

### Reserve Pinot Noir Club™

Van Duzer Dijon 03 Evesham Seven Springs 03  
Harmonia 04

This month we bring you Pinot noirs from three particularly interesting winemakers. All three clearly make wine for the love of the craft, for the artistic expression of flavors and texture and scent, and all have labored in relative obscurity for some period of time before achieving national recognition.

**Russ Raney**, winemaker and owner of **Evesham Wood**, is true to his sense of the essence of Pinot noir, crafting wines that are exciting for their transparent, nuanced layers of flavor. **Jim Kakacek** basically worked his butt off for years to get a mismanaged vineyard into shape, waiting patiently through the seasons for the grapes to improve. He is now producing the fruits of that labor, highly rated **Van Duzer** Pinots garnering national ratings and admiration from his fellow winemakers.

**Michael Beckley** is a member of a new generation of "Indy" winemakers in Oregon, younger winemakers whose careers parallel their fellow "starving artists" who produce innovative visual art in warehouses in Portland's Pearl district. While Michael's canvas is a cement room full of wine barrels and a hill in the Northern Willamette, his passion for the expression of Pinot's soul rivals any artist's desire to produce art with an original voice.

In contrast to the very well established Van Duzer and Evesham Wood Wineries, **Harmonia** is a relatively new, one man band of a winery.

#### Van Duzer— Long Labors Reap Rewards

It took ten years to turn around the Estate Vineyard from which Van Duzer gets all its grapes. Winemaker Jim Kakacek labored for years to convert a really messed up vineyard to one with vine spacing, clones, ground cover, trellising, irrigation, and cultivation suitable to the unique site. His 2002 Pinots received high marks from **Wine Spectator** and other national press, with the 2003 wines gaining even more recognition. All of Van Duzer's wines are produced from the Estate vineyard that Jim manages.

This month we try Jim's **Van Duzer Dijon Clone Pinot noir 03**, a wine made from grapes grown on root stock originally planted to Chardonnay. The Chardonnay blocks were grafted over to Dijon Pinot Noir clones in 1998 and 1999. These particular clones, isolated by the University of Dijon from selections in Burgundy, ripen earlier, allowing for more hang time and more concentration of flavor. The unique microclimate around Van Duzer's vineyard creates colder nights and hotter days, stressing the grapes and adding complexity to the wines. The Pinot noirs from Van Duzer's vineyards are rich with black berry and stone fruit flavors, with tobacco and chocolate flavors and scents emerging as the terroir expresses its nature.

Dick Shea (owner and manager of Shea Vineyards) explains the Dijon Clones this way: "Pommard is the fruitiest, the most fruit forward, and Wadenswil is the most restrained, with blue fruit flavors that take the longest time to soften and mature into good wine. The Dijon clones are in the middle, showing some of the fruitiness of Pommard, but also offering some of the structure and blue fruit character of Wadenswil."

Continued on page 4

### NW Big Reds Club™

Owen Sullivan Cabernet Franc 03  
Owen Roe Cabernet Franc 04, Sharecroppers Cab 04

**WIRED** ----- **TIRED** ----- **EXPIRED**  
**Cab Franc**----- **Syrah**----- **Merlot**  
Glass stoppers-----Screwtop-----Rubber  
Finesse-----Forward-----Toasty oak  
Riesling-----Gris-----White Zin

Back in 2000, the new big thing in NW wine was Syrah. Very little planted, very few producers, **Doug McCre** was the best producer, with L'Ecole's extremely limited production Syrah right behind. That all changed with the arrival of Cristophe, the mad Frenchman, a couple of hot magazine articles about **Cayuse**, and the realization that, if you are starting a new winery in Walla Walla, with about a hundred other startups in town, you'd better have a hook- why not Syrah?

Flash forward to today, lots of NW Syrahs, lots of Syrah vines planted and producing, a not very nice article in NY Times about the one-dimensionality of Washington Syrah, and a lot of very pleasant, juicy, black cherry flavored big red wine that could be easily mistaken for any of several other red wine varietals. At prices ranging from a reasonable \$20 to a mind boggling \$85, NW Syrah is everywhere.

So if you want to be the "next big thing" what's a winery to do? Answer? **Cabernet Franc**. Yes, that blending grape of notorious "green" flavors and hints of pencil lead is the new Syrah. And there are some dang good ones too. And a lot of wanna bes.

Cabernet Franc is pretty miserable if it's not allowed to ripen, and if the grower leaves a lot of grapes on the vine (more than 2-3 tons/acre), the grapes are best used in a blended red to add color. They won't add much more. But if a grower crops the Cabernet Franc vineyard down to 1-2 tons/acre, and the grapes are allowed to get completely physiologically ripe, well, there's a different kettle of fish.

Depending a great deal on vineyard practices, the flavor profile of Cabernet Franc may be both fruitier and sometimes more herbal or vegetative than Cabernet Sauvignon, although lighter in both color and tannins. Over-cropping and underexposure each tend to accentuate the vegetative flavor elements. Typically somewhat spicy in aroma and often reminiscent of plums and especially violets, Cabernet Franc is more often used as a secondary or tertiary element in varietally-blended red wines, such as Bordeaux or Meritage, instead of as a stand-alone varietal bottling.

In a few years, Cab Franc may become as ubiquitous as Syrah is, but for now, there's a few "wired" wineries offering Cab Franc who are generating discussion (and controversy).

**David O'Reilly**, of **Owen Roe, Sharecroppers**, and **O'Reilly's** fame, is always out there looking for good vines, a new vineyard he can work with, and he's expanded his Washington State vineyard contracts to include some older vine Cabernet Franc from the Yakima area. His **Owen Roe Cabernet Franc 04** is sourced from West Yakima's Rosa Mystica Vineyard and a new vineyard he's discovered, Slide Mountain Vineyard.

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December 2005

### Reserve Pinot Noir Club™ Belle Pente Month!

Van Duzer  
"Dijon Clone" 03 \$35  
Evesham Wood  
Seven Springs 03 \$29  
Harmonia 04 \$21

### Northwest Big Reds Club™ Fielding Hills Month!

Owen Sullivan  
Cabernet Franc 03 \$30  
Owen Roe  
Cabernet Franc 04 \$36  
Sharecroppers  
Cabernet Sauv 04 \$24

### New Discoveries Club™

Lumos  
Pinot noir 03 \$22  
720 Cellars  
'Ordeaux Red 04 \$15  
720 Cellars  
Pinot gris 04 \$14

### Dessert Wine Club™

L'Ecole #41  
Semillon Ice Wine \$22  
Ransom Port

**Big Reds Club continued from page 1**

It was a hit at his Thanksgiving open house and the nose was the focus. The wine is "all about fragrance" as David says. Whether it will age well is a big question, but for drinking over the next year, it's pretty satisfying.

The Owen Roe Cabernet Franc 04 is made from grapes sourced in an area just north of the Yakima Valley that David has diligently searched as he looks for sites suitable for growing the intense, low yield, non-irrigated vines he makes such great wine from. He has discovered a horizontal strip of land near DuBrul Vineyard that stretches across a steep hill, part of a ridge that has sandy soil above the strip and clay below. This strip contains the rounded river rocks of ancient lake beds, perhaps laid down during the famous Missoula flood.

The cataclysmic Missoula flood, over 15,000 years ago, radically changed the structure of Eastern Washington. From the east, a series of cataclysmic floods burst from Glacial Lake Missoula, bearing rocks frozen in ice and mussel shells from the lake bottom. These floods scoured northern Idaho and eastern Washington, then raged through the Columbia Gorge, leaving varied soil elements behind.

Over centuries, the west wind carried ash from the Cascade volcanoes to David's site. The volcanic ash mixed with flood deposits from Glacial Lake Missoula to form the soils covering the basalt promontory that hosts the vineyard. A sheet of silica-cemented hardpan was laid down and compacted. Now David is planting this site and we'll see the results soon. An already existent vineyard in the area, Rosa Mystica, was used to make the Owen Roe Cabernet Franc 04.

**Owen Sullivan (O-S Winery)**, that garagiste winery with the "never too intense" motto, makes a Cabernet Franc we feature this month. **Bill Owen** finagled some Cab Franc grapes from **Champoux Vineyard** and made a wine from the monster burly voluptuous school of winemaking. Winemaker Bill Owen has been in the restaurant, wholesale and retail wine business for over 25 years.

The Owen Sullivan Cabernet Franc 03 offers some black currant and dark chocolate notes that differentiate it from the other Cab Francs available from the Northwest.



Owen Roe Winery

**The Wines**

**Owen Sullivan (O-S Winery)  
Cabernet Franc 03 \$30**

Top grape source Champoux Vineyard makes this Cab Franc something special. Aromas of crushed Bing cherries mingle with hints of tobacco and cinnamon. This mouth filling wine has a voluptuous well rounded texture. The flavors of blackcurrant and dark chocolate compliment the distinctive creamed cherry core of Champoux Vineyard Cab Franc. The delicious lengthy finish is supported by powerful rich soft tannins



**Owen Roe  
Cabernet Franc 04 \$35**

The 2004 is all about fragrance - it has an other worldly intensity of scent, with violets and fresh herbs in the nose, following through in the mouth. The wine is richer than last year's - the vintage was a small one, with intensity trumping quantity - it's very limited this year. If you like intense, dark Cab Franc with an exotic flavor twist, you'll enjoy this wine.

The grapes are sourced from the very special Rosa Mystica Block Vineyard in West Yakima, plus grapes from a new site that David is quite excited about, Slide Mountain Vineyard. There's a bit of Elerding Vineyard fruit in the mix as well.

The extreme stress the vines are exposed to results in complexity, texture, rich flavors, and a distinct sense of terroir.

The bulk of the grapes are from Rosa Mystical Block Vineyard, and have created a Cab lover's Cab Franc. Black color, ripe fruit, blackberry cedar nose, and a ripe, rich textured finish characterize this wine. This is a multi-dimensional wine, nothing like usual Cab Franc- too good to be a mixing wine, this Cab Franc stands on its own. David says the vineyard makes wonderful fruit but is exposed to extreme weather stress, resulting in tiny harvest of small, intensely flavored grapes. A wine to share with friends- they'll be impressed!

**Sharecroppers Cabernet Sauvignon 04 \$24**



Richer and a bit more complex than last year's Sharecroppers Cabernet Sauvignon, this wine contains a bit of Merlot and Petit Verdot. It's lush and easy drinking, with smooth tannins and enough body to balance lots of foods, hearty cheeses, and to enjoy as a sipper while watching the game.

This is a rich, full bodied, ready to drink wine, filled with fresh fruit flavors, a great value and excellent follow-up to the wildly popular Sharecropper's Pinot noir.

Sharecropper is Owen Roe's new label for wines produced in close collaboration with specific vineyards. David O'Reilly had a brilliant idea, to join with his favorite vineyards in making reasonably priced Northwest wines.

| Typical Cabernet Franc Smell and/or Flavor Descriptors |   |
|--|---|
| Varietal Aromas/Flavors:                               | Processing Bouquets/Flavors:                        |
| Fruit: raspberry, cherry, plum, strawberry             | Oak (light): vanilla, coconut, sweet wood           |
| Floral: violet   | Oak (heavy): oak, smoke, toast, tar                 |
| Herbal: bell pepper, stems                             | Bottle Age: musk, mushroom, earth, cedar, cigar box |

## New Discoveries Club

Three delicious wines from right here in the mid-Willamette Valley, near our store, are featured this month.

### Lumos Pinot noir 03 \$24

An elegant, refreshing Pinot noir with great balance and an easy drinking character. Scents of black raspberry, pink peppercorns, and hints of red currant echo in the flavor, with the addition of blackberry and a hint of red cherry essence. The finish has notes of nutmeg and warm spicy pepper, with absolutely no heat in the finish. It's a 2003 with only 13% alcohol, 100% Temperance Hill Vineyard fruit (which winemaker Dai Crisp manages), and the signs of excellent vintage management are here in the balanced soft tannins and crisp, subtle acidity. Dai and wife PK are shown at right.



### 720 Cellars

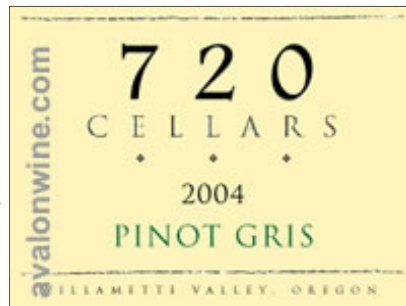
720 Cellars is a small "garagiste" winery (the winery is literally in his home's garage) specializing in hand crafted Pinot noir and Pinot gris. Chris Heider brings enthusiasm and skill to his exuberant, delicious wines. He's one of those "Indy" winemakers invigorating Oregon's wine scene. We're lucky to have him so close to our store, and his wines have quickly become cult faves of local and web customers alike.

For the 2003 and 2004 vintages, Chris produced a unique Bordeaux-style blend from the heavier varietals of Southern Oregon. We were so impressed with its hearty goodness at a low price that we're sending the 2004 to you this month.

In all, the winery produces less than 1,000 total cases.

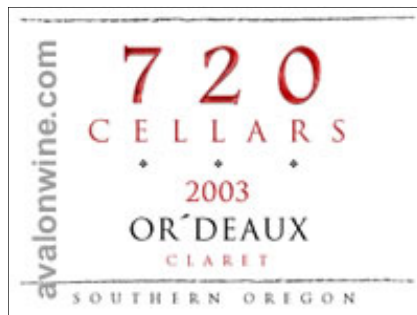
### 720 Cellars Pinot gris 04 \$14

Lovely nose of honeyed fruit and minerals. Flavors of sweet honeysuckle, crisp citrus, creamy pear, hints of tangerine, and a clean, refreshing, dry finish with stony mineral notes. Just lovely, and a great value price to match. There's a hint of bitter citrus peel in the flavor when first opened, but it clears immediately and adds a bit of a sense of concentration to the wine. This wine was really luscious with poached halibut, and goes well with any white fish, salmon, salad Niçoise, or grilled chicken.



### 720 Cellars 'Ordeaux 04 \$19

Fruit, richness, white pepper, plum, chocolate, smoke, more more more. Made from Southern Oregon grapes, a rich, yummy red at a very reasonable price. Great value.



## NW Dessert Wine Club

### L'Ecole #41 Semillon Ice Wine 04 \$22



L'Ecole makes a lovely late harvest Semillon every year that sells out quickly. This time, the grapes froze on the vine, and the winery was able to make a real ice wine.

It's very limited, a delicious dessert wine from a master of Semillon. This luscious sweet golden nectar shows intense floral aromas of orange blossom and honeysuckle, and enriches the mouth with a thick viscosity of ripe pear, pineapple, and butter-scotch.

From the winemaker: "While we have produced a number of excellent Late Harvest Semillons from our Seven Hills Estate Vineyard, this is our first true Ice Wine, produced from grapes frozen on the vine by Mother Nature."

### Ransom Port \$25

Ransom's winemaker also makes spirits, and his skill with fortified wines is clear here. This port is fortified with Ransom Spirits eau d'vie made from gewurztraminer, pinot gris, and chardonnay, added directly to must and macerated post fortification. It's fruity and balanced, rich and satisfying.

## Reserve Pinot noir Club continued....

### Evesham Wood—Low Key Treasure in Oregon

When I think about Russ Raney, I think about how Japan recognizes their best artisans as "National Treasures". In my opinion, Russ qualifies as an "Oregon Wine Treasure". He creates multifaceted Pinots each year that express the terroir of the vineyard and push the limit in showing the depths of flavors and textures in Pinot noir. He brings out the essence of Pinot noir in a way that mirrors the best Burgundian producers.

Like the best artists, Russ continually returns to the basics, revisiting winemakers in Burgundy to study their methods. After getting close to 25 years of winemaking, you'd think he might rest on his laurels, but my sense is that he's as enthused by exploring the nuances of Pinot noir today as he has ever been.

And on top of all of his skill and willingness to rediscover winemaking with each season, he offers his wines at very reasonable prices. And he remains true to his interpretation of the essence of the Pinot noir grape, even when it's not as popular with the big wine critics. I'm sure he could whip out a toasty, oaky Pinot, black in color and full of big cherry flavors with one hand tied behind his back—what he does, making Pinot with transparent layers of flavor, where flaws cannot be hidden by a generous dose of heavily toasted oak, is much more difficult. He's in it for the craft, the artistic expression,

### The "Indy" Wine Scene in Oregon

Like the "Indy" music scene, where new music groups are using their wits rather than deep pockets to get the word out about their innovative music, there's a growing "Indy" wine scene in Oregon's Willamette Valley. It's a dynamic new generation of women and men in their late 20s and 30s who have a passion for wine. These "garagistes" make amazingly good wines with very basic equipment and not much money. They're in it for the creativity, the pleasure of creating something satisfying and delicious, and they are bringing new ideas and opinions to the table, shaking up the wine scene and heralding Oregon's wine industry, 21st century style. One of the "Young Turks" is Michael Beckley.

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 Coehlo Winery, and he makes his Harmonia wines there as well. We sent the Harmonia to our New Discoveries Club last month, and are so impressed with the wine that we're sending it to our Reserve Pinot Club as well. Michael is an impressive winemaker, a real up-and-comer whose future we look forward to following.

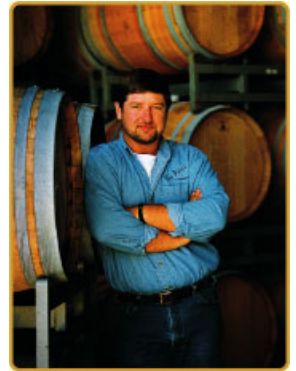


## The Wines

### Van Duzer Pinot noir "Dijon Clone" 03 \$34.95

From the winery: Ripe plum, black cherry and blueberry arise instantly with a swirl of the glass, followed by hints of chocolate, hibiscus, violet and exotic spices. In the mouth, rich, sweet fruit flavors of blackberry, cherry and cassis mingle with underlying touches of clove, vanilla and nutmeg. A slightly smoky, spicy note carries through a long finish.

The grapes were hand harvested and sorted in the field in the early morning hours. The cool grapes were delivered to the winery and de-stemmed and crushed, leaving approximately 40% whole berries. The must was inoculated using yeast isolates from Burgundy and allowed to heat naturally, resulting in a four-day cold maceration and a relatively cool fermentation. The wine was aged in 35% new French oak, 35% once-used French oak barrels and 30% neutral barrels. After ten months of aging the selected lots were blended and the wine returned to barrels for an additional four months of aging to allow the blended wines to marry. The wine was bottled by hand to preserve the elegant aromatics and minimize 'bottling shock'.



### Evesham Wood Pinot noir Seven Springs 03 \$28.45

Forbes Magazine named this wine one of the "25 Great American Wines" in Sept 2005, and said: "This is a super wine for the money, offering the perfect balance between vibrant fruit and good, soft tannins. It also shows tantalizing hints of smoky earthy flavors that will only intensify with time. In fact, this is a wine for keeping, five years at least."

Burghound rating 90 points: "This is slightly riper than the Puit Sec with a pretty, subtly spicy nose that also displays a very deft touch of wood followed by round, rich, full and sweet flavors that possess a more forward character yet there is clearly enough stuffing here to permit extended aging. I quite like the overall balance though there is a bit of warmth on the impressively long finish. 90/2008+

Matt Kramer (Oregonian, Wine Spectator) says: "Evesham Wood, in Salem, has an ardent following among pinot noir lovers in Oregon. The reason is twofold. First is quality. Few Oregon winemakers are better at issuing consistently superb pinot noirs than Evesham Wood owner-winemaker Russ Raney. He almost never misses. Raney's preferred style emphasizes a detailed austerity rather than a swoopy, oaky lushness. Consequently, Evesham Wood pinots age better than many others, improving in the bottling for upward of a decade."

For a lot more info about Evesham Wood and Russ Raney, I have to refer you to the avalonwine.com website. Alison Ruchs' article about the winery was published on the site in October, and Russ says it's the most comprehensive article written on his winery. Just type "Evesham Wood" in the search box on the home page, and the first article that comes up is it.

### Harmonia Pinot noir 03 \$20.95

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.

