

Proprietors Scott and Marta Rich recently sent me all of their 2013 Pinot Noirs, some of which are very special, super limited, small production wines. Readers of the PinotFile know that I have been a long time fan of the Pinot Noirs produced by Talisman, not only for their individuality but also their age ability. Because of the inclusion of some whole clusters, extended post fermentation maceration, and lengthy

aging in a relatively high proportion of new French oak, the wines benefit from cellaring. The high percentage of new oak and alcohol tends to mask the terroir when the wines are young. If opened upon release, they need decanting. A quaint tasting room is located in Glen Ellen and is open Thursday through Monday from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. A personal, comparative Pinot Noir tasting experience is offered.



SCORE: **93**

2013 Talisman Red Dog Vineyard Dijon Clones Sonoma Mountain Pinot Noir

14.4% alc., pH 3.66, TA 0.62, 413 cases, \$68. Released October 1, 2016. This vineyard, planted in 2000, is located high on the northwestern flank of Sonoma Mountain at 800 feet elevation and is exposed to cool air and fog from the Pacific Ocean through the Petaluma Gap. Clones are predominantly Pommard with lesser amounts of Dijon 115 and 777. After feral fermentation, the wine underwent extended maceration before pressing and barreling. Aged 19 months in French oak barrels, 62% new. · *Moderately light reddish purple color in the glass. Aromas of black cherry, mushroom and toasty oak. Intense attack of black cherry fruit with impressive palate presence. Weight and weightlessness combined with generous intensity on the finish. The satiny texture seduces, the tannins are well integrated, and the charming cherry fruit delights. When tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle, the fruit continued to charm and the wine had opened further. This bottling needs more time in bottle to integrate the oak.*



SCORE: **92**

2013 Talisman Red Dog Vineyard Sonoma Mountain Pinot Noir

14.4% alc., 413 cases, \$56. Released May 1, 2016. Clones 115, 777 and Pommard 5. Aged 18 months in French oak barrels, 59% new. · *Moderately light reddish purple color in the glass. Aromas of black cherry, graphite and a hint of oak combine in a pleasing perfume. The mid weight flavors of black cherry, pomegranate and spice evolve slowly over time in the glass. Nicely composed, with a juicy underpinning, slightly astringent tannins, a silky texture and a modest finish. Considerably more fruit expression and finishing length the following day when tasted from a previously opened and re-corked bottle. The oak treatment is very complimentary.*



SCORE: **92**

2013 Talisman Wildcat Mountain Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., pH 3.68, TA 0.57, 164 cases, \$56. Released May 1, 2016. The highest vineyard in the appellation at an elevation of 750 feet. Vines are planted in rocky soils of volcanic origin and exposed to the full brunt of fog and cold airflow that streams off San Pablo Bay. The vineyard was established in 1998 by Nancy and Tony Lilly and their partner, winemaker Steve MacRostie. 25% whole cluster, cold soak, feral fermentation both primary and malolactic, extended post fermentation maceration, and aging 19 months in French oak barrels, 57% new. · *Moderate reddish purple color in the glass. The nose opens slowly in the glass, revealing aromas of wild berries, underbrush and forest floor. Good attack of Damsel plum, black cherry and purple berry flavors with an earthy undertone. Some drying tannins show up on the finish. Much more aromatic with more finishing power and length when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.*



SCORE: **91**

2013 Talisman Gunsalus Vineyard Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

14.6% alc., 314 cases, pH 3.67, TA 0.60, \$54. Released May 1, 2016. This vineyard, planted in 2001, is farmed by Pamela and Glen Gunsalus. It is located in the Green Valley of Russian River Valley AVA. Clones 114, 115 and 777. 30% whole cluster fermentation. 1 week cold soak, feral yeast primary fermentation, 36 days in fermenter, and aged 19 months in French oak barrels, 50% new, without racking until just before bottling. · *Moderately light reddish purple color in the glass. Hi-tone aromas of Bing cherry, strawberry and mild toasty oak lead off. Dark red fruited and mid weight in style, with complimentary oak seasoning and a vivid acid spine. Quite approachable now, with a modestly intense finish.*



SCORE: **91**

2013 Talisman Weir Vineyard Yorkville Highlands Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., 241 cases, \$65. Released October 1, 2016. Planted in 1992, this vineyard sits at 850-1000 feet elevation. Clones 2A, and Pommard, along with DRC suitcase and a Rochioli selection planted in gravelly, loamy clay. Aged in French oak barrels, 70% new. · *Moderately light reddish purple color in the glass. Aromas of cherry, forest path, dried herbs and floral bouquet. A very savory wine, with light to mid weight flavors of black cherry and black raspberry fruits dominated by flavors of herbs, eucalyptus and toasty oak. Firm, but supportive tannins, with a generous finish of some length. Still quite savory when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.*



SCORE: **90**

2013 Talisman Adastra Vineyard Los Carneros Pinot Noir

14.9% alc., 316 cases, \$56. Released October 1, 2016. This vineyard, planted in 1994 in clay loam soils, is CCOF organically certified and farmed by Chris Thorpe and Edwin Richards. Clones include 113, 115, 777, Swan, Pommard, Wädenswil 2A and suitcase selections. Aged in French oak barrels, 62% new. · *Moderate reddish purple color in the glass. Nicely perfumed with heady scents of blueberry, cherry, cola and subtle oak. An array of dark red and blue fruits are offered in a mid weight styled wine, with a muscular tannic backbone but balancing acidity. The oak treatment peaks on the finish that reveals a bit of alcoholic warmth. When tasted the following day from a previously opened and recorked bottle, there was better oak and tannin integration, more polish, but still a hint of heat on the finish.*



NV Talisman Cuvée No. 5 North Coast Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., 217 cases, \$38. Released October 1, 2016. Sourced from a few young vineyards. 25% whole cluster, feral yeast fermentation, aged 19 months in French oak barrels, 44% new. · *Moderate reddish purple color in the glass. The nose is quite giving, with bright aromas of black cherry, strawberry, forest floor and exotic spices. Forward drinking and middleweight in style, with flavors of dark red and black cherry, black berry and anise. The whole cluster has contributed good structure to the wine. Not particularly complex, but easy to like. Score: 89*