



OREGON RED WINES

PINOT NOIR

95 Chehalem 2006 Statement Pinot Noir (Ribbon Ridge); \$99. This one-of-a-kind offering from Chehalem celebrates what they are calling a “great” vintage. The wine is dark, supple and immensely rich and dense, yet retains a lightness that captures the elegance of the Pinot Noir grape while propelling it to rarified heights. The mix of red and purple fruits, herb, spice and earth all come together in a smooth and seductive wine that drinks like a dream. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

95 Scott Paul 2008 Audrey Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$65. All Maresh vineyard grapes are behind this gorgeous and feminine Pinot, with soft and evocative scents of truffle, chocolate and raspberry. Brilliant winemaking that takes all the elements of great Oregon fruit and puts them into unique focus, with winemaker Kelley Fox’s trademark blend of biodynamic earthy/fungal flavors, elegant berry/cherry fruit, and just a touch of milk chocolate. The alcohol just reaches 13%. —P.G.

94 Kelley Fox 2007 Maresh Vineyard Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$50. This has a surprising amount of vanilla cream in the flavors, plus soft, seductive raspberry fruit. The fruit comes from the oldest part of the Maresh vineyard—38-year-old self-rooted vines. The wine is a pale rose, yet substantial in the style of a classic Pinot from Eyrie. After some hours breathing it opens up with elegant, seductive aromas and some caramel streaks, delicate and perfectly proportioned. —P.G.

94 Ken Wright 2008 Canary Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir (Eola-Amity Hills); \$50. The top wine from Ken Wright in 2008, this beautifully elegant wine clocks in at just 13.3% alcohol, yet delivers a mouthful of delicious flavors. A lovely mix of cranberry, pomegranate and wild raspberry is annotated with dusty herb. Excellent midpalate concentration and length. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

93 Evening Land Vineyards 2007 Seven Springs Vineyard La Source Pinot Noir (Eola-Amity Hills); \$67. Dominique Lafon consults on these wines,

sourced from a vineyard now almost 30 years old. Evening Land is among the wineries who sense an opportunity to make refined, elegant wines from the terroir of this little-known region. Lovely aromas, complex scents and flavors, pine and herb, cranberry and raspberry, earth and seafoam—lots of nuances here. *Editors’ Choice.* —P.G.

93 Kelley Fox 2008 Maresh Vineyard Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$50. This has pure fruit – strawberry especially – creating an elegant, light, delicate, complex, though still quite young wine. Some caraway seed flavors come into play, and bolder black cherry fruit. —P.G.

93 Longplay 2008 Jory Bench Reserve Lia’s Vineyard Pinot Noir (Chehalem Mountains); \$30. Longplay’s 2008 reserve is quite different from its non-reserve stablemate. The aromas include more earthy barnyard scents, the color has a hint of maturity, and no new oak was used. As a result, this wine could pass for one with a few more years under its belt; its flavors more suggestive of fruit pastry, figs and plums, leather and compost. Complex and detailed, it’s a lovely effort. —P.G.

93 Scott Paul 2007 La Paulée Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$30. Four vineyards – Ribbon Ridge, Momtazi, Maresh and Shea – are included here. Soft and seductive, this wine caresses the palate with silky fruit. Aromatically it weaves together red fruits, truffles and clean, earthy scents. It reaches just over 13% alcohol; truly Burgundian yet with an Oregon flair to the fruit flavors. It puts the lie to any notion that this was a poor vintage. Challenging to be sure, but great wines were made in 2007, and this is one of them. —P.G.

92 Adelsheim 2008 Elizabeth’s Reserve Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$48. This barrel selection from the best estate vineyards is given just 10 months aging in 30% new oak. The fruit is exceptional – a mix of red berries with tasteful threads of caramel sneaking into the finish. Let it breathe—it’s a baby—but very nicely proportioned and showing layers of detail throughout a lingering finish. —P.G.

92 Anne Amie 2006 L’iris Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$75. Drinking very nicely, this wine bursts from the glass with rich aromas of cherry, chocolate, truffle and loam. The fruit factor is ramped up, delicious and

coats the palate with bright cherry candy flavors. But this is more than a fruit bomb; the acidity and ripe tannins balance it out as it runs into a clean, lengthy finish. —P.G.

92 Brittan Vineyards 2006 Basalt Block Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$45. The private project of veteran winemaker Robert Brittan, the limited-production wines under his own label are treasures. This is his inaugural release. Both fruit ripeness and meaty depth are here in abundance, with a complex mix of tree fruits and stone fruits, streaks of earth and a fine layering of chocolate. This is a wine you excavate as much as drink; it’s full of surprises. —P.G.

92 Ken Wright 2008 Abbott Claim Vineyard Pinot Noir (Yamhill-Carlton District); \$50. The 2008 Pinots from Ken Wright display their individual terroirs quite succinctly, with little evidence of the (roughly) 30% new oak they receive. The Abbott Claim has a bit more of a chocolaty flavor, with full, spicy cherry fruit at its core. In fact there is so much fruit, spicy and candied, that it is a bit like fruitcake, in a good way. —P.G.

92 Ken Wright 2008 McCrone Vineyard Pinot Noir (Yamhill-Carlton District); \$50. Still quite young, but showing real depth and layering, the McCrone vineyard designate offers pomegranate and raspberry fruit, dusted with baking spices, and finished with a tasty vein of mocha. This is a wine to enjoy in the full bloom of its youth. —P.G.

92 Soléna 2007 Hyland Vineyard Pinot Noir (Eola-Amity Hills); \$45. Laurent and Danielle Montalieu acquired this high-profile vineyard in 2007; this is the first Hyland release under their Soléna label. It’s a beautiful Pinot, with the elegance of Burgundy and the freshness of New World grapes. Fermentation in rotary barrels (for color extraction and tannin management) yields a silky, perfumed, feminine wine that penetrates subtly and lingers gracefully. *Editors’ Choice.* —P.G.

91 Anne Amie 2007 Estate Pinot Noir (Yamhill-Carlton District); \$50. A welcome trend in Oregon is making Pinot Noir at moderate alcohol levels—here it’s 13.5%. This enhances the wine’s details, beginning with the aromas. Cola and clove, licorice and toffee scents promise a tasty bottle that turns out to be burst-



ing with black berries, black cherries, black currant and even black tea flavors. —P.G.

91 Brittan Vineyards 2007 Gestalt Block Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$45. Tart, tangy, and herbal, this juicy wine mixes cranberry and strawberry fruit with tomato leaf, herb and peppery spice. If new oak barrels were used, they are not showing themselves at the moment. But the balance, length and detail are delightful. —P.G.

91 Chehalem 2008 Corral Creek Pinot Noir (Chehalem Mountains); \$44. The balance and brightness are immediately apparent, with sweet raspberry and red cherry fruit against some lightly earthy tannins. All in proportion, yet with a bit of extra depth that suggests some age-worthiness. Everything is ripe, but not too ripe, and the acidity feels natural and proportionate. —P.G.

91 Domaine Serene 2006 Jerusalem Hill Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$75. This opens with a very pretty nose—scents of clay, mineral, blueberry, cassis and a whiff of rather high-toned volatility. In the mouth the barrel flavors bring dusty cocoa and chocolate. A full-bodied wine, still young, sharp and edgy. Best to give it a few more years in the cellar, to smooth out some of the rawness. —P.G.

91 Evening Land Vineyards 2007 Seven Springs Vineyard Pinot Noir (Eola-Amity Hills); \$45. Powerful vanilla scents rise from the glass, but the fruit, even in this difficult vintage, comes out immediately. It's tart and sharp, with a strong herbal component, and the wine snaps into focus quickly with fruit, acid, tannin, herb and vanilla in equal proportion. Firm and tight, still quite young, this wine needs decanting and/or further bottle age to show its best. —P.G.

91 Kelley Fox 2007 Momtazi Vineyard Pinot Noir (McMinnville); \$40. Though it seems quite light on first impression, that is a bit deceptive. The biodynamic grapes show a muted earthiness, while over time the cranberry and raspberry flavors gain focus and concentration in the mouth. A graceful, nicely proportioned wine, with some stem and grip to the tannins. —P.G.

91 Ken Wright 2008 Meredith Mitchell Vineyard Pinot Noir (McMinnville); \$50. Bold and striking aromas

of mushroom, seaweed and organic funk set this apart from the other Ken Wright vineyard designates. There's plenty of tart, tangy cherry fruit also, though it seems to hit a wall, perhaps due to the recent bottling. This is a wine that could score even higher with additional bottle age. —P.G.

91 Longplay 2008 Lia's Vineyard Pinot Noir (Chehalem Mountains); \$24. This is a delight—a supple, polished, ripe and full-throated Pinot Noir offered at a mid-1990s price. Winemaker Aron Hess keeps the alcohol at 13.5%, the oak a moderate 20% new, and the earthy underpinnings gracefully in check. Lush purple and blue fruits are lightly licked with chocolate; the result is a very satisfying mouthful of wine. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

91 Soléna 2006 Willakia Vineyard Pinot Noir (Eola-Amity Hills); \$35. The vineyard name is a combination of the two prevalent soil types, Nekia and WillaKenzie. Along with sweet cherry fruit comes a defining minerality—a streak of iron running through the heart of the wine. Balanced nicely, with gentle acidity and sculpted tannins. In the finish you pick up an elegant streak of green tea. —P.G.

90 Brittan Vineyards 2007 Basalt Block Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$45. Tasted alongside the winemaker's 2006 from the same fruit, this shows both vintage variation and consistent terroir—the marks of a real professional. The complexity and vitality of the wine remain comparable to the riper 2006. Tart fruits, leaf, herb and streaks of earth make for a lively, interesting palate-pleaser. —P.G.

90 Chehalem 2008 Wind Ridge Pinot Noir (Ribbon Ridge); \$32. Nice cherry fruit right up front brings some sweetness to this wine. Young as it is, the components are still knitting together, but there is much to enjoy already. Lovely grapey/cherry flavors are wrapped in light herb, and accented with almost salty sea flavors. —P.G.

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90 Domaine Serene 2006 Evenstad Reserve Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$58. As with most of Oregon's 2006 Pinots, this shows more grip and fullness than the winery's '07. There's a strong smoky character, presumably from barrel toast, and a thick and chewy midpalate of mixed berries and tart cherry fruit. The acids stick out a bit, but the dominant flavor is cherry, with a spicy herbal edge. —P.G.

90 Hamacher 2007 Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$45. Eric Hamacher has done a fine job with this wine. At 13.6% alcohol it is in fine balance, with a precise mix of strawberry, pie cherry, root beer and herb flavors. It's medium bodied, open and accessible, but not too simple. There is no reason to wait, but it could be cellared for up to six years. —P.G.

90 J.K. Carrière 2007 Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$36. A fine-tuned, fragrant, low (13%) alcohol Pinot Noir, this wine offers fruit flavors of strawberry and raspberry, fresh and juicy, but with a steely spine and enough tannin to feel sturdy and cellar-worthy. There is more than a trace of leaf and herb in the finish. —P.G.

90 Ken Wright 2008 Savoya Vineyard Pinot Noir (Yamhill-Carlton District); \$50. The Savoya Pinot Noir displays excellent concentration and grip and its raspberry/cherry fruit gives it a tart, racy flair. There's an herbal edge to the tannins, but overall this is very well crafted, balanced and built for medium-term cellaring. —P.G.

90 Ken Wright 2008 Nysa Vineyard Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$50. Tart and speckled with pepper, this shows lean but polished fruit. It's truly Burgundian in style, with well-defined highlights of leaf and bark, and just a hint of tomato. A chocolaty afterglow sets in long after the last swallow. —P.G.

90 King Estate 2008 Signature Collection Pinot Noir (Oregon); \$27. Just released, young and tight, this widely available (25,000 case) Oregon Pinot shows the strengths of the 2008 vintage. The cranberry and raspberry fruit has plenty of supporting acidity, while the barrel regimen—a mix of new, one-, two- and three-year-old French oak—brings in cedar, smoke and caramel highlights. —P.G.



90 Soléna 2007 Domaine Danielle Laurent Pinot Noir (Yamhill-Carlton District); \$45. Blackberry and black cherry flavors are right up front, the fruit is definitely the star here. Light suggestions of dried leaf and moist earth add complexity, though in this lighter vintage it does not have the power of previous bottlings. This is a graceful, perfectly balanced wine, whose subtle pleasures will reward those who pay close attention. —P.G.

90 Willamette Valley Vineyards 2007 Hannah Vineyard Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$45. In this cooler vintage the wine is finished at under 13% alcohol—a rarity these days. It is a lovely wine, spiced with pine needle accents over cranberry and raspberry fruit. Acids are full but not biting, and the tannins proportionate. The return of elegance. —P.G.

89 Adelsheim 2008 Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$30. This forward, light, elegant wine sports bright raspberry fruit flavors first and foremost. Young and fresh, it drinks like a good cru Beaujolais, but with a little bottle age could reveal more inner stuffing. —P.G.

89 Anne Amie 2007 Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$35. A pretty nose suggests cherry candy, sandalwood and a whiff of maple syrup. Those pie cherry and baking spice aromas continue in the mouth, with a hint of truffle. Beautifully balanced and blended—nine vineyards contributed. —P.G.

89 Chehalem 2008 3 Vineyard Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$32. A feminine, almost soft Pinot Noir, this opens nicely with scents of roses, red fruits, and pine forest. Despite its light color, it has plenty of grip and density in the mouth, even bringing some streaks of light milk chocolate into the finish. —P.G.

89 Domaine Serene 2006 Mark Bradford Vineyard Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$90. This was presented from a bottle that had been open for a day. The scents and flavors were a bit muted, with plump plum and blueberry fruit, a whiff of animal and herb. The acidity has a strong citrus character that juts out, even after so much time to breathe. —P.G.

89 J.K. Carrière 2007 Provocateur Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$24. Very pretty, delicate, rose-colored, with cranberries and pomegranate taking the lead among the fruit flavors. With just a hint of malted milk and pine needles in the back of the mouth, this is drinking very nicely. —P.G.

89 Ken Wright 2008 Carter Vineyard Pinot Noir (Eola-Amity Hills); \$50. This distinctive bottling, which includes a percentage of juice from 25-year-old vines, leans toward the spicy/herbal side of Oregon Pinot Noir. Whiffs of herb and leaf fade into light, lingering pale red fruits—watermelon and strawberry. —P.G.

89 Soléna 2007 Grande Cuvée Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$25. An appealing mix of fruit and forest floor aromas waft from the glass, leading you into a tart, spicy and earthy wine with well-balanced red fruits, white pepper, bark and graphite flavors. Modest in scale, beautifully balanced, and perfect for near-term enjoyment —P.G.

89 Winter's Hill Vineyard 2006 Cuvée du Vigneron Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$39. This estate reserve has more grip and tannin than the other 2006 Pinot from Winter's Hill. It has been in bottle for two years now, so you are buying a well cellared wine with significant flavor development. The fruit is first rate, and the wine is structured with plenty of acid and light barrel flavors of nougat and mocha. —P.G.

88 Elk Cove 2008 Five Mountain Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$48. This is a tasty, fruity, appealing bottle of Pinot Noir. Strawberries and cherries rule the midpalate; the tannins are ripe and the barrels bring in some chocolate through the finish. It's not the most complex of Elk Cove's offerings, but a nice bottle for near-term enjoyment. —P.G.

88 Evening Land Vineyards 2008 Pinot Noir (Oregon); \$25. This captures the sense of place and commitment to ele-

gance that characterize the pricier Evening Land Oregon Pinots. Tart, assertive, spicy and unrepentantly herbal, it's a delightful wine for near-term enjoyment. —P.G.

88 Ken Wright 2008 Freedom Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$50. This is a different style than past vintages of Freedom Hill, with less tannin and alcohol. Cranberry fruit flavors are augmented with some pretty whiffs of incense, but it feels a bit simple in the mouth, and turns slightly chalky through the finish. —P.G.

88 Methven Family Vineyards 2007 Estate Cuvée Pinot Noir (Eola-Amity Hills); \$35. One of the last 2007 Pinots to be released, this still seems as if a bit more time in bottle is in order. It's still sharp, aggressive, herbal, yet nicely detailed. Cranberry fruit, sour cherry, dark chocolate, black licorice, moist earth—interesting, well-made wine. —P.G.

88 Willamette Valley Vineyards 2007 Tualatin Estate Vineyard Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$45. Light and tannic, tart and tasting of just-ripe cranberry and mountain strawberries. There is some pretty spice in the nose, and this wine is ready for food. It has the tannins and acids to complement wild poultry especially. Bring on the duck. —P.G.

88 Winter's Hill Vineyard 2006 Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$29. The aromas that greet you from the glass bring flowers, cherries, hints of cured meat and more. The wine is already drinking nicely, with an elegant mix of pie cherries and fruit pastry flavors. —P.G.

87 Domaine Serene 2007 Yamhill Cuvée Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$42. The alcohol comes in just under 14%, but the wine tastes a little harsh and the tannins hint at green tea flavors. The fruit is subdued, dark, a little smoky, peppery and very herbal. This definitely needs to be decanted. —P.G.

87 Kason 2007 Estate Reserve Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$28. This reserve is the best of Kason's 2007 releases, with cranberry fruit, minty spice, moderate tannins and overall balance. The thinness of the vintage shows through, and this will need to be drunk now, rather than cellared. Aging in 80% new French oak puts some toast into the finish. —P.G.

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87 Methven Family Vineyards 2007 Reserve Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$55. For a reserve, this seems surprisingly light, attenuated and acidic. The cranberry/strawberry fruit, of modest weight and depth, offers barely a hint of the 100% new French oak—just a faint flavor of hazelnuts and milk chocolate. —P.G.

87 RouteStock Cellars 2007 Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$20. Sturdy and clean, this is a good, near-term, go-to Pinot Noir. It's got light berry and pomegranate fruit, tart acids, spicy herb highlights and firm tannins. All the fruit flavor is front-loaded. —P.G.

87 Verve 2007 Stoller Vineyard Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$30. A whiff of leather to open, followed by plenty of cranberry and cherry fruit, balanced and medium bodied. Mocha and cola streaks run into ripe tannins. —P.G.

87 Westland 2008 Citizen's Cuvée Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$22. Westland is the second label of Methven Family Vineyards. This seems sure to be a popular wine—broadly fruity, lightly chocolaty, firmly tannic, yet clearly varietal. The fruit brings cherries and berries, rounded out nicely with chocolate and coconut flavors. The wine shows some astringent tannins and finishing earthiness. —P.G.

86 Cloudline 2008 Pinot Noir (Oregon); \$21. Cloudline wines are a project of importer Dreyfus Ashby, vinified with guidance from DDO's Veronique Drouhin. It's a professional product, clean and straightforward, with tart red fruits and striking acidity. The tannins, ripe and firm, provide some finishing heft. —P.G.

86 Kason 2007 Barrel Select Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$24. This is cool-climate Pinot Noir, with the attendant herbal flavors that bring in forest floor, pine needle, tomato leaf and bark. It's spicy and sharp, focused and tannic, with a toasty finish from aging in 60% new French oak barrels. —P.G.

85 Del Rio Vineyards 2008 Pinot Noir (Rogue Valley); \$28. A simple, pleasant Pinot Noir with suggestions of strawberries and chocolate wafers. Light as a feather, it seems almost weightless in the mouth, but it has no

rough edges and would be a fine picnic wine. —P.G.

85 Kason 2007 Black Label Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$20. Distinctive, with a strong flavor of cherry—much beyond the usual cherry found in many red wines. The fruit is backed with stiff tannins, slightly herbal, and a streak of vanilla/caramel. The finish is incomplete; the fruit drops off and the wine turns gluey. —P.G.

85 Kathken Vineyards 2008 Reserve Signature Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$27. Though lacking the weight and complexity generally associated with reserve wines, this delicate little Pinot offers pale red fruits, tart acids and moderate tannins. Much like a simple Bourgogne from a modest vintage. —P.G.

85 Verve 2007 Momtazi Vineyard Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley); \$33. A chewy style, with lots of earthy, organic flavors, but not much in the way of sweet fruit. Truffles, dried leaves and a bit of tomato can be found, then it thins out quickly. —P.G.

MERLOT

90 Griffin Creek 2007 Merlot (Rogue Valley); \$30. The scents explode with both dark fruit and dark chocolate, and flavors follow, all wrapped in stiff tannins. A serious effort, this spent 18 months in French oak. It's a muscular, deep, dark wine, substantial in every way—fruit, tannin and alcohol. —P.G.

84 Del Rio Vineyards 2007 Merlot (Rogue Valley); \$28. This is pure Merlot from southern Oregon, a style quite distinct from either Washington or California. It's tight, sharp and somewhat spindly, with cranberry, wild strawberry and earthy flavors of bark and pepper. —P.G.

SYRAH

88 Griffin Creek 2007 Syrah (Rogue Valley); \$38. Quite tart for a grape that usually is not known for its acidity, this sharp, spicy Syrah is loaded with concentrated cranberry and raspberry fruit. It would be a fine companion to roasted poultry, or pork with some sort of red fruit sauce. —P.G.

80 Del Rio Vineyards 2007 Syrah (Rogue Valley); \$35. Thin, herbal, and tannic, this does not show much in the way of either varietal character or ripeness. —P.G.

OTHER RED WINES

90 Sineann 2008 Red Table Wine (Oregon); \$16. This is the bottle you want on your table if the night is calling for burgers, flank steak, tri-tip, Mexican, Southwest—in other words, food that is hearty, spicy and satisfying. The 2007 blend included old vine Zin, Resonance Pinot Noir, Baby Poux Cabernet and more. Peter Rosback isn't saying what's in this 2008, but you won't care once you slug down the first glass. It's just pure deliciousness, cherries and chocolate galore. —P.G.

89 Griffin Creek 2007 Cabernet Franc (Rogue Valley); \$38. With its sharp edges and muscular mouthfeel, this Cabernet Franc has the power to stand up to a variety of roasted or toasted foods. The fruit is ripe and supple, with lots of purple berries, plums and cassis. But what is best is the full-bodied finish, whose tannins impart a distinctly varietal green tea character. —P.G.

88 WillaKenzie Estate 2007 Gamay Noir (Willamette Valley); \$25. A delightful bottle, this fruit-packed Gamay has more stuffing and sweetness than most of the Oregon Pinots from 2007. Plums, cherries and black currants ramble through the mouth, running into some fairly stiff, chewy tannins. This is a sturdy, immediately drinkable, thoroughly enjoyable quaffer. —P.G.

87 Chehalem 2008 Cerise (Ribbon Ridge); \$24. Cerise is Chehalem's version of a Passetoutgrains—80% Gamay Noir, 20% Pinot Noir. Youthful, tasting of berries and spice, it hints at leafy herbs also. It's a picnic wine—tangy and light, with cherries and raspberries, and finished at just 12.7% alcohol. —P.G.

82 Del Rio Vineyards 2007 Claret (Rogue Valley); \$35. This Claret combines Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec and Cabernet Franc into a sturdy, tannic, slightly sweaty wine with only the barest hints of black fruits. The flavors seem focused on leaf and stem, especially the tannins, which do not taste quite ripe. —P.G.