

LEGENDS OF STAG HOLLOW

as heard through the grapevine...

(mid November, 2010) Volume 14.1

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Our passion: craft distinct, individual wines that reflect the place of origin using best vineyard practices and minimal winemaking intervention.

Secure Shopping at www.staghollow.com

Connecting with Jill Zarnowitz and Mark Huff
at Stag Hollow

E-mail: staghollow@staghollow.com

Phone: 503-662-5609; Fax: 503-662-4581

Greetings from the Hollow,

There is lots of news to update since our last "Legends" newsletter a year ago. No break this vintage between wine fermentation and producing our newsletter. Last pressing of 2010 vintage grapes was on November 6 and all wines are now resting in barrel. So, a quick recap of the last three vintages is a good place to start as any.

Vintage 2010 will be remembered for the latest harvest in decades, heroic battles with hungry birds, and grape flavors that were far better than anyone had anticipated even though growing season temperatures were well below normal. Vintage 2009 wines, bottled two months ago, are showing characteristics of a warm growing season, big and rich in style. Stag Hollow will offer tastes and futures purchases from the 2009 vintage during our holiday events. Vintage 2008 is spectacular! Our 2008 Dolcetto won multiple gold medals. 2008 pinot noirs are extraordinary.

An enticing selection of pinot noirs and other varieties from 2002, 2006 through 2009 vintages await you at the Stag Hollow tasting room during our holiday events—as well as good conversation with the owners, winemaker, and friends of Stag Hollow. The wines will be served with fresh breads, and our gourmet selection of cheeses and hors d'oeuvres.

For a map to the vineyard tasting room and more detailed information, go to staghollow.com.

If you are not available on the dates of the holiday events, call or email to make an appointment (information in banner, above), and we will do our best to accommodate your schedule. We will be closed for appointments from December 22 through January 2. Take advantage of on-line holiday offerings and sales through January 15 at staghollow.com. Gift mailing is available, too.

Weekend before Thanksgiving

(Private tasting—mailing list customers)

Saturday & Sunday

November 20 & 21

Noon to 4 PM

Weekend after Thanksgiving

(Public tasting)

November 26, 27, & 28

Friday, Saturday, & Sunday

11 AM to 5 PM

First Saturday in December

(Private tasting—mailing list customers)

December 4

Noon to 4 PM

All tastings are \$10


Reimbursed with purchase of

\$60 or more per person

(Note, tastings of our 2007 *Vinnæ* pinot noir and 2008 *Field Blend* and *Muscat* are *gratis*)

Cellar Selection for Holiday Tastings

2002 Pinot Noir Reserve

Winemaker's Corner 

In selecting a cellared wine to feature for the upcoming tasting, I pondered my discussions with friends and customers on their favorite wines. This topic bubbles over with irrefutable sensory experiences. Conversations meander passionately to a select group of wines that is so special they garner "revered status". We each have our own passionate *raison d'être*. Often, a special wine is connected to a remarkable moment shared with close companions, or certain wines just deliver exceptional gratification over and over that can't be matched by other wines.

Among Stag Hollow's wines, we have favorites. Pinot noirs from the 2002 vintage, in particular, are among our most treasured. The reasons are complex, like the wines themselves. To our taste, the 2002 Stag Hollow pinot noirs consistently have shown exceptional balance and integration of fruit, depth and complexity (i.e., layers and longevity on palate), and structure (how the complex pieces fit together and age). Hitting these key wine characteristics in stride, with a sense of equilibrium and staying power is rare and hard to achieve. First and foremost, it seems that a unique set of weather conditions is necessary for such wine synergy to gel. For that fussy grape, pinot noir, conditions—simply stated—must be *not too hot or cold or wet or dry*. The 2002 and 2008 vintages fit somewhere in that nexus.

That said, much hype from the press currently surrounds the 2008 vintage of Oregon pinot noirs: “new benchmark for quality”...“best releases in years”...“like a sparkling gem”...“a knock-out”. Clearly, this is a different kind of praise than merely “excellent vintage”.

To our tastes, both 2008 and 2002 are pinot noir vintages that show parallel tracks. So, we said, why not? The unveiling of Stag Hollow’s 2008 pinot noirs has inspired us to open one of our revered wines, the 2002 *Reserve* pinot noir, to taste along with the 2008s. *Santé!*

New Releases

The Wait is Over—Futures Pick-up

2008 pinot noir futures are now available, just in time to serve with upcoming holiday festivities. Even though the Stag Hollow 2008 pinot noirs are drinking well now, they definitely would benefit from additional cellaring—and have excellent aging potential ahead.

2008 Pinot Noirs

A renowned local wine writer has a mantra-like expression that merits saying again: “vintage matters”.

Three 2008 pinot noirs, the Stag Hollow *Reserve*, *Reserve 777/114*, and *Yamhill-Carlton*, will be available for tasting and purchase at the upcoming Stag Hollow tasting events. Wines with the *Reserve* designation are our finest pinot noirs from the vintage. We offer two stylistically different reserves from the 2008 vintage.

The *Reserve*—without clone numbers—is an artful selection of wines from the best pinot noir clones of the vintage. In 2008, the clonal blend for the *Reserve* included primarily the Alsatian clone, Colmar 538, four Dijon clones, 667, 777, 114, and 115; and the Pommard clone. This is first appearance for the Pommard clone in the *Reserve*. The Pommard clone, planted in our oldest block dating back to 1990, is always held back for the *Vendange Sélection* pinot noir; however, that wine was not produced in the 2008 vintage (another story, another time). We expect the *Reserve* bottling to be our longest lived of the vintage, capable of aging 8 or more years, gaining bottled complexity and nuanced flavors over time.

Rivaling the quality of our *Reserve* is our *777/114 Reserve* pinot noir. This wine is crafted only in vintages when pinot noir Dijon clones 777 and 114 reveal exceptional characteristics, warranting a special separate reserve bottling. The last *777/114* released from Stag Hollow was from the 2005 vintage, a wine that customers continue to rave about. The 2008 *777/114 Reserve* has the depth, structure, and long-lingering finish that customers have come to expect of Stag Hollow pinots. Compared to the *Reserve*, the *777/114 Reserve* expresses more forward fruit and is intended for more near-term drinking than the *Reserve*. The wine will develop with 3 to 5 years further aging or longer.

Looking for sensibly priced high-quality reserve pinot noirs from Oregon? These two Stag Hollow Reserves* are priced

at \$39.95/btl and at the case price \$33.95/btl (193 and 97 cases were produced, respectively).

*Winemaker’s note: The 2008 Stag Hollow pinot noirs being released (described above) are gorgeous—the kind of Stag Hollow pinot noirs that you just can’t put the glass down. With our reasonable pricing, these wines should not be missed. Our first 2008 vintage customers stopped by recently to pick up their futures early because of Thanksgiving season travel conflicts. After savoring a flight of 2008 pinot noirs, they remarked, “wish we had bought more futures”.

With all the excitement about the *Reserves* let’s not forget about the 2008 *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noir. This wine is an incredible value, with remarkable depth and complexity at \$24.95/btl (15% off case price is \$21.20/btl).

On the **Sunday** before and after Thanksgiving (**November 21 and 28**) and the **first Saturday in December (4th)**, Stag Hollow will be pouring a mini-vertical tasting of the *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noirs from 2008, 2007, and 2006, showcasing the pronounced influence of “vintage” on pinot noir flavor profiles. For these **three days only**, we will be offering a special just at the tasting room on a vertical case of the *Yamhill-Carlton*, 4 bottles each of the 2008, 2007, and 2006 vintages at \$180/case (\$15/bottle!—savings of ~\$33 off the case price!!).

2009 Dolcetto (New)

Dolcetto is an Italian grape variety hailing from the Piedmont that is made into a dry, medium-bodied red that sings to be paired with food. The 2008 Stag Hollow Dolcetto has been a hit and only four cases remain. That means the 2009 Dolcetto will be released at our holiday events instead of the next spring.

The 2009 Dolcetto has some “big shoes” to fill after all the accolades received for the 2008 Stag Hollow Dolcetto. We believe that the 2009 Dolcetto will rival the much heralded ‘08—which won gold medals from the NW Wine Summit, San Francisco International Wine Competition, and was just submitted to NW Wine Press for their annual Platinum Award judging of gold medal winners. The ‘09 is a substantial Dolcetto, stylistically more in-line with our popular 2006 bottling from a warm vintage. The ‘09 shows delicious red fruits framed in a big structure.

Dolcetto should be consumed relatively young, since the variety lacks sufficient tannin needed for long-term aging. Within 5 years of the vintage date is a good rule-of-thumb for drinking dolcettos. Our estate-grown Dolcetto is hearty and accompanies a wide range of foods well, especially Italian cuisine (of course). Price of the ‘09 Dolcetto is the same as the ‘08, \$18.95/btl and \$16.11/btl in mixed or solo case. Like last year, at the upcoming private tastings (November 20 & 21 and December 4) this wine will be offered at a special early release price of \$16.95/btl and 14.40/btl at case price.

Double good news is that the new plantings of dolcetto at Stag Hollow Vineyards in 2003 and 2004 finally are bearing excellent fruit, which is reflected in the 2009 production of Stag Hollow Dolcetto, now at 168 cases, more than double the number cases in 2008.

2008 Field Blend (New)

From the proclaimed 2008 vintage comes a new *Field Blend* released in November. *Field Blend* is Stag Hollow's joyous version of an everyday country wine. The '08 is a proprietary blend of dolcetto and pinot noir, and a modest amount of lemlberger, an Austrian/German variety, as well as, chardonnay fermented with skins of red grapes. The '08 is already a house favorite, among our best *Field Blends* to date. From a vintage like 2008, the wine shows nice fruit structure, and delivers far, far more depth and complexity than you would expect from a wine in this price range. The '08 *Field Blend* sells for \$10.95/btl., and at the case price (20% off) of \$8.76/btl. Not surprising, our *Field Blend* has a loyal following because the quality and price are so darn good. The wine is sold direct-to-consumers only and is not available in retail stores. We appreciate your enthusiastic support of this wine—so, we keep making it!

2009 Pinot Noir Futures

At our holiday tastings, you'll get a sneak preview of the 2009 vintage when tasting the 2009 *Reserve*—just bottled September 28, 2010. At this young stage of development, the 2009 *Reserve* wine is impressive. Comparatively speaking, the 2009 *Reserve* is currently tracking most closely to the 2001 *Reserve*, a wine which required long aging in the bottle to come around. When the 2001 *Reserve* and *Vendange Sélection* pinot noirs finally "peaked," those wines developed a following that we still hear rave reviews from customers. In contrast to the 2006-2008 vintages, which upon release were near the ready-to-drink stage, the Stag Hollow 2009 pinot noirs seemingly will require extra time. Futures price for the '09 is once again one of the best values in the Valley at \$169/6 pk (= \$28.17/btl) and \$299/cs (= \$24.92/btl). Prices are good through January 15, 2010. Please note, these are set prices—no further discounts apply.

Of note, a small quantities of 2009 *Vendange Sélection* and 777/114 *Reserve* were also bottled in September (95 cases each). Since bottling, these wine have been very closed-in and are not ready for public tastings. This happens almost every year with the *Vendange Sélection*, as it is a wine of patience. We'll pour tastes and offer futures of the '09 *Vendange Sélection* and 777/114 *Reserve* next Memorial Day weekend.

News Update

Stag Hollow wines in Europe and...

In August, Stag Hollow co-owners, Jill Zarnowitz and Mark Huff, toured northern Germany and Alsace with "Euro" importer Bruce Graham. While in Celle, in lower Saxony, about an hour drive south of Hamburg, we hosted tastings of Stag Hollow wines at the Graham family-owned music club, Kultur Insel-Celle, managed by Bruce's brother, Alan, who performs a mix of sax, guitar, and piano at the club. Celle, a historically charming city of about 75,000, which escaped war bombings, is the base for Stag Hollow sales via the internet in the Euro-zone. Even with an internet distribution focus, Stag Hollow wines are finding their way into the retail marketplace, too,

including a terrific Italian restaurant, Santa Lucia, in the historic district of Celle, and via music-wine events organized by Alan while on tour and at the club. Jill, Mark, and Bruce also toured Alsace, and were instantly captivated by the mountainous vineyard landscapes and historic walled villages of this time-honored wine-growing region. Of note, in Alsace's largest city, Strasbourg, Stag Hollow wines are currently featured at a charming café, Au Petit Tonnelier, near the Strasbourg Cathedral.

Back at the Pacific Rim, we are exploring Asian markets, too. Stag Hollow pinot noirs were recently poured at the Hong Kong Wine and Spirits Fair. The Stag Hollow 2006 *Reserve* pinot noir was a featured wine in one of the American wine panel sessions at the Fair. Stay tuned—perhaps China is next?

2010 Vintage Chart Pinot Noir '94-'08

<u>Vintage Wine</u>	<u>Drink Range [plateau]</u>
1994 Celebré	now & beyond—still going
1995 Vendange Sélect.	now
1998 Vendange Sélect.	now & beyond
1999 Vendange Sélect.	now
2000 Vendange Sélect.	<u>now to 2014 [now]</u>
2001 Vendange Sélect.	<u>now to 2012 [08-10]</u>
2002 Vendange Sélect.	<u>now to 2013 [now]</u>
2004 Vendange Sélect.	<u>now to 2014 [2010-12]</u>
2005 Vendange Sélect.	<u>now to 2013 [2009-10]</u>
2006 Vendange Sélect.	<u>now to 2013 [2010-11]</u>
2000 Reserve	<u>now</u>
2001 Reserve	<u>now</u>
2002 Reserve	<u>now to 2012 [2007-10]</u>
2004 Reserve	<u>now to 2014 [20010-12]</u>
2005 Reserve	<u>now to 2012 [08-10]</u>
2006 Reserve	<u>now to 2012 [10-11]</u>
<u>2008 Reserve</u>	<u>2012 to 2017 [15-16]</u>
2004 Reserve-777/114	<u>now to 2013 [2010]</u>
2005 Reserve-777/114	<u>now to 2012 [2008-11]</u>
<u>2008 Reserve 777/114</u>	<u>now to 2015 [2012-13]</u>
<u>2001 Cuvée (returns)...</u>	<u>..now (delicious)</u>
2003 Cuvée	<u>now</u>
2002 Yamhill County	now
2003 Yamhill-Carlton	now
2004 Yamhill-Carlton	<u>now</u>
2005 Yamhill-Carlton	<u>now</u>
2006 Yamhill-Carlton	<u>now to 2013 [20011]</u>
2007 Yamhill-Carlton	<u>now to 2015 [20011-14]</u>
<u>2008 Yamhill-Carlton</u>	<u>now to 2014 [20011-13]</u>

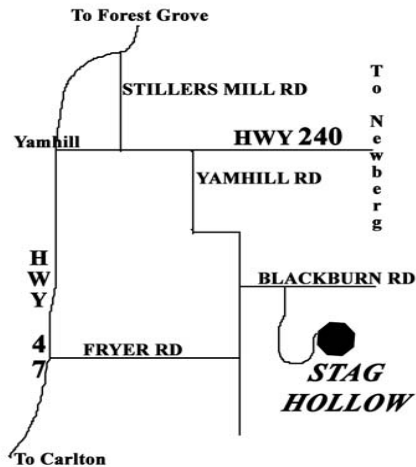
[Underlining signifies change since the previous Vintage Chart. Now refers to drinking well now. **Plateau refers to the most satisfying time period (in our opinion) to consume the wine.** Production of "Reserve" designation began in 2000. Wines that should have been consumed by now are not listed]

Wines Currently Available

Vinnae Pinot Noir—customer-direct sales only

In May, we decided to be the sole retail source in the U.S. for the Stag Hollow 2007 *Vinnae* (pronounced Vin nay), by removing this wine from the wholesale to retail distribution chain. In doing this, two layers of the

Stag Hollow
7930 Blackburn Road
Yamhill, Oregon 97148



distribution chain for this wine vanished, allowing Stag Hollow to set the wine price—rather than having to match the prices set via the layered, traditional retail system. We are pleased to now offer the 2007 *Vinnæ* as a customer-direct wine, priced at \$7.46/btl at the case price, and \$9.95 at the single bottle price. The three-tier system retail price for this wine was ~\$18.95. Needless to say, we are offering an exceptional value.

With bottle age, this wine has blossomed, as you would expect from a Stag Hollow pinot noir. By word of mouth, customers are coming back, and back for more—some for their 6th case since May! Once tasted, your search for a solid everyday pinot noir is over. The following captures what our customers have been saying: “This wine is incredible—I can’t believe the price”.

Yamhill-Carlton Pinot Noirs

Three different--vintage-driven--styles of our *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noirs are currently available (2006, 2007, and 2008 vintages). Some might be surprised to learn that the 2007 is the house favorite. When wines from Stag Hollow make their way from the tasting room to the dinner table, it's usually the 2007 *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noir that is finished first because the acidity and complex flavors of this wine are most appealing with meals. Grapes for this wine came from our warmest sites, and were harvested at full maturity, with no dilution from rainstorms that occurred later in the harvest. Both the 2007 and the 2006

Yamhill-Carlton, a big and smooth pinot noir, are on special during the Holidays at \$20.00/btl (regularly \$24.95) and 20% off at the case price of \$16.00/btl in mixed or solo cases.

2006 Reserve

From the 2006 vintage, which typically yielded rich, full-bodied wines, the *Reserve* pinot noir is currently available but our *Vendange Sélection* has sold out. The '06 *Reserve* is a hefty wine, with a collage of plum, raspberry, and blackberry, with hints of lavender. The '06 *Reserve* is currently on sale from \$39.95/btl to \$36.95. The mixed and solo case price, at 15% off, is \$31.40/btl.

2007 Field Blend—close out sale

The final 10 cases of the '07 Field Blend are on the move to make room for the '08 Field Blend. The remaining '07 Field Blend is on pre-Thanksgiving, case orders only special for \$84 (case bottle price is \$7.00 ea). Call in your order—first come...Holiday entertaining?

2008 Muscat

The 2008 Muscat is our finest dry muscat that we have to date. Made in an Alsatian style from muscat ottonel (73%) and early muscat (27%), this wine is for meant for holiday cheer and entertaining guests, and is a good match for the breadth of flavors found on holiday dinner tables. The 2008 muscat is priced at \$16.95/btl and \$14.41/btl at the mixed or solo case price.

4 *Cheers, Jill and Mark*