

JANUARY 2021



# *The Bluffs* *Food & Wine* *gazette*

16  
BOHÈME  
PINOT NOIR  
SONOMA COAST  
ENGLISH HILL WINERY

DOMAINE DROUHIN  
2016  
OREGON  
Domaine Drouhin  
OREGON  
DUNDEE HILLS  
Pinot Noir  
OREGON

BRICK-HOUSE  
Les Dyonnas  
2017  
KIMBLE

HARTFORD  
COURT  
LAND'S EDGE VINEYARDS  
SONOMA COAST  
PINOT NOIR  
2016  
HARTFORD FAMILY WINERY

**IN MEMORIAM: SUZANNE KOSSOW | NEW MEMBERS BIO: LEAH & JOSH JOHNSON**

**EVENT REPORT: CALIFORNIA VS. OREGON PINOT NOIR**

**WINERY PROFILE: BOHÈME WINES | COMPARING CALIFORNIA AND OREGON PINOT NOIRS**

**AN INVITATION FROM THE IWFS OMAHA BRANCH | UPCOMING EVENTS**



# PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

## Greetings to all;

**A**s we begin the new year, I want to share a thought:  
“May love and laughter light your days, and wine warm your heart  
and home. May good and faithful friends be yours, wherever you may roam.”  
(an adapted Irish Proverb)

Be safe and be well. 🍷

*Connie Martin*

*Cover Photo:* Tasting wines for our California vs. Oregon Pinot Noir Event at Spezia

***“A Dentist and a manicurist married.  
They fought tooth and nail.”  
— Its Time for some Lexophiles***

# EDITOR'S

# CORNER

**W**ell, we are starting a new year. Good Riddance for 2020. But be careful for what you ask. Who knows, maybe 2021 will be worse! I sincerely hope not.

We have the sad duty to report that longtime member and Board Member Suzanne Kossow has passed. We have prepared a short bio of her membership in the CB Branch.

Josh and Leah Johnson have asked to join our group and their application has been approved by the Board. Check out the short biography Leah submitted about our newest members.

We have not been to Spezia since 2015, when I returned from the International Pinot Noir Celebration (IPNC), held annually on the last week of July at Lindfield College campus in McMinnville, OR. IPNC is a real showcase of Pinot Noirs and worth attending if you can. The highlight of the IPNC weekend is the traditional salmon bake, where huge salmon filets are made the way Native Americans do it: over an open wood fire. Spezia's cooks their salmon over a wood fire grille. I knew they did a great job before, so chose them again. The theme was contrasting **Pinot Noirs from Oregon and California**. I have to say, it was a delightful endeavor, and the food was top drawer. Check out the Event Report for details.

One of our tasting wines at Spezia's was the **Bohème English Hill Pinot Noir 2016**. Bohème is a true boutique winery, situated on the Sonoma Coast and getting all the benefits of the Pacific Ocean, like coolness at night and foggy mornings in the summer. Yields are small on all the various lines they carry. I thought you might be interested in learning more about this small producer.

In our **Comparing California and Oregon Pinot Noirs** story, we get more into the weeds about the personality of Pinot Noir. I'm sure you have met a high maintenance person. You walk away thinking, "Boy, I would never want to be married to him / her. Pinot Noir is one of those High Maintenance grapes. It even has nicknames. You simply must get all the gossip on Pinot Noir, that just happens to be true.

Some members have had trouble reading the Gazette on issuu.com, Or, they don't want to sign in, which means you can't even read the Gazette at all. They prefer a PDF since all you have to do is click it open. We have decided to offer it in both formats. In your email, a PDF will be sent along with the issuu.com link. The advantage of issuu.com is that you can see both right and left pages, like a paper magazine. Our PDF only lets you view one page at a time.

You can also access the Branch Recipe file by clicking:  
[https://issuu.com/omahapublications/docs/iwfs\\_cb\\_council\\_bluffs\\_recipes](https://issuu.com/omahapublications/docs/iwfs_cb_council_bluffs_recipes) 



**ENGLAND HAS  
NO KIDNEY  
BANK, BUT IT  
DOES HAVE A  
LIVERPOOL."**

*— Its Time for some Lexophiles*

*Tom Murnan*

# *In Memoriam:*

## *Suzanne Kossow*



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It is with sadness that we share the news that our long time member and executive board director, Suzanne Kossow passed away yesterday from her long struggle with metastatic breast cancer.

Bob & Suzanne joined the Council Bluffs Branch in 2009. Diane Forristall recalls that she and husband Gary met Bob and Suzanne through the Western Iowa Grape Growers. They had a common interest in that both couples wanted to start their own vineyards. After a year or two of membership in our branch, the CB Board invited the Kossows to serve on the Executive Board. She took notes for the minutes for a number of years, even down to who brought which wine. Note taking was a job no one else wanted to do! It was near the end of 2009 that both Suzanne & Diane were diagnosed with breast cancer. They shared treatment notes throughout 2010 while donning wigs and attending IWFS events. Unfortunately, Suzanne was unable to rid herself of cancer. She would go into remission a few times, but it always came back. For the past few years, she and Bob went on numerous tours throughout the world, going to over 60 countries, including unusual ones like Madagascar. Some of these trips included the IWFS Festivals and Great Weekends, including Baltimore, Sonoma, and the Douro River to name a few.

Suzanne and Bob had recently torn down their old house and were in the process of building a new home on the same property. Unfortunately, she did not live to see it to completion. She will be missed for her cheerful attitude and willingness to help the Branch in any way she could. She will be missed.





# New Members Bio:

## *Leah & Josh Johnson*

Leah & Josh Johnson have been to two of the CB Branch events and have asked to join the club. The Board agreed and welcomes them to our Branch.

**Here is a brief biography from Leah:**

Josh Johnson works in advertising and marketing with Right Idea Media & Creative, a full-service advertising agency in Council Bluffs. Josh is a lifelong fan of the Buffalo Bills and patiently awaits their first Super Bowl Championship. In his free time he enjoys golfing, watching Husker football, and attending his kids sporting events.

Leah has spent a good portion of her life working in fine dining, where she developed a love and palate for exquisite food and fine wine. She is a licensed real estate agent in Iowa and Nebraska. In her free time she enjoys golfing, traveling, and is currently studying for her Wine Sommelier Level 2 certification.

The couple are residents of Council Bluffs and have two children, age 16 and 7.

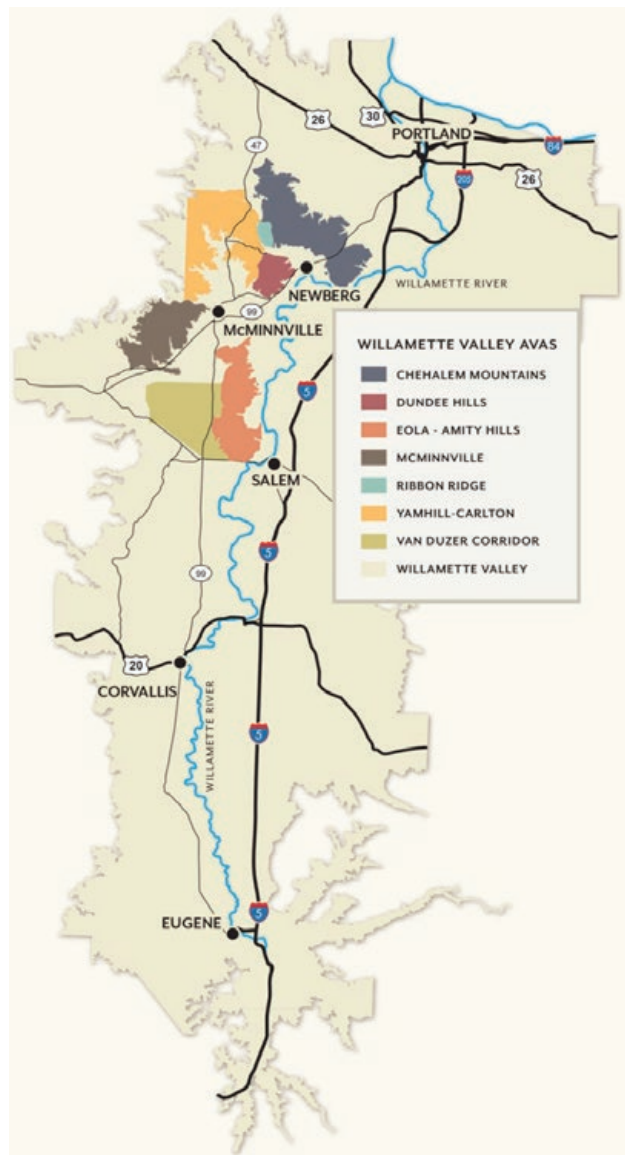
# EVENT REPORT:

## *California vs. Oregon Pinot Noir*

STORY & PHOTOS BY TOM MURNAN

As a Branch, we have not devoted a lot of Gazette time to Pinot Noir. We have had one other Pinot tasting when we did Pinots from around the world at the April 2019 Kutak Rocks the Pinot event. With Pinot increasing in popularity, I thought it was time for another Pinot Noir (PN) focus, but with a more narrow scope: a comparison of the two finest PN areas in the United States. Plus it has been a long time since we have been to Spezia: my Oregon event in November of 2015. Spezia never seems to miss a beat culinary wise. With Corona Virus restrictions still in place, and in the midst of a spike in cases, I was glad we were still able to hold the event. Thirty were allowed, and 24 signed up, including 4 guests.

With COVID restrictions in mind, we immediately went to our assigned seats, removed our masks, and had 4 wine glasses pre-poured with two Oregon and two California PN. Not in the order printed on the menu card, we tasted blind with a mission of determining which wines came from OR and which from CA. Our contending wines were, after being switched around: **1. Brick House Les Dijonaise Ribbon Ridge PN 2017;** **2. Bohème English Hill PN 2016;** **3. Hartford Court Lands End Sonoma Coast PN 2016;** and **4. Domaine Drouhin Dundee Hills PN 2016.** Both the CA wines are near the Pacific Ocean, which provides coolness at night and many a foggy morning. The OR wines are on the same 45th degree latitude, almost the same as Burgundy, which is 47. Both are from the Willamette Valley, both north of McMinnville in the AVAs of Dundee Hills and Ribbon Ridge, somewhat close to Portland. One would expect the OR wines to be more Burgundian in character, lighter in color and more delicate than their CA counterparts. All the tasting wines were decanted à la the Parker method starting at 9:45 in the morning. ▶



















◀ Our **appetizers** were served shortly after 6:30. And what a bountiful display these were. One highlight was perfectly Seared Tuna with a thickened soy sauce. A chilled charcuterie plate had slices of **Gruyère and Mature Gouda, Sopressata and Genoa Salami, crackers and grilled baguette slices**. What is the difference between the meats? Mostly it is a matter of a coarser grinding for Sopressata. **Large shrimp** were impaled on the rim of a cocktail glass with cocktail sauce inside the glass. Balls of **Arancini** rounded out our appetizers. Looking like meatballs, the arancini was composed of cooked arborio rice with a mozzarella cheese center and breadcrumb exterior, then deep fried. A lot of work to me. And of course, we were sampling our mystery wines, which were all quite tasty and good examples of their type. When revealed, they were in the order listed above. As a group we did quite well at identifying. 1. had one wrong; 2. had 1 wrong; 3 and 4 had 6 (or one table) wrong because they got them backward. The Drouhin and Hartfort Court were surprisingly similar, and both had deep color, showing you can't go by lightness of color exclusively. I was impressed at how much more flavor the wines had after their extended breathing time than when they first came out of the bottle in the morning. It definitely was the right thing to do to open them up and decant before things get busy in the evening.

The **First Course** was a **Mixed Greens, Goat Cheese, Candy Pecans, Pickled Beets & Dried Cranberry with Raspberry Vinaigrette salad**. Beet forward, it had a nice set of flavors, with a wine friendly sauce that was a bit sweet and not at all vinegary. An **Eyrie Estate Dundee Hills Pinot Gris 2016** proved to have the stuffing to stand up to the salad, and was refreshing after all those PNs.

The **Second Course** was **Wood Grilled Salmon with Peas, Prosciutto & Basil in a light White Cream Sauce and Angel Hair Pasta**. Perfectly grilled salmon over a wood fire is one of Spezia's specialties, and this was no exception. It was moist and delicious with its wood flavors. Capellini pasta (angel hair) helps give the dish a lighter touch than thicker, heavier spaghetti, and with its white sauce was the perfect accompaniment to the salmon. Along with the peas for color and flavor, salmon doesn't get too much better than this. Our OR wine was the **Rose Rock Eola Amity PN 2016** from Drouhin Oregon.

The Eola-Amity AVA is southeast of McMinnville, medium dark ruby color with black cherry flavors, earthy, and well balanced. The CA wine was a Hartfort Court Russian River Valley PN 2016 was a bit darker at ruby purple, it had an aroma of red cherry and blackcurrants and an earthy, loamy taste. Both wines had fine tannins and good balance.

**Third Course** was an intermission and a palate cleanser. The **Raspberry Sorbet** fit right in with all the PN type flavors and was sweet, cold and refreshing, the essence of raspberry. The frozen glass was a nice touch so the sorbet didn't melt too quickly.

Our **Fourth Course** was **Wood Grilled Tenderloin with Mushroom Ravioli & Porcini Mushroom Sauce, Broccoli and Roasted Garlic Ravioli**. Again, Spezia's magic with a wood grille was apparent on my very tender piece of meat. Quite delicious, especially with the porcini mushroom sauce, another house specialty. Porcinis are one of my favorites for its pronounced, earthy flavor. The meat was sitting high over a small pile of rather flat ravioli, which added to the enjoyment mentioned above. Our CA wine was the **Martinelli Zio Tony Ranch Russian River Valley (RRV) PN 2016**. Like the above Hartfort Court which also hails from the RRV, it is one of the premier places in Sonoma for quality PN. And the Uncle Tony ranch is one of the better vineyards Martinelli has for PN. Intense, dense, fabulous with its earthy, cherry and blackberry notes. My favorite wine of the night. The OR comparison was the **Cristom Louise Vineyard Eola-Amity PN 2013**, our oldest red tonight. Perfectly balanced, with deep red color and red berry flavors, it was a quite elegant expression of PN, but lighter in body than the Martinelli.

Our **Dolce** course was **Raspberry Cheesecake** accompanied by **Vanilla Ice Cream with Raspberry Swirls**. Rich but not too much so, it was nicely matched by our **Château Guiraud Sauternes 2005**, with his dulcet honeyed tones.

Many thanks to **Chef Brian Reilly** who orchestrated the menu on the busiest night of the week for Spezia. Thanks to **Wendy Becker** our party manager, and to our two servers **Jessica and Nicole** who gave us great and attentive service. And thanks to our guests who attended in this time of COVID. 🍷





# WINERY PROFILE: BOHÈME WINES

BY TOM MURNAN



One of the wines we had in our November 14th California vs. Oregon Wines was Bohème Wines. It was featured with three other wines in a sit down tasting. Bohème Wines could be described as a boutique winery. It only produces about 1,500 cases per vintage. Located 7 miles from the Pacific Ocean on the Sonoma coast near the town of Occidental, CA, the winery was founded in 2004. It has eight named vineyards which produce Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, with a small amount of Syrah, at elevations from 600 to 1250 feet above sea level. Morning fog is typical for Bohème, being so close to the Pacific. Bohème was named after the Bohemian Highway which meanders among the hills, farms and redwoods. The highway was named after the Bohemian Club, which originated in San Francisco about 50 miles to the south. In the late 19th century, the

club would annually use this route to escape the city and seek cooler temperatures at an especially beautiful grove of redwoods to the north of Occidental.

Founder **Kurt Beitler**'s family has quite a wine pedigree. One ancestor was director of Beaulieu Vineyards around 1900. Another was winemaker for Inglenook. Closer to modern times, his grandfather was Charlie Wagner (Camus, Belle Glos), and Charlie's son Chuck (Camus, Belle Glos, Mer Soleil, and Conundrum). Both uncle and grandfather urged Kurt to enter the wine business. At the time, he was more interested in machinery where he received a degree in mechanical engineering in 2000. After graduation, Chuck Wagner convinced Kurt to manage one of Belle Glos' labels, Taylor Lane Vineyards in Sonoma. By 2004, Beitler



struck out on his own, being convinced that winemaking was his true profession. He finds working with wine gives him countless opportunities for creative expression in all aspects of winemaking: grower, vineyard management, winemaker. ▶

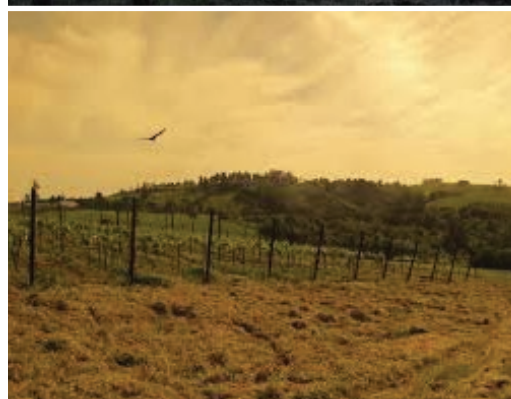
◀ He uses biodynamic techniques with no chemicals and minimal tilling, which allows for greater vine resilience, and better nuances and depth in grape flavor.

His main vineyards are scattered around the area. **English Hill** was the wine we tried in our tasting. The vineyard is 9 miles from the ocean and sits on a small hill at about the 600 foot elevation. It is an 8.5 acre parcel planted in 2005. The narrow spaced vineyard is a mosaic of 9 Pinot Noir, 1 Chardonnay and 1 Syrah plots. On summer mornings, fog covers the vineyard. This is essential because the vineyard is dry farmed. In the afternoon, the wind dries the canopy, depositing bits of soil in the grape leaves. By late August, a layer of clay soil helps retain moisture for the vines. English Hill was used as a pasture for cattle for 100 years, so it has deep organic fertilizer. The site is exposed to turbulent weather. Six different clones of Pinot Noir are grown. The Chardonnay is very much like French Chablis, which is a cooler area than Burgundy. Bohème's Chardonnay is known for its honey flavors and marked acidity. Within the English Hill vineyard is **Occidental Hill**, where Syrah is grown. In 2013 Beitler told the Wine Spectator he was dropping Syrah, but it is currently for sale on the website, albeit in small quantities.

**Taylor Ridge** is a 5 acre vineyard at the 900 foot elevation mark. Planted in the year 2000, it is the coolest Bohème site at 5 miles from the Pacific. It sits in a prehistoric sea area called Wilson Grove Sea and has sandy loam soil. Over millennia, the seabed rose to around the 900 feet above sea level. Because of the coolness and fog, the grapes mature at a slow, unhurried rate which gives their fruit a unique complexity. Pinot Noir using 2 clones are grown here.

**Stuller Vineyard** grows nestled amongst the redwoods at 1200 feet and only 6 miles from the Pacific. Planted in 2001 it is about 6 acres. This vineyard is marked by soil diversity and has two plots. The south facing plot has red colored soil and is planted with the **Dijon Clone 115**. The grapes it yields are dark purple with deep berry flavors. The other plot has the **Dijon 667 clone** and is a hill-top. It is rocky with very little organic matter. Both plots are stressed and yield only ounces of concentrated fruit.

Pinot Noir is a demanding grape, well known for its fickleness. It is delicate and takes more effort to farm. It took Beitler time to determine just what the vines wanted. For exam-



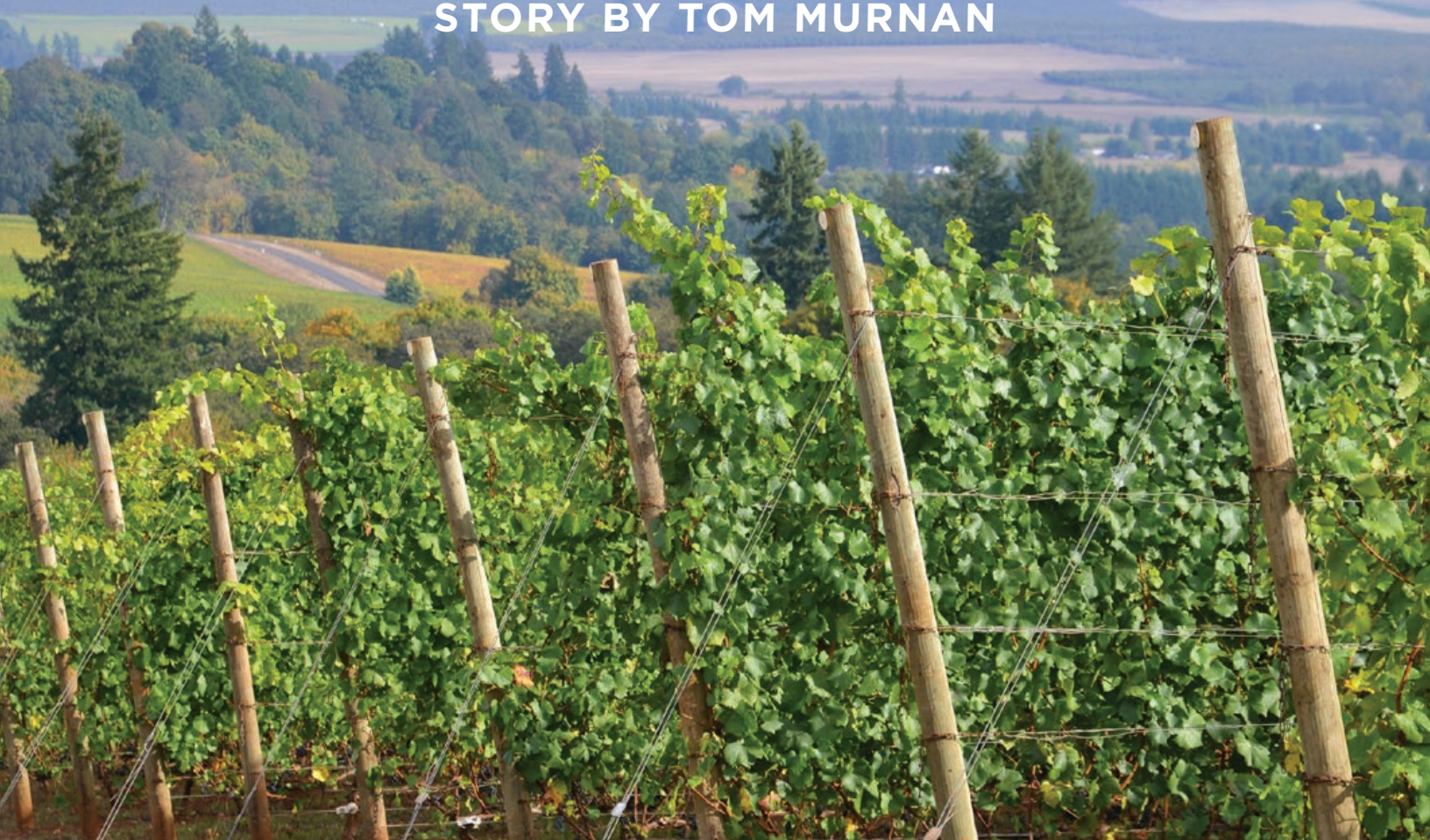
ple, on one vineyard, to increase ventilation around the grapes, part of the leaves are plucked to prevent mold. You have to be careful not to pluck too many leaves or the grape bunches will get sun burnt. But in another vineyard, you have to pull the leaves from the opposite side. The cool, foggy weather also makes it hard to ripen the grapes. Finicky.

Bohème is still a work in progress. It definitely is a boutique winery, which the trade defines as an operation of 10,000 cases or less. Our 2016 English Hill only produced 378 cases. But its owner is totally dedicated to quality. 🍷

**Sources:** [bohèmewines.com](http://bohèmewines.com); [winespectator.com/articles/six-to-watch-48847](http://winespectator.com/articles/six-to-watch-48847); [ediblemarinandwine-country.ediblecommunities.com/shop/kurt-beitlers-bohème-wines](http://ediblemarinandwine-country.ediblecommunities.com/shop/kurt-beitlers-bohème-wines)

# COMPARING CALIFORNIA & OREGON PINOT NOIRS

STORY BY TOM MURNAN



**B**efore we get started on the differences of Pinot Noir areas, you should know it is a difficult grape to grow. It has nicknames, like fickle, or the heartbreak grape. Unpredictable and moody, it likes things just so: not too hot, not too cold. It needs warm, not hot days. It needs cool nights to preserve its acidity. It likes limestone soil. It can express minute characteristics of different vineyard plots (terroir). It takes a long time to ripen at moderate temperatures. Its thin skinned grape is prone to be sickly from a host of viruses and diseases, it is susceptible to rot. It is frost vulnerable. It gives low yields making it harder for the winery to recoup its costs. It is difficult to ferment. If it ferments too fast, the heat from fermentation kills the yeast, and sulfur results. Have you ever heard of Pinot Stink when you first open a bottle? So why bother? Because it

can give some of the most elegant, ethereal wines of incredible finesse, more than any other red wine. Plus it is a fabulous food wine that pairs with a wide range of dishes.

Pinot Noir (PN) has been getting more and more popular lately. The movie *Sideways* gave it a boost in 2004, but it is a relatively recent varietal in California, where it was properly introduced to a cool climate vineyard in 1974, and in Oregon, introduced in 1985. I think its popularity is partly because the Pinot based wines are just so user friendly. You don't have to wait for 5 or 10 years for the tannins to smooth out like with a Cabernet Sauvignon. Our November 14th event featured a comparison of Pinot Noirs from Oregon and California. So, what are the differences between the two states? ►



*Fog covers a Sonoma Coast vineyard*

◀ Let's start with climate. The best growing area in Oregon for PN is the Willamette Valley which at the 45th latitude north, is almost the same latitude as Burgundy, which is at the 47th degree latitude. Oregon has all four seasons, including cold winters and hot summers. Because of its higher latitude, it is cooler, and it takes longer to ripen the grapes. It takes more sunlight hours. By contrast, Sonoma California sits on the 38th degree latitude, and even its cooler, coastal areas which produces foggy conditions in the morning, has more sunlight than Oregon. Combined with warmer temperatures and mild winters, the vines ripen more quickly. Hot summer days are followed by chilly nights due to its proximity to the Pacific Ocean, which allow the vines to rest.

The fruit in PN is more delicate than a Cab or a Syrah, and that makes it easier to compare. Because of the climate Oregon PN wine is more delicate in structure and lighter in color. Oregon fruit more closely mirrors the Burgundian style: fresh with moderate acidity, soft and light in body. A Burgundy PN can sometimes be quite light in color, like a dark hued rosé. But that doesn't mean there is less flavor. Lighter flavors might be strawberry, cranberry and some currant.

California, on the other hand, especially in the Coastal areas and the Russian River Valley, are darker in color, almost purple at times. The fruit is riper, luscious, more full bodied, with more black fruit tines on the palate than the Oregon counterparts. Wines from both states display earthy undertones, one of the things I like most about PN. California flavors are of the more assertive fruits, like berries and cherries.

On August 12th, 2020, I sent Sid Cross, our IWFS consultant who issues a Blog several times a year, a blog question about the differ-

ences between the two states' Pinot Noirs.

Ask Sid: Difference between pinot noirs from Willamette Valley in Oregon & those from Sonoma Coast/Russian River in California?

“Question: I read your Blog dated June 24 about the differences between Pinot Noirs from the Russian River and the Sonoma Coasts. What would you say the difference is between Pinot Noir from the Willamette Valley in Oregon and Sonoma Coast/Russian River Pinots? I am planning an event to contrast the OR Pinots from the CA Pinots.

“Answer: Will be an interesting comparison. Both Oregon and California are changing rapidly with the benefit of older vines planted in the right spots and the influence of climate change. There are some unique best places being found and developed for pinot noir in both states. For example on the Sonoma Coast quality producers like Littorai are able to achieve just enough rich ripeness (but not too much) to balance out that good fresh underlying acidity. Some don't reach the same complexity, picking grapes too early that are slightly under ripe, or too late overripe. Difficult to get everything perfect. Look at the excitement being generated by amazing pinot noirs from Santa Rita Hills. In Oregon you have pinot noirs that are lighter more delicate and fragrant than the denser fuller riper richer ones in California. However there are lots of exceptions to that overly general rule. Good to remember that California has higher temperatures, fewer daylight hours,\* and a longer growing season while Oregon has cooler temperatures, more daylight hours, but usually a shorter growing season before the



Fall rains arrive. Additionally climate change is really affecting Oregon with the last 5 years seeing the warmest increased temperatures on record during the growing season. Over 62% of the grapes grown in Oregon are pinot noir. This presently can be a big benefit for them in achieving perfect phenolic ripeness but also an added pressure to harvest earlier. The best way to explore the fascinating differences between the two states is by tasting the specific bottles you actually open and studying them. Please report back on the findings.”

[\* What Sid means is that it takes less sunlight hours to ripen PN in California than OR, partly due to the warmer temperatures. Editor]

Anyway, the study of Pinot Noir is an endlessly fascinating subject, full of nuances and surprises in every bottle. Start paying attention to the differences between CA and OR Pinots. 🍷

**Sources:** [vinepair.com/wine-blog/pinot-noir-reveals-the-differences-between-oregon-and-california-climates/](https://vinepair.com/wine-blog/pinot-noir-reveals-the-differences-between-oregon-and-california-climates/); [jackyblisson.com/pinotnoir-burgundy-newworldpinotnoir/](https://jackyblisson.com/pinotnoir-burgundy-newworldpinotnoir/); [wienscellars.com/wine-101-blog/ive-heard-that-pinot-noir-is-a-very-difficult-grape-variety-why-is-that/](https://wienscellars.com/wine-101-blog/ive-heard-that-pinot-noir-is-a-very-difficult-grape-variety-why-is-that/); [blog.iwfs.org/2020/08/ask-sid-difference-between-pinot-noirs-from-willamette-valley-in-oregon-those-from-sonoma-coast-russian-river-in-california/](https://blog.iwfs.org/2020/08/ask-sid-difference-between-pinot-noirs-from-willamette-valley-in-oregon-those-from-sonoma-coast-russian-river-in-california/)



# AN INVITATION FROM THE IWFS OMAHA BRANCH

The Omaha Branch is turning 50 years old in 2021. They have extended an invitation to the Council Bluffs Branch to join them for a Valentine's Day event at old Blackstone Hotel, now the newly remodeled Kimpton Cottonwood Hotel, where they had their first couples event in 1972.

The Omaha Branch of the IWFS was founded in 1971, but they called themselves the Omaha Wine and Food Society of London, England, back then. All the events were stag. On November 17th, 1972, the 2nd President, Fred Haus, presided over an "Annual Dinner," now called the Formal Dinner, in the ballroom of the Radisson Blackstone Hotel with the stated purpose "In Honor of the Wives of the Members in recognition of their support and tolerance" ....of all those stag events! ▶



*The Blackstone Hotel*



◀ The Branch had put themselves in the culinary hands of Irwin Siegler, who was an accomplished, European trained chef in charge of the hotel. But Erwin had also been a supporter and advisor of the new Branch from the beginning. He crafted a French feast, but without the number of wines we typically have today. In fact, the 1964 Chambertin was used for two different courses. Fast forward to today.

The Blackstone, constructed in 1915, had fallen on hard times, and in recent memory was converted into office space for the Kiewit Construction Company. But Kiewit left, the building was sold, and a local developer has remodeled the structure from top to bottom, preserving many of the most important public areas. The Blackstone was built in the shape of an “E” and all the public areas and rooms have been updated, preserving the historic touches the hotel was known for. For example, the original first floor tile was saved as well as the fantastic woodwork that is simply unavailable today. An entire new building was constructed for large events, like a 200 guest wedding party, with two stories of room above the ball room. An outdoor pool now exists, with its own pool house, which can be used for parties. Of the original two ballrooms on the top floor, only the north ball rooms survives. The south side was converted into offices and support rooms. A direct elevator connects guests with the ground level and the 7th, or top, floor. The original ceiling arches were conserved. Unfortunately, the building can no longer be called the Blackstone since the name was sold to a hotel in Chicago. The new name is the **Kimpton Cottonwood Hotel**, a nod to the naturally growing tree that grows along Nebraska’s waterways. The kitchens have all been redone, as well as the various lounges and restaurants.

Todd Lemke and Mike Wilke have made the arrangements with the new management and were able to secure the coveted 7th floor ballroom spot on Valentine’s day itself. The menu will be an updated version of the first Annual Event. The Chef is reported to be wonderful. The Omaha Branch has invited the members of the Council Bluffs Branch to join us in our 50th anniversary celebration. This has the advantage of having the expense of only one Branch event to attend should you be a member of both Branches. We have also arranged for special room prices should you want to stay overnight and experience the new hotel’s amenities. Be sure to pencil this extraordinary event onto your calendar. An invitation will be sent towards the middle of January.





**UPCOMING  
COUNCIL BLUFFS  
BRANCH EVENTS**

*Mark Your Calendars!*

**JAN.  
20**

**DANTE'S PIZZERIA**

Truffle theme

Producers:

Amanda Harrington & John Matthews

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**FEB.  
14**

**THE COTTONWOOD**

(FORMERLY THE BLACKSTONE HOTEL)

IWFS Omaha 50th Anniversary Formal Dinner

Producers: Todd Lemke & Mike Wilke

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**MAR.  
07**

**801 CHOPHOUSE  
IN THE PAXTON**

Theme: Are You a Master Somm??

Producers: Tabitha & Dave Thrasher

**HOSTING AN EVENT?**

Let us know when, where and a little bit about what's going on! We would love to include YOUR event on the calendar! **Email details to: [iwfs.councilbluffs@yahoo.com](mailto:iwfs.councilbluffs@yahoo.com)**



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*The mission of the Council Bluffs Branch of the International Wine and Food Society is to develop a profound understanding and appreciation of both wine and the culinary arts and to enjoy this experience in the camaraderie of friends. Our task is to educate our membership about wine and to develop the skill of matching wine with food. We strive to drink high quality wines and to experience an eclectic array of foods prepared by the area's top chefs.*

## *The International Wine & Food Society of London, England*

### **COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA BRANCH - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**President:** Connie Martin

**Vice President:** Dave Thrasher

**Treasurer/Membership:** Diane Forristall

**Secretary:** Tabitha Thrasher

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### **KEEP IN TOUCH!**

Please notify Club Membership Chairman Diane Forristall at [DIANE@FORRISTALL.US](mailto:DIANE@FORRISTALL.US) to let her know if you are interested in hosting an IWFS event.

**To access past Gazettes and other features about our Branch, go to the international website following this link:**

[www.iwfs.org/americas/council-bluffs](http://www.iwfs.org/americas/council-bluffs)

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