

Le Cadeau Vineyard – by Josh Reynolds

Tom and Deb Mortimer bought this high-altitude vineyard on Parrett Mountain close to Newberg in 1996 and after almost two years of brush- and rock-clearing had a soil scientist/researcher tell him that he had four distinct terroirs, each of which was capable of producing a different expression of pinot noir. "Being a wine geek," Mortimer told me, "I couldn't resist the chance to have four different wines made." Taking it a step further, he also decided to have each block made by a different winemaker; in past vintages his wines have been made by the likes of Harry Peterson-Nedry (of Chehalem), Josh Bergstrom, Sam Tannahill (A to Z) and Isabelle Dutartre (De Ponte and 1789). Mortimer gives the winemakers free rein so it isn't easy to nail down a particular style here aside from noting that the wines have been of consistently high quality from the outset. These '08s, as a group, really deserve some patience.

2008 Le Cadeau Vineyard Pinot Noir Cote Est Willamette Valley

92-points: Bright violet. Highly aromatic bouquet of black raspberry, dried rose, Asian spices and white pepper. Deeply pitched dark berry flavors gain vivacity with aeration, picking up notes of cinnamon and rose pastille. Finishes with excellent clarity and nervy, spicy persistence. Lots going on already but this showy wine is also balanced to age. This wine was made by Steve Ryan, formerly of Martinelli Vineyards in Sonoma and now at Mendocino Farms.

2008 Le Cadeau Vineyard Pinot Noir Diversite Willamette Valley

91-points: Vivid ruby. Powerful aromas of black raspberry, cherry-cola, woodsmoke and Indian spices. Lively but also deep in dark fruit flavors, with a supple texture and good back-end lift. Very expressive today, with strong finishing cut and a lingering note of sweet mocha. Scott Shull of Raptor Ridge made this wine.

2008 Le Cadeau Vineyard Pinot Noir Equinoxe Willamette Valley

92(+?)-points: Bright ruby. Deep, pungent aromas of cherry, black cardamom, violet and spicecake. Initially rather brooding but gains energy with air and picks up a brighter raspberry quality, along with a hint of candied rose. A zesty mineral quality kicks in on the back half and adds lift and precision to the long, spicy, seductively sweet finish. Give this some air or hold onto it for at least another three or four years. Made by Jim Sanders, who is Mortimer's partner in Aubichon Cellars.

2008 Le Cadeau Vineyard Pinot Noir Rocheux Willamette Valley

92(+?)-points: Full red. The darkest of this set on the nose, slowly opening up to display dark berry and cherry pit scents, along with notes of dried rose, licorice and smoky herbs. Rich but surprisingly lively on the palate, offering sweet dark fruit flavors and good back-end cut. A dense and gutsy pinot that finishes with solid grip and sneaky sweetness. This one demands patience. Jacqueline Yoakum, who formerly worked at Littorai in California, made this wine.

2008 Le Cadeau Vineyard Pinot Noir Serendipity Willamette Valley

92(+?)-points: Deep, bright ruby. Sexy, wild aromas of crushed dark berries, spicecake, dried flowers and underbrush. Then broad, plush and silky, with impressive volume to the smoky red and dark fruit flavors. This seamless, high-toned wine has serious stuffing and finishes sweet and very long, with a touch of warmth and a persistent mocha quality. This is mostly Pommard clone, balanced with some Dijon clones and fermented with 15% whole clusters. Made by Tony Rynders, formerly of Domaine Serene.

2008 Le Cadeau Vineyard Pinot Noir Equinoxe [Reserve] Willamette Valley

93-points: Saturated ruby. Flamboyant, highly expressive scents of red and dark berry preserves, smoky Indian spices, cola and incense, with sexy vanilla and sassafras notes adding complexity. Lush, velvety and deep, with candied rose and violet notes coming up with air to join the sweet, oak-spiced blackberry and boysenberry flavors. A very suave, palate-coating pinot that manages to be both exotic and focused, and offers excellent aging potential. This two-barrel selection was raised in 100% new oak.