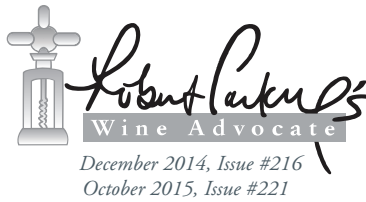




HARTFORD  
COURT



December 2014, Issue #216  
October 2015, Issue #221

96  
POINTS

2014  
FOUR HEARTS VINEYARD  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
CHARDONNAY

The 2014 Chardonnay Four Hearts Vineyard is a larger cuvée of 1,285 cases that comes from relatively old vines for Northern California (planted in 1975). The wine is super-opulent, offering terrific honeysuckle, orange marmalade and pineapple notes in a full-bodied, sexy, super-fresh, pure style. This stunning Chardonnay was aged in 43% new French oak and should drink well for 5-6 years.

95  
POINTS

2013  
STONE CÔTE  
SONOMA COAST  
CHARDONNAY

The 2013 Chardonnay Stone Cote Vineyard (572 cases produced) is fashioned from a specific block of vines that Don Hartford farms in the well-known Durell Vineyard. Fermented with indigenous yeast, it exhibits lots of white peach, orange blossom, pear and honeysuckle notes in its medium to full-bodied, gorgeously pure, textured personality. With terrific acidity as well as focus, it should drink well for 10+ years.

92-94  
POINTS

2013  
FAR COAST VINEYARD  
SONOMA COAST  
CHARDONNAY

From the Sonoma Coast, the 2013 Chardonnay Far Coast Vineyard (396 cases) emerges from a mountain ridge north of Fort Ross. This cuvée sees about 35% new French oak, and the 2013 clearly shows the tropical fruit side of Chardonnay with lots of pineapple, mango and candied tangerine-like notes. Full-bodied with fabulous fruit intensity as well as purity, super focus, and an underlying liquid minerality that gives it an extra-special character, it should drink well for 10 years.

92-94  
POINTS

2013  
FOG DANCE VINEYARD  
GREEN VALLEY OF THE  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
CHARDONNAY

There are 304 cases of the 2013 Chardonnay Fog Dance Vineyard, another Green Valley hillside site just south of the town of Forestville. One-hundred percent barrel-fermented and aged in 29% new French oak, this superb Chardonnay exhibits notes of apple blossoms, lemon oil, white currants, quince and hints of tangerines and orange marmalade. The vintage's sensational acidity and delineation come through in this full-bodied, super-concentrated 2013. Drink now-2020.

92-94  
POINTS

2013  
THREE JACKS VINEYARD  
GREEN VALLEY OF THE  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
CHARDONNAY

From the Green Valley, the 2013 Chardonnay Three Jacks Vineyard (253 cases produced) sees about 44% new French oak. It reveals terrific fruit, lots of tangerine oil, pear, pineapple and caramelized citrus, medium to full body, and tremendous acidity and definition. Drink over the next 7-8 years.

90-92  
POINTS

2013  
SEASCAPE VINEYARD  
SONOMA COAST  
CHARDONNAY

The 2013 Chardonnay Seascape Vineyard is one of the leanest and lightest of these white wines. From a ridge top west of the town of Occidental, facing Bodega Bay and the Pacific Ocean, this wine sees about 43% new oak, and comes across as Chablis-like. Medium-bodied with fresh apple blossom, crisp red currant and quince notes, it is a fresh, lively, cool-climate Chardonnay that, despite its new oak aging, has a naked appeal and flavor profile. Drink now-2022.

97  
POINTS

2013  
ARRENDEL VINEYARD  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
PINOT NOIR

Absolutely magnificent and probably the candidate for my favorite of all these Pinot Noirs is the 2013 Pinot Noir Arrendell Vineyard from the Russian River. This is one of the oldest Pinot Noir vineyards in Northern California, planted in 1975 with the Martini clone. The wine struggles to ripen, according to Don Hartford, and is picked after Halloween in most vintages. Aged in 44% new French oak, bottled unfiltered and unfiltered, the wine has an opaque ruby/purple color and a gorgeous nose of saffras, sweet sherry liqueur, black raspberries and floral notes with background forest floor and underbrush. Intense, full-bodied and made from tiny yields of just over a half-ton of fruit per acre, this prodigious and world-class Pinot Noir should drink nicely for 10-15 years.

96  
POINTS

2013  
FOG DANCE VINEYARD  
GREEN VALLEY OF THE  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
PINOT NOIR

As for the 2013 Pinot Noir Fog Dance Vineyard, another cool site from a hillside in Green Valley, this is aged in 37% new French oak and from the Dijon clone 667 and 777. Absolutely prodigious Pinot Noir, with notes of blood orange, rose petals, blueberry and blackcurrant fruit, this is a stunner, with full-bodied texture, great depth, an opaque ruby/purple color and killer concentration and length. This Pinot Noir should age beautifully for at least a decade or more.



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96  
POINTS

2013  
VELVET SISTERS VINEYARD  
ANDERSON VALLEY  
PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Pinot Noir Velvet Sisters Vineyard (480 cases) comes from the northern end of Anderson Valley and Dijon clones 115, 667, 777 and a clone often seen in Oregon, Pommard. Aged in 37% new oak, this is another compelling, blue-fruited Pinot Noir with notes of spring flowers, blueberries, blackberries, Asian plum sauce and forest floor, in a full-bodied, gorgeously textured and opulent style. This is certainly one of the most sexy of all these Pinot Noirs for drinking now and over the next decade.

95  
POINTS

2013  
SEASCAPE VINEYARD  
SONOMA COAST  
PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Pinot Noir Seascape Vineyard from the Sonoma Coast is a cuvée of 360 cases aged in 38% new French oak for 16 months prior to be bottled unfinned and unfiltered. This is a magnificent Pinot, full-bodied, with notes of Asian spices as well as plum sauce, roasted meats, grilled herbs, earth and spice. Some blacker fruits and forest floor notes are also present in this distinctively Burgundian Côte de Nuits-like Pinot Noir. Drink it over the next 7-8 years.

94  
POINTS

2013  
MULDUNE TRAIL  
ANDERSON VALLEY  
PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Pinot Noir Muldune Trail comes from an Anderson Valley vineyard at a 1,600-foot elevation. Aged in 31% new French oak, this wine offers the cranberry, blueberry and traditional red fruits in an elegant, deep plum-colored wine with moderate tannin. As the wine sits in the glass, more raspberries seem to emerge. This is a cool-climate, high-elevation Pinot that's just beautiful. Drink it over the next decade, as it's somewhat restrained at present.

93+  
POINTS

2013  
MACLEAN'S BLOCK  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Pinot Noir MacLean's Block comes from a vineyard east of the town of Occidental and saw 36% new French oak prior to being bottled unfinned and unfiltered. This is from Dijon clone 667 and 777 from a relatively high-elevation site that needs plenty of time to ripen fully. About 30% whole-clusters were used in this wine, which is dense ruby/purple with loads of spice, damp earth, forest floor and mushrooms as well as raspberry and black cherry fruit. It should drink well for up to a decade.

93  
POINTS

2013  
FAR COAST VINEYARD  
SONOMA COAST  
PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Pinot Noir Far Coast Vineyard, which comes from a mountain ridge north of Fort Ross on the Sonoma Coast (408 cases), shows lots of herbaceousness, Japanese green tea notes intermixed with cocoa, black cherries, pomegranate and a hint of earth. This is a spicy, distinctively herbal style of Pinot Noir that readers will either love or not. I did like it, because it offers such a contrast in style to the other Pinot Noirs from Don Hartford's winery. Drink it over the next 7-8 years.

92+  
POINTS

2013  
JENNIFER'S VINEYARD  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Pinot Noir Jennifer's Marshall Vineyard comes from a vineyard south of Sebastopol that sits right in the windy Petaluma Gap. Foresty, woody aromas intermingled with raspberry, blueberry and black cherry fruit jump from the glass of this wine, which is medium to full-bodied and shows terrific purity, texture and length. It is still tightly knit, as one might expect. Another 6-12 months of bottle age is probably suggested, and the wine should evolve easily for a decade or more.

92  
POINTS

2013  
HAILEY'S BLOCK  
GREEN VALLEY OF THE  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
PINOT NOIR

The 2013 Pinot Noir Hailey's Block, which comes from a cool hillside vineyard in Green Valley, was aged in 28% new French oak. This is a more structured, tighter-coiled and earthy style of Pinot Noir meant for aging. It is elegant. Pomegranate, plum and black cherry notes jump from the glass along with underbrush and spice box. It is medium-bodied and pure, with the grip of tannins present in the finish. This should be given another year or so of bottle age and drunk over the following decade.

92  
POINTS

2014  
LAND'S EDGE VINEYARD  
SONOMA COAST  
PINOT NOIR

The only 2014 tasted was the early-bottled 2014 Pinot Noir Land's Edge Vineyards, which come from a vineyard four miles from the Pacific Ocean. Aged in 32% new French oak, the wine displays raspberry and blueberry fruit, damp earth, fresh porcini mushrooms and plenty of minerality. This is a juicy, tightly knit, but concentrated and promising Pinot Noir that has that forward fruit of this vintage well displayed.



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POINTS

2013  
FANUCCHI-WOOD ROAD VINEYARD  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
ZINFANDEL

The 2013 Zinfandel Fanucchi-Wood Road Vineyard (264 cases produced) was aged in 100% French oak of which 51% was new. This killer Zin includes a dollop of Petite Sirah. Its opaque purple color is accompanied by notes of licorice, incense, blackcurrants and black cherries, bay leaf, spice box, and pepper. This full-bodied stunner should drink well for 7-8 years or longer.

95  
POINTS

2013  
HARTFORD VINEYARD  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
ZINFANDEL

There are 336 cases of the 2013 Zinfandel Hartford Vineyard, which comes from vines planted over 100 years ago on the estate vineyard of the Hartford Family Winery. Aged in 100% French oak (35% new), this wine possesses fabulous fruit intensity as well as abundant notes of black raspberries, blackcurrants and cherries intermixed with licorice, earth, vanillin and spice box. Full-bodied and powerful with massive fruit, opulence and a long finish that lasts nearly 40 seconds, this sensational Zinfandel can be drunk over the next 7-8 years.

93  
POINTS

2013  
HIGHWIRE VINEYARD  
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY  
ZINFANDEL

Another beauty is the 2013 Zinfandel Highwire Vineyard, which comes from century-old vines, half of which are head-pruned and the other half are trained on a trellising system, hence the name. Aged in 50% new French oak, it includes a small percentage of old vine Carignane in the blend. Terrific blackcurrant and kirsch liqueur notes intermixed with loamy soil, pepper, spice and unsmoked cigar tobacco are all present in this big, full-bodied, powerful Zinfandel. It should drink well for 7-8 years.



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