Our Estate vineyard is one of the coldest vineyards in California growing Syrah. When we purchased the property we were concerned that we would not be able to ripen Pinot noir, much less Syrah. But due to our dry October weather, we have an additional month to ripen our grapes in comparison to other typical Syrah growing regions of the world. It is true October days are shorter and daytime highs rarely exceed 75 degrees, yet these qualities lead to longer hang time that imprints our Syrah with characteristics that speak of our place. In warm climates, Syrah often expresses its darker berry, fruitier, softer personality, emphasizing lushness and soft mouth-feel over the floral tones and notes of minerality, game, leather and pepper found in cooler climate Syrah. To be sure, there is plenty of fruit in our Syrah to balance out these cool climate characteristics though our Syrah will evolve in complexity as these aromas arise and recede over the course of a bottle as well as the wine’s life in your cellar. In 2004, two unique expressions of cool climate Syrah led Vanessa to create separate Estate blends of less than 400 cases each. She explains further her decision to make two cuvées in her article on page 2. These are stellar wines. 2004 was truly a magnificent vintage for us. Enjoy.

2004 Peay Vineyards La Bruma Estate Syrah 320 Cases

The 2004 La Bruma Estate Syrah captures the floral notes and classic fruit-driven aromas that were the hallmark of the 2003 Estate Syrah. Both 2004 blends share the Estrella, 174 and UCD1 clones as their base though La Bruma also includes a few barrels from our planting of clone 470. La Bruma (“the mist or fog”) pays tribute to the role fog plays in producing our unique microclimate. The nose of the 2004 La Bruma is dramatic. Aromas of violets, lavender, and black cherry coalesce around a firm and focused mineral core. The nose carries through on the palate with a burst of red and black fruits highlighted by already well-integrated brown spice aromas from time spent in barrel. The mid-palate reveals a touch of the black pepper common to cooler climate Syrah. The tannins on the finish are soft and the finish is very long with just the right amount of acidity to ensure a long life and a complementary role with food. La Bruma is for those who seek the classic expressions of Syrah. Although La Bruma is approachable in its youth, the wine will gain further complexity and the various elements will integrate with more time in the bottle. If you try one now decant for at least 45 minutes and hold the rest for 3-7+ years.

2004 Peay Vineyards Les Titans Estate Syrah 375 Cases

Though it shares some of the floral and fruit characteristics of the 2004 La Bruma Estate Syrah, the 2004 Les Titans Estate Syrah emphasizes the meatier, gamier, dare I say, more masculine side of Syrah. Both blends share the Estrella, 174 and UCD1 clones as their base though Les Titans also includes a significant portion of a Côte Rôtie selection that contributes much of the black pepper and game to the blend.

The cuvée name, Les Titans (“the Giants”), refers to two enormous and ancient redwood trees left by loggers over 100 years ago that flank the blocks of Syrah. The nose of the 2004 Les Titans is lifted with shifting, meaty, dark aromas taking turns with floral and fruit notes. On the nose and palate aromas of charcuterie, black pepper, leather and game play a leading role that is bolstered by red and black cherry and a hint of blueberry. As the wine opens, Les Titans reveals its strength and virility. The tannins are firm but round, the acidity is medium and the finish is quite long. Les Titans is approachable in its youth, with significant decant time, though the wine will gain further complexity if you age it in your cellar for 3-7+ years.
This past spring I presented at a seminar at Hospice du Rhône, a weekend event that showcases the myriad Rhône variety wines sourced from all over the world. It is a terrific weekend where primarily wine enthusiasts converge to taste, talk and revel for 3 days in the world of Syrah and its Rhône kith and kin. A couple of weeks before the event, I was piecing together what I would say about growing Syrah on the cold northern Sonoma Coast, when John Alban, if not the godfather of Syrah in California, the elder statesman at least, called to check up on me. John, who is the pioneering winegrower behind Alban Vineyards in Edna Valley, was the organizer and moderator for the seminar at the Hospice du Rhône. He called mainly to reassure me that even though the seminar was in front of a crowd of 400 thirsty wine lovers, I was going to do just fine. Further, contrary to my worst fears, I did not have to worry that it was going to turn out to be the wine version of American Idol where he would acridly tell me that I was the winemaking equivalent of the ebola virus and vote me off the stage.

When I asked John what he planned to ask us at the seminar, he demurred. John didn’t want us to be too rehearsed. He felt that the spontaneity would actually aid in dispelling any nervousness we might have. Seemingly to prove his point, in the middle of chatting about the seminar and the wines I planned to pour, John fired, “If you had to pick only 5 albums to bring with you to a deserted island, what would they be?” (Apparently on this deserted island i-Pods are outlawed). Feeling a tad blindsided by this line of inquiry, I stammered and then blurted out, “something by Jimi Hendrix,” the elastic bom-bom bwang strains of Foxey Lady twanging in my head. As I tried to recall the name of the album that featured Foxey Lady, John replied hesitantly, “…Uh…that’s cool.” His response showed signs of a little surprise. I could tell that he was enjoying this mildly tortuous exercise. Feeling the pressure of the proverbial buzzer at hand and with no life-line to cast out to friends, I tried to stall for a moment, “Gosh, only five albums, that’s hard…” “What else?” John shot back, insistently. “Err…umm…Beethoven!” “Well,” John cleared his throat, “That’s…uh… an interesting combination of choices.” I explained, “Well, I have this CD of Pablo Casals playing Beethoven’s cello sonatas and I literally listen to it over and over again.” It is true, it is the only CD I burned onto the hard drive of my laptop so that I can listen to it whenever I work on the computer. In particular, I adore the Scherzo of the Sonata No. 3 in A Major, Opus 69. It mesmerizes me. I was still stumbling for three more albums, though. I was completely stumped, oddly no other ideas came to me as naturally as the first two did. I told John I would have to go through my albums to come up with an answer. Pleased at his parlour game, John said “That’s all right and you’ll do just fine at the seminar, don’t worry.” And with that, our phone call concluded.

A few days later when I was walking through the vineyard I revisited my conversation with John. I recalled how I described to him that in the 2004 vintage I made two different Estate cuvées for the Syrah. I explained to him that the different blends weren’t really differentiated by particular Syrah clones. Nor were they sourced from different vineyard blocks. They were not two radically different styles of Syrah as they were two expressions of our one vineyard. I attempted to describe how they were different from one another: La Bruma, a classically styled Syrah perfumed with red fruits and floral notes and, Les Titans with deeper, black fruit character and meatier, brooding aromas hung on a more muscular frame. It was at that moment that John sprang his seemingly non-sequitur Deserted-Island-Record question at me. Was his question a musical version of a Rorschach Ink Blot test; some kind of subconscious free association hypnotism? It suddenly occurred to me that the first two answers I impulsively blurted out were a reflection of the thread that was already running in my head. These two seemingly incongruent musical choices were analogous to the two wines I was trying to find words to describe. Although bold and definitely raucous, at its core the music of Jimi Hendrix is a display of precise musicality. Yet, it is also brooding, primal and seductive like Les Titans. At the very mention of classical music, one imagines straight backs, hushed tones, and calm oases. The idea of Pablo Casals playing Beethoven’s cello sonatas may seem decorous but when listening to him you are enveloped by the passion of his playing; it is voracious and extremely moving. Like La Bruma, the structure and composition is very composed and pretty but it sings with a striking intensity and focus.

The revelation made me gasp. John Alban is not only a winemaker but also a psychoanalyst, no, wait, a wino-analyst, drawing out the inner workings of my mind! Wow, heavy. So heavy that I don’t think even John knew it. And let’s not tell him either (analyst/patient confidentiality thing, you know). But since we are so freely and heavily

Continued on page 4
HILLSIDE FARMING:
THE HIGHS, THE LOWS, AND THE STEEP IN-BETWEENS
-WINEGROWER NICK PEAY

So, I’m sitting here in the trauma ward, hopeful that today Dr. Flores will send me home. I mean, all they’re doing is monitoring me. Blood pressure: 126 over 77. Heart rate: 82 bpm. Hemoglobin levels: normal. All my vital statistics are normal. True, there is a little blood around the lower part of my lung, and yes, the CT scan revealed a list of interior damage: lacerated kidney, torn spleen, cracked ribs, cracked lateral wings of a vertebrate. But so long as I’m not bleeding internally, and a drop in blood pressure would show that, there’s nothing to be done but to keep still. I can do that in my bed or on my couch at home! Here, I’m subjected to a guy hacking up a lung in the bed next to me for hours on end. Argh.

Okay, I wasn’t wearing the seat belt when I rolled my tractor. Even though it has a roll bar behind the driver’s seat, I fear being crushed under the tractor with my seat belt on. I was surprised when I realized the tractor was rolling. I had let my guard down: one of the sections of the newer blocks has pretty steep sloping turnarounds at the row ends and usually I am quite cautious when making turns there. In this cautious state, moving very slowly, I’m usually prepared to hop off if the tractor begins to roll. This happened once before, when the tires of our bigger – more stable - tractor found a hidden ditch in the tall grass and rolled onto its side. I was able to exit quite leisurely as the roll took place very slowly.

This time, I was driving our smaller and tipper tractor and a sequence of avoidable events caught me off guard. I instinctively headed over the back of the tractor. I remember lying on my back on the ground and watching the tractor roll bar head for my midsection. So much soft flesh was pressed into the ground by this steel bar. As quickly as one’s mind works, I considered the likelihood of snapping my spine, of paralysis, as the tractor rolled over me. After the tractor passed, I fished in my pocket for my cell phone to call an ambulance to retrieve my rag doll body. At that moment, to my delight, I discovered that I had full sensation in both legs. No paralysis after all! I put my phone away, stood up, and walked over to the tractor to turn off the still running motor.

I’ve always felt that hillsides and hilltops are the best sites for quality grape growing. A quick perusal of the vineyards of Côte Rôtie and Hermitage in the Northern Rhône as well as the various vineyards of Germany and Austria appear to support this contention. I could attempt to construct a general rule that thinner top soil leads to greater vine stress and when combined with slopes provides better drainage and sun exposure that result in superior wine flavors. As with all generalizations, however, this too has various shortcomings: certainly there are hillside sites with the wrong soils, plenty of hill country with the wrong climate, and Grand Cru sites in Burgundy that barely slope to the east. A long history of human habitation perhaps is the overriding factor in what type of agriculture ended up on different slopes: west of the Rhône river south of Lyon, the rolling granaries give way to hillier apricot and cherry orchards before finally dropping off down the steep faces of St. Joseph et al. with their Roman era terraces to the river itself. What else would grow on these steep hillsides but vines? Still, whatever the cause, it was a lesson I internalized while working up on the old volcano, Howell Mountain, at La Jota. Hillsides make great wine.

Peay Vineyards’ blocks are set up in the air - at 800 feet elevation - on hilltops and hillsides. The precise intersections of latitudinal, longitudinal and vertical coordinates locate us in coastal countryside that is quite hilly and steep, as is true of all “true Sonoma Coast” grape growing country. When we were looking for the ideal vineyard site, the soil and climate were of greatest importance to us. Slope was not seen as a negative, unless, of course, for areas that we considered “too steep.” How steep is too steep? Even though we strive to create a ne plus ultra/nonpareil wine, practicality must enter into our decision-making. We could farm on slopes greater than 30 degrees – history has demonstrated that it is possible – but we need to consider our erosive soils. We also need to consider the economics of farming without tractors in extremely steep sections and also the low density of plants to acreage that terraces necessitate.

Thankfully, we chose a hilltop surrounded by steep drop offs to the river below that empties a few miles west into the Pacific. Our vineyards up on the hilltop are on somewhat gentle slopes – 0 to 25 degrees –and where the planting gives way to the forest, the hillside plunges downward into the canyon below. We were secretly pleased to have found such a well-located site with slopes that were somewhat practical to farm and that didn’t require terraces. We would not be able to use over-the-row tractors, however, as in Burgundy. There are no more than a few square yards that are flat on our property. We had considered a track layer, also known as a crawler. Hmmm. We thought about that one.
THE 2004 VINTAGE:
EARLY TO RISE, EARLY TO BED

QUICK SYNOPSIS: The 2004 vintage started early and abruptly with atypical warm fronts and finished early and abruptly with another heat spell. But, all in all, we had pretty good growing weather throughout the summer months.

The most peculiar feature occurred in the early spring, which started out with record high temperatures in the first two weeks of March. The young shoots pushed skyward far ahead of schedule. This brief warm weather trend came to an end in late March and cool weather settled in causing a temporary yellowing of the shoot tips, something we call “spring fever.”

Cool, damp weather is not unusual for the months of March and April, but more often than not by the time flowering typically comes along at the end of May, the weather is mild and pleasant, suitable for good fruit set. But, as we were two to three weeks early, flowering took place while the weather was still a bit cool and damp and the flowers on the Syrah set under two tons to the acre. As a result, other than to balance the vines’ crop load and to drop lagging clusters at verasion, no fruit dropping (green harvesting) was necessary this year.

The rest of the summer was fairly normal - that is, cool. There were not any unusual weather patterns or heat spikes, generally just the typical pattern of morning fog followed by a warm late morning sun tempered by cool afternoon ocean breezes. This weather was ideal for phenological development and it shows in the wines.

Throughout August the fruit slowly approached perfect ripeness. Then, as sometimes happens, a switch was thrown and we were hurled into frantic action. Around Labor Day, nine days of off-shore heat blasted California. We picked the Pinot noir, Viognier, and Chardonnay flat out until the majority was in by September 9th. Though the fruit was perfect (no shriveling, good acidity, advanced phenolics, mature fruit flavors), the calendar was all wrong - we were two and a half weeks early! A few, small blocks of Pinot coasted through the heat wave and were harvested on September 24th around the same time as the bucket or two of Roussanne and Marsanne. The Syrah came along in early October and at a much more relaxed pace. Except for a flat tractor tire on Labor Day, all in all, harvest went smoothly.

FACEETS OF PEAY SYRAH

Continued from Page 2

drawing psycho-analytical parallels here, let me continue. That these two disparate albums coexist in the same body of mine reflects how the varied profile of one musical taste, my own, can be just like two Syrah blends that are two expressions of the same vineyard. Okay, I won’t get too carried away with the analogies. I am not trying to defend a thesis after all, I am just explaining why I made two wines. Simply put, prior to the 2004 vintage we had been making one wine from the Syrah that we grow on our estate vineyard. We have 6 different blocks of Syrah which we not only harvest separately but sometimes pick certain parts of a block on a separate date because it doesn’t ripen at the same time as the other parts within the same block. Each lot is vinified and aged as a separate lot. As I was tasting through the different lots during their 16 months of aging in barrel, I noticed that two different expressions were emerging from our one vineyard. So I decided to make two wines to showcase these distinct characteristics. They are two different wines just like there are different facets to people, music and just about everything else.

To John Alban’s query I struggled to come up with the last 3 of the 5 albums I would take with me to a deserted island.* After producing the first two picks without much hesitation, I said to him, “I thought you were going to ask me what wines would I choose if I had to pick only 5.” To that he exclaimed, “Wines? No, that would be too easy!” You see, that would be a question from John the winemaker, but John the wino-analyst was trying to free the subconscious of the wine-maker in question. So now I will try my own hand at exploring the inner workings of your mind and invite you to try our La Bruma and Les Titans and let us know which one you like. And do worry, it is a personality test! Remember, the right answer is, “Both!”

* A little post-script. If you must know, here are the last 3 of the 5 albums I would take with me to a deserted island: Bill Evans: Everybody Digs Bill Evans; Bob Marley and the Wailers: Legend; and P-Funk: One Nation Under a Groove. Bet you can’t wait to taste the wines that are analogous to these beauties!
A FEW POINTS OF INTEREST

- We only make wine from our 48-acre hilltop vineyard located above a river gorge in the far northwestern corner of the Sonoma Coast, 4 miles from the Pacific Ocean at Sea Ranch. Yes, it is remote.
- We grow 33 acres of Pinot noir, 8 acres of Syrah, 5 acres of Chardonnay, 0.8 acres of Viognier, 0.4 acres of Roussanne and 0.2 acres of Marsanne.
- We sell fruit to 2 wineries: Williams Selyem Winery and Failla Winery.
- Winemaker Vanessa Wong left her position as winemaker at Peter Michael Winery in 2001 to launch Peay Vineyards.
- Nick, a UC Davis-trained and veteran Santa Cruz mountains winemaker, is the vineyard manager and works side-by-side with our full-time crew.
- Though we are not certified organic, we make every effort to grow our fruit using sustainable vineyard practices. The long term health of the vineyard and our ecosystem drive our practices. We continue to experiment with less invasive, organic and environmentally-friendly alternatives and convert our cultural practices when substitutes are deemed successful.
- The vineyard and winery are not a family heritage, they are the result of our combined 39 years working in the wine industry. We started it from scratch and have dedicated our lives to it. Wine is our work and our passion.

HILLSIDE FARMING

Continued from Page 3

for a long time. To turn, however, crawlers’ tracks run in opposition to one another. This chews up the ground and creates large divots at every row end. For an area with erosive soils, I thought it best to avoid loosening so much soil on a regular basis. Now, I’m having second thoughts, because track layers are difficult to flip…

As the years have passed we have learned that, in particular, aspect (the combination of a hill’s direction and slope) influences the flavors we extract from each block. For the Syrah, it appears that aspect plays almost as important a role in determining flavor profile as clonal selection.

I had a hunch all those years back about the relationship among hillsides, slope and quality wine. I’ve been accumulating more experience at our site on how these factors affect flavor. As with all things in grape growing, however, it is hard to pin point the specific variables that really account for a wine’s profile. The jury is still out. I’ll get back to you as the years—and, hopefully, no more tractors—roll on.

GRILLED CHERMOULA LAMB CHOPS

Chermoula is a wonderful marinade made of a blend of spices widely used in Moroccan cooking. This deeply flavored paste of herbs and spices is almost always associated with seafood, particularly fish. Traditionally it is used with fish before it is baked or grilled. We find that it also matches well with grilled lamb and the spice and herb aromas pair well with the floral and spice notes of our Peay Syrahs.

**Ingredients**

- 1 teaspoon caraway seeds
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 3 whole cloves
- 2 tablespoons sweet paprika
- Pinch of cayenne pepper
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons grated ginger
- Juice of ½ a lemon
- ½ cup honey
- 2 8-rib racks of lamb, frenched and each rack cut into 4 double chops
- 1 ¼ tablespoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Finely chopped cilantro for garnish

**Serves 6-8**

**Preparation:**

1. Toast the spices (caraway seeds, cumin seeds, cinnamon stick, coriander seeds, and cloves), in a dry heavy skillet over moderate heat, stirring until they are fragrant and a shade or two darker - no more than a few minutes. Finely grind the toasted spices in a coffee/spice grinder. Stir together with the paprika and the cayenne pepper.

2. Blend the olive oil, garlic, ginger, lemon juice and honey in a large bowl. Add the lamb and toss to coat. Season with the salt and pepper and toss with the spice mixture. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours to overnight.

3. Prepare a charcoal or gas grill for medium-hot coals. Take lamb out of the refrigerator and allow to come to room temperature. Season the chops with a little salt and pepper and grill 3 to 4 minutes per side for medium rare: 125°F with an instant-read thermometer. Transfer to a platter and loosely cover with foil. Take each double chop and cut it into two single bone chops. Garnish with the chopped cilantro and serve with a couscous mixed with brown spices, pine or almond nuts and raisins.

Peay Vineyards, 1117B S. Cloverdale Blvd #172, Cloverdale, CA 95425/www.peayvineyards.com/andy@peayvineyards.com
### PEAY VINEYARDS ORDER FORM

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**ORDERING:** You can order your allocation by fax, mail or online at www.peayvineyards.com. **No phone or email orders, please.** They are easily misplaced causing you and us much consternation. We signed up with a new software company to execute orders through our mailing list. We hope this will make it easier to order wine through our web site and resolve the technical issues we faced last release.

For online ordering, your user name remains the email address you used to join the mailing list. You should have received an email that introduced you to our new system and supplied you with a new password on June 20th. Please discard your old password. Once you enter the ordering section of our web site you can change this password—and all of your account information—whenever you would like. If you do not have a password or did not give us an email address you will need to order by fax or mail or email Andy.

*Your allocation is the maximum amount you may purchase in this release. If you are interested in more than your allocation, please signify this on the online order form or on this order form and we will automatically charge you for the additional wine after the release period ends (October 1st) if any wine remains.

**Shipping:** If your state is not listed below, please email Andy at andy@peayvineyards.com to discuss shipping options. We will begin shipping in early October or when we determine it is cool enough in your state to ship wine.

**TAXES**

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**Shipping Address (No P.O.S., Prefer Business):**

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CITY __________________________ STATE ________ ZIP ________ PHONE ________

**Paying:** We prefer checks but also accept MasterCard, Discover and Visa. No corporate credit cards or AMEX, please.

**Billing Address**

NAME __________________________ STREET __________________________

CITY __________________________ STATE ________ ZIP ________ PHONE ________

Name on CC: _____________________ CC#: _____________________ Exp. Date: __________

Card Type (MC, Visa, Discover): __________ Signature: __________________________

Our wine can be sold and delivered only to people who are at least 21 years of age. In placing your order and signing below, you represent to us that you are at least 21 years old and that the person to whom delivery will be made is at least 21 years old. When the wine is delivered, the person receiving the wine will be required to prove that he/she is 21 years old. Signature: __________________________. Thank you.

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