

LEGENDS OF STAG HOLLOW

as heard through the grapevine... (early November, 2006)

Volume 10.1

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

Greetings from the Hollow,

Now that the last of the 2006 fermenters have been drained to barrel, Stag Hollow is rolling out the red-wine carpet for the upcoming holiday season wine tastings.

Open Two Weekends

Stag Hollow is open twice a year, flanking Thanksgiving and Memorial Day holidays. We'll be greeting visitors:

On **November 24 to 25, Friday and Saturday Only, 11-5**, when Stag Hollow returns to the big bar in the historic former saloon in "downtown" Yamhill, called **Zippy's "Café"** (1 block south of State Routes 240 and 47 intersection – see cover page for map) (**Closed Sunday**)

On **Saturday, November 18**, Stag Hollow will be open **noon to 4 PM** at the **vineyard tasting room** (map to vineyard on cover page, the cover of the newsletter and directions available at www.staghollow.com under "Contact Us").

As our "library" selection for these tastings, we'll be pouring the Stag Hollow 1996 *Vendange Sélection* pinot noir, which was among the top Oregon pinot noirs from that challenging vintage. Last week, sipping the '96 lulled us back to stories of yesteryear, as recalled from the '98 newsletter:

....last winter just as our 1996 *Vendange Sélection* pinot noir was being released, the wine buried itself into a shell (of tightness) that could not be pried open with a crow bar. We looked at each other and mumbled, "if it's not ready, it's not ready; there's not much we can do about it—some are early bloomers and

some are late bloomers." ...in June[1998], the wine seemed to turn a corner, and it began emerging once again. To be sure we were not dreaming; we took the wine out for a test ride, so to speak, by entering it in the 20th anniversary Oregon State Fair wine judging. A fair test (no pun intended) considering that Fair organizers went to great lengths to recruit the most impressive portfolio of judges (and palates) ever. They included 2 master sommeliers, Catherine Fallis and Barrie Larvin; Bob Liner, previous co-owner of one of the Northwest's premier wine shops; Zelma Long of Simi winemaking fame; and Terry Robards, senior managing editor of the Wine Enthusiast Magazine.

The scuttlebutt among the wineries at the awards ceremony was about how stingy the judges were this year in handing out gold medals, only seven, period. And only one gold medal was given for pinot noir. You already know the punch line; the gold was for the 1996 Stag Hollow *Vendange Sélection*, and just missed Best of Show red by a 3-2 vote.

Well, 10 vintages later, the '96 is still inspiring stories. We look forward to sharing this wine with you at the holiday tastings.

But wait; there's much more, which rhymes with--'04. From this highly touted vintage, Stag Hollow produced some of its best wines to date, including the *Reserve, Reserve-777/114* (limited), and *Vendange Sélection* pinot noirs, and *Dolcetto Reserve* (a don't miss wine). Add to that cast, great deals on futures of 2005 *Reserve* pinot noir at ~40% savings (futures of *Vendange Sélection*, which matures at a snail's pace, will be offered on Memorial Day weekends); 2001 *Reserve* pinot noir; 2003 *Field Blend* red table wine while they last (~40 cs left), as

well as, the new 2004 dry muscat-chardonnay white table wine (*Tre Secco*); and Stag Hollow's white port (*Tre Dolce*). A three-tiered tasting is offered: (1) \$3.00, 5 value wines all under \$20.00; (2) \$5.00, includes tier (1) plus the 2005 *Reserve* pinot noir futures wine, 2001 *Reserve*, and *Dolcetto Reserve*; and (3) \$8.00, includes tiers (1) & (2) plus the 2004 and 1996 pinot noirs. Join us for these wines, delicious fresh oven baked breads, rich chocolates, and good conversation. Case purchases of the 2004 reds are 15% off; all other case purchases of current releases are 20% off.

'04s: Here Today, Gone....

Pinot Noirs!!!

Oregon's 2004 pinot noir vintage was one of the smallest grape crops ever, which gave rise to wines that, in general, are concentrated and powerful, but not over the top. On the marketplace, you will find a fair share of big, super-soft wines that are alluring and delicious for near term consumption, but are risky for aging. Stylistically, the Stag Hollow '04 pinot noirs have considerable structure that should bode well for long-term aging.

In 2004, some vineyards had problems with yellow jackets, en masse, mercilessly devouring a substantial portion of the '04 crop. These producers had to harvest certain blocks earlier than desired to cut their losses. This only complicated the crop situation, which was already short from a poor flower set and droughty conditions, by prematurely harvesting grapes that were targeted for high quality wine programs. At Stag Hollow, we were spared the (yellow jacket) wasp outbreak and its potential effect on harvest decisions. Remains of this ground-dwelling insect had been dug up and strewn throughout Stag Hollow in '04. Apparently, with plentiful wildlife habitat adjacent to the vineyard, resident natural predators, including coyotes, raccoons, and especially skunks, kept the wasps in-check.

With yields set back to under a ton per acre in 2004 at Stag Hollow, we produced some "keepers" that resemble the 1998 vintage—a favorite. Four pinot noirs were produced in 2004.

Of the two reserve designations in this vintage, the Stag Hollow *Reserve-777/114* is the most forward and Burgundian-like (to our tastes) that is showing dark cherry flavors backed by fresh toasty and vanilla nuances from 50% new French *Allier* oak barrels. We expect this limited-production wine (\$39.95/btl; \$33.95/btl at cs price) to sell out during the Thanksgiving open house, as only about 15 cases remain from earlier futures sales. The traditional 2004 *Reserve* (\$39.95/btl; \$33.95/btl at cs price), a

blend of 10 pinot noir clones, shows remarkable concentrated flavors and structure, and finishes with a long trail of spiced nuances.

In '04, Stag Hollow apparently produced another decadal-aging *Vendange Sélection* pinot noir (\$35.95/btl; \$30.55/btl at cs price). Showing substantial power and structure at this stage of its journey, the *Vendange Sélection* comes, as always, from grapes harvested in Stag Hollow's oldest vineyard block, planted in 1990. Traditionally, it's a two-clone blend Pommard (~85%) and Colmar 538 (~15%), an Alsatian clone, and matures slowest of Stag Hollow's pinot noirs. A classic!

Most of the 2004 *Yamhill-Carlton District* pinot noir production, 75 cases, has been allocated to our wholesaler for retail placement, especially fine grocers in the Portland area. We've held back a small portion for newsletter and internet sales (\$23.95/btl; \$20.35/btl at cs price). It's an excellent value on a wine selected from barrels destined for the Stag Hollow *Reserve*. Because of the minuscule production, the *Yamhill-Carlton District* pinot noir will not be poured at the upcoming Thanksgiving season tastings.

Dolcetto: Curtain Call

Since 1998, Stag Hollow has been hand-crafting wines made with the dolcetto grape, an Italian variety that Stag Hollow fans have developed quite a thirst for. Stag Hollow is one of a few Oregon producers working with this grape variety, and likely has the largest planting of this variety in the northern Willamette Valley, although small at ~3000 plants.

For the 1998 through 2002 vintages, we combined dolcetto grapes with pinot noir, adding ~15-25% to the blend. Delicious as these dolcetto-based blends have been, they were not labeled as dolcetto, *per se*, because of the 90% rule in Oregon: a wine must have 90% of a given varietal to be labeled as such (threshold for Bordeaux varietals is 75%). Stag Hollow did not make a dolcetto-based wine from the 2003 vintage, rather, the dolcetto grapes were incorporated into the 2003 *Field Blend*. Now, with the 2004 vintage, Stag Hollow debuts its first "pure" dolcetto. And, because of outstanding dolcetto character, it's a reserve!

Before we describe the 2004 Stag Hollow *Dolcetto Reserve*, it's worth noting dolcetto styles from the Piedmont motherland. These styles reflect local customs more than what the grape is capable of expressing. In the Piedmont, red wine is the beverage of meals and white wine of desserts and aperitifs (i.e., *spumante* and vermouth). Dolcetto is an early-maturing wine compared to its brawny Piedmont siblings, nebbiolo and barbera. Because of

this, one “persona” of dolcetto is a fruity, *Beaujolais* like wine, with a bit more body and structure than its French counterpart. This style is rarely exported out of the Piedmont, given that it is meant to be consumed within a year of the vintage.

The most well-known style from the Piedmont, typified by wines from the Dolcetto d’Alba appellation, is a medium bodied, rich, and hearty wine that--most importantly--is mellow. Beginning with Stag Hollow’s next dolcetto vintage, 2005, the first release of the “Yamhill-Carlton District” dolcetto at the 2007 Memorial Day weekend tastings, will parallel this style.

Lesser known from Piedmont are individualistically styled dolcettos, serious wines that can improve with modest bottle-aging, which dolcetto is capable, despite its reputation. Dolcetto made from a severely thinned crop, a warm vintage, less productive soils, and by a dedicated winemaker, can emerge as big and robust as nebbiolo (yes, it’s true), but drinkable much earlier. Historically, dolcetto has had to give ground to rivals barbera and nebbiolo on bigger-style wines because of a locally saturated marketplace. But times are changing, primarily driven by new export markets for dolcetto that are riding the wave of Italian world leadership in exporting wine. Traditionally, the most consistent producers of this style hail from a little known appellation, Dolcetto di Ovada, in the southeastern Piedmont; however, comparable producers have and are surfacing throughout the seven dolcetto appellations in Piedmont, often discovered by a vineyard designation on the label.

A reserve designation for dolcetto at Stag Hollow denotes a special vintage; wines that are concentrated and complex, akin to the best examples from the motherland. In 2004, our estate-grown dolcetto grapes hit this mark, and wow, the wine has been turning heads! The Stag Hollow *Dolcetto Reserve* alone is worth the drive to join us at the upcoming Thanksgiving tastings. Its price is \$19.95/btl and \$16.95/btl by the case. This wine, with a small, 48 case production, undoubtedly will disappear quickly!

The Aging Report

Aged another year, indeed? The Stag Hollow *Vintage Chart* is back with more wines coming on than going off the chart. To follow the progression of one or more of Stag Hollow pinot noirs, we recommend opening 1 or 2 bottles per year and tracking the evolution over a 4 to 8 year period. In lieu of that, each year we offer an updated “Vintage Chart” to assist you in deciding when to pull the corks.

Vintage Chart 94-04

2006 Stag Hollow Pinot Noir Vintage Chart

Vintage	Wine	Drink Range	[plateau]
1994	<i>Celebré</i>	now to 2008 & beyond?	
1995	<i>Celebré</i>	now (last call!)	
1995	<i>Vendange Sélection</i>	now	
1996	<i>Vendange Sélection</i>	now (last call!)	
1998	<i>Vendange Sélection</i>	now to 2010	[2006-7]
1999	<i>Vendange Sélection</i>	now to 2008	[2005-7]
2000	<i>Vendange Sélection</i>	now to 2009	[2005-7]
2001	<i>Vendange Sélection</i>	hold/now to 2011	[2008]
2002	<i>Vendange Sélection</i>	hold/now to 2011	[2008]
2004	<i>Vendange Sélection</i>	2009 to 2013	[2009]
2000	<i>Reserve</i>	now to 2009	[2005-7]
2001	<i>Reserve</i>	now to 2011	[2007-9]
2002	<i>Reserve</i>	now to 2010	[2007-8]
2004	<i>Reserve</i>	2009 to 2012	[2009-10]
2004	<i>Reserve-777/114</i>	now to 2010	[2007]
2000	<i>Cuvée</i>	now	
2001	<i>Cuvée</i>	now	
2003	<i>Cuvée</i>	now thru 2008	[2007]
2002	<i>Yamhill County</i>	now to 2008	[2006]
2003	<i>Yamhill-Carlton</i>	now	
2004	<i>Yamhill-Carlton</i>	2007 (mid) to 2010	[2008]

[Hold/now refers to drinking well now, while enhanced development in bottle is likely. **Plateau refers to the most favorable time period (in our opinion) to consume the wine.** *Celebré* name was discontinued after the 1996 when it was merged with the *Vendange Sélection*. Production of the *Reserve* designation began in 2000, when a vineyard block of new Dijon clones came into production and was allocated solely for the *Reserve* designation.]

Cellar notes. If you want to hold on to that last bottle of 1994 *Celebré*, why not? Its longevity is amazing. And, likewise for opening the 1995 *Vendange Sélection* pinot noir, which we poured for enthused tasters over the 2006 Memorial Day Weekend tasting. Once again the ’98 Stag Hollow *Vendange Sélection* showed well, this time in a star-studded line-up of international and domestic pinot noirs at an invited tasting in September. The ’98 *Vendange Sélection* was tasted alongside a few older and recent Burgundies, the likes of Pommard, Clos de Vougeot, and Gevrey-Chambertin, all retailing from ~\$150-\$300. Many of the 40 to 50 who attended, commented that the ’98 more than held its own.

The ’99 and ’00 *Vendange Sélection* and ’00 *Reserve* (first reserve) were among our favorite cellar wines that are tasting well now, and we recommend opening one or more of these wines during the holiday season (make sure they are at room temperature before serving).

2005 Futures

At Stag Hollow's Thanksgiving tastings, the '05 *Reserve* pinot noir will be unveiled for futures purchase. Bottled early this vintage, on September 26th, to preserve the vintage's fruit character, the *Reserve* has moved past the bottling shock stage and is tasting well given just seven weeks post-bottling, whereas the *Vendange Sélection* and *Reserve-777/114* pinot noirs are still too closed-in and are being deferred to the 2007 Memorial Day Weekend tastings for futures purchase.

The 2005 vintage has been a joy to work. The wines have shown surprising depth yet retain characteristics that arguably are archetypical pinot noir, a refreshing change after several very ripe vintages. In 2005, harvest of pinot noir began on October 5 in the reserve block. A few showers preceded harvest, though no soakers, which seemed to wake up the vines to complete their mission. Pinot noir achieved good color and sugars, all *Reserve* lots ranged from 23.4 to 24.6 degrees brix. In the last week, we taste tested two bottles of '05 *Reserve*, which we thoroughly enjoyed and foretells a tasty future. Notes: delicious fresh berry flavors and lots of complexity, an engaging wine that changes in the glass.

Stag Hollow is holding the line on futures prices, which is good news, even though cost of doing business is going up at every turn. Futures case price for the 2005 *Reserve* is \$24.90/btl, a 35 to 40 percent savings below retail (~\$40.00), a super value.

Current Releases & Specials

Pinot Noir

The 2001 *Reserve* pinot noirs is ready! We held this wine back to bottle age while pinot noirs from the more forward 2002 and 2003 vintages were put on the market. Aged 5 years, this wine is drinking well now and can be aged for additional development in the bottle (see *Vintage Chart*). Showing fine depth and structure, the '01 *Reserve* is on **special** for the holiday season at \$35.95/btl and **\$28.76/btl at cs price**. Gift giving ahead? Here is a terrific near-term drinking pinot noir for the holidays.

Whites

Speaking of the holidays: Company coming, or looking for that \$10.00 office gift exchange? Be adventurous with your holiday planning and entertaining this year, avoiding that last minute purchase of wine you've never tasted. Check out Stag Hollow's muscat-chardonnay blends, Tre Secco, a bone-dry Alsatian style from the 2004 vintage and a fruity version from the 2003 vintage with a crowd-pleasing hint (only 0.4%) residual sugar that livens

this unique blend of muscats (early and ottonel) and chardonnay. These wines have refreshing peach and apricot fruit flavors, infused with a muscat zing that is gewürztraminer-like. Our holiday special on these wines is \$9.95/btl (\$1.55 off) and case price at 20% discount is \$95.50 (=~\$7.95/btl).

Field blend

Field Blend is Stag Hollow's everyday, hearty country wine—a throw-back to the old days before the wine industry in general starting migrating to the mega-corporate model. Our goal with this wine is keep our loyal customers stocked with a modest-priced quaffer. To maintain a "country wine" price, the wine is sold exclusively customer-direct (not available in stores). Stag Hollow produced by far its largest quantity of *Field Blend* with the '03 vintage, about 265 cases. Being open only twice a year for sales, Stag Hollow happens to have a small quantity of '03 *Field Blend* remaining (~40 cs), which should sell out quickly. Meanwhile, the '04 *Field Blend* will make its first appearance at the Thanksgiving season. As in '03, the '04 version consists of dolcetto, lemlinger, pinot noir, and chardonnay. Admittedly, the '03 is a massive wine; the '04 comes back to earth, more on par with the tasty '02 *Field Blend*. The '03 and '04 *Field Blends* each are \$10.95/btl and \$8.76/btl!!! at cs price.

Cheers, Jill & Mark (2 thumbs up for the '06 vintage)

STAG HOLLOW 2005 PINOT NOIR

FUTURES-OUTSTANDING VINTAGE

☛ **No further case discount - Released fall '07** ☚

'05 PINOT NOIR

➤ **12 bottle pack 2005 Reserve pinot noir (750 ml) @\$299 (equals bottle price: ~\$24.90)**
\$ _____

➤ **6 bottle pack 2005 Reserve pinot noir (750 ml) @\$169 (equals bottle price: ~\$28.15)**
\$ _____

Shipping & Handling \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

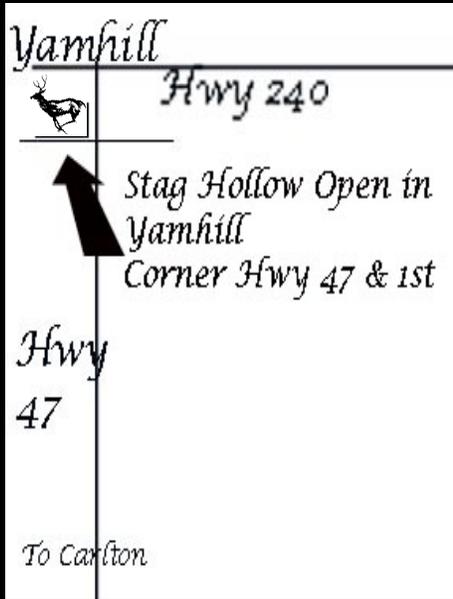
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'05 Stag Hollow pinot noir futures prices good - 12/31/07

STAG HOLLOW

2005 Holiday Season Wine Tastings CELEBRATION



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MAP TO STAG HOLLOW
Nov. 18 2006; Noon – 4 PM

