2017 Merry Edwards Pinot Noir
Russian River Valley
Coopersmith

This designate, named after my husband, Ken, became a favorite with customers almost as soon as it was first released. Like Ken, the wines are generous and full-bodied, reflecting their UCD37 heritage and terroir, grown here on the sandy Laguna Ridge in Sebastopol. To hold the vigor of the vines in check, the vineyard is farmed without tilling the soil. This allows carbon dioxide to remain sequestered — a real contribution to supporting our environment in this time of climate chaos.

The trademark aroma of this luscious Pinot greets us — a profuse mélange of deep, dark fruit highlighted with rich cocoa powder and chocolate. Blackberry preserves, cassis and dark cherry are complemented with black tea, a bit of tar and a hint of roses. Toasty François Frères oak is another signature as this wine chose this cooperage upon its first christening in barrel in 2004. The effect is a pronounced savory aspect of charcuterie and bacon.

A showy, expressive Pinot, it has broad, succulent tannins and good acid balance. Cocoa resurfaces and lingers on the finish. This is a powerhouse wine that will release its energy over a long lifetime in bottle.

Please enjoy this recipe for Merry’s Crispy Oven Baked Chicken. The skin gets nice and crispy while the sweet potatoes remain moist and succulent. I also make this substituting heritage potatoes from our garden. The juicy chicken and earthiness of the dish are a nice accompaniment to our Coopersmith Pinot. Ken’s Idaho roots also make this an appropriate pairing.