

# Swirl on Castro Tasting Notes

## Art of the Label September 27, 2007

### 1) Congress Springs Pinot Noir, California '06 \$11.25 btl

**100% Pinot Noir.** A great Monday-night-in-front-of-the-TV Pinot. [And a great party wine for the holidays.] Daniel Gehrs oversees winemaking at this property, and works his magic again. [He is winemaker at Pacific Oasis, a Swirl staple.] He has a way of coaxing silky, plush varietal qualities at the value level. Congress Springs Pinot is 'Sur lees' aged in French oak barrels for 8 months, for added complexity. This Pinot is medium bodied in the Cote du Beaune style – smooth and velvety. *Fresh, with black cherry, raspberry aromas and flavors and finishes with nuanced vanilla and toasted oak. Why not serve Pinot Noir at your next party?* 12.5% alcohol.

### 2) Morey-Coffinet Bourgogne, France '05 \$22.00 btl

**100% Pinot Noir.** From the highly esteemed '05 vintage - if you are beginning a wine cellar at home, now is the time to watch for notable '05s from Europe. This Bourgogne is produce by Morey-Coffinet – most of his vineyard holdings are in the Chassagne Montrachet area. Michel also has a deft hand with Chassagne rouge. [Both red and white wines are produced under this village name.] These old vines capture the roasted, muscular aromas of Chassagne rouge terroir, but are framed by a silky texture and balance that many other examples of the village lack. *Smooth and polished. A great value for Burgundy. Please open and let breathe in the glass, this wine is pretty tight still..... showing wonderful flavors and aromas of roasted meats, spice, coffee, leather, with firm acidity, and a solid mineral underpinning. A lot of Burgundy for \$22. Pair with smoked pork chops, grilled salmon, even steak.* 12.5% alcohol.

### 3) L'automne Pinot Noir, Anderson Valley '06 \$21.00 btl

**100% Pinot Noir.** Since Wells Gutherie began Copain, he has quickly and rightfully garnered praise as one of California's leading young Turks that is redefining winemaking in California. He produces exquisite and extremely limited wines from specific sites in California, expanding upon techniques he learned while working for Chapoutier in Rhone. A few years ago he introduced the Saisons des Vins label to offer affordable and delicious wines for each season of the year. *This vintage of L'automne [Autumn] is dense, with deep black cherry fruit, earth, mineral and spice. Pair with duck sausage pizza, roasted chicken, grilled vegetables.* 13.6% alcohol.

### 4) Shaky Bridge Pinot Noir, Central Otago, New Zealand '03 \$35.50 btl

**100% Pinot Noir.** Built in 1878, the "Shaky Bridge" overlooks the picturesque town of Alexandra on the Southern Island of New Zealand. The Grant family brings us some of the best wines from this very cool growing area of Central Otago – the world's southern most wine region. The flavors are intense, due not only to the cool region, but the vineyard age. [Planted in 1973] Winemaker David Grant and consultant Gerry Rowland gives the fruit delicate treatment it deserves, and the wine is then aged on light lees in French oak for 11 months. Flavors and aromas of dark berry, smoky oak and spice. Rich and silky with exceptional depth followed by a long long finish. 14% alcohol.

### 5) Brogan Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast '06 \$49.50 btl

**100% Pinot Noir.** Margaret Wierenga was a teenager when her father, Burt Williams, started making the first Williams & Selyem wines in a bathtub in a basement beneath their garage in the late 1970s. For several years she worked at her father's winery in Fulton as a volunteer before taking a paid position at the Westside Road facility in 1993. In 1998, she started her own winery, Brogan Cellars [named after her maternal grandmother]. Her motto is "Good, Better, Brogan." The cult-like tradition continues with her amazing, dense, full-throttle-yet-balanced wines. *The Sonoma Coast 06 is reminiscent of the original Williams & Selyem – supple, seamless, rich, yet light on it's feet, ethereal, and just pure gorgeous on the palate. A Pinot to savor.....serve with grilled salmon.* 250 cases produced. 14.2% alcohol.

### 6) Loring Pinot Noir "Gary's Vineyard" Santa Lucia '05 \$51.00 btl

**100% Pinot Noir.** Brian Loring's Pinot Noirs are some of the hardest to find, most highly sought after in California. The rugged Santa Lucia Mountain Range separates the lush Salinas Valley from the great expanse of the Pacific Ocean. In 1991, the 18-mile long strip of southeastern-facing alluvial fans was recognized as the Santa Lucia Highlands AVA. Famed personality Gary Pisoni oversees all grape growing and winemaking activities for Lucia with an unmatched fervor. Gary's passion and enthusiasm are contagious. For over 20 years, he has produced Pinot Noir grapes from the Santa Lucia Highlands. During this time, he has shared the fruits of his labor and an immense excitement and appreciation for the land, the grapes and Pinot Noir. A few top wineries [friends of both Garys] source Gary's Vineyard; Roar, Pisoni, Flowers, and Copain. [The vineyard is owned by Gary Pisoni and Gary Franscioni, hence the name] Gary's son Jeff Pisoni carries out the winemaking duties. He remembers working harvests at 8 years old. The Garys' Vineyard Pinot Noir is the flagship wine of Lucia. [And very hard to find. The wine is already sold out in California] Specific barrels are hand selected and blended together to create a wine that best reflects the unique terroir of the Garys' Vineyard. *This site produces wines of vibrant, pretty and floral aromatics with a lush, rich texture and firm acidity. The wines drink well upon release, but contain the acidity and tannins to age gracefully for several years. Round nose of red fruits, crushed violets, and cinnamon spice.* 700 cases produced. 13.8% alcohol.