



2013 Merry Edwards Pinot Noir Russian River Valley

Each year I enjoy the challenge of creating our Russian River Valley Pinot Noir. Grapes from six different vineyards and 17 individual lots of wine were woven together in tapestry-like fashion to form this intricate blend. Each small batch was made using customized techniques to enhance its own unique clone and adaptation to the site where it was grown. Perhaps whole clusters were added to the fermenting tank or the length of the cold soak period was extended. Barrels were then selected to amplify the fruit character and mouthfeel.

The resulting Pinot Noir reflects the personality of our region in bold style. The jewel-toned rich, ruby color portends an aroma that is revealed as fresh and appealing. Dark blue plum, red currant, hedgerow fruit and raspberry coulis come forward first. Deeper layers reveal hints of fragrant earth, warm brown spices and cocoa. In the mouth, the wine is juicy on entry, broad in the midpalate and shows smooth, firm tannins on an extended finish. Supported by good acidity, the balance of this Pinot predicts excellent ageability.

Erik Niel, chef/owner of the Easy Bistro & Bar in Chattanooga, Tenn., submitted this winning entry to our ongoing Win-a-Magnum Recipe Contest. His tasty *Chilled Beet Salad with Charred Red Onion, Alabama Goat Cheese, Cocoa Crumble and Dijon Vinaigrette* highlights many elements of our Russian River Pinot, making it a great pairing.