

LEGENDS OF STAG HOLLOW

As heard through the grapevine...

(November, 2015) Volume 18.3

Contents

Tastings on Three Weekends

Futures on 2014 Vendange Selection & Reserve

Vin Vintages

New, Recent, and Current Releases

Vintage Chart

Connecting with Stag Hollow

E-mail: staghollow@staghollow.com

Phone: 503-662-5609

Facebook.com/staghollowwines

www.staghollow.com

*Open for public tastings Labor Day,
Thanksgiving, and Memorial Day Weekends*

Thanksgiving-Holiday Season Tastings

Join us at Stag Hollow Wines for one of six tastings during the Thanksgiving holiday season:

Weekend before Thanksgiving

(Private tastings--mailing list customers)

Saturday & Sunday*

November 21 & 22*

Noon to 4 PM

**offered for those who prefer smaller gatherings*

Weekend after Thanksgiving

(Public tastings)

November 27 & 28

Friday & Saturday, 11 AM to 5 PM

November 29

Sunday, Noon to 4 PM



First Saturday in December

(Private tasting--mailing list customers)

December 5

Noon to 4 PM

**All
tastings
are
\$10.**

Tasting fee reimbursed with purchase of \$75 or more per person

Map, directions, or other information about Stag Hollow and its wines can be accessed at **Staghollow.com**. At these tasting events, Stag Hollow will offer tastes and purchases of the following:

- o **2005 Vendange Sélection pinot noir.**
- o **Mini vertical of Vendange Sélection pinot noirs:** 2005, 2011, and 2014.
- o **Futures:** 2014 *Reserve* and *Vendange Sélection* pinot noirs
- o **New/recent releases:** 2010 *Yamhill Villages* pinot noir and 2013 *Dolcetto Rosato*.
- o **Sampling of current releases:** Close-out sale of *Field Blend--Oregon Special Selection* (red blend of 2010 and 2009 vintages), 2012 *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noir, 2012 *Dolcetto*, and 2009 *777/114 Reserve*.

Owner of **Chocolates by Bernard**, LaQuita Corbett-Martin, will offer **chocolate truffle-making demonstration and samples** on Sunday, November 29. **Christmas gifts on sale:** Exquisitely handcrafted Red Rooster wooden pepper mills, and spice and coffee grinders priced 25% off.

Greetings, and woof, woof, woof...and more woofs from the Hollow.

Indeed, Brix, our two-year old golden lab has made a hasty judgment about our new neighbor who arrived this fall. According to Brix, the neighbor is annoying and should move somewhere else, now; and, he is not shy about saying so. Woof.

During his walks the tempranillo block has become the new territorial line to defend: Way to go Brix to protect Stag Hollow grapes! Though we rarely question Brix's incessant instincts (like best time to play ball: all the time), this is clearly one instance that we believe the pooch's judgment of neighborly character is not in line with our values because we believe two grey foxes taking up residence in our vineyard and surrounding wooded wildlife sanctuary is awe-inspiring.

Our new resident is a beauty, furred with ashy to coppery-brown tones and a classic bushy black-tipped tail. Though secretive, this grey fox has been spotted hunting for mice along our riparian area below the muscat block by the entrance to Stag Hollow, as well as near the tempranillo along the long hill climb to tasting room. Be on the look out for this magnificent mammal when you visit Stag Hollow during the holiday tastings.

2014 Vintage Futures

Rarely does Stag Hollow have a vintage trifecta, that is when all three reserve level wines are produced: the *777/114 Reserve*, *Reserve*, and *Vendange Sélection*. It's rare because our standards for quality and consistency are challenging to achieve for all three wines in one vintage. Only two trifecta vintages have occurred to date, 2004 and 2005; and, some vintages no reserve-level pinot noirs were produced: 1997, 2007 and 2013. So, eight vintages have passed since all three reserve-level wines were made; finally the trio is back in 2014, in spades.

During the Memorial and Labor Day weekend events earlier this year, we poured barrel-sample tastes and sold futures of the Stag Hollow *777/114* pinot noir. Futures purchase of this wine concluded in September. Next up are the 2014 *Vendange Sélection* and *Reserve* pinot noirs, which will be offered at the upcoming Thanksgiving-Holiday Season Tastings.

Bottled in late September, the 2014 *Vendange Sélection* and *Reserve* were tasted for the first time as a finished wine in early November. It took only one sip and we were beaming from ear to ear. These pinot noirs are big, rich, yet balanced, and are remarkably approachable as young wines. Our 2014 pinot noirs are tracking similar to 2002s, one of our best vintages for pinot noir and one that was drinkable upon release, and aging beautifully for more than a decade.

The 2014 vintage is an astounding one for Stag Hollow. Astute buyers of Stag Hollow wines know from experience that the best time to purchase our reserve-level wines is during our futures offerings when prices are set below wholesale rates. Stag Hollow's futures price for the 2014 *Reserve and Vendange Sélection* pinot noirs is \$192 @ 1/2 case (\$32.00/btl) and \$348 @ full case (\$29.00/btl). These prices will be available through January 15, 2016. The wines will be released in November 2016.

Vin Vintages

Ever ponder what is the most defining characteristic of Oregon wines? We have. Perhaps making pinot noir from Oregon grapes for 30 vintages inspires such reflective moments, or more likely just sipping the wine....

Well, Oregon has flavor mojo that California's famous wine grape regions lack: distinct differences in wines between vintages. The reason for this is that Oregon is on the edge of where wine grapes, especially red varieties, can grow and reliably be crafted into quality wines. Grape-growing regions throughout the world that are on the edge have wide climate oscillations between years that are more pronounced than milder, warmer climates (ever hear someone from California proclaim: "winter is coming").

Okay, what does that mean for wine? Climate swings between years are the underpinnings of intrigue in wine. Wines from idyllic climates, in general, are consistent and solid yet show little variation between vintages from the same producer. Once you know the plot, there is no mystery, whereas wines produced in areas with precipitous fluctuations in climate between years take on flavors that are diverse, distinct and engaging between vintages.

Take for example the 2008, 2010, and 2012 vintages from Oregon. These vintages are heralded as spectacular for pinot noir, yet for strikingly different reasons climatically. The flavor characteristics and styles of pinot noirs from these vintages are so different that it's hard to deduce that they come from the same wine growing region.

For Oregon, climate variability is a defining characteristic of its wines, however keeping track of differences between vintages can be challenging. To help sort this out, we've come up with a thumbnail sketch of pinot noir vintages since 2005 at Stag Hollow. A qualifying note, we developed

this information from memory to meet our newsletter deadline and future modifications are likely.

Year	Climate	Weather and Wine Perspectives
2015	Hot vintage, among the warmest to date	Very early bud break followed by a hot spring and summer. NW Oregon broke the record for the most days over 90 degrees, nearly broke the record for most consecutive days over 90 degrees and over 80 degrees, and there were plenty of days over 100. By strategically leaving a crop about 20% larger than normal, we delayed harvest to mid to late September and thus achieved mature grape flavors with balanced sugars. Wines appear to be very high quality.
2014	Relatively hot	A long streak of days above 80 degrees in July and August, but low number of days over 90 degrees and none over 100. Despite the warm year, the wines are balanced, early maturing, with excellent depth and complexity.
2013	Relatively hot, but wet	Typhoon laced storm descended on NW just before harvest. Wines are lighter-bodied, though flavors are complex; Burgundian in style that needs bottle aging.
2012	Warm & dry vintage; not too hot	An impressive streak without rain, exceeding 100 days, intensified fruit flavors that yielded big plush, crowd-pleasing wines.
2011	Cold vintage	Cool weather in spring & summer; vintage was saved by a warm September and dry and cool October. Latest harvest ever, starting the last week of October. Wines have fresh berry character, complex, body lighter than most vintages, and relatively high acid levels, making wines that pair well with meals.
2010	Cold & wet spring, warm & dry summer, & cold harvest, translated into a cooler vintage	Cool vintage delaying harvest until mid October. Grapes were harvested at higher sugar level than 2011, and while showing cool vintage attributes the wines are more expansive, though less fruit-driven than 2011. Exceedingly slow to mature.
2009	Hot vintage	Long hot summer that set record for the most days above 90 degrees until 2015 re-set the record. As the grapes matured, sugars raced way ahead of flavors; as a consequence, grapes were held on the vine until preferred flavors developed. Wines are rich and silky textured and surprisingly balanced considering the higher than normal alcohol level.
2008	Goldilocks vintage, not too hot and not too cold	Perfect weather conditions for growing the sensitive pinot noir grape brought forth some of the most compelling and unique flavor profiles of any vintage. Wines have matured very slowly and are just now reaching their full potential and complexity.
2007	Warm vintage with	The vintage broke a streak of high-quality vintages dating back to 1998. A cool and

Year	Climate	Weather and Wine Perspectives
	cool, wet harvest	damp harvest season produced medium-bodied pinots with higher tannin extraction than usual. Wines were tight and closed in their youth that, as many found out, only needed extended bottle aging to bring forth engaging, complex, and appealing characteristics.
2006	Hot vintage	A very hot summer and fall bestowed huge pinot noirs, with bold and rich flavors that have been very pleasurable to drink. Should we fret that the flavor profiles are uncharacteristic of pinot noir? Think not.
2005	Warm, dry vintage, with needed rain storms before harvest	Many climatic comparisons have been made of the warm dry spring in 2015 with similar conditions in 2005. From our perspective, pinot noir thrived in the climate conditions of 2005. Two significant rains in September after a droughty summer enliven the vines as harvest approached. The conditions were near perfect for Stag Hollow pinot noirs. The wines from 2005 are one of the most treasured in our cellar.

Most Frequent Question?

When can the 2014 tempranillo futures wines be picked up? In Rioja, Spain's most famous wine region for tempranillo, their *reserva* and *gran reserva* wines have to be aged for 4 and 5 years, respectively, before they can be released. Our *reserva* styled tempranillo from Stag Hollow was bottled in September, spending just one year in barrel, unlike the Rioja *reserva* wines that are required to barrel age for 2-3 years.

Breaking from the traditions of Spain, our Stag Hollow tempranillo will be labeled later this winter and released in May, in time for the 2016 Memorial Day weekend tastings. The 2014 Stag Hollow estate tempranillo is sensational. Those that bought futures of this wine at \$20/bottle have won the wine lottery. Tastes and futures purchases of our 2015 vintage tempranillo will be available next May during the Memorial Day weekend tastings. Vintage II of Stag Hollow tempranillo from the warm 2015 vintage is looking very promising. With two more barrels of tempranillo in 2015 than 2014 (only one barrel produced), sales should be more widely available to our customers than last year when we sold out quickly.

New/Recent Releases

In 2015, we initiated a new set of Stag Hollow tasting events, a pre-harvest celebration, occurring around the Labor Day holiday weekend. With one of the earliest harvests on record looming, we scaled back our tastings this year to be open just one day. At that one-day tasting, we introduced two new wines, the 2013 Dolcetto *Rosato* and 2010 Yamhill *Villages* pinot noir.

Dolcetto Rosato. The 2013 Stag Hollow Dolcetto *Rosato* is a dry-styled *rosé* (i.e., zero residual sugar). The wine has lively strawberry aromas and flavors

on the palate. It's crisp, refreshing, that is *meant to accompany food* (contrasted with rosés made in a summer sipping style that are slightly sweet). With a modest level of alcohol at 10.5%, the wine pairs with a broad range of rich-flavored foods, especially cheeses. The Stag Hollow Dolcetto *Rosato* is sold direct-to-consumers at a terrific everyday price, \$11.00/btl and \$9.35/btl at case price.

2010 Yamhill Villages Pinot Noir. The Yamhill *Villages* pinot noir is a new pinot noir for Stag Hollow that is destined for everyday enjoyment; similar to what a *Bourgogne* is in Burgundy. Our intent with making the *Villages* designation is to offer our valued customers an alternative to the highly manufactured wines in the everyday price range.

Yamhill *Villages* pinot noir is a limited-production wine crafted in the same style as all our pinot noirs. For this wine, we are sourcing pinot noir that traditionally would have been part of the Yamhill-Carlton "designation" and the Field Blend. Our first Yamhill *Villages* pinot noir offering is the 2010. This aged pinot noir is a clonal blend, as with most Stag Hollow pinots, with about 60% coming from the Pommard block. This structure-driven pinot noir has plenty of substance for a wine in a *Bourgogne* price range. The Yamhill *Villages* pinot noir is priced at \$15.00/btl and \$12.75/btl at case price.

Given the limited production of the 2010 Yamhill *Villages*, we are selling the wine customer-direct from Stag Hollow. The 2011 Yamhill *Villages* pinot noir is available through retail stores and restaurants beginning in December.

Current Releases

A Ho-Ho-Ho Inventory Close-out Sale of Field Blend.

Stag Hollow's current release of *Field Blend* is a blend of grapes from the 2010 and 2009 vintages. The wine has our proprietary blend of pinot noir, dolcetto, and chardonnay (fermented together) from the 2010 vintage. To this blend we added 2009 Oregon Columbia Gorge Syrah (20%), primarily to accentuate color and provide additional body. This direct to customer wine (i.e., not available at retail stores) is on sale for the holiday tastings sale at \$10.00/btl (\$12.00 reg. price) and full case price is at 25% off (!!), \$90.00/case (\$7.50/btl) and in a mixed case 15% off.

The next release of Field Blend, the 2012, is waiting in the wings. This wine will be labeled the day before Thanksgiving, and potentially will be available sometime during the holiday tastings when inventory of the current release is sold out. The 2012 Field Blend, a big, dark, version is priced at \$13.95/btl. (\$11.85/btl by the case).

2012 Yamhill-Carlton Pinot Noir. The 2012 Stag Hollow Yamhill-Carlton pinot noir is just beginning to show up on retail shelves in Oregon, including Fred Meyer, New Seasons, Zupans, and other retail outlets. The 2011 Stag Hollow Yamhill-Carlton pinot noir is sold out. Washington

State residents, we are working on finding a new distributor.

Our *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noir is our most popular wine in retail markets. Once the *Yamhill-Carlton* bottling is widely available at stores locally we usually phase-out pouring the *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noir at our holiday events to focus on smaller production Stag Hollow wines that are less commonly found in the marketplace. We are making an exception for the 2012 *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noir.

The 2012 *Yamhill-Carlton*, which recently won two gold medals, tastes so good we felt that our customers should taste this one more time. Since its debut at our Thanksgiving season holiday tastings last year, it has evolved more complex flavors. Poured at a recent tasting event in Portland, one taster's comment summed it well: "the Stag Hollow *Yamhill-Carlton* is better than most Oregon reserve 2012 that cost twice the price." The 2012 vintage is a barrel selection of nine clones of pinot noir, featuring Pommard, 777, 114, 115, and 667 clones and was barrel aged in 2 to 4 year-old and neutral French and Oregon oak barrels. The 2012 *Yamhill-Carlton* pinot noir is an excellent value at \$25/btl and \$255/case (\$21.50/btl at 15% case discounts in solo or mixed cases).

2012 Dolcetto. The 2012 Stag Hollow Dolcetto has been one of our most popular wines in the tasting room this summer. It is one of our most full-flavored and complex dolcetto wines to date, and is almost gone. Once again, our dolcetto was among the favorites at the August *Italy In The Valley* festival held in Carlton, Oregon. We pair this wine with hearty Italian cuisine, especially pasta dishes. The 2012 Dolcetto is priced at \$22/btl; case price @ 15% off is \$18.70/btl in mixed or solo case.

Mini-Vertical "Vendange Sélections"

At the upcoming Holiday tastings, we'll feature a mini vertical of *Vendange Sélection* pinot noirs from the 2005, 2011, and 2014 (futures) vintages, highlighting our cellar selection from 2005. When this wine was initially released, Mark commented, "the '05 pinot noirs are by far the most surprising to date in terms of unexpected high quality." Two rainstorms occurred before our pinot noir was harvested, giving way to some uncertainty about how the wines would turn out. The '05 *Vendange Sélection* pinot noir, like most vintages, evolved more slowly compared to the two *Reserve* bottlings. The '05 *Vendange Sélection* has old-world style that emphasizes structure-driven complexity with a long spice finish. The 2011 *Vendange Sélection* also captures structural complexity but at a lower ripeness and is an interesting match for 2005. The 2005 is priced at \$105/btl, with no further discounts for this wine in case lots or for retail trade (limit one per person). The 2011 is priced at \$40.00/btl and \$34/btl in solo or mixed case lots.

Chocolate

Bypassing the larger gatherings of wine tasters on the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving just got tastier. On Sunday, November 29, please join us for a special guest appearance of LaQuita Corbett-Martin owner of Chocolates by Bernard of Lake Oswego. LaQuita, who just happens to be passionate about chocolate and Stag Hollow wines (and was among those who helped on the 2015 harvest at Stag Hollow) will offer a chocolate truffle-making demonstration and samples. Not to be missed!

Vintage Chart Update

Normally the next vintage would be updated in our vintage chart. However reserve wines were not produced from 2013 vintage and 2014 needs one more year of bottle aging and tastings before adding to the chart. Our recommendations for the holidays include any of our 2004s and 2005s, if you have any, and 2008s, and 2009s, especially the *777/114 Reserve*.

2015 Vintage Chart--Pinot Noir 1994-2012

<u>Vintage</u>	<u>Wine</u>	<u>Drink Range</u>	<u>[plateau]</u>
1994	Celebré	now & beyond	—still going
1998	Vendange Sélect.	now & beyond	(delicious)
1999	Vendange Sélect.	now & beyond	(delicious)
2000	Vendange Sélect.	<u>now</u>	
2001	Vendange Sélect.	<u>now</u>	
2002	Vendange Sélect.	<u>now</u>	
2004	Vendange Sélect.	<u>now</u>	
2005	Vendange Sélect.	now to <u>2017</u>	[2009-16]
2006	Vendange Sélect.	now to <u>2017</u>	[2010-15]
2010	Vendange Sélect.	<u>2017 to 2025</u>	[evolving slowly]
2011	Vendange Sélect.	2015 to <u>2020</u>	
<u>2012</u>	<u>Vendange Sélect.</u>	2016 to <u>2022</u>	
2000	Reserve	now	
2001	Reserve	now	
2002	Reserve	now	
2004	Reserve	now	
2005	Reserve	<u>now</u>	
2006	Reserve	now	
2008	Reserve	2013 to <u>2020</u>	
2009	Reserve	2013 to <u>2018</u>	[14-17]
2010	Reserve	2013 to <u>2018</u>	[?]
2011	Reserve	2014 to <u>2020</u>	
<u>2012</u>	<u>Reserve</u>	2016 to <u>2022</u>	
2004	Reserve-777/114	now	
2005	Reserve-777/114	<u>now</u>	
2008	Reserve 777/114	now to <u>2017</u>	
2009	Reserve 777/114	now to <u>2019</u>	
2006	Yamhill-Carlton	now	
2008	Yamhill-Carlton	now to <u>2018</u>	[2011-16]
2009	Yamhill-Carlton	now to <u>2017</u>	[2014-16]
2011	Yamhill-Carlton	now to <u>2017</u>	[2014-16]
<u>2012</u>	<u>Yamhill-Carlton</u>	<u>now to 2020</u>	[2015-17]

[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]

Cheers, Jill and Mark