

Stephen Tanzer's INTERNATIONAL WINE CELLAR

Issue 138: May/June 2008



HARTFORD
COURT

93
POINTS

2006
FAR COAST VINEYARD
SONOMA COAST
PINOT NOIR

Bright red. Strongly perfumed nose offers a sexy set of red and dark berry aromas, along with cinnamon, mace and dried rose. Juicy, sharply focused raspberry and blackberry flavors display impressive depth and vivacity. Silky tannins add support to the long, sappy finish. A drop-dead gorgeous pinot that's drinking wonderfully right now.

92
POINTS

2006
HAILEY'S BLOCK
GREEN VALLEY
PINOT NOIR

Deep red. Sexy, explosively perfumed bouquet of raspberry, cherry, sandalwood incense, cinnamon and mace; smells like a head shop. Tangy red berry flavors gain sweetness with air, picking up deeper cherry and bitter chocolate flavors while maintaining precision. Extremely elegant and pure, with a silky texture and a long, spicy finish.

92
POINTS

2006
VELVET SISTERS VINEYARD
ANDERSON VALLEY
PINOT NOIR

Deep red-ruby color. Smoky cherry-cola, raspberry and baking spices on the alluring nose. Intensely spicy red fruits stain the palate but are almost shockingly lithe, offering excellent mineral snap and lift. Finishes with outstanding persistence, leaving a strong impression of sweet red berries behind. This is delicious.

91+
POINTS

2006
ARRENDELL VINEYARD
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
PINOT NOIR

Dark red. Deep cherry and dark berry aromas show rooty, cola and herbal qualities reminiscent of a wine from Morey-Saint-Denis. Suave bitter cherry and blackcurrant flavors are framed and enlivened by juicy acidity. Fleshes out on the finish, with the cherry and cola qualities repeating. This is the most backward of this impressive set of pinots.

91+
POINTS

2006
SEASCAPE VINEYARD
SONOMA COAST
PINOT NOIR

Deep red with a bright rim. Intensely aromatic bouquet shows red berries, cherry jam, Indian spices and smoky minerals. Deep and juicy, with pliant, medium-bodied red berry flavors, silky texture and a strong jolt of red licorice on the close. Tannins slowly build on the long, sappy finish, but don't detract from the pure, sweet red fruit. The spiciness of this wine is compelling.

92
POINTS

2006
STONE CÔTE VINEYARD
SONOMA COAST
CHARDONNAY

Hazy yellow-gold. Smoky, leesy orange and pear aromas give way to white peach and floral honey with air, but maintain energy. Rich and chewy, with deep orchard and pit fruit flavors braced by zesty orange and lime qualities that carry through the long, powerful finish. Plenty open today but there's enough material here to reward cellaring.

92
POINTS

2006
SEASCAPE VINEYARD
SONOMA COAST
CHARDONNAY

Light gold. Leesy pear and yellow plum aromas display a waxy, mineral character that reminded me of a Loire Valley chenin blanc. Ripe orchard fruit and citrus flavors are firmed by juicy acidity, which adds refreshing bite and clarity. Nervy lime and pink grapefruit flavors build on the long, spicy finish, which echoes the waxy note. Lots of flavor and power here, but the impression it leaves is of elegance rather than weight.

91
POINTS

2006
FOUR HEARTS VINEYARDS
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
CHARDONNAY

Light gold. Fresh lime and orange on the nose, along with honeysuckle and dusty minerals. Bright and juicy, with suave citrus and honey flavors underscored by tangy lemon zest and quinine. Refreshing, sharply focused and strikingly pure, with excellent finishing lift and cut.

HARTFORD

91
POINTS

2006
DINA'S VINEYARD
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
ZINFANDEL

Glass-staining purple. Powerful blackberry and cassis aromas are complicated by incense, Asian spices and lavender. Deep, sappy and sweet, offering pure dark berry preserve flavors, terrific mineral lift and fine-grained tannins. Impressively balances richness against elegance, with outstanding finishing thrust and lingering dark fruits.

90
POINTS

2006
HARTFORD VINEYARD
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
ZINFANDEL

Opaque purple color. Flamboyantly aromatic bouquet of blackberry, blueberry, licorice, sandalwood and fresh flowers. Deep, sweet and velvety, offering dense black and blue fruit flavors, soft tannins and building spiciness. Finishes with surprising vivacity and impressive persistence. This is already delicious.

90
POINTS

2006
HIGHWIRE VINEYARD
RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY
ZINFANDEL

Deep ruby. Fresh red and dark berry aromas, complicated by smoked meat, tobacco and fresh flowers. Surprisingly tangy on the palate, displaying intense, medium-bodied raspberry and blackcurrant fruit. Dusty tannins build with air, adding firmness to the long, intensely spicy finish.

HARTFORD FAMILY
WINERY