

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™

Shea Block 23 04

Daedalus Seven Springs 03 Alloro "Fattoria" 04

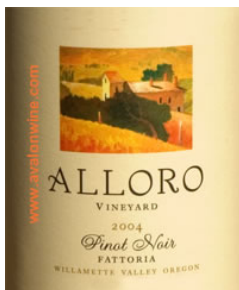
Three wines this month for Reserve Pinot Club members, two world class Single Vineyard Pinots and a drink-me-now, fun Pinot with a distinct nod to the country-Italian style.

This month we begin our series of wines from Shea Wine Cellars. Over the next 8 months, we'll be sending all the Shea wines to the club, starting with the lovely **Shea Wine Cellars Block 23 Pinot noir 2004**. Only 45 cases of the **Daedalus Pinot noir Seven Springs 03** was made by Aron Hess. It's a lovely example of this outstanding vineyard, and a 2003 vintage Pinot that has structure and good acidity in a vintage where extremes of heat made it difficult to produce a balanced, ageable wine.

Alloro Fattoria– Fun Fun Fun in the Sun Sun Sun

Alloro, Italian for laurel, is a small winery that crafts entirely Estate grown Pinot noirs. It is located on the southwest slope of the Chehalem Mountains, north west of Chehalem and Rex Hill Wineries. Alloro's team includes owner David Nemarnik and winemaker Don Kautzner (winemaker at Adesheim for 20 years).

All the Alloro wines are made from Estate grapes. Don has made two delicious Pinots, and the 2004 Estate looks like a good candidate for the Reserve Pinot Club next year. This fall, he made a less expensive, drink-me-now Pinot from younger grapes and barrels that did not fit into the Estate blend. Called **Fattoria** (a term for a wine estate in Italy) this wine is a pleasant surprise, showing us yet another style for Pinot noir.



There's intriguing hints of bacon smoke and cedar in the nose, and bright, red cherry and red raspberry flavors dancing on the palate with just the right amount of acidity. This is SUCH a pleasant wine - hints of spice in the finish, sometimes I think that the red fruit-type Pinots are too acidic or astringent, but not here.

There's a wonderful balance between the bright red fruit flavors and a soft plushness that makes the finish easy and enjoyable. It's a drink-me-now, red fruit flavored Pinot for everyday, with a country Italian twist. 52% Sunnyside Vineyard fruit, 48% Alloro Estate.

Shea Wine Cellars Block 23 Pinot noir 04

Shea Wine Cellars' 2004 vintage Pinot noirs have achieved a new level of excellence. Perhaps the exemplary quality experienced in all of the Shea 2004s is the result of a combination of the maturity of the vineyard, a year that produced near perfect (if little) fruit, and winemaker Sam Tannahill's several years of experience with the winery and its fruit. With a total of only 2400 cases of five different Pinots produced, Shea's 2004 wines are collectable, noteworthy, and wonderfully satisfying, promising rewarding experiences across their 10-12 year life.

We at Avalon are so honored to be able to offer all five of Shea's 2004 wines as Reserve Pinot Club selections over the next 8 months.

Continued on page 4

NW Big Reds Club™

Five Star Cellars Merlot 03

Woodward Canyon Old Vine Cabernet 02

A wine from a Washington State icon, and a wine from an up-and-comer whose two vintages of red wines have both been received with high scores and lots of local excitement.

I just spoke to Darcy Small, Rick's wife, and things seem just about the same as usual there. I guess after 25 years of making wine, Rick has things pretty well thought out.

What's new at Woodward is Rick's development of sustainable growing practices in his Estate vineyard and the increasing amount of fruit he is able to pull from the maturing vineyard. Quality continues to trump quantity, and the amounts of wine made, particularly Woodward's best reds, continue to be small.

Five Star– Up and Coming

Matt Huse didn't like wine, and certainly never expected to be in the wine business. The Walla Walla native graduated from a carpentry program at the local community college and started a career of "pounding nails for a living," working for a general contractor.

Continued on page 2

Oregon Vintage 2005 Report

Despite a wet spring and recent rains for most of the state, Oregon's wine harvest looks promising, with increased crop levels and ripeness profiles that indicate favorable flavor structure and higher acidity than in past years. A major factor in the coming days will be weather - if the rain holds off and temperatures rise, the result will be a good balance of fruit ripeness and sugar levels, potentially leading to lower alcohol levels, said Dr. Greg Jones, a climatologist at Southern Oregon University in Ashland, OR.

"This has been an interesting year, with one of the driest winters and wettest springs on record," Jones said. "The wet spring gave us more water in the ground but ultimately resulted in good vegetative growth. The down side was some of that rain came at the bloom period, resulting in shatter or poor set. Rain was more of an issue in higher elevations. We are now looking at the ripening profiles. Everything out there should ripen but it depends on elevation and the weather forecast." An increased yield is good news for Oregon's wine industry, which has been experiencing an unprecedented demand for Pinot noir and other varieties, in part due to the success of "Sideways." Lower alcohol levels, coupled with increased tonnage, could lead to an ideal Oregon vintage, says many of the state's producers. "This could end up being a magical harvest," said Jim Bernau, owner of Willamette Valley Vineyards in Salem.

October 2005

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™

Shea Wine Cellars
Block 23 2004 \$48

Daedalus Cellars
Seven Springs 03 \$35

Alloro
"Fattoria" 04 \$17

Northwest Big Reds Club™

Woodward Canyon
Old Vine Cabernet \$65

Five Star Cellars
Merlot 03 \$32

New Discoveries Club™

Harmonia
Pinot noir 04 \$21

Harmonia Theia
Chardonnay 04 \$21

Dessert Wine Club™

Harris Bridge Cellars
Story Reserve
Pinot noir "O"
Dessert Wine \$37

Big Reds Club continued from page 1

It turned out that the general contractor was building many of the new wineries in the region and Huse, nail by nail, began a transformation on his own. The process of winemaking intrigued him, and while learning about that process, he tried many of the new Walla Walla wines.

"It's funny—I couldn't stand the stuff at first," Huse recalled. "Working at the wineries changed a lot of things for me. I learned to love wine, and while working as a carpenter, I discovered I didn't want to pound nails the rest of my life."

As it happened, Huse's father, David, retired a few years ago from selling farm machinery in the region and decided to make a little wine for himself. The first vintage, in 2000, turned out to be such a lush Cabernet Sauvignon that he chose to commercially produce wine and asked his son if he were interested.



Matt Huse immediately enrolled in Walla Walla Community College's winemaking and viticulture program and produced his first wine in 2001, followed by a 2002 vintage, both highly regarded by regional winemakers. With the 2003 vintage, the winery has started to receive very high ratings from national magazines and competitions.

"We knew Matt had great potential," said Myles Anderson, co-owner of Walla Walla Vintners and advisor to the community college's viticulture program. "His parents had just started a winery and Matt showed the passion necessary to succeed in this business."



The Huses searched for a name that wasn't already taken in a region with so many new wineries. Matt said he kept noticing words like, "five-star hotel," and "five-star restaurant," and checked to see if Five Star Cellars was available.

"We wanted to show that we are dedicated to quality, and five-star is the best," he said.

The winery produced 3,000 cases of the 2003 vintage and plans to stay at that size. Their new winery is located at the Walla Walla airport, along with many of the newer wineries. Matt said he'll stick with red wines for now, and let the fruit dictate his wines.

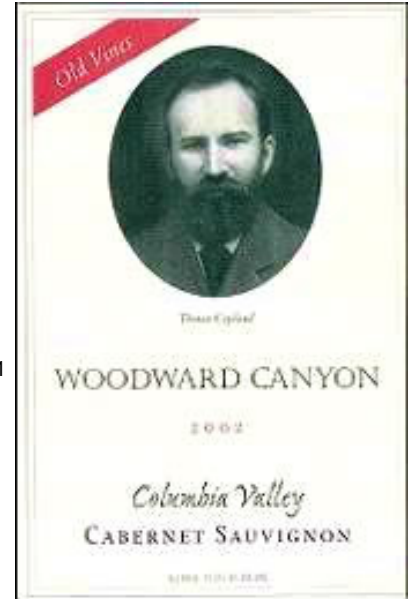
Although he is happy with the new direction of his life, Huse did not let the carpentry skills go to waste. As a side business, Huse is repairing wine barrels and showing students in the community college winemaking program how to make minor repairs.

"I don't think I would have believed this a few years ago, but it's what I want to do now," Huse said. "I am a Walla Walla native and this is where I want to be."

Woodward Canyon Old Vine Cabernet Sauvignon 02 \$65

Produced from grapes that were planted in the early 1970s, these vines are some of the oldest in Washington State. The grapes were harvested from Champoux Vineyard (75%) and Sagemoor Vineyard (25%), both on elevated bench land overlooking the Columbia River in southeastern Washington.

This 2002 "Old Vines" Cabernet Sauvignon is a rich and powerful successor to the 2001 "Old Vines." The 2002 vintage was warmer than 2001 and this wine reflects that. Flavors of ripe black fruits and cassis marry with spicy oak and vanilla. The color is dark purple and the flavor is concentrated, rich and long; the texture is supple and silky but still the wine has fantastic grip. This red wine will benefit greatly from additional cellaring and with proper storage should last fifteen years or more. 870 cases produced.



Five Star Cellars Merlot 03 \$32

Wine Spectator had this to say about this wine:

"93 points — Deep, dark, gorgeous stuff, a generous mouthful of sweet, oak-accented black cherry, blackberry and currant flavors that mingle seductively on the long, beautifully focused finish. Stylish stuff, wants cellaring. Best from 2008 through 2018. 1,020 cases made." (HS)

Aromas of Black Cherry, cedar, and spicy oak leap out of the glass. Dark and deep, this rich, powerful wine fills the mouth with sweet oak, vanilla, and Bing cherry flavors. The long, lingering finish just keeps on going.

Below, winemaker Matt Huse and wife Traci.



New Discoveries Club

Harmonia Winery is the personal wine label of Michael Beckley, a winemaker based in Amity, Oregon, just south of McMinnville (where the IPNC is held each year). Michael's "day job" is winemaker for new Coelho Winery, and he makes his Harmonia wines there as well.

Michael and his family moved to Oregon in 1989, and he was determined to get into the wine industry, working as a "cellar rat" at Sokol Blosser for several years. In 1994, he started working at Domaine Drouhin, where he still occasionally helps out. In 2002, Michael moved to Erath as winemaker, then took the opportunity to help new winery Coelho to start up their wine program. He still works periodically with other North Willamette wineries, as well as making his own wines.

Harmonia wines are made in small amounts, from fruit Michael sourced from his contacts in the Willamette Valley. The wines are balanced, well made, and quite appealing, all at very reasonable prices. We're enthusiastic about Michael's winemaking skills and look forward to his future vintages.



Harmonia Pinot noir 04 \$21

Michael Beckley makes small amounts of very well priced wine, and is mostly known locally as a source of real good values. His 2004 Harmonia Pinot noir is everything you'd want and expect in a ready to drink Oregon Pinot. Black berry fruit in the scent and flavor are accompanied by hints of fresh earth, red cherries, and red raspberries. It's just a real nice wine for the price. About 300 cases made.

Harmonia Theia Chardonnay 04 \$21

Surprisingly delicious, this nice Chardonnay from Garagiste Michael Beckley is a super-pleasant experience. Richly fruity, yet with a racy acidity that keeps it real lively and great with food. Michael really knows how to make wine....which is maybe why he has such a devoted local following.

NW Dessert Wine Club

Harris Bridge Dessert Wine 2003 Story Reserve Pinot noir "O" Ice Wine \$37

2003 Pinot Noir Story Reserve-O dessert wine sweetly entices with an aroma delicately coated in blackberry and oak. Plum and currant lead into a rich progression of tannin across the palette and it finishes with a touch of fruit. Pairs well with peppered beef carpaccio & horseradish cream, or a black-berry cobbler.

This is a second release of their 2003 Pinot Noir, aged in oak barrels for 14 months.

Winemaker Nathan Warren suggests having this wine with a good cigar.

Harris Bridge Vineyard 2003 Pinot Noir Story Reserve Dessert Wine offers a hint of chocolate and pepper in the aroma. Blackberry and currant lead into a subtle sweetness on the palette. A touch of oak and plum linger on the finish. Enjoy this wine with dark chocolate desserts, after dinner as a lighter alternative to port, or with a nutty salad or beef carpaccio to start your meal.

Here's the winery's description of their wine-making methods:

"Harris Bridge Vineyards makes a "dessert wine". We feel our production method yields a more dynamic wine, higher in acidity, and more balanced for enjoying, not only with desserts, but also with fine aperitifs, salads, or on its own. Our wine is cryoextracted, meaning that the grapes are picked, then frozen, instead of being frozen on the vine. This gives the winemaker total control as to when to harvest the fruit. The winemaker waits for the sugar and acid balance to be ideal, as well as the physiological ripeness and mature flavors to be present in the grapes, then harvests the fruit. The resulting wine is rich and supple, intoxicatingly aromatic, and timeless in the bottle. These wines age better than most red wines, due to their high acid, sugar, and alcohol levels. They begin fresh and crisp and through the years by carbohydrate degradation and caramelization of the sugars become sinfully smooth, supple, and aromatic."

Harris Bridge Vineyards and Winery is the only Oregon winery exclusively devoted to Dessert Wines. Nathan and Amanda make three ice wine styled dessert wines from the Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir grape varieties.

Ecologically sound and sustainable farming practices are at HBV's core, and they are key to preserving one of the most spectacular natural settings in Oregon. The Vineyard is planted in Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris, two of Oregon's premier varieties. With the fruit from those vines, HBV produces ultra-premium dessert wines.

The founder of Harris Bridge Vineyard is a farming enthusiast by the name of Nathan Warren and Harris Bridge Vineyard is a lifelong project for him and his partner Amanda. Nathan was raised in Harris Valley and developed a love for the region. In 1997 he returned to the valley and began establishing Harris Bridge Vineyard.

While establishing the vineyard, Nathan worked in the wine industry to both pay the bills, and learn the craft. He started winter pruning with Dai Crisp at Croft Vineyard, then worked with Argyle winery in Dundee as a cellar-hand under Winemaker Rheinhard Schlasse, and finally as an assistant winemaker at Eola Hills under Winemaker Kerry Norton. Since leaving Eola Hills in 2000, Nathan has been focused solely on Harris Bridge wines.



Reserve Pinot noir Club continued....

Vintage 2004 Pinot noirs, made in very small quantities, from Bergstrom, Owen Roe, Sineann, and now, Shea Wine Cellars, have been received with great enthusiasm. The 2004 vintage was down about 30% from the previous year, with many top wineries, including Beaux Freres, producing tiny amounts of wine. While Shea Wine Cellars' crop was down about 30% in 2004, Dick Shea had planned to expand his offerings, so the winery produced about as much wine as in 2003. What's different at Shea Wine Cellars is the quality of the wines. Building on previous vintages, the 2004 wines show what years of hard work can produce.



Daedalus Cellars—Up and Coming

Daedalus Cellars is Aron Hess and wife Pam Walden, with assistance from 2 year old son Samson. Daedalus (DAY-duh-lus) is a small family winery in Oregon's Willamette Valley. Aron and Pam source fruit from some of Oregon's best vineyards and use artisan methods to handcraft their wines. The wines show an elegant, ageable structure and complexity, refined and sophisticated, natural partners for a wide range of foods.

We've followed Aron's Pinots with interest since the first vintage, 2000. Since inception, the winemaker has aimed high for quality and complexity. The Daedalus Pinot noirs are sophisticated, ageable, and world class. Silky texture and delicately layered fruit and spice flavors are classically true to the nature of Pinot noir.

There's lots of news about Daedalus- first, **Aron and Pam are now full owners of the "Jezebel" label**, a line of value priced Oregon wines formerly co-owned with Sineann owner, Peter Rosback. **Aron has now joined 12th & Maple Wine Co. in Dundee as their winemaker.** 12th & Maple is a new custom crush facility in Dundee owned by Corus Estates & Vineyards. Both Daedalus Cellars and Jezebel will be produced at this facility starting with the 2005 crush.



Shea Wine Cellars Block 23 2004 \$48

My tasting notes for this wine start with one word: "gorgeous". Followed by "serious world class". Ha. Must'a liked this one, you think?

The nose starts with hints of toasted espresso bean and cocoa bean, intermingled with lovely notes of mint and herbs (the vineyard is surrounded by and streaked through with areas of native plants, many of which are scented herbs like mint, sage and marjoram – the pollen and oils from these plants sometimes blow onto grapes during the growing season and show up at subtle levels in the wine). Red berry and blackberry aromas take over as the wine opens in the glass. A hint of the scent of Shea's cellar is present in this wine, bringing to mind nostalgic memories of barrel tasting last spring.

In the mouth, the wine has a creamy sweetness, unified with fresh blackberry, marionberry, black raspberry, cassis, cherry liqueur, and loganberry flavors. There's a refined structure built from a backbone of tannins that are quite present, firm yet balanced, saying to me- **"age me--- age me and I'll give you even more"**. The invasion of Phyloxera into this vineyard has reduced yields and increased complexity and depth of flavors in this Block, and until it has to be replanted, we're going to see some lovely wines from this section of Shea Vineyard.

It's a stunningly rich, nuanced Pinot, with a perfectly poised balance of rich flavors, seamless acidity for freshness, and tannins for long and productive cellaring. The best Shea Block 23 ever, drinking well now but will reward the patient wine lover with cellaring for 3-8 years. It's a very special wine.

The **Shea Wine Cellars Block 23 Pinot noir \$48** has been made since the 2001 vintage. The fruit in Block 23 is Pommard clone, and was planted in the 1990's. The vineyard is slowly being effected by Phyloxera, and there may not be a 2005 vintage wine. In the next year or two, the vineyard will go out of production and be replanted. Until then, the lower yields that a Phyloxera infection causes adds to the intensity of the flavors in the grapes. This block's grapes have always made a fruit forward, early release Pinot that tastes great pretty much from bottling on. It's not a simple wine, and cellaring allows the wine to develop the layered, rich flavors we've grown to love.

Daedalus Pinot noir Seven Springs Vineyard 03 \$35

Only 45 cases made of this complex, age able Pinot noir from one of Oregon's oldest and most distinguished vineyards.

Winemaker Aron Hess, formerly winemaker at Rex Hill, puts all his skills into creating a Pinot with lots of varietal character and flavors. Made entirely from Seven Springs fruit, all Pommard clone, the wine is dense and concentrated, with scent blackberry and roasted cocoa bean, flavors of violets, oolong tea, black raspberries, cherries, and plum. The finish is quite long, with hints of black fruit and silky tannins.

