

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™

**Broadley Marcile Lorraine 04,
Shea Wine Cellars East Hill 04**

Two of Oregon's hardest to get 2004 Pinots are in our shipment this month.

Broadley's Marcile Lorraine 04 is a standout among even the best of Oregon's 2004s, and is unfortunately sold out at the winery and at Avalon, except for the Wine Club's shipment. Recently, Marcus and staff were able to taste over 60 new Oregon releases together, and the Broadley ranked as one of the best in the tasting.

Shea's East Hills— New Blend, Best Value

The **Shea East Hills Pinot noir 04** has impressed the heck out of us. It's new this year to Shea, and was developed to compensate for the very small yields produced by parts of the phylloxera ravaged East Hill. Formerly, this was called "**Block 32**" and was made from that one part of the East Hill site, but now that block is undergoing replanting and the wine's fruit is derived from a broader section of the vineyard.

Marcus Looze, Avalon's Manager, says the Shea East Hill 04 is "way too good, at way too good a price". He thinks that this wine will be the 'unsung hero' of the 2004 vintage, combining such fantastic flavor with one of the lowest prices for a Shea Wine Cellar Pinot.

From the first scent, to the final hint on the palate, the Shea Wine Cellars East Hill Pinot noir 04 is Pinot without a net- Sam Tannahill and Chris Matzepink took the risk of allowing you to really taste the fickle Pinot grape in all its glory.

It's so hard to make a rich yet balanced Pinot noir that shows the elusive, entrancing scents and flavors that make the wine unique. And to not "friendly it up" with toasty oak and big extracted sweetness to deflect attention from flaws, in case something goes wrong.

In the nose, the classic scent of Pinot noir fruit is expressed as red raspberry, red cherry, red currant, marionberry, and elusive hints of violets, cinnamon, and fresh turned earth. In the mouth, the layers of flavors just keep on rollin'.

After decanting and some time to air, balanced red and black fruit flavors mingle with a crisp acidity and focused, very fine tannins. Individual notes of different fruit, spice, and herbs dance in the mouth, changing constantly. There's a silky texture and a heady taste of roses intermingled with white raspberries, red raspberries, blackberry, and occasional hits of red and black cherry.

What is most impressive is the transparency of the flavors- there's no way that anything could be hidden here- the flavors are 100% Pinot fruit, no toasty oak barrel or highly extracted sweetness to deflect attention. This is really Pinot without a net - the winemakers have traversed the tightrope and produced a wine of balance, finesse, and classic quality.

A new wine for Shea Wine Cellars this year, it is made from blocks on the East Hill ranging in age from 3rd to 6th leaf, 85% Dijon clone 777 and 115 fruit and about 15% Wadenswil clone.

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NW Big Reds Club™

**Charlie Hoppes Month!
Fidelitas Champoux Ca, Canon de Sol Meritage 02**

One of Washington State's most well known winemakers, the release of Charlie Hoppes' new vintage of his Fidelitas Cabernet Sauvignon, made from the very special Champoux Vineyard, has triggered our "Charlie Month" for the Big Reds Club.

Charlie Hoppes has something that can't be taught in the wine industry: a gut instinct that nudges him when grapes are ready to pick, alerts him when he reaches the "ah-ha" point of blending wines and intuitively informs him what a wine will taste like a year or two down the road in the bottle.

That instinct is distinguishing the Benton City, WA winemaker among his peers, and garnering accolades for his latest releases, his fourth vintage of Fidelitas wines. As well as making wine for his own Fidelitas, Charlie is one of Washington's most active consulting winemakers. Today, wine lovers can taste Hoppes' winemaking prowess behind a number of labels, including Cañon de Sol, Goose Ridge, Ryan Patrick Vineyards, Zefina Winery, Alder Ridge, Six Prong, Saint Laurent and his own label, Fidelitas.

This month, we offer Canon de Sol's Meritage 02 as partner to his Champoux Cab 03.

Charlie's Winemaking in 2003

2003 was one of the warmest growing seasons and harvests in Washington in the last 20 years. This resulted in smaller berry size and lighter cluster weights, which produced lower yields. The unusually hot growing season resulted in early ripening in the warmer areas and a quick start to harvest with flavorful ripe fruit in the early part of the vintage. Modest precipitation in August and September helped cool down the vineyards, slowed down ripening and allowed many of the vineyards in the cooler regions to benefit from the extra hang time which improved fruit flavors and intensity.

Charlie buys grapes from a range of vineyards: "I work with about a dozen vineyards," Hoppes said. "My fruit comes from a really diverse cross-section of the Columbia Valley, from Walla Walla to Frenchman Hills. I get grapes from Champoux Vineyards. I get grapes off Red Mountain. I get a big chunk from the Wahluke Slope. My business model is to do this on purpose. It gives you a lot more options to make the best wine you can."

With the Canon de Sol Meritage 02, Charlie was able to draw on a selection of grapes from all over Washington. With the Champoux Cabernet Sauvignon 03, he used fruit from just one vineyard source. Fortunately, the Champoux Vineyard, in the Horse Heaven Hills AVA, received cool breezes from the Columbia Gorge that moderated the extreme heat of 2003's summer.

The **Champoux Vineyard** was first planted in 1972, and the grapes that come from this vineyard make some of the most sought after Washington wines, including wines from Andrew Will and Quilceda Creek. The vineyard is made up of 170 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Lemberger, Riesling, MuscatCabernet Franc, Syrah, and Merlot.

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January 2006

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™ Vintage 2004 Month!

Shea Wine Cellars
East Hill 04 \$42

Broadley Vineyards
Marcile Lorraine 04 \$50

Northwest Big Reds Club™ Charlie Hoppes Month!

Fidelitas
Champoux
Cabernet Sauvignon \$55

Canon de Sol
Meritage \$28

New Discoveries Club™

Note Bene
Abbinare 02 \$24

Brandborg
Pinot noir
Northern Reach 02 \$24

Dessert Wine Club™

Sineann
Sweet Sydney \$27

Owen Roe
Vox Populi \$25

Big Reds Club continued from page 1

The Cabernet vines of Champoux Vineyard were planted in 1972, making them one of the oldest Cabernet blocks in the state. The fruit produces extremely elegant and bright red cherry flavors. In 2003, black cherry, cassis, and intense, richly concentrated flavors dominate the Cabernet Sauvignons made from its grapes.

Canon de Sol Winery

While this month's Big Reds Club is focused on the wine-making of Charlie Hoppes, Canon de Sol Winery is a joint operation of Charlie and **Victor Cruz**. They became friends while both were working at Westinghouse as engineers.

While Victor Cruz (pictured at right) grew up in Wapato, Washington, the son of first-generation Mexican-American farm laborers, he never worked in agriculture. Instead he earned an engineering degree from Western Washington University and began climbing the corporate ladder. After retiring from Westinghouse, he founded Canon de Sol, in 1999, with Charlie.

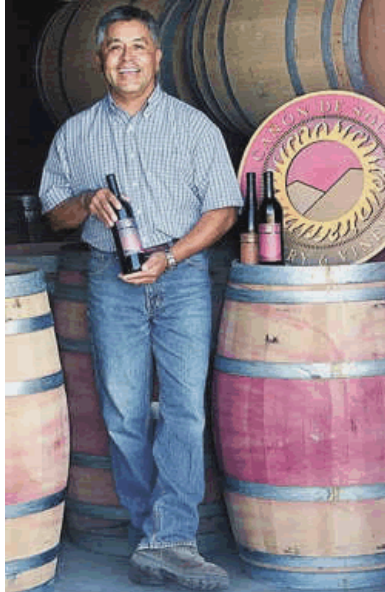
As one of a very few Hispanic winemakers in the US, Canon de Sol has come to the attention of the Hispanic community, and the wines are especially popular with that community.

"In my wildest dreams I never thought using my ethnic background would be a plus for me. But it has been," Cruz says. "It's brought me a lot of marketing opportunities with magazines and newspapers. Still, my advice to any Hispanic entrepreneur would be to get an education. Education opened many doors for me and gave me the opportunity to take a risk in the wine industry."

Fidelitas Winery has been tucked into a corner of Canon de Sol since its founding in 2000, but a new winery in the Red Mountain appellation is under construction, with completion expected in 2007.



Charlie Hoppes



The Wines

Fidelitas Cabernet Sauvignon Champoux Vineyard 03 \$55

Top grape source Champoux Vineyard goes into this Cabernet Sauvignon .

"Great vineyard, great vineyard site, we're fortunate to get what we do of their grapes", says Charlie. "The age of the vineyard makes a huge difference in the quality of the fruit we get—there's great consistency from vintage to vintage. "

What differentiates Champoux Cab from other Cab sources is the "great fruit intensity and concentration", says Charlie. "The wine is capable of going over the top with its tannic structure, and must be monitored closely. Careful fermentation extracts exactly what you want."

The 2003 Champoux has concentrated black color, and big black fruit qualities — black cherry, and cassis flavors. A huge backbone of well integrated tannins shows potential for cellaring from 6-8 years, although the wine is drinking well right now.



Canon de Sol Meritage 02 \$28

Wine Press NW rating "Outstanding".

From the winery: "This Meritage Blend is 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, and 13% Cabernet Franc from four different vineyards in the Columbia Valley".

Wine Press NW says: "Charlie Hoppes and his childhood friend Victor Cruz joined forces to make small lots of outstanding red wines. This offers aromas of cherry cola, tobacco and chocolate with flavors of lovely black fruit and plums. A delicious, balanced and flavorful wine."

Cherry cola, tobacco and chocolate aromas lead to lovely black fruit and plums. A clean, flavorful wine that is balanced and absolutely delicious.



New Discoveries Club

Two wineries you may not have heard of are featured this month.

**Note Bene
Abbinare 02 \$22**

Nota Bene Cellars takes its name from the Latin phrase "Nota Bene", which is used to direct the attention of the reader to something particularly important. It also happens to be the first letter of the last name of the winemaker, Tim Narby (the N) and his wife Carol Bryant (the B;).



"We wanted our wines to catch the attention of the consumer," said Narby, a Boeing programmer/analyst for the past 26 years. "Carol was a Latin student for many years and used the letters NB when she wanted to 'note well' a passage to emphasize. It just fit when we started making our wine."

Narby joins a number of graduates from the Boeing Wine Club, including Candence, Austin Robaire, Soos Creek and a half-dozen others who have taken their amateur status commercial with positive results.

Abbinare is Italian for "link together" which is the winery sees this assemblage of vineyards and varietals... Washington's finest sources of the grape varietals that together comprise a classic Bordeaux style wine.

Abbinare was crafted to show how diverse vineyards can come together to produce a wonderful wine that will age for many years.

44% Merlot
(25% Conner Lee, 11% Chandler Reach,
4% Ariansas, 4% Ciel du Cheval)

31% Cabernet Sauvignon
(25% Portteus, 6% Champoux)

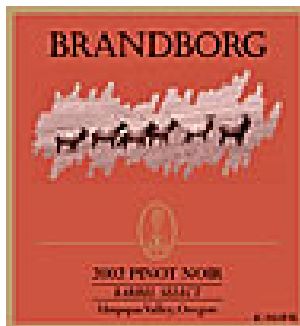
17% Cabernet Franc (Portteus)

8% Petit Verdot (Ciel du Cheval)

Bottled on 8/22/04. This wine was aged for 23 months in oak barrels, 42% new French oak; 150 cases were produced.

**Brandborg Winery
Pinot noir
Northern Reach 2002 \$22**

From the winery: "This is our mid range pinot and possesses excellent structure and very nice fruit. The wine is a blend of Wadensvil clone from the Bradley Vineyard in Elkton and Pommard clone from the Red Hill Vineyard, the highest elevation site in the Umpqua Valley AVA."



"We felt that the forward fruit of the Bradley and the structure of the Red Hill blended well together. The wine is a lovely medium ruby color with aromas of ripe dark cherry fruit with a warm smoky oak and sandalwood bouquet. The flavors show dark cherries with raspberry and some ripe plummy. There is a bit of mint with good acid and somewhat firm tannins. The balance is very good with good structure and length."

Brandborg's owner and winemaker made wine in California before moving to Oregon and starting a winery. The Brandborg Pinots are usually good buys, and represent some of the best wine from Umpqua Valley in Oregon.

NW Dessert Wine Club

Sineann "Sweet Sydney" 04 \$24

From the winery: "Sweet Sydney is a Zinfandel Ice wine named for the winemaker's beautiful and, well, sweet daughter, Sydney. Freezing Zinfandel effectively removes water as ice crystals concentrating sugars, flavors and aromas. After fermentation the wine ended up with 9% alcohol and 39% residual sugar. We use this wine as dessert with strong, flavorful cheeses."



**Owen Roe
Vox Populi 375 ml \$26**

A Grenache based, fortified dessert wine in the style of the great Banyuls, and just as perfect with chocolate desserts or confections, even Foie gras and cheese.



Reserve Pinot noir Club continued....

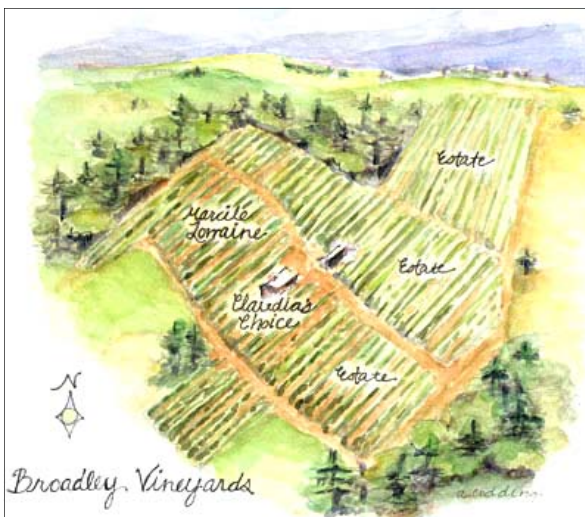
Shea's East Hill is the winery's first Pinot noir made from its vineyard's Dijon clone fruit. According to Dick Shea, the vineyard and winery owner, Dijon clone Pinot noir grown in the Shea Vineyard seems to produce grapes that, when blended with other Shea fruit, balance and enhance the flavors of the fruity, forward, classic Pommard clone and the structured, blue fruit quality of the Wadenswil clone.

The backbone of the Shea East Hill Pinot is the 777 Dijon clone fruit from Block 5 of the East Hill. The 777 clone of Pinot noir is considered to be one of the top quality Pinot noirs available for planting. It is known for the strong and intense colors it brings to a Pinot, along with intense aromas and good balance, with rounded tannins and the potential for extended cellaring. The 777 clone produces a high quality Pinot with a high sugar content, low acidity, and with judicious thinning, a world class wine.

The source of the 777 Pinot noir clone is the region called Morey St Denis, in the Cote de Nuits, the northern portion of the Cote d' Or, in Burgundy. The Morey St Denis area is a block of vineyards surrounding the village of the same name, part of a 30 mile long horizontal stretch of limestone around the city of Beaune where many of the world's top Pinots are produced. While not quite as well known as the Gevrey-Chambertin vineyards to its north, and the Chambolle-Musigny vineyards to its south, Morey-St-Denis makes its share of world class wines, and the 777 clone appears to translate superbly to Oregon's climate and soils.

All of the characteristics of the East Hill are muted by the wine's youth -- it really takes several hours of decanting to experience its potential. Tasting it young, there's a sense of having forced the wine open. Worth it, as we want to know what's there so we can make a decision about its quality. But the wine needs several years in the cellar before it will start strutting its stuff. Yet we seem to reach for this wine often -- even though we know it's too young, it's so intriguing, so quintessentially Pinot.

Because this is the first release of the East Hill wine, the price is an introductory one, and a good value. Other 2004 Pinots made from the East Hill Dijon fruit include Broadley's Shea 04, available from Avalon in very limited amounts.



The Wines

**Broadley
Marcile Lorraine 04 \$50**

**Earthy, Classic,
Distinctive**

The Broadley Vineyards Marcile Lorraine Pinot noir 04 shows great fruit concentration, perfect balance, and a healthier level of refreshing acidity than was possible in the warm 2002 and 2003 vintages. The cooler climate let Craig and Morgan do what they do best-- make an ageable, Burgundian style Pinot noir with a strong dash of Broadley's Estate Vineyard terroir and the extra mouth texture and complexity gained from whole cluster and wood fermenter processing.



Broadley's Marcile Lorraine Pinot noir is named after Craig's mother. The wine's grapes always come from 2 acres located at the top of the Broadley Estate vineyard, above the Claudia's Choice blocks at around 600-ft. The grapes are a blend of older Pommard and Wadenswil clones planted in 1983 on an unusual, for Oregon, lyre trellis (At right).

Usually harvested last, the Marcile Lorraine grapes are partially destemmed and then fermented in 600 gallon open top French oak fermenters. These wines are aged in tight grained new French oak for 12 months, and are bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.



**Shea Wine Cellars
East Hills Pinot noir 04 \$45**

The East Hill is Shea's first Pinot noir made from its Dijon clone vines. Dijon clone Pinot noir grown in Shea Vineyard balances the fruity, forward qualities of the classic Pommard clone with the structured, blue fruit qualities of the Wadenswil clone, according to winery owner Dick Shea.



Shea's East Hill wine release signals the successful replanting of much of the vineyard after a phylloxera outbreak in 1996, and offers a fascinating glimpse into the future of Oregon's best Pinot noirs.

Made from blocks of vines on the East Hill of the vineyard ranging in age from four to seven years, the wine is a combination of 85% Dijon clone 777 and 15% Wadenswil clone. These vines are younger (replanted since the Phylloxera outbreak in the 90's) and show the direction the vineyard is heading, with impressive results.