valley. We honor his legacy with our tradition-bound Bordeaux blend produced from vineyards among the oldest in the state. Small lot, artisan-style winemaking has produced a refined yet powerful wine that will reach maturity well into the next decade. The aromatics feature ripe cherry, raspberry, blueberry with oak influenced mocha and roasted coffee. The soft, supple tannin profile balances the concentrated fruit and oak, leading to a balanced, lingering finish." according to Doug Gore, Winemaker.

The Press Release:

Columbia Crest Introduces Proprietary Name for Reserve Red Blend Paterson, WA –

Columbia Crest Winery announces the introduction of its premier wine, "Walter Clore Private Reserve," an artisan-style Bordeaux blend. The vintage 1999 wine is now available nationally for a suggested retail price of \$30 per bottle. Just 2,000 cases of the blend were produced.

Winemaker Doug Gore said the new designation honors the pioneer who proved that premium wines could be produced from Washington-grown vinifera grapes. "There are a lot of legends in the Washington wine industry, but it was Walter Clore who first dreamed it was possible. The modern day legends are a validation that he was right." Walter Clore, PhD was a Washington State University (WSU) scientist who began planting grapes for research in 1937. He quickly became an advocate for grape growing in the Columbia Valley, although local growers were skeptical of his recommendations. Nearly 40 years later, Dr. Clore published, "Ten Years of Grape Variety Responses and Wine-making Trials in Central Washington." The work ultimately convinced growers that varietal and site selection joined with the best viticultural practices could produce premium wines.

Theodor Baseler, President/CEO of Columbia Crest's parent company Stimson Lane Vineyards & Estates, said that without Dr. Clore's research, the Washington wine industry would have evolved much more slowly. Today, Washington state is ranked the second largest wine producing region with more than 200 wineries and 28,000 acres of vineyards, all planted to premium grape varieties. "The industry got a running start because he planted scores of varieties throughout the Columbia Valley and collected the data necessary for vintners to make reasonable decisions about where to site a vineyard or winery," Baseler said. "Prior to that, many people decided it was a foregone conclusion that premium wine grapes could not be grown in Washington state."

Winemaker Gore said that Dr. Clore's contributions to the Washington wine industry include guiding Columbia Crest through vineyard plantings and research projects. "His work laid the foundation for a seven-year irrigation trial that demonstrated that the precise timing of when and how much to water a vineyard would enhance wine quality. The results have been adopted by a majority of growers in Washington state."

Columbia Crest's parent company, Stimson Lane Vineyards and Estates also consulted with Dr. Clore before planting many of the company's premier vineyards sites, including on the Horse Heaven Hills and Cold Creek. Outside Washington State, Dr. Clore's research has been lauded by numerous national and international wine and grape organizations.

### 2. Hells Canyon Seven Devils Red

A blend of rich red wines, big and bold, hearty and full bodied. Excellent value. Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot.

### 3. Waterbrook Merlot 98

Waterbrook Winery was founded in 1984 by Eric and Janet Rindal and is located in Washington State's lovely Walla Walla Valley. Our name was chosen to complement the translation from Nez Perce Indian dialect for the name Walla Walla, meaning "running water". Production has slowly increased to a total of 30,000 cases annually.

#### TASTING NOTES

A nicely rounded Merlot, displaying a woody character with spice nestled in comfortably amongst chocolate overtones. Harmonious berry flavors with a firm, lively finish.

#### GRAPE SOURCE

95% merlot, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon, 2% Cabernet Franc. 43% Klipsun Vineyards, 26% Ancora Estate, 15% Red Mountain Vineyard, 11% Sagemoor, 5% Shiels.

#### REVIEWS

**1998 Merlot**, Columbia Valley. The 1998 Merlot is a delightful, fruit-filled wine. It has a plum and raspberry base, a hint of cherry with a bit of mocha, complimented by a mixture of spices. The wine is well-balanced with a smooth finish. This is a delicious wine and will complement those red meat meals...best of all - it is under \$20.

*Journal of Business (Spokane) - January 10, 2002*

**1997 Merlot**, Columbia Valley. Gold medalist.

*Enological Society Annual Judging - August 2000*

**Rated "89" - 1997 Merlot**, Columbia Valley. An interesting nose that mingles black cherry, roasted nuts, leather and smoke. Tart, dark and tannic, with light, bright fruit shining through. The finish is clean and pure but fairly light. Very appealing and beautifully made.

*Wine Enthusiast June 2000*

**Rated "89" - 1996 Merlot**, Columbia Valley. A little chewy with tannins, but a veritable spice box of aromas and flavors; exotic, with cinnamon, allspice and star anise overtones to the basic black cherry. The finish lingers. Best after 1999.

*Wine Spectator Magazine August 31, 1999*

### 4. L'Ecole #41 Schoolhouse Red

Lucky club members! You are the only customers to get this great wine. It is usually only sold at the winery, is a blend of big reds that the winemaker takes extra special care on. Wonderful value, enjoy this delish wine now.

The winery says: "This hearty red wine is in part comprised of the hard press fractions of each of our vineyard lots, including some of our best vineyard sites. As a result, many customers view this table wine as the 'bargain' from L'Ecole."

## Best Values Club

### 1. Duck Pond Pinot noir

An unusually dry winter continued into a relatively dry summer lending the fruit a bit more concentration than usual. The 2001 Pinot Noir has a traditional nose of raspberry and black currant and nice weight in the mouth. Soft oak enhances the body and prolongs the finish without competing with the wine's clean fruitiness.

### 2. Seven Hills Riesling 01

2000 Riesling, Oregon was deemed Wine of the Week (August 1, 2001) by **Wine Press Northwest Magazine**. "This Riesling from Oregon grapes, has a nice balance of fruit and acids with just the right amount of sweetness at 1.8% residual sugar. Honeysuckle aromas are followed by the flavors of a crisp, sweet Gala apple."

**Tasting Note:** Predominantly Riesling with a hint of Muscat, from select Oregon sites. Brilliant, light straw color. Graceful, balanced Riesling with an off-dry finish and restrained alcohol. Fermented at cool temperatures to maximize varietal aromas and flavors. Follows our traditional style of a light sweetness with a clean finish. While, this wine can be held for up to 2 years to gain bottle character, it is a white wine made to be drunk young.

A broadly appealing, versatile style for a variety of occasions.

### 3. Argyle Chardonnay 00

#### Wine Spectator Rating 88 Points

The color is one of green tinted straw. The aroma is an intense core blend of pear fruit and fresh roasted hazelnut with citrus creamy - key lime pie trimming. Viscous tree fruit apple and pear flavors, with a mineral structure and big citrus, vanilla finish. The kind of flavor profile that just begs for garlic mashed potatoes! No tropical pineapple in this big fella! 3898 cases produced.

### 4. Ch St Michelle Syrah 00

Exotic spice aromas heightened by a hint of white pepper. Pairs well with beef, grilled salmon and strongly flavored cheeses. 93% Syrah, 3% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Grenache, 1% Merlot. Ripe grapes were picked during the warmth of the day to start fermentation quickly, then crushed, destemmed and fermented for 7-8 days. Aged for 14 months in half French and half American oak barrels, 20%new.

## Dessert Club

### 1. Eola Hills Vin d' Epice

Pressed from late harvest frozen Gewurztraminer grapes, "Vin d'Epice" is unctuous, honeyed and spicy on the palate with flavors reminiscent of apricots and guavas. While the wine is very sweet, the firm acidity keeps it from being overly sweet.

Wine Spectator says: "Deep gold in color, with rich, sweet honey, orange, cream and floral-spicy aromas and flavors that linger on the silky finish. Drink now through 2008. 929 cases made. "(929 cases produced) **rating 90**

### 2. Eola Hills Vin d'Or

One of the NW's best Dessert wines- not to be missed if you are a "stickies" lover!--jy

Winemaker Kerry Norton's Description: Pressed from late harvest frozen Sauvignon Blanc grapes and barrel fermented in new French Oak, our Vin d' Or exudes aromas of vanilla, honey and pineapple. Its natural sweetness is supported by a strict acid backbone that displays all the flavor of the fruit to come forward.

A perennial medal winner, the Vin d' Or shows best with clean flavors with perhaps just a touch of ginger. Some suggestions include wood grilled fruits with Lemon Tarragon Genoise, Gingered Berry Shortcake with whipped Mascorpone or Mango Brulee.

### 3. Made in Oregon Nog

### 4. Ch Lorane Port 96

Such tiny amounts made he does not even put it on HIS website, this is a special treat for Avalon Wine Club members. From Lindy's personal stock, an intense dessert wine with great red and black fruit flavors. Made from Marechal Foch grapes. Enjoy!

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By producing only Bordeaux-style blends, Camarda will not be so dependent on one particular grape for a wine. If Cabernet Sauvignon grapes are not as good next year, he can focus on Merlot and other varietals to blend with the Cabernet. He says it will require more skill and free-up space in his ever-growing Vashon Island compound.

His skills are highly praised, as is his wine. In the just published sixth edition of Robert Parker's Wine Buyer's Guide, the wine critic lists only four Washington wineries as "outstanding." Andrew Will is one of the four, which includes Quilceda Creek, Leonetti and DeLille Cellars.

Parker calls Camarda "one of America's finest producers of Merlot. (His) wines have virtually perfect tannins. They are present but buffered by the loads of dominating sweet fruit.

"Furthermore, what is amazing about Chris Camarda's wines is that they are concentrated, yet graceful," Parker continues. "Camarda's (wines) blend power with elegance, concentration with finesse, and super sweet fruit with definition. (He) is a brilliant winemaker."



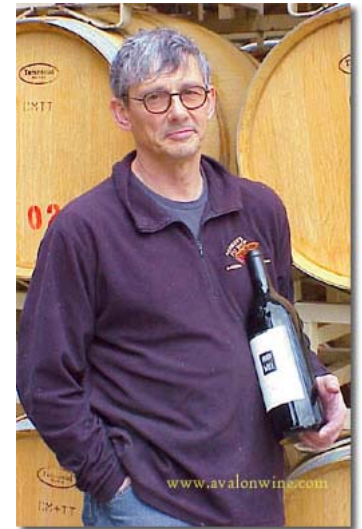
It is big praise for a man who plans to eliminate some of the highly touted wines of the past. Yet, Camarda says the new focus will produce even better wines. If his 2000 Champoux Red Wine is any example, Camarda has little to fear. The wine is fabulous, with 62 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 19 percent Merlot and 19 percent Cabernet Franc. In a recent tasting, this wine came across as rich and dense, with layers of plum, currant, herb and blueberries. It has just enough oak to add to the wine, rather than detract. Although drinkable now, it should be cellared and after several years, you'll have a hidden treasure waiting to impress your taste buds.

Andrew Will Sorella, another Bordeaux-style blend that Camarda calls his prototype, is also outstanding. The wine is wonderful now, but with a few years in the cellar, will knock your socks off, in a subtle way, of course.

Incidentally, Sorella, meaning sister in Italian, is a tribute to Camarda's sister, who died from cancer in 1995. The label is a portrait of his sister, painted by Seattle artist Randy Hayes.

Camarda can make this move because of his relationships with some of Washington's best vineyards, which include Klipsun, Pepper Bridge, Ciel du Cheval, Seven Hills and Sheridan. The fruit, under Camarda's touch, produces subtle wines that never overwhelm with power, making them very food friendly. He has captured the intensity of the fruit without producing such bombs that explode and overtake a meal.

The change will enable Camarda to spend more time with his two children, Will, 15, and Luci, 12. (The winery is named for Will and the Camarda's nephew Andrew). Both children were adopted from South Korea and have lived with the Camarda's since infancy. Since the winery is located on an island (and not open to the public), life revolves around the state ferry system. While Annie provides much of the Camarda transportation system for their children, Chris says he hopes to have more time to help out. He recently took his daughter to a concert in Seattle and said it was a great father/daughter experience.



Camarda says the kids are more involved with school activities and growing more independent every day.

The Camarda's live on several acres, surrounded by trees, flowers and a recent acquisition from South Korea—a Changsung. The Changsung, which looks like a totem pole, is a guardian spirit, in honor of his children. Life on the compound includes a couple of dogs, critters from the woods nearby, and a sitting area to enjoy in spring and summer.

Single-vineyard wines from Andrew Will will still be available for the next year or two. Barrel tasting reveals they will be as great as those in the past. But Camarda wants his consumers to experience his love of blends and those currently on the market are just a taste of what is to come.

It is his attempt to express in the glass the spirit of a particular season and a specific place. It is showmanship at its best. And that thought, makes Camarda smile.

2000 Vintage Notes from Chris Camarda 2/1/02

The 2000 crush stated on September 18 and ended on October 17th. The extremely even growing season and the perfect ending made for fruit which had ripened perfectly. Looking backward, trying to understand the reason for the balance and concentration that these wines possess in spades, we can see that the evenness of the fruit set, the great spring and heat of summer contributed greatly. In addition, we had just the right amount of cooling in August and September, conditions that delivered what is perhaps the best fruit we have ever had.

The other vintage which comes to mind when I think of these wines is the 1997. The structure and depth of those wines is matched by this vintage. An almost liqueur-like concentration in these Merlots separates this vintage from 1997, and while they are powerful and structured, the wines have an immediate appeal.

I think it is the balance in the last weeks before harvest that adds so much or little to each vintage. If the weather stays too hot, the fruit cannot ripen gradually but goes into a state of almost hyper-ripeness. The wines made from these vintages are usually fleshy and are great for immediate drinking while better vintages age. Repeatedly, we read about waiting to pick since that implies that the fruit will ripen if only one waits. This model is based on conditions in Europe and is much different from the situation in California and Washington. The more we are able to focus on what each vineyard needs to produce perfect fruit, the better wine we will make. Each year our techniques get better, but without fruit which is flavorful and balanced, we can make fresh, exuberant wines, but not wines which are unforgettable.

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Pacific Northwest Wine and Gourmet

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## Avalon Wine Club News October 2002



### Solena Winery October Big Reds Club Featured Wines

Soléna is a combination of two names that mean the sun and the moon. For Danielle and Laurent, Soléna represents the celebration of life as this is the name they gave to their daughter, after her somewhat early, miraculous birth. Their Merlot, Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, and upcoming Syrah were made to be enjoyed with family and friends during life's victories both big and small.

### Danielle Andrus Montalieu

With more than a decade of experience in the wine industry, Danielle Andrus Montalieu has left Archery Summit winery to start her own wine label with her husband, Laurent Montalieu and daughter Soléna.

"After the birth of Soléna, I realized that I wanted to get back to the basics." The basics for her include spending more time with her family, making a small amount of high quality wine, and returning to a time when life was simpler.

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Danielle's father, Gary Andrus, started Pine Ridge Winery when she was ten. "The was actually a small cellar under a two bedroom farm house," she reminisces.

winery