



Reserve Pinot noir Club™ for September 2007

Club Selections:

Dusky Goose Pinot noir 05

Capitello Pinot noir 05

This month our selections include Dusky Goose's 2005 Pinot noir, highly collectible and quite hard to get, a Pinot noir with an international reputation gained almost entirely by word of mouth. Made by one of Oregon's best known and most highly honored winemakers, Lynn Penner-Ash, from Winderlea Vineyard fruit. The Winderlea Vineyard, formerly known as the Goldschmidt Vineyard, grows fruit most Oregon winemakers can only dream of working with.

Joining Dusky Goose this month in our club shipment is Capitello's 2005 Pinot noir. Ray Walsh brings deep knowledge of winemaking in both New Zealand and Oregon to his tiny winery's offerings. Capitello is new (this is his second vintage) and seems sharply focused on the road to cult status. His wines are deeply pleasing to both classical Burgundy fans and lovers of the denser, richer New World style of Pinot noir.

Capitello's Oregon Pinot with a New Zealand Twist

Winemaker Ray Walsh was recruited from New Zealand to work for King Estate—one of Oregon's largest wineries—in 1993. His talent swept him higher and higher until, before he had a chance to look back, he'd progressed beyond the realm of winemaker to executive status—ten years of upward momentum. When Walsh finally had a chance to reflect on his journey, he realized he longed to return to what he loved best—the hands-on stuff. "All of a sudden," Walsh said, "I realized, 'I'm not making wine anymore.' I really wanted to get back to winemaking because that's where I'm happy.



Ray Walsh

Thus we have Walsh's very own Capitello Wines. Starting with the name, Walsh created a winemaking operation that embraced everything he likes most about the profession and rejects everything he doesn't like. "Capitello," he explained, "is what you find in Italy—little houses where [you'd] post a statue of Mother Mary—a little house that would bless the vineyard or farmland. I didn't want to use my name because I feel there's a little too much ego wrapped up in this industry, and I didn't want to fall into that trap.

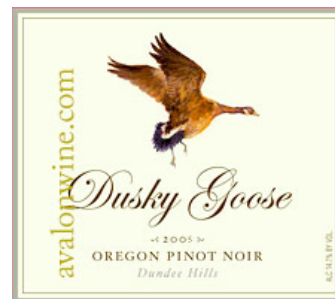
"I want to make honest wine, fun wine, wine that can be enjoyed with food," Walsh said, "so I decided to be more whimsical with my label."

The Innovative, New World Capitello Style

Walsh started small with Capitello. He said, "It was a horrible financial

Dusky Goose Pinot noir 05 \$54

Seamlessly lush and constantly evolving, the 05 Dusky Goose again shows why it is an Avalon favorite. The nose opens with oodles of black fruit, with a brightness (freshness) that lifts the aromas from the glass. Truffled cream intertwines with dried herbs and rose petals, and cocoa powder.



Black berry, black cherry, black raspberry, and dark red cherry vibrantly wrap around your palate. Supple fruit is lifted by the fresh acidity of the 2005 vintage, hinting at a long life in the cellar.

The finish is full of subtle spice and barrel toast, mixing with sweet black fruit and re-emerging creamy truffle notes. After many seconds, super-fine tannins move like a feather around your mouth.

The 05 Dusky evolves with each taste, one minute offering lushness, the next putting on a darker element and showing exotic barrel spice. The 2005 Dusky Goose: proof that sophistication and elegance can coexist with opulence in an Oregon Pinot noir.

Capitello Pinot noir 05 \$33.95

The nose is all fruit - blackberry, black raspberry, and a hint of pomegranate that's intriguing and appealing.

On tasting the wine, the silky texture is quite striking. As Ray ages his wines in oak he uses a product called "Biolees", It acts in a similar way to aging wine on the lees, a process that softens acidity while enhancing sweetness. Biolees not only produce a richer, sweeter flavor, but also contribute a beautiful silky mouth feel/texture to the wine, like the sensation you'd have if you rubbed silk on your palate.

Flavors of the Capitello Pinot noir start with an initial intense sense of fruit sweetness, followed by clearly discernible layers of fruit - black raspberry, blackberry, black cherry, sweet red cherry, pomegranate, and tart pie cherry.

Ray ages his Pinot noir in one year old barrels he sources from Archery Summit, "long toasted" for several hours to add elegance and subtle flavors. The fruit and toast flavors reiterate in the mouth and mingle with a sense of dark minerality and fresh earth in the finish. Fruit dominates the flavors at this point in the wine's life, with subtle yet present acidity to add freshness and a seamless silky hint of tannins adds depth. Drink now or cellar through 2010.

Food pairing: I can't imagine a better pairing than Oregon or New Zealand spring lamb. Pan grill lamb chops and chantrelles, and deglaze with some of the Capitello Pinot noir. Serve with spring greens and baby potatoes

burden to go back to winemaking." He picked up consulting jobs for other area wineries—which he still does—and made it happen. He'd intended to keep Capitello small, but, he said, "My son is embracing it now." Walsh's nine-year-old son has taken a great interest in winemaking and spends lots of time with his dad, learning the craft. "That's why," Walsh said, "I've grown the program more than I thought I would have."

Walsh said his winemaking objective is to feature the nuances of the land and fruit his wines are made from. "I do want to express the vineyard. That is true," he said. "I do pride myself as a New World winemaker. I'm very interested in new techniques. I want to play. I fiddle to the nth degree."

Some say this "play"—really, the use of available technology—tampers with the natural flavors coming off the vineyards. Walsh disagrees. "I try to express a full degree of the varietal, and maybe not all of that comes from the vineyard," Walsh said. "I do filter. I think the old days of we make wine and we sell it amongst our village are over, and now we ship it all over the country. I need to make something I can stand behind."

Walsh described his fining technique, a technique designed to remove the matter that makes wine appear cloudy—some believe, leaving it (over)stripped. "I fine with things that actually add," Walsh said. "I use Biolees—because they add to the quality rather than fine out." This natural product eliminates cloudiness while enhancing the wine's natural flavors and overall balance.



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