



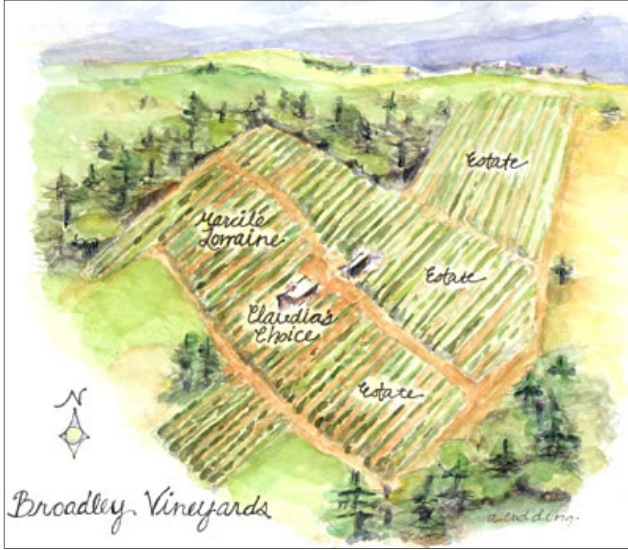
Reserve Pinot Noir Club™
The Challenge of Estate Vineyards

Broadley Claudia's Choice 03 & Brickhouse Cuvee Tonnellier 03

This month we focus on two experienced wineries whose families make wine exclusively from their own vineyards' fruit. As we've discussed before in this newsletter, it is particularly challenging to both own (and often manage) a family vineyard, and then to make wine only from the fruit you have grown yourselves.

Both Craig and son Morgan Broadley, and Doug Tunnell of Brick House, have risen to the challenge of both growing the fruit and producing the wine from small estate vineyards. Doug Tunnell adds the challenge of a strict organic philosophy, incorporating biodynamic techniques in the cultivation of his 19 acres of Pinot noir. Both wineries have received national awards for their wines over many vintages, proving their skills at creating balanced, well made wines whatever the weather throws at them.

Broadley Vineyards is almost within sight of my house, in the Southern part of the Willamette Valley, about 30 miles north of Eugene, Oregon in the tiny town of Monroe (pop 800). The area is known as the "Banana Belt" of the Willamette. An unusual configuration of mountains in the Coastal range west of the vineyard creates a unique hot spot where temperatures run higher than in most parts of the valley, and rain clouds pass over the area, routed around it by the Green Peak Mountain's rain shadow. A guy up the road from my house has



25 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon that ripen beautifully each year!

The Broadleys have nurtured their 30 acre Estate Vineyard for over 20 years and the wine shows it. Avalon's favorite Broadley wine over the years has been the rounded, elegant, lavish **Claudia's Choice**. This wine hit its high point of fame with the 1994 vintage, when it received 97 points from Wine Spectator. The 1994 vintage was, across the region, exceptionally soft, plush, and forward upon release, although it did not, in general, age well. Although the Claudia's Choice 2003 is a more structured, ageable wine than the 94, it is so reminiscent of the 94's positive qualities that we are very excited to be able to offer it to our members.

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NW Big Reds Club™
Meritage Masters

Owen Roe Walla Walla Red 03 & Fidelitas "Optu"

Two of the masters of big reds, David O'Reilly and Charlie Hoppes, made the wines for our Big Reds Club this month. Both wines are made from grapes sourced from Yakima and Walla Walla vineyards, including some of the most famous vineyards in Washington.

David O'Reilly was raised in Ireland, leaving with his family for British Columbia as a teen to escape the turmoil. While in school in Southern California, he worked at a small winery, 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."

After moving to Oregon, for more than six years O'Reilly worked for Elk Cove Winery, performing marketing tasks. However, he was leaning more and more about winemaking. The urge to make his own wine was singing inside his head. It was at this time that he met Peter Rosback, an amateur winemaker who helped the winery during crush.

Rosback was also bitten by the urge to produce wine. With Irish heritage and love of good wine in common, they struck a partnership and created **Sineann**. David then founded **Owen Roe** with friend Jerry Owen. They work together on some wines, and consult to each other on others.

"David has a great palate and is one of the best marketing people in the state," Rosback said. "We're a good team. Each of us brings talents to the table to produce the best wine we can. Of course, it starts with great fruit, and that also has to be the best we can get."

"Peter brings an irreplaceable passion to everything he does," O'Reilly said. "I think that's why we are such good partners."



Peter Rosback, David O'Reilly, and Jerry Owen

May
2005

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™

Broadley "Claudia's Choice" 03 \$48

Brick House Cuvee Tonnellier 03 \$50

Northwest Big Reds Club™

Owen Roe Walla Walla Red 03 \$45

Fidelitas "Optu" Meritage 03 \$35

New Discoveries Club™

Lone Canary "Rosso" \$18

Willow Crest Pinot gris 04 \$10

Jezebel Blanc 04 \$13

Dessert Wine Club™

Brooks Tethys \$27

Big Reds Club continued from page 1

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, the third vintage of Fidelitas wines. In a crowded field of new wineries and new releases, Fidelitas wines are quickly rising to the top of the barrel.

If making his own wines wasn't enough, Hoppes is also a hired consultant or winemaker for a handful of wineries in Washington State. And even if he isn't officially a consultant for a particular winery, family and friends say he receives phone calls daily from winemakers and winery owners who have questions about wine production, barrel selection, fermentation—you name it.

Known for his patience, both in the vineyard and the winery, 2005 is turning out to be a touchstone year for the affable winemaker who looks less like a wine-maker rock star and more like the neighborhood dad who transports kids to and from soccer games and lends a hand when someone needs help digging a fence post. Hoppes is slightly uncomfortable under the wine industry spotlight, but is so at ease with people that he accepts his newly acquired tier one status in wine business, knowing what is good for him is likely good for the wine industry in general.

Victor Cruz, owner of **Canon del Sol Winery**, says Hoppes has a few tricks up his sleeve that will make it hard for other winemakers to copy.

“He is a work of art to watch,” said Cruz. “To look at him, you wouldn't guess what he does for a living. But when you watch him in the vineyard and in the winery, you know you are watching something special.”

Charlie's brother Loren, who recently took over the reins of marketing and sales for **Fidelitas**, said Charlie was the third in line of five children, but was the one kid in the family who was willing to take more chances than any of the other kids.

“He knew something, and was the first of us to go out and experience culture and food and so on,” said Loren Hoppes. “He understood great food, smells, textures and other things at an early age.”

With more wines in barrel, Hoppes is one of the best Northwest winemakers on the radar screen, and worthy to join the ranks of the premiere wine tiers in the country.



Fidelitas “Optu” Meritage 02 \$35

Charlie Hoppes has changed the name of his Meritage, calling it “Optu” from this 2002 vintage forward. In Latin, Optu means “best”. The wine has a harmonious, seamless character. It is a tremendously complex wine with a black-fruit dominated profile.

Optu is a blend of red fruit from five different Washington State Vineyards: Champoux Vineyards (25%), Conner-Lee Vineyards (32%), Red Mountain Vineyards (10%), Snipes Canyon Vineyard (21%) and Milbrandt - Katherine Leone Vineyard (12%). The wine is 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 37% Merlot, and 9% Malbec.

All the fruit for Fidelitas was hand picked and sorted in the vineyard. Upon arrival at the winery, the fruit was destemmed and crushed directly to the fermentation tanks where the wines were either punched down three times daily or pumped over twice daily. Primary fermentation lasted five to ten days after which time the wines were gently pressed off and went immediately to barrels.

Once fermentation was complete in barrel, all wines were then put through malolactic fermentation in barrel. While aging in oak barrels, the wines were racked every four months to naturally clarify the wine. Optu was aged for 20 months in 60% new French oak.



Owen Roe Walla Walla Red \$45

New from Owen Roe, David O'Reilly is very excited about this blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 11% Merlot, and 9% Cab Franc sourced from Walla Walla's Seven Hills Vineyard Block 17. Block 17 fruit is also purchased by Quilceda Creek, Pepper Bridge Winery, and Leonetti, and is considered one of the best sources of fruit in Walla Walla.



The wine has a beautiful engraved label, one of a series of hand printed photographs made by David Bruner of scenes from Northern Ireland.

New Discoveries Club

**An Affordable Sangiovese,
and Whites for Warm Weather****Lone Canary
"Rosso" \$18**

Lone Canary Winery is owned by Mike Scott - former winemaker at Caterina Winery - and Jeanne and Steve Schaub - who are vineyardists and great fans of Mike's wines. The logo is an artistic rendering of Washington's state bird, the American Goldfinch.

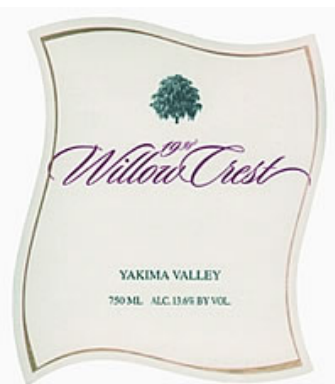


Through the fifteen years that he has been making wines in Washington State, Mike Scott has doggedly sourced the finest fruit from the Yakima and Columbia Valleys. He seeks out the grapes that show the characteristics of fragrance and flavor which are unique to Yakima Valley and Columbia Valley fruit.

The Lone Canary Rosso is a Super-Tuscan style blend of 70% Sangiovese, 19% Merlot, and 11% Cabernet Sauvignon. There are a number of pricey Sangioveses from Washington State that are only describable as undistinguished. It's refreshing to find a lively, enjoyable Sangiovese at a reasonable price. We like it enough to offer it to our New Discoveries Club members.

**Willow Crest
Pinot gris 04 \$10**

Here's a Pinot gris that out performs many \$15 offerings. A richly flavored, intensely fruity wine, a rich scent of candied lemons and pears opens to flavors of Bosc pear, Granny Smith apples, and creamy vanilla spice. The wine has a refreshing clean finish, and tastes so good, you just have to try another sip. This is a great deal!



Willow Crest is primarily a vineyard, growing hundreds of acres of grapes for wineries like Hogue and Chateau Ste Michelle. The owners bottle a small amount of wine each year at great prices.

Jezebel Blanc 04 \$13

From Peter Rosback (Sineann) and Aron Hess (Daedalus) this is their incredible value second label. The 04 Blanc is a blend of five grape varieties: Gewurztraminer, Pinot Blanc, Riesling, Pinot Gris and Chardonnay. The wine is aromatic, complex and very drinkable.

The 04 Blanc combines a crisp, citrus zing with a scent of jasmine and white flowers and lush tropical fruit flavors. Both spicy Asian food and subtly flavored vegetarian cuisine are complemented by the Blanc. It's refreshing and perfect for lovers of white wines like Evolution and Conundrum, at a wonderful price!



NW Dessert Wine Club

**Brooks Winery
Tethys Dessert Wine 375 ml \$27**

Jimi Brooks passed away in August of 2004 at the age of 36, from an unexpected heart attack. He was one of Oregon's most promising young winemakers. Before his death, he made this lovely dessert wine, which has been released in the spring of 2005.

Rich pear, apple, and hints of lychee make this a special example of late harvest Riesling. Almost as rich as an ice wine, a lively streak of citrus keep the wine fresh and enjoyable.

In Greek mythology, Tethys was the daughter of Uranus and Terra. She married Oceanus and gave birth to three thousand nymphs, called Oceanids. She is usually pictured riding a shell chariot followed by dolphins. She was also mother of the chief rivers of the universe, such as the Nile, the Alpheus, and the Maeander.

Tethys is also a moon of Saturn, and is composed mostly of water ice. The battered surface of Tethys was photographed in great detail by Voyager 2 in 1981 (below).



Tethys, one of the moons of Saturn



Tethys, "Goddess of the Sea" in a 4th Century Mosaic from the Shahba Museum south of Damascus
Note the sea life depicted in her hair

Reserve Pinot noir Club continued....**Brick House Vineyards**

Housed in an old wooden beamed barn next to an antique brick (what else?) farm house, owner/winemaker Doug Tunnell and his Brick House Vineyards exude the authentically rural charm and individualistic temperament that is at the heart of Oregon's wine character.

Doug traded in the glamorous job of being a foreign correspondent for CBS for the arduous job of organic farming and personal winemaking. He did it because he preferred to return to his literal and figurative roots: he was a native of what is now Oregon's wine country, and he wanted to make things grow.

"I heard about a family from Burgundy that had bought 120 acres in the Dundee hills of Oregon to grow wine grapes. I knew them to be exceptionally gifted and talented in the field of wine. I came home and put the word out that I was interested in finding a farm that would be appropriate for wine grapes. A family friend contacted me and said, 'There is a place over on Ribbon Ridge that is for sale that I think would be about what you need for grapes.' It was an old filbert farm. It wasn't very productive. It is a hillside, shallow soils. It seemed like it would be a pretty good place for grapes. That was 15 years ago. It was a great place for grapes actually and for the last 15 years that is what we have done."

Brick House was one of the first Willamette Valley Pinot noir vineyards to be totally dedicated to organic methods. Organic wine differs from non-organic wine in a number of ways. To be certified organic, a wine must be made with organic fruit in a facility certified for organic processing and must not contain more than 10 parts per million (ppm) sulfites. Brick House makes both certified organic wine and wine made with certified organic grapes.

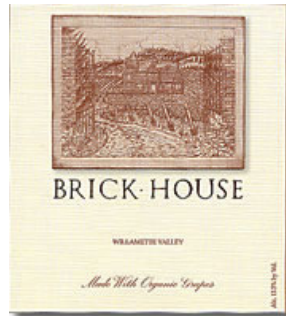
The heart of the matter is growing the grapes organically, and that process also requires special care. Non-organic grape growers use any number of insecticides and herbicides to keep weed species from competing with the grapevines and insect pests away. Instead, Brick House uses mechanical and hand tilling to keep weeds from proliferating under the vines. Tunnell also disdains the use of insecticides, which he says are birdicides as well.

Instead, Tunnell tries to create an ecology in the vineyard that favors beneficial insects and polycultural flora. "Our vineyards are filled with all kinds of life. They are not monocultures. I am looking into the vineyard and I can see layers of Queen Anne's lace, wild carrot that grows naturally. It has a really nice taproot that is in the shape of a carrot, and when it breaks down it contributes to the porosity of the soil. We have got blackberries growing out there, but they provide very important habitat for predatory life. If you take out all the blackberries, you lose that habitat and can end up with problems."

Specifically, blackberries create habitat for a predatory mite that feeds on spider mites. Some vineyards in Oregon are having problems with spider mites feeding on vine leaves. "I am not going to plant blackberries," Tunnell says, "but I've got plenty, and I don't plan to work too hard to eradicate them either."

Cover-cropping is also an important part of Brick House's management plan. In the fall, crews prepare a seed bed between the rows of vines for any number of cover crops. The crop is allowed to grow through the winter, and in the spring it is spade into the soil to add organic matter and nutrients. This year, Tunnell expects to plant crimson clover for nitrogen and aesthetics. Every few years, Tunnel also broadcasts wildflower seeds for insectary purposes.

Walking through his vineyards or tasting through his barrels, Doug's sinuous, deep voice and suavely articulate words leave a lasting impression: here is a man at peace with his work. Committed to organic farming methods, Doug's grapes are farmed with intensive handiwork. Committed to quality and craft, Doug's wines are made with passion and focus.

**Brickhouse Vineyards****Pinot noir "Cuvee Tonnelier" 03 \$42**

From the winemaker: "Of all elements, it was Fire that dominated the parched growing season of 2003 in Oregon. In the mountains, wildfires with now infamous names like Bear Butte, Booth and Biscuit scorched tens of thousands of acres of pristine forest. The valleys sweltered. Temperatures reached record highs. An entire summer passed without a drop of rain.

It is said that, more than any other grape, Pinot Noir mirrors its environment. I would swear there is both smoke and flame in the 2003's. The ³Cuvee du Tonnelier² or (Cooper's Cuvee) smolders with tobacco, cinnamon, allspice and brooding dark fruit...forward, supple, and definitely not for the faint of heart."

Wine Spectator rating 90 points: "Firm. The tannins overplay the flavors at this point, but the currant, cherry, and earthy cinnamon emerge on subsequent sips, lingering well. Give it time. Best from 2006 through 2010. 400 cases made." H.S.

Cuvee du Tonnelier (blend of barrelmaker) is named in honor of owner and winemaker Doug Tunnell's ancestors in France, who were barrel makers (Tonnelier became Tunnell).



Brick House's Doug Tunnell

Broadley Pinot noir**"Claudia's Choice" 03 \$48**

Bold, rich, layered and age-worthy, hand-crafted and exceptional. Aromas and flavors of chocolate, cherries, tangerines, prosciutto, earth, and smoke mingle beautifully in this darkly ruby colored wine. The wine's initial layered aromas of black raspberry, dried leaves and dark chocolate are followed by thick, deep dark cherry fruit, oak spice, velvety and round tannins, and a long luscious finish.



From the winery: "Named for Claudia Broadley, beloved wife, mother, and co-founder of Broadley Vineyards, our Claudia's Choice wines are truly the powerhouse wines of our offerings. Our Claudia's Choice bottlings come exclusively from 4 acres located mid-slope in our estate vineyards. Planted in 1983 of primarily Pommard clones, with a few rows of Wädensvil clone Pinot noir thrown in for structure, we use whole cluster fruit and ferment in open top French oak fermenters. The wine is aged in 100% French oak for 15 months and is always bottled unfiltered and unfiltered."