

Reserve Pinot noir Club™

Coeur de Terre Renelle's Block 04
Dusky Goose 04 Evesham Wood WV 05

Oregon's top level Pinots are few, and one is Dusky Goose. This month you receive the **Dusky Goose 2004** vintage, along with an outstanding newcomer, **Coeur de Terre Renelle's Block 04**, and a true "best buy" from venerable Evesham Wood, their sublimely under priced **Evesham Wood Willamette Valley 05**.

Vindication

If you've been a member of the Avalon Wine Club for awhile, you know our dedication to wineries we believe in. And that they are not necessarily the wineries with the biggest PR budget, or the most high ratings. **Shea Wine Cellars** is one of the wineries we strongly believe in, and last month the wines, which are not submitted to publications by the Sheas for review, received some pretty extraordinary ratings from **Wine Spectator**.

If you've been in the Reserve Pinot Club this year, you were sent the **Shea "Homer" 04**, given **95 points** by Wine Spectator this month online. You also received the **Shea East Hill 04**, given **94 points** by Wine Spectator, and the **Shea Wadenswil 04**, **93 points** from Wine Spectator. The complete reviews are posted on our website on the Shea Wine Cellars page.

Most exciting of all is the **Shea Estate 04**, whose rating has not yet been announced, but which we are suspecting may become the highest profile of all of the Shea 04's when Wine Spectator's Pinot noir issue comes out in late November.

It's harder to sell a wine without high ratings, and it's almost ridiculously easy when a wine get an extraordinary score. So we feel a bit of a sense of vindication that the Shea wines, which we've, yes, unabashedly pushed — even though they haven't had many influential scores — did so well in Wine Spectator. Enough said.

Dusky Goose

Maintaining a low profile with no marketing and very limited distribution, Dusky Goose has, none the less, attained a reputation as one of Oregon's best Pinot noir producers. We regard it in the same rarified group as **Beaux Freres**, **Broadley**, **Penner Ash**, and **Bergstrom**.

Although Dusky Goose has maintained a very low profile, and the wines have not been reviewed or rated in many publications, it cannot be emphasized enough that this is a vineyard and winery that will eventually rate as one of the best in Oregon.

Dusky Goose Wines was founded in 1998 by the Carter family with a mission to make a world class Pinot noir. The Carters chose to use fruit from the Goldschmidt (Dundee Hills) Vineyard for their wine. That vineyard was planted in 1974, and is known for the excellent wines made over the last 15 years from its fruit by the deeply knowledgeable winemaker Lynn Penner Ash.

The vineyard is one of Oregon's oldest, and is based in the highly regarded Red Hills, near Domaine Drouhin, Archery Summit, and other prime vineyard sites. The vineyard, originally named Dundee Hills Vineyard, was sold to former Oregon governor Neil Goldschmidt in the late '90s.

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Northwest Big Reds Club™

Andrew Will Champoux Red 04
Buty Rediviva Columbia Valley 04

Of all the vineyards in Washington State, the one that keeps showing up as the source of fruit for customers' favorite wines is **Champoux Vineyard**. This month, we feature two excellent wines made entirely from Champoux Vineyard fruit.

Andrew Will

The last two years for Chris Camarda has been a mixed blessing, but the owner/winemaker for **Andrew Will Winery** continues to penetrate the heart of blending wines with elegance, concentration and a match for food.

In the past few years, Camarda lost his beloved wife Anne to cancer, dropped single-vineyard varietals for hand-crafted blends and nurtured his own estate vineyard, Two Blondes, which will replace other vineyards in his portfolio. He will soon be named **Wine & Spirits Magazine's Winemaker of the Year** for artisan wines.

The release of the 2004 Andrew Will Champoux Red coincides with Chris's release of several 2004 vintage wines.

The 59-year-old lights up in conversation about the vintage, showing the passion and excitement that elevated his wines to the top tier after 17 years of production. The wines are highly praised as true expressions of the vineyard, without manipulating or over-extracting the fruit, or using oak as a blanket that hides great flavors.

"The wines from 2004 are very well balanced," Camarda said. "The season allowed the fruit to get sufficiently ripe, despite some late rains. The 2003 vintage was uneven with slightly higher alcohol levels. The 2004 vintage really shows great flavors in nearly every vineyard."

Overall, Camarda is extremely pleased with the vintage, and although he dislikes comparing his wines from vintage to vintage, he does admit that 2003 was a hot year and the flavor profiles somewhat reflected the heat. Only a good winemaker can take the fruit from a hot year and turn it into an elegant drink, and the high marks he received for his '03 wine is a testament to his skills.

For the 2004 Champoux Vineyard blend, Camarda changed the mix around, using less Cabernet Sauvignon than in previous vintages, adding some Petit Verdot and filling out the rest with Merlot and Cabernet Franc. The result is a beautiful, food-hugging wine that will gracefully age for many years. Camarda says the red and black fruits meld beautifully in this Bordeaux-style blend.

Camarda believes vineyards hold the key to a unique identity—a signature—that consumers will come to identify. He also believes that in addition to the process of minimally-invasive winemaking, how he blends those signature vineyards is the art of his work, a left-brain, right-brain blend of skills. The vineyard is the canvas and his fruit becomes the palette from which he chooses his blends.

While many people talk about terroir, or expression of the land in the wine, Camarda studies it, lives and breathes it until he has that distinct taste in the bottle.

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September 2006

Northwest Big Reds Club™

Andrew Will
Champoux Red 04 \$60

Buty Rediviva 04 \$40

Oregon New Discoveries Club™

Daedalus Pinot noir
WV 04 \$25

Owen Roe
"Ex Umbris" 05 \$24

Dessert Wine Club™

Dalla Vina
"Amore"
Semillion Dessert Wine
05 \$25

Zerba Cellars
Late Harvest Syrah
05 \$20

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™

Coeur de Terre
Renelle's Block 04 \$34

Dusky Goose 04 \$50

Evesham Wood
WV 05 \$16

Big Reds Club continued from page 1**Buty Winery**

Nina Buty Foster and Caleb Foster have built their tiny Walla Walla winery on a shoestring, with the emphasis on finding the best possible sources of fruit. For such a small and relatively new winery to make this, their "lower end" of their two "Rediviva" wines, with fruit from the famed Champoux Vineyard, says a lot about the respect Caleb has gained in the wine community.

Buty makes two different "Rediviva" wines, this one, made from Champoux Vineyard fruit, and a "Rediviva of the Stones", made from Cayuse's Cailloux Vineyard fruit.

The big news for Buty is that they have purchased a farm on the Oregon side of the Walla Walla valley, near the Cailloux Vineyard and Zerba Cellars vineyards. Future vintages of the Rediviva of the Stones will be made from that Estate Vineyard's fruit.

**Buty "Rediviva" Columbia Valley 04 \$40**

100% Champoux Vineyard fruit, 57% Cabernet Sauvignon and 43% Syrah.

Hugely rich, aged over a year in bottle, this wine has "come together and integrated. It's smoother and more refined." - Caleb Foster, winemaker



Buty's current winery near the Walla Walla airport

**Andrew Will
Champoux Red Wine 04 \$60**

Wine Advocate (Robert Parker) gave this wine's previous, 2003 vintage, 93 points.

2004 Champoux--
44% Cab
22% Merlot
25% Cab Franc
9% Petit Verdot

Wow the nose! Impossibly inviting aromas of sweet black cherry pie with black raspberry, dark chocolate, and hints of baking spice. I just couldn't stop smelling it. The Champoux fruit core is dense, wound up with black and red fruit in innumerable layers. Supple and silky with powder-fine tannins. The whole wine is wrapped with a delicate Bordeaux-like herbal note that adds complexity like the sizzle of a jazz ride cymbal--it just fits. Give it air, give it time and you'll see why this is one of the finest wines from one of the finest vineyards in the entire Pacific Northwest. - ml

Champoux Vineyard is a customer and Avalon employee favorite- it's the same vineyard that Quilceda Creek uses for its 100 point Cabs, and Andrew Will's Chris Camarda creates one of the best wines made from Champoux fruit each year with his blended "Champoux Red".

As Chris Camarda has developed his style of winemaking over the years, he has focused on the primacy of the vineyard over variety. It is now the driving force behind Andrew Will. While the idea of terroir has become almost a hollow marketing tool, it has great attraction for Chris in its purest form.

"I believe that an individual piece of property can form a signature - an identity - and it is that face that is the focus of my winemaking, " "We are trying to let the vineyards reveal themselves. I believe that if Washington is ever to be considered a great wine region we need to establish the characteristics of our geographical areas and the characteristics of each vineyard in those areas."

Chris and Annie Camarda



Upcoming Wine Releases

Avalon's Wine Club members get first access to the hard to get NW wines that are limited in quantity. To that end, a new feature in the newsletter starts this month. Here are the wines we will probably start selling in late September through mid-October. If you wish to order, just let us know. In many cases, this is the only source for information on these wines until they are announced on our site. You get first dibs, just let us know what you'd like and we'll do our best to fulfill your requests.

Shea Wine Cellars

The wines will be released starting in late 2006 through 2007, but preordering is essential, especially after the **Wine Spectator** ratings come out in November. Purchase now for shipment upon release from the winery, and most will taste best with cellaring of at least 6 months after receipt before opening.

To read more about these wines, go to the Shea Wine Cellar page on our website and look down at the bottom of the wine listings. We're keeping the wines off the main pages of the site until next year, when they'll be offered to the public.

All are marked as sold out, so email or call us to order. Reserve Pinot noir Club members will be receiving some of these wines as Club Selections in 2007.

Shea "Homer" 05	\$75	95 points Wine Spectator for 2004 vintage
Shea "East Hill" 05	\$45	94 points Wine Spectator for 2004 vintage
Shea Estate 05	\$45	score to be announced
Shea Wadenswil 05	\$52	93 points Wine Spectator for 2004 vintage
Shea Pommard 05	\$52	not made in 2004

There is no Block 23 as that block has been replanted and will probably not be back until 2009/10.

Betz Syrah

Very limited, these wines received stellar ratings last year and the 2004's rank with or above the 2003's.

Betz Syrah "La Cote Rousse" 04 \$45

Betz Syrah "La Serenne" 04 \$45

Fielding Hills

This tiny East Wenatchee winery makes small amounts of dense, intense red wine. The new releases are showing the increasing maturity of the vineyard and the winemaker's skills. These wines are made exclusively from the Wade's Estate vineyard, in Mattewa, and there's something about the soils and location that give them a real sense of place and a layered quality with more complexity than the vine age would indicate. Who would have thought that a vineyard in this location would grow such delicious and unique wine?

Cabernet Sauvignon 04 \$33-\$35

Syrah 04 \$32-\$35

Cabernet Franc 04 \$32-\$35

Riverbend Red 04 \$32-\$35

Mark Ryan

Seattle Times waxed enthusiastic about these wines this month. Favorites for their huge yet expressive flavors, interesting blends, fruit from Ciel du Cheval Vineyard.

Mark Ryan Dead Horse Red 04 \$43.50

Mark Ryan Long Haul Red 04 \$41

We still have the Dissident 04 \$25 which just got 91 points from WS.

Owen Roe

Pinot noir Dundee Hill 05 \$42

Seven barrels from primarily Durant Vineyard, not on his website or offered anywhere else but Avalon. Elegant, for David, not as over the top as the Kilmore, more ageable, more layers than gushing cherry, perfumed sophistication, seamless. A cellar selection.

NW Dessert Wine Club

Dalla Vina "Amore" Dessert Semillion 05 \$25

While Dalla Vina is better known for their big, rustic styled red wines, they made a dessert wine in 2005 that impressed tasters at a recent trade event.



To make this wine, Dalla Vina's owner and winemaker, Karl Dinger, harvested Semillion grapes in late November when the grapes were intensely ripe and flavorful. Almost shriveled into raisins, the intensely flavored grapes made a rich, intriguing wine.

The wine is unctuously rich and sensual, with an enchanting nose of white peaches and melon. Full-fruit flavored and not overly sweet, yet gracefully poised with sharp acidity. The great acidity give the wine a sense of juicy freshness and keeps it from being cloyingly sweet.

To pull off a dessert wine with such good balance of fruit and crisp acidity is something of an art. Karl may be onto something here, and we hope he continues to make "stickies".

Zerba Cellars Columbia Valley Late Harvest Syrah 05 \$20

Oregon's Walla Walla Valley is beginning to gain the recognition its Washington partner (on the other side of the Columbia River) already has.

Zerba Cellars is an Oregon winery in the heart of the Walla Walla Valley that is an Avalon favorite. It's gaining recognition for wines that take advantage of the unique soils of the area. Zerba's vineyard is dominated by round, flat river rocks that stress vines and create the conditions that most famously, have been lauded in Cayuse's Syrahs (their vineyard is next door).

The 2005 Late Harvest Syrah has a beautiful raspberry color with hints of ultraviolet blue.

Sweet blackberry aromas combine with berry, spice, and earthy flavors, with tart cherry on the finish. The acidity of the finish, as with the Amore (above) gives the wine a finish that pleases and complements chocolate or savory foods.

Harvest: December 17th, 2005 at Willard Vineyard in Prosser, Washington.

Harvest Brix: 36 degrees.

Acidity: pH 3.14 and TA .80.

Alcohol: 11%.

Residual Sugar: 7.6%.

Production: 95 cases.



Reserve Pinot noir Club continued....

Introducing Coeur de Terre

One of the hottest consumer wine events in Oregon has become the "Indie Wine Festival", held for the last two springs in Portland. You get to taste the wines of over 100 new, small wineries and find the rising stars amongst the rest.

At Oregon's 2006 Indie, **Coeur de Terre** stood out and called to us. The wines, and the vineyard site, are exceptional. Scott and Lisa Neal did everything right when it came to creating their dream winery. They consulted experienced local winemakers, searched diligently for the right location, and took their time letting the vines mature before releasing their first wine.

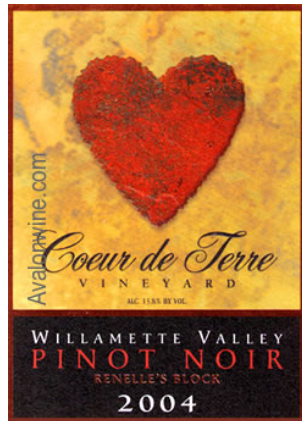
While researching the area, Scott contacted the owners of a winery whose wines he and Lisa liked, Scott and Annie Schull of **Raptor Ridge**. Eventually, the Neals showed up at Raptor Ridge for advice on vineyard land, and a friendship was born. The Schulls purchase fruit from the Neals' vineyard, including the fruit used to make their 93 point (Wine Spectator) Raptor Ridge Coeur de Terre Pinot noir 03.

We were pleasantly surprised at the unique and distinct "terroir" of the Coeur de Terre wines, even with the vines' relatively young age. The vineyard site is definitely something special.

Viniculture auteur and owner of famed **Resonance Vineyard**, Kevin Chambers, did the original analysis of their first vineyard block at Coeur de Terre. According to Neal, "Kevin thought this vineyard site would be in the top 10% of all vineyards in Oregon. At the time, I thought he was just trying to make me feel good. But now I know that Kevin doesn't do that. He was serious. I guess we'll see".

Coeur de Terre
Renelle's Block Pinot noir 04 \$40
 82 cases made

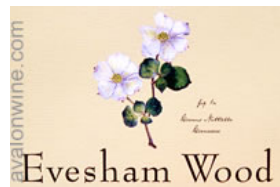
This wine sneaks up on you. The dark cherry, blackberry and raspberry aromas mix with a little cinnamon spice and some barrel toast, but it whispers instead of shouts. The wine hits your mouth and besides the cherry, cassis, violet and a little spice on the palate, what you notice is how silky it is. The pretty cherry colors and delicate flavors show good concentration without being over extracted. This wine is well balanced and really opens up after awhile in your glass. The finish is long and smooth. This is a finesse Pinot Noir you should get to know. - M.S.



Evesham Wood
Willamette Valley Pinot noir 05 \$16

Russ's Willamette Valley is one of Oregon's great values. This vintage, there was very little wine made, but we wanted to include a bottle in this month's Club to give all of our members an opportunity to try it.

This is classic berry fruit flavored Pinot noir, with a juicy, fresh quality that is characteristic of the vintage. A texture of shot silk in the mouth defies the price, as does the long finish and nicely layered flavors of blackberry, black raspberry, cinnamon spice, and a hint of red currant.

**Dusky Goose 2004 \$50**

Full-bodied, yet sumptuously complex, the 2004 Dusky Goose Pinot noir wine has its characteristic candied fruit and dried cherry notes, along with glorious layers of lush black cherries and berries, and hints of dried lavender, dried orange zest, and a high note in both nose and flavor of intensely sweet and concentrated dried fruit. The balance is so good, the wine should cellar well for more than ten years.



Hints of dried lavender, dried cherry, dried herbs, and a tiny hint of fresh earth are present in this vibrant wine. There's a freshness to the nose that is characteristic of the 2004 vintage.

Flavors: Layers of fresh fruit explode in the mouth. A plush, deep core of black cherry and black raspberry is entwined with layers of ripe red raspberry, hints of fresh strawberry, seamlessly integrated sweet vanilla bean, spicy plum, and dried cherry fruit (characteristic of the vineyard).

Finish: The finish just keeps rolling out, offering transparent layers of red and black fruit and silky tannins with notes of toasted cocoa bean, espresso bean, sweet vanilla, cedar, fresh tobacco, and essence of rose.

Balance: Tannins are very supple and well integrated, there's a fresh, uplifting quality to the acidity, and the fruit flavors reappear over and over with ultra rich cherry, black cherry, and dried cherry flavors, intensifying with more exposure to air.

The Vintage - 2004 compared to 2003: In a side-by-side tasting of the 2003 and 2004 Dusky Goose over the course of a couple days, both wines showed extraordinary development and complexity. Both 2003 and 2004 are powerful wines, juicy and multilayered, with the vineyard's characteristic dried red cherry quality. The 2003 shows more of a dark fruit profile in the nose, flavors, and finish, with black cherry and black raspberry dominating. The medium to full-bodied 2004 has that vibrant, uplifting freshness characteristic of the 2004 vintage, and more red as well as black fruit flavors. In the 2004, the layered flavors are easier to discern- there's a sense of transparency catalyzed by refreshing acidity. More hints of lavender, roses, herbs, and chocolate are present in the 2004. Both wines are quite cellar worthy, with the 2004 having a slightly longer potential life.

When to Drink: The 2004 is lovely now, especially with an hour or so of decanting. In 6 months to a year, the wine will be much better integrated, so patience will be rewarded. The wine's combination of vibrant, uplifting acidity balanced with sumptuous, lush, sweet fruit shows all the signs of aging well for over ten years.



Goldschmidt Vineyard

Oregon New Discoveries Wine Club

Daedalus Cellars**Pinot noir Willamette Valley 05 \$25**

Daedalus Cellars is Aron Hess and wife Pam Walken, with assistance from 3 year old son Samson and baby Cato.

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.

Extremely low key, and known more for their higher end single vineyard wines, the winemaker has hit a home run with this Pinot. It is just a standout, from both a price and quality perspective, among the 2005 wines we've so far tried.

BEST BUY - Outstanding quality at this price, scents of sandalwood, red raspberry, red and black cherry, and warm pie spice. Flavors are hugely expressive red raspberry and cherry, black cherry, blackberry, black currant, and hints of white pepper. The wine gives the sense of opening and expanding in the mouth as it warms.

A beautiful racy acidity and very fine grained tannins balance the layers and layers of fruit flavors. Not much made, restaurants are going to snap this one up quickly. -jy

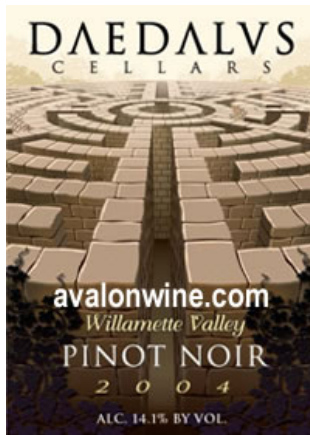
A complex blend of several different vineyards and clones. It has old Pomard from Murto and Seven Springs Vineyards, Dijon clones from Momtazi Vineyard, and Wadenswil from Hawks View Vineyard. Partial whole-cluster fermentations yield a wine of sandalwood, minerals, dried herbs and cherries. - the winery

It should drink well on release with decanting, but will develop greater nuance and richness over the next seven to eight years.

Grapes are sourced from:
45% Momtazii Vineyard
20% Seven Springs Vineyard
20% Hawks View Vineyard
15% Murto Vineyard

Processed entirely by gravity
Cold-soaked for 10 to 17 days
15% Whole cluster
All spontaneously fermented
Total skin contact 24-30 days
Aged 15 months in French oak - 20% New
Unfined and unfiltered.

At Right, Aron Hess

**Owen Roe****Ex Umbris Syrah 05**

\$24

You probably know about Owen Roe Winery, it's one of the most popular among serious Oregon wine drinkers these days. The owner and wine-maker is David O'Reilly, who combines Irish charm, a razor sharp mind, and a passion for the land into a blend of wine labels, price points, and styles that are like no other. His wines range from the value priced O'Reilly's wines, made in reasonably large quantity, to the very small production single vineyard wines, including the Ex Umbris Syrah.



David keeps his Syrah affordable and accessible. The Ex Umbris was inspired, as are many of his wines, from a particular circumstance of the vineyard.

If you remember back to the first release of this wine, the vineyard was literally next door to the edge of a forest fire, and the first vintage was so strongly flavored with smoke that some people found it atypical ... and many people loved it. Each vintage thereafter has showed less of the smoky quality imparted from the fire, and this vintage has just an intriguing hint of bacon fat-laced smoke.

The 2005 vintage has aromas of blackberries and marionberries, entwined with the wine's trademark smoky scent. The unique combination of flavors make this a Syrah standout from the moment it's opened. This is a juicy, fresh and lively Syrah that shows layers of berry fruit flavors. It's structured with balanced acidity and well managed, fine grained tannins that are present but never intrusive.

Ready to drink, "refreshing", "appealing", "lively" are some of the words tasters have used to describe it. David continues to make the price super competitive - this is an Owen Roe "Best Buy".

Latin for "out of the shadows", this wine was originally crafted to express the smoky notes imparted to the Syrah grapes by a raging wildfire. One of the characteristics of this noble grape is its inherent smokiness, a flavor that comes through even without Mother Nature's assistance.

This Syrah is named for the personal motto of Cardinal John Henry Newman "Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem" (From shadows and symbols goes the truth). David was inspired by the fire blackened land right next to the vineyard and the stark contrast between it and the verdant grapevines full of fruit



David O'Reilly