

Avalon Wine Club News October 2002



Soléna 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.

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

Continued on page 6



A Winemaker's Dream, "Living the Life of O'Reilly" October Reserve Pinot Noir Club Featured Wine

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-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 Cellars-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.

Continued on page 3

Big Reds Club

Soléna Cab
Soléna Merlot
Soléna Zinfandel

Reserve PN Club

Sineann Phelps
Creek
St Innocent
Brickhouse

Pinot Gris Club

Coleman Vineyards
2001
Helvetia 2000

New Discoveries Club

Eugene Wine Cellars
Syrah
Sagelands Merlot
2000

Best Values Club

Powers Merlot 98
Secret House Riesling

Dessert Club

Hood River
Pear Wine
3 Rivers Late Hvst
Gewurztraminer

Big Reds Club-

Solena Cabernet Sauv Solena Merlot Solena Zinfandel

I knew that Laurent Montalieu made excellent wines, I have enjoyed his Willakenzie Pinot noirs for years. I was not aware of his skills with Cab, Merlot, and Zinfandel until I tried these wines. I was wowed.

I know that this winery has not yet really hit the national wine market- they make such tiny amts of wine. But they will! And their prices are dang reasonable.

Laurent is fearless in his winemaking. He does not hide the wine with heavy toast, extracted fruit, and high alcohol. The wines offer a freshness and transparency of flavor that is fascinating and rewarding to the most experienced wine lover.

Reviews by Cole Danehower, OWR

Solena Merlot 2000, Woolridge Creek Vineyard, Applegate Valley \$25

Summary: Dark, fully extracted ruby core with vibrant fuchsia colored edges. Distinct aromas of plump red and black summer berries, with hints of coffee, brown earth, and dried leaves. Clean and tart in the mouth, with a pleasing weight that delivers an upright character. The flavors reflect the aromas, with crushed blackberry and ripe prune fruit contained within a sturdy superstructure of coffee bean and fresh wood-bark tannins. The finish is quite long with distinct fruit lingering on the tongue, and tannins pleasingly puckering the cheeks. Comments: No wimpy Merlot, this! This is a hefty wine with strong fruit character that is well complemented by stout but not overbearing tannins. The longer the wine sits in the glass, the more it opens and the ripe red fruit character shows through. I think of this as an "honest," almost "old world" style Merlot—there are no overt signs of winemaking manipulation to produce the ultimate in polished texture and simple sweet fruit. Rather, all this wine's components (texture, acid, tannin, fruit) stand up for themselves to deliver a wine with clear and straightforward character. Parenthetically, I love seeing in this wine the deposit at the bottom of the bottle. It tells me that Laurent didn't go wild with the filtering and fining that is so often used to soften up a wine (that's what I mean by an "honest Merlot.") What we have here is a very well made, well-balanced wine, that has all the stuffing needed to complement roast meats—especially grilled!

With an average of 2.5 tons of fruit per acre and a brix of 23.7, the Merlot brought in from Woolridge Creek was optimal for creating an outstanding Merlot. The 1999 Soléna Merlot has a deep ruby color with earthy tones layered with intense fruit. Notes of berries, black cherry, and cassis from the Merlot are blended with four percent of Zinfandel for additional tones of spiciness. The multiple layers of fruit, spice, tobacco, and earth are enhanced by the round, ripe tannins giving the wine a long silky finish. Drinking well now, the 1999 Merlot will continue to improve with age well into 2010. Quantity: 591 bottles

Soléna Zinfandel 2000, Woolridge Creek Vineyard, Applegate Valley \$25

Reviews by Cole Danehower, OWR

Summary: Deep and inky purple red color. Great earthy, herby aromas with hints of plump blackcurrant fruit framed against a soft wood background. As the wine is swirled, a very appealing sweet mint and oaky vanilla aroma arises. In the mouth the wine is very smoothly textured, with a soft and elegant feel. Flavors are robust and rich with plenty of dark plum, currant, and black cherry fruit, accented by black pepper and a hint of cinnamon. The fruit is backed by a sturdy structure of wood and tannin, with a pleasing balance of acidity.

Comments: Laurent Montelieu is one of the few Willamette Valley winemakers with extensive experience making wine from Southern Oregon fruit, and it shows well in this wine. This is a tasty and sturdy Zinfandel that—as Danielle Montelieu said to me, would make a great "pizza picnic" wine! Oregon Zinfandel is a bit of a rarity, and this is by far the finest I have yet had. The fruit comes from Woolridge Creek Vineyard in the Applegate Valley, one of the prettiest vineyards in Oregon, and a warm site that gently rises up the slope of a picturesque mountain valley. While the Soléna Zinfandel is great for current consumption, and while Zinfandel generally isn't a great wine for ageing, I think the structure and tannin in this wine ensure a good 3-5 years of great sipping!

Solena 2000 Cabernet Sauvignon Klipsun Vineyard \$35

The grapes that comprise Soléna Cabernet Sauvignon come from selected rows in the old blocks of the famous Klipsun Vineyard in Washington State. When first visiting the vineyard we were blown away by the awe-inspiring beauty. Laurent so aptly exclaimed, "Whoa...what a sight!" Located in the hot and windy western slope of Red Mountain, Klipsun Vineyards was planted in 1984 by David and Patricia Gelles. Standing in the vineyard and looking west is like standing at the bottom of a geological cone. To the right, Rattlesnake Mountain gently climbs out of the Yakima Valley, and to the left, the Horse Heaven Hills loom. The western-exposed vineyard ensures the fruit receives the peak heat and light later in the day. Klipsun receives 6 inches of rain a year making it semi desert conditions. The mostly bilateral cordon vines have a tight canopy, keeping the foliage to a minimum, especially on the east side of the vine. The resulting fruit is spectacular! The 2000 vintage was very hot and made wines of great power but at the same time silky with seamless tannins. The wine is smooth, rich and polished with a pretty core of currant enhanced by flavors of tobacco and spice typical of the vineyard site. Full bodied with a very long lasting finish, this age worthy wine is very limited. Only 713 bottles produced.

Reserve Pinot Noir Club

St Innocent Brickhouse 2000

Sineann Phelps Creek 2000

O'Reilly continued...

Owen Roe was named both after a friend of O'Reilly's and a great Irish patriot. And, of course, O'Reilly Cellars, 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.

From Harsh Life to Lush Life

The combination of his Irish heritage and obsession about being the best says a lot about the affable winemaker. His luck and his taste for the good life wasn't always granted.

As a young child in Belfast, the O'Reilly family-all 14-was of modest means. Life was harsh, and often violent as the family witnessed a depressing catalogue of death and injury due to fighting among Catholics and Protestants.

Between 1966 and 1999, a total of 3,636 people were killed and 36,000 injured as the conflict spread beyond Northern Ireland's borders onto the British mainland and elsewhere, according to reports. Most of the victims were innocent civilians.

O'Reilly said two of his uncles were murdered, a sister suffered a traumatic injury, and one never knew when and where a homemade bomb would explode.

His family scraped up enough money to move to British Columbia, Canada just before his teen years, and O'Reilly never looked back.

"I'm sure the past did have some impact on why I want the best from what I produce," O'Reilly said, thoughtfully. "I'm not like Frank McCourt in Angela's Ashes-I choose not to look back and dwell on the past."

Instead, O'Reilly looked to the future, majoring in philosophy at Thomas Aquinas College in Santa Paula, CA, where he met his future wife, Angelica. It was there that he discovered a love of land and soil. He worked at a small winery in Southern California performing all the tasks necessary to get the wine out the door.

"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."

[Continued on the web site](#)

St Innocent Pinot Noir 2000 Brickhouse Vineyard \$35.99

The winemaker says: Brickhouse Vineyard is located in the hills north of McMinnville and Dundee known as Ribbon Ridge. The vineyard is farmed organically by Doug Tunnell and was planted in 1990. St Innocent's grapes come from a SE-facing, two-acre block planted with the Pommard clone of pinot noir. St Innocent produced their first Brickhouse designated wine in 1995.

The wine has layered aromas and flavors of spice, red, and black raspberries. As the wine ages, it gains layers of flavors and a certain wildness that reminds me of older Burgundies. It is best at 5-8 years of age.

The ability of Brickhouse to age beautifully was emphasized in Minneapolis when Mark showed both the 1995 & 1996 vintages during a marketing trip. Both were awesome. St Innocent's last vintage of Brickhouse was in 2001, after which the vineyard will produce and bottle all their fruit.

Sineann Pinot Noir 2001 Phelps Creek 2001 \$45

Jean's favorite, a little lighter than the Reed & Reynolds Pinots, there are subtle notes of truffle and fresh earth in the nose, distinct and very pleasant hints of fresh raspberry in the flavor, and a complex palette of red berry and stone fruit that finishes warm and with a lot of glycerin. Silky mouth feel and hint of roses completes the picture. Very limited.

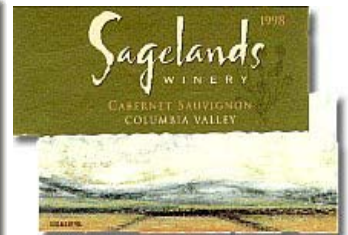
Pinot Gris Club

Coleman 2001
Helvetia 2000



New Discoveries Club

Eugene Wine Cellars Syrah 2000
Sagelands Merlot 2000



Coleman Pinot Gris 2001 \$15.99

The 2001 Estate Grown Pinot Gris was harvested in beautiful late October weather to produce a ripe, fruity wine that has converted many a red wine drinker to white! To maintain the crisp, fruity style, there is no malolactic fermentation and a very slight, blink-and-you'll-miss-it hint of residual sugar. We find that the phenolic components and aromatics of this wine make it particularly appealing with meals. Try it with seafood such as salmon, scallops, crab or cioppino; or try roasted chicken or pork with baked apples. 200 cases produced.

Helvetia Vineyards Pinot Gris 2000 \$14.99

The Helvetia Pinot gris 2000 is intense on the palate and goes well with spicy foods like curry or kung pao chicken. The vintage is fragrant with delicious aromas of peach and pear. It complements delicate dishes like halibut with mango salsa.

Helvetia Vineyards and Winery is located at the northern end of the Tualatin Valley on the west side of the West Hills of Portland, Oregon in the community of Helvetia. The rolling hills of the area were settled by Swiss and German immigrants in the late 1800's. Prior to prohibition, the community was also known as Grape Hill because of the area's cottage wine industry.

John Platt and Elizabeth Furse moved to their farm in 1980 and began planting winegrapes on their southern slopes in 1982. In 1987, they made their first wine and, in 1989, started selling grapes to home winemakers. From 1992 to 1995, they custom-crushed their grapes at Laurel Ridge Winery under the Helvetia Vineyards label and opened their own winery in October, 1996. Their Willamette Valley Vintage Chardonnay and Pinot Noir is oak barrel-aged and fermented while their Pinot Gris is fermented in stainless steel to project its crisp fruitiness and aroma. For the 2002 vintage, they are producing pinot noir, chardonnay and pinot gris from their own vineyards as well as from vineyards owned by Stuart and Melinda Wilson and other nearby vineyards.

Eugene Wine Cellars Syrah 2000 \$25

Eugene Wine Cellars makes delicious and affordable wines from vineyards across Oregon. The winery is housed in a 10,800 square foot facility in downtown Eugene, Oregon. We are thrilled with the quality of the 2000 Syrah. A warm month of October is always key in Oregon to obtaining the desired sugar levels and acid balance to produce world-class wines.

This growing season was Oregon's driest on record. We have had four years of below average precipitation in a row. As a winery and vineyard management company EWC's main concerns are: how well did the vines hold up physiologically and how will that effect their production in the next year and in the long run. When plants do not receive adequate moisture they can suffer and incur more stress than is desired.

Eugene Wine Cellars has a very good vintage. The Syrah shows incredible fruit characteristics and aromatics, along with good mouth feel. This is a rich, **luscious, deeply satisfying wine.**

Sagelands Merlot 2000 \$14.99

Wonderful rich flavors, well balanced, delicious for drinking now through 2002. Aroma shows lots of ripe berry fruit. Aromas of black cherry and raspberry fruit are backed by bitter chocolate/cocoa powder and nice touches of smoke, fresh herbs, and a hint of leather. The same characteristics come through in the flavors. The wine finishes with good body and a nice touch of chalky tannin. Ready to drink upon release, or it will age for up to 5 years.

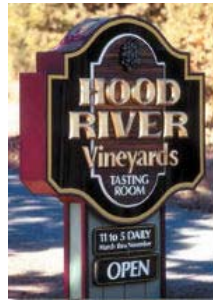
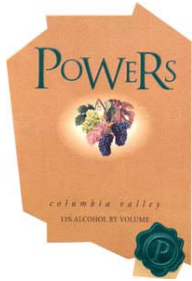
Pair this Merlot with lots of different foods. Works especially well with grilled pork tenderloin, barbecued meats, especially a classic American hamburger!

Best Values Club

Powers Merlot 98
Secret House Riesling

Dessert Club

Hood River Pear Wine
Three Rivers Late Hvst Gewurztraminer



Powers Merlot 98 \$13.99

Tasting Notes: Tasting Notes: The initial aroma evokes raspberry truffle and cherry cordial. This impression is carried through with lush flavors of sweet raspberry, cocoa, and toasted almond balanced by the full-bodied structure and silky texture. The flavors give way to a gentle finish of dried fruit and mild toasty oak.

Winemaker's Notes: The wine is a blend of five different lots from five different vineyards. The largest, single lot of wine in the blend is Merlot from the Taggares Vineyard, one of the latest ripening vineyards in the state. The extended time on the vine gave this fruit great flavor and intensity. This wine comprises 46% of the blend, with just over half of that having gone through our rotary fermenter. Unique fruit characteristics were added by Merlot from C&M Vineyards and from Pleasant Vineyards, each contributing 22% to the blend. The remainder of the blend is 5% Cabernet Franc (Wahluke Slope Vineyard) and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon (Mercer Ranch Vineyards). Each of these separate lots was fermented with Prise de Mousse yeast and aged 14 months in barrels. The blend was assembled prior to bottling in December 1998.

Secret House Riesling \$8.99

Sweet honeysuckle, citrus, and lively peach flavors, clean finish, medium dry. The fruit flavors are contained in a crisp, pleasant finish.

Hood River Pear Wine \$18.99

Three Rivers

Late Hvst Gewurztraminer \$21.99

Grapes for this vintage of Late Harvest Gewürztraminer were hand-harvested in November from Biscuit Ridge Vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley, long after the first frosts of the vintage. The extra hang time allowed for increased concentration of flavors and perfect ripeness. Tropical fruit aromas and flavors dominate this wine. Enjoy alone as an aperitif or to accompany a fine dessert. Alcohol: 10.5 % by volume. Residual Sugar: 8.8 % by weight.

Vineyards -The source of grapes for the 1999 Walla Walla Valley Late Harvest Gewürztraminer was Biscuit Ridge Vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley. Biscuit Ridge Vineyard is located in the very northeast part of the Walla Walla Valley. Elevation of the vineyard is at 1800 feet. The vineyard is owned and operated by Duane & Mary Wollmuth who are also partners in the winery operation.

Fermentation & Aging -The Late Harvest Gewürztraminer was hand picked into small bins, brought to the winery and pressed immediately. Natural dehydration in the fruit produced lower per-ton juice yields with increased concentration of sugar and flavors. The juice was cold fermented in stainless steel tanks over a period of 30 days and the fermentation stopped retaining a residual sugar level of 8.8% by weight.

Food Suggestions -The Late Harvest Gewürztraminer is an ideal match with a variety of dessert entrées. It also goes well with fresh fruit, chocolate and soft cheeses.

Continued from page 1---

During her youth, Danielle worked in the administration, the cellar, and the hospitality departments of Pine Ridge Winery. While in college she continued her wine education by working in retail wine stores, and as a wine steward for a small restaurant. During this time Pine Ridge winery grew to a 100,000 case winery. This success allowed Nancy Andrus, Gary Andrus, and their new partners, Leucadia, to create an additional winery in Oregon, Archery Summit.

"Moving to Oregon was the logical choice for me," the native Oregonian states. "Oregon's wine community is exciting and youthful. It was almost like returning to the time when Pine Ridge was first being created."

Archery Summit Winery provided her with a wonderful education, but when her father retired, she knew it was time to leave. "Developing Archery Summit Winery with my father was a great joy for me, one I will always cherish."

After six years at Archery Summit Winery, Danielle continues in her pursuit of developing a small family operated winery and vineyard, and in educating the trade and consumers about the Oregon wine industry. As a founding board member of Oregon Pinot Camp, Danielle has endeavored to familiarize the wine trade with Oregon wines. She remains active in consumer organizations like Salud, which raises money for the vineyard workers health care, and the International Pinot Noir Celebration.

With eighty acres, Danielle and Laurent have their work cut out for them. Yet their ideology puts quality of life higher than producing large quantities of wine. They anticipate only planting about twenty of the eighty acres, and leaving the rest in its natural beauty.

"Moving up to our property this past October was so exciting. From our window we see our new vineyard and the place where Laurent and I were married."

The property holds special meaning for the couple, and they look forward to raising Soléna in this environment. "In a way, life has become a full circle for me," Danielle smiles.

Laurent Montalieu

Laurent Montalieu took his first steps in a vineyard in Medoc owned by his great grandfather, Pierre Joseph Montalieu. He grew up on the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, but spent summers in his family's homeland of Bordeaux, where he learned to grow grapes and drink wine. Laurent returned to Bordeaux in 1980 to attend high school.



Laurent Montalieu

With a renewed interest in wine, he immersed himself in studies of vineyard management and winemaking. Upon his graduation in 1987 from the Institute of Oenology of Bordeaux, he worked for Chateau La Tour Blanche near Sauternes, France and Domaine Mumm in California before moving to Oregon.

After seven successful vintages at Bridgeview Vineyards in Cave Junction, Oregon, Laurent joined WillaKenzie Estates. Laurent, as a partner and winemaker, shared Bernard and Ronnie Lacroute's commitment to top quality in the vineyard and winery with a philosophy of minimal intervention in the production of handcrafted wines.

Laurent is passionate about Pinot Noir and other varietals he creates as winemaker at WillaKenzie Estates, but as an artist he is always looking to continue creating wines from other varietals. Indulging in his art, Laurent first created a private label called La Merleausine, an experiment in blending Merlot and Zinfandel. Laurent enjoyed making small quantities of this wine, but wanted to focus on the purity of the varietals. With this ideology in mind, he broadened his focus to include Cabernet and Syrah. Thus the four varietals of the new label, Soléna, were determined, and his business relationship with Danielle, his wife, was created.

As if Laurent was not active enough in his winemaking career, private label, and commitments to the Oregon wine community, he and Danielle have taken on another new venture: developing their own Pinot Noir vineyard. When asked how he was able to manage so many different activities, he replied, "Creating and watching things grow gives me great pleasure. I think if you love what you do, finding time to do it is not a problem." With a young daughter, new label, and a budding vineyard, Laurent is enjoying the fullness of his life!