

PEAY VINEYARDS

FALL 2010

ISSUE 16

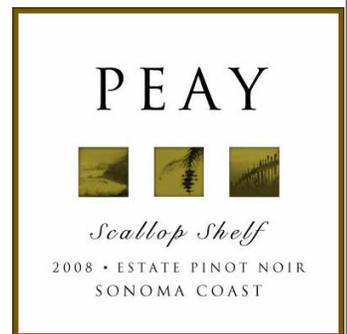


Welcome to the fall release of the 2008 vintage. By now you have probably tried a few 2008 Peay wines from the spring release. The red wines are more compact and earthier than the 2007s with lively spice notes. The fruit expression is classic for our vineyard though the typical higher-tone notes are kept in check by secondary aromas. This profile is mainly due to the miniscule yields in 2008 caused by a late spring frost. These are terroir-driven wines with a good life ahead of them.

If we are to believe the press, the 2008 Scallop Shelf Pinot noir and La Bruma Syrah are the best expressions of Peay wines in the 2008 vintage. As we emphasized in previous newsletters, the increased vine age has contributed further complexity to our wines' aromatic profiles. We hope you enjoy them.

2008 SCALLOP SHELF ESTATE PINOT NOIR, SONOMA COAST 526 CASES

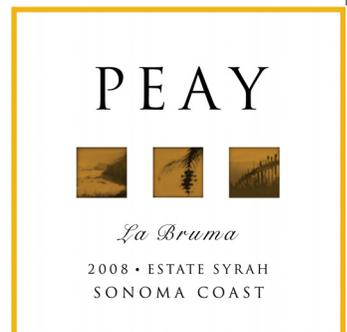
The appearance of the 2008 Scallop Shelf is vibrant red and light-hued. The nose reveals dark cherry, spice and violet notes supported by grilled meat (lamb) and brass aromas. Despite its youthfulness, the wine is well-integrated and seamless. This is evident as the fruit aromas build and broaden as the wine carries across the palate. The incredibly long finish has notes of anise, dried pine needles and a lingering flavor of chocolate covered cherries. With air, the fruit profile darkens and becomes more masculine and kirsch-like though not alcoholic or pruny, just deep and powerful. No need to decant though a 30-45 minute breather will allow these deeper aromas to emerge. The wine should age for 7-10 years though we suggest you open a bottle after letting the wine rest from delivery to assess for yourself. *Stephen Tanzer's IWC 93+ points*



2008 LA BRUMA ESTATE SYRAH, SONOMA COAST

314 CASES

The 2008 La Bruma Syrah radiates an electric purple hue. The nose is bright with fragrant notes of boysenberries, blackberries, graphite and violets. Really pretty. There is a touch of dark Mission fig underneath the top notes and a sweet bacon edge to the overall aroma. The mouth is elegant and medium-bodied (13.4% alcohol). The bacon fat and berry notes are wrapped in smoky, lead pencil aromas. Without a decant the palate is tight and compact. The tannins are persistent and silky but not firm or green. After a 45 minute decant a softer and broader mid-palate emerges and portends well for what will be gained through bottle aging. We suggest you age for at least 3-5+ years.



IMPORTANT DATES

August 3rd	Release date
October 15th	Shipping commences to cooler states
November 13th	Winery Open House & Pick Up Day
November/December	Shipping commences to warmer states





TO BE TRENDY - ANDY PEAY

Fads in winemaking come and go. After the second World War, farmers in all fields, including wine-growing, pursued higher yields and “quality” through the use of newly developed, chemically-intensive farming practices. For the past 15 years, the stylistic trend has been to make accessible, rich wines that result in high scores from critics and ensure financial success. Today, biodynamic farming claims ne plus ultra status for proponents by taking a Shirley Maclaine approach to organic farming.

It is exciting to be part of an industry that is dynamic. It is not surprising that most of the zealotry and innovation comes from the New World where there is less inertia from tradition and lower barriers to entry for outside entrepreneurs who want to make wine. Often in their eagerness to quickly imitate what the Old World producers have accomplished over many decades, many New World wineries borrow traditional techniques outright from the Old World icons and enshrine them without considering the differences in their terroir or the logic and history behind the practices. Consider the Chardonnay producer who puts her wine grown in a warm climate in 100% new French oak and 100% through malo-lactic fermentation and ends up with a wine that tastes like a butter and toffee parfait. “It is what they do in Montrachet.” True, but if these grapes are not grown in Montrachet, no matter what the marketing team professes, the wine does not and will not taste like Montrachet. At other times, New World winemakers eschew traditional practices and wine styles as out-dated or, at least, out-moded. It reminds me of the Napa Cabernet producer who explained to me that the reason his Sangiovese did not taste like Chianti (I asked where had the sour cherry flavors gone) was that it was not hot enough in Tuscany to get Sangiovese fully ripe. Ah, right, the twin “problems” in Tuscany, lack of heat and a want of insight from cabernet producers.

There are so many variables involved in the process of making a glass of wine that theory is often supported only by supposition, anecdotal evidence and the force of personal persuasion. The resulting marketing messages (and wines) can be quite confusing to consumers, trade buyers, and, well, pretty much anyone who bothers to drink and listen to people talk about wine. Sussing out which practices are valuable and effective and which are simply misguided—or, even worse, slick marketing mumbo-jumbo—can be a daunting task. How can you tell the difference?

I put this question to Vanessa Wong, our winemaker extraordinaire. With a degree in enology (essentially, wine chemistry) and a background making wine at some of the world’s finest and oldest estate wineries, she answered unequivocally: “What? You are asking the question from the wrong end, Andy.” This is polite language for “man, how can my brother-in-law be so thick.” Essentially, she said, you make the best wine when you aim to express the terroir of your vineyard. The land: that is real, that is unique. If you pick the right site, that dictates everything else you do. Winegrowing techniques should be based on an understanding of plant biology and viticulture with an eye directed at growing fruit that best expresses your terroir. Employing farming practices that result in over-ripe, raisin-y fruit (high BRIX at picking, e.g.) in an attempt to achieve power and fruit-forwardness, lead to fruit aromas in the wine that are monolithic and taste generically like dried fruit from anywhere. This does not allow the vineyard to express its character. If winemakers use winery techniques that mask terroir and result in soft, oaky, and/or overly fruity wines that are evocative of no place, but instead of added flavors, why not grow grapes in the Central Valley where the land is cheaper? In some cases, winemaking techniques are utilized after picking to purposefully alter or correct the character of the wine to fit an ideal that is not reality, kind of like Mary Shelly’s Frankenstein. It may taste like the real thing but the wine seems a little stitched together and when it inevitably falls apart, head for cover. Instead, a winemaker should use techniques to guide and highlight the expression of the fruit without masking or adulterating terroir expression. Any advance in technology or “hot” new practice that Vanessa’s brother-in-law wants her to consider must fit through this logical framework.

Let’s take the use of stems in making Pinot noir as an example. In some cases I have liked the aroma of stems in Pinot noir, as it can add a spice and bark aroma that can lift Pinot noir’s bouquet and balance fruit flavors. I have also had many wines where the stems made the wine taste awful. I have encouraged limited experimentation with stems to see how it works with our fruit. It is oh-so-trendy while being so old school; what’s not to like? Vanessa correctly points out that our wine is already balanced by a dried pine needle spiciness and adequate tannins simply by the fact that the grapes are grown on our vineyard near the coast. Many people think we use stems because of the presence of these characteristics. She feels if we use stems, this aromatic profile will be exaggerated and dominate the wine. And her suspicions have mostly proven true. When we have experimented with using stems (anywhere from 25-100%

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INTRODUCING PEAY ESTATE TEMPRANILLO - NICK PEAY

Back in May, some folks from the Nature Conservancy stopped by the vineyard. As part of the research that would form open space and wildland conservation policy for the area, they wanted to know the desires and behavior of an environmentally-conscious grapegrower. The policy makers explained that their long-term interest in this part of the world was due to a certainty that the global warming phenomenon would make inland California a vast desert and drive more species toward lightly populated, coastal California. One of them asked, as many of you have, what are we doing to plan for the rise in temperatures? Fiddling while Rome burns?

Well, this may be the hinterlands, but we are not sitting on the porch fiddling. We are trying to reduce the heat trapping emissions that we produce on our farm: Back some eight years ago when I was researching the biodiesel that we use in our tractors, I learned that burning biodiesel produces something like 70% less CO₂ and 50% less particulate emissions than regular diesel. I try to remember this benefit while my stomach growls in response to the smell of French fries from the burning oil. And you can be reassured that my commuting to our remote location is with a hybrid vehicle. And, as you know, we put in an array of solar panels a few years ago alongside the reservoir and on the roof of the winery. "That's all nice", the Conservancy folks said but, specifically, they wanted to know if I should be thinking about shifting the varieties that we grow toward more heat-loving winegrapes, like Cabernet, or even Tempranillo.

This supposition brings to light two different ways we know or learn: direct experience versus secondhand information gathering (like the news). My direct experience at the vineyard over the last six vintages has given me no sign of a general warming. The news reported that the previous April was the warmest the globe has experienced since humans began measuring April temperatures. Here, we had ~11 ½ inches of rain. The vines were leafed out, but the leaves that had been out the longest were looking haggard; some spotted, some brown edged, most of them battered by wind. And again, due to the chilly winter and early spring, we were late getting started, buds opening around March 25th instead of March 15th. This past July is yet again another cool, foggy month with temperatures rarely breaking 70 degrees. We've had a "dust settler" of a couple tenths of an inch to almost two inches almost every September starting with 2005 and up to five inches in October. I know it hasn't always been like this, and a few or even a dozen years is not meaningful when talking about climatic trends. But, there have definitely been a string of wet and chilly Springs, later Spring rains, and an earlier return of rains in the Fall. Warmer? No. Drier? No. More erratic and intense storms and stretches of weather? Well, maybe.

How is this affecting us? It is a good thing that Syrah is well-accustomed to October rains, since we've had them every October since 2004. The thick skins and loose clusters can, for the most part, withstand the moisture. And the trend of year-to-year total rainfall has not been consistent, but cyclical, following the El Niño cycle. In this past El Niño winter, we received around 68 inches. But my read of the best climate data and news out there is that the world is unquestionably warming, and, quite likely, my corner of the world will eventually warm, too. It just doesn't seem like it has over the past 15 years. But should I act on the broader global trends in warming weather?

It all depends on one's perception of time: How long will these Pinot/Chardonnay/Syrah vines be in the ground versus how fast is the climate changing? I am exceedingly busy dealing with the season that Mother Nature is giving me right now: cool, even for Pinot noir, but with enough day length into October that we can ripen Syrah. Maybe. I can't imagine I'll be ripping cool climate vines out in my lifetime, though. Ask me in a dozen years about planning for the coming heat wave. For now, I'm intensely focused on bringing this year's crop to readiness at the peak of its potential. Hopefully.

TO BE TRENDY....CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

of total) in small lots, the wine is overwhelmed and taken out of balance, not only in stem expression, but in pH, color, and tannins. If she were to use stems in all of our Pinot noir, we would have an unbalanced wine, and worse: a wine that does not express Pinot noir grown at Peay Vineyards, but rather a cocktail of our wine mixed with stem flavors.

I still cock my ears when I hear of a new trend sweeping through the industry. I want an egg shaped fermenter! I mean, they look cool. But, it takes a massive amount of attention, knowledge and patience to understand how our vineyard can make wines that capture our terroir's unique expression. As a result, we are less tempted to flit from trend to trend. That is one variable that our customers can rely on.



IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW

- Peay Vineyards is a first generation family winery. Husband and wife, Nick Peay & Vanessa Wong, grow and make the wine and brother Andy Peay and his wife Ami sell the wine and run the business.
- All wines are made from grapes grown on our 53-acre estate vineyard located above a river in the far northwestern corner of the Sonoma Coast, 4 miles from the Pacific Ocean at Sea Ranch. Yes, it is cold and remote.
- We grow 35 acres of Pinot noir, 8 acres of Syrah, 7 acres of Chardonnay, 1.8 acres of Viognier, 0.4 acres of Roussanne and 0.2 acres of Marsanne.
- Winemaker Vanessa Wong left her position as winemaker at Peter Michael Winery in 2001 to launch Peay Vineyards. Formerly she worked at Château Lafite-Rothschild, Domaine Jean Gros and Hirsch Winery.
- 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 of 8 workers.
- We farm organically and maintain our certifications for fish-friendly farming and integrated pest management. The health of our vineyard dictates these approaches to farming and making wine. We also run on bio-diesel at the vineyard and solar power at both the vineyard and winery.
- The vineyard and winery are not a family heritage; they are the result of our combined 50 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.
- We sell Pinot noir grapes to Williams Selyem and Failla Wineries.

2010 FALL DINNERS & TASTINGS

One, two or all three of us will attend one of the events below. We hope to see you there!

Piacere	San Carlos, CA	August 4th
Epic Roasthouse	San Francisco, CA	November 4th
Peay Open House & Pick Up Day	Cloverdale, CA	November 13th
PinotFest at Farallon	San Francisco, CA	November 19th-20th



VISITS TO THE VINEYARD & WINERY

Wine moves people. One of the pleasures in making wine is the opportunity to meet like-minded people who are as moved as we are by wine. Throw in a plate of cheese and salumi served in a beautiful environment and sometimes we make lifelong friends (at least, so far.)

This experience at Peay Vineyards is open only to mailing list customers who purchase from the mailing list. We must limit visits as there are only three of us doing everything in the winery from growing the grapes to making the wine to selling it around the country.

If you would like to set up an appointment at the winery in Cloverdale or the vineyard out on the coast, please email Andy at andy@peayvineyards.com. Please understand that we have young children so we are often not available on weekends. We also have Open Houses at the winery on a Saturday every spring and fall where we pull lots of corks and often will release a library wine available on that day only. Next one is November 13th.

We hope to share an afternoon with you soon.



RECIPE: CHICKEN A LA WOOD TAVERN

Wood Tavern is my local. My wife and I call it our “formal dining room” as the restaurant sits just down the hill and we eat there with embarrassing regularity. At their first restaurant, Frascati, Rich and Rebekah Wood discovered a formula for delivering deep, satisfying flavors that they perfected at their new outpost, Wood Tavern, in Oakland, CA. Regardless of whether the dish is a pan-seared halibut or a sumptuous pork chop, it is the best version of that dish you have ever tried.

As part of my job I eat at many of the best restaurants in the country. When I do, I rarely order chicken. I feel I can cook chicken at home, and my mom’s recipe of roasted chicken with thyme and garlic can not be surpassed. Further, if I am going to pay someone else to cook for me, I want something I have never seen or would never take the time to do. So I pretty much eat only fried chicken or some riff on stuffed poussin when I order chicken. Pan-seared chicken? I know what that will taste like. Yawn. And then someone told me I had to try Wood Tavern’s chicken. C’mon, the chicken? Instead of the pork belly in lentils or the duck confit? Holy moley, it is the best chicken I have ever put in my mouth, bar none. And, even better, I can cook it at home and achieve almost the same dizzying result. And, now, so can you. — Andy Peay

Ingredients

4 whole free-range chicken legs including thighs

1 1/2 quarts home-made (or very high quality) chicken stock

2 medium carrots

4 green spring onions

8 fingerling or small creamer potatoes, any color

8-10 cloves of garlic

3/4 lbs mushrooms—preferably chanterelle, sliced

Rock salt and fresh ground pepper

Stick of butter

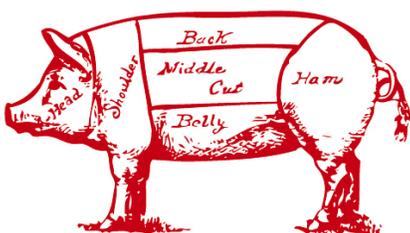
Canola or other high heat oil

1/2 cup inexpensive crisp white wine

1 bottle of Peay Chardonnay ;-)

Serves 4

Total prep & cooking time: 1 hour



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Preparation

Heat the oven to 350 degrees.

Place the chicken stock in a sauce pan over high heat and reduce to 5 tablespoons. It will take 40-50 minutes and can be done on a spare burner while you follow the rest of the steps.

Cut 2 carrots into 2-3 inch lengths and then into halves or quarters. Cut the roots off the ends of the green onions and leave 3 inches of the light green stalks attached. Halve lengthwise or leave whole. Rinse potatoes and halve or leave whole as desired. Peel and cut garlic cloves in halves.

Rinse and pat dry the leg/thigh. Liberally season on both sides with salt and pepper. Pour 2 tablespoons canola or other high heat oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat and add more salt and pepper to the pan. When the oil is hot, place the chicken in the pan and brown on both sides pressing down on the chicken with a small lid to achieve a crisp brown layer across the top and bottom. Repeat until all are browned.

If you are only cooking 2 legs/thighs, remove the pan from the flame and deglaze the pan with a few tablespoons of white wine. If you are cooking more than you can fit comfortably in the pan leaving room for the vegetables (like the 4 suggested in this recipe), transfer the chicken to a roasting pan and after deglazing the pan, add the pan juice to the roasting pan.

In the large sauté pan, reheat the oil. Add potatoes, julienned carrots, green onions and garlic and cook for 5 minutes to soften. Add the chicken, 1/4 cup of stock and 1/4 cup of white wine to the pan. Place pan in the oven.

Check on the pan from time to time to turn the vegetables over so they caramelize, add more stock to avoid burning, if necessary. Baste chicken. The chicken’s finished temperature should be about 150 degrees though I often use a knife to cut to the bone to be sure there is no pink flesh. Remember: the chicken will coast after you remove it from the oven and likely will rise another 5-10 degrees during that time. So, be careful not to overcook!

While the chicken cooks, sauté the mushrooms in butter over medium heat. I prefer chanterelles for this dish but they can be hard to find. You can also use trumpets or the small, whole mushrooms often sold in package. Brown mushrooms will work in a pinch.

When the chicken is done—about 30 total minutes- it should be juicy and moist on the inside and crisp on the outside. Remove the chicken from the pan and deglaze with a splash of white wine. Add the reduced stock and mushrooms to the pan and turn off the heat or turn to very low if you have that setting.

Add butter one or two pats at a time and stir against the bottom of the pan to slowly melt. Continue until you feel the sauce has achieved the level of decadence you can live with. Place the chicken on a plate and pour the vegetables and sauce around it. Open a bottle of Peay Chardonnay and feast.



SHIPPING OPTIONS AND RATES

We recognize shipping may be a barrier to our customers buying more wine direct from us. Direct sales, however, sustain our business model—estate grown and produced—and without our mailing list sales, we could not exist. So we have worked hard to find better rates and shipping vendors to encourage you to continue to buy direct. And we found one with the lowest shipping rates and the best reputation in the industry. Further, you can receive your wine with greater peace of mind than before, perhaps even sounder than the Peay wine the few retailers have on their shelf as it does not sit in non-refrigerated trucks driving around the country (see temperature control note below). So, please select your desired shipping method. If you are paying by credit card you do not need to calculate shipping rates or taxes for us, we will do it for you. For shipping rates on magnums, we will need to calculate them on our end, they are about 20-50% higher per 1.5L bottle than a 750ml bottle.

UPS GROUND				UPS TEMP CONTROL*		GOLDEN STATE OVERNIGHT**			
Delivery	1 day	2 days	3 days	2 days	2 days	Delivery	1 day	1 day	1 day
# of Btls	CA-North	CA-South, NV, OR	AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, WA	IO, KS, MN, MO, NE, SD, TX, WY	CT, DC, FL, GA, IL, IN, LA, ME, MI, NH, NJ, NY, ND, NC, OH, OK, SC, TN, VT, VA, WV, WI	# of Btls	CA-North	CA-South, NV, OR	AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, WA
1	\$ 14.45	\$ 15.20	\$ 15.80	\$ 17.15	\$ 18.15	1	\$ 12.05	\$ 13.20	\$ 13.90
2	\$ 14.75	\$ 15.50	\$ 16.60	\$ 18.20	\$ 19.20	2	\$ 12.60	\$ 13.60	\$ 14.90
3	\$ 18.00	\$ 18.75	\$ 19.20	\$ 22.50	\$ 23.55	3	\$ 16.10	\$ 17.10	\$ 17.65
4	\$ 19.05	\$ 19.55	\$ 20.05	\$ 24.35	\$ 25.70	4	\$ 17.55	\$ 18.35	\$ 19.05
5	\$ 21.30	\$ 22.55	\$ 23.50	\$ 30.55	\$ 32.65	5	\$ 20.15	\$ 21.75	\$ 22.80
6	\$ 21.30	\$ 22.55	\$ 23.50	\$ 30.55	\$ 32.65	6	\$ 20.15	\$ 21.75	\$ 22.80
7	\$ 26.15	\$ 26.90	\$ 28.85	\$ 37.20	\$ 41.10	7	\$ 25.35	\$ 26.40	\$ 28.50
8	\$ 26.15	\$ 26.90	\$ 28.85	\$ 37.20	\$ 41.10	8	\$ 25.35	\$ 26.40	\$ 28.50
9	\$ 26.65	\$ 28.90	\$ 31.05	\$ 41.45	\$ 45.30	9	\$ 26.35	\$ 29.15	\$ 31.65
10	\$ 26.65	\$ 28.90	\$ 31.05	\$ 41.45	\$ 45.30	10	\$ 26.35	\$ 29.15	\$ 31.65
11	\$ 28.75	\$ 31.00	\$ 33.95	\$ 45.45	\$ 50.50	11	\$ 28.55	\$ 31.50	\$ 34.85
12	\$ 28.75	\$ 31.00	\$ 33.95	\$ 45.45	\$ 50.50	12	\$ 28.55	\$ 31.50	\$ 34.85

*UPS TEMPERATURE CONTROL: Our new shipper trucks the wine to their east coast warehouse in refrigerated trucks and then uses UPS to ship the wine from that warehouse. This, in effect, means the wine is exposed for only 1-2 days to ambient temperatures similar to a UPS 2-day air shipment. Neat.

**GOLDEN STATE OVERNIGHT: Only available in these states. The wine is picked up from our shipper's warehouse in the late afternoon and trucked overnight to your town. The wine is delivered the next day and rarely exposed to any extreme temperatures.

UPS 2 DAY AIR						
Delivery	2-3 days	2-3 days	2-3 days	2-3 days	2-3 days	2-3 days
# of Btls	CA-North	CA-South, NV, OR	AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, WA	IO, KS, MN, MO, NE, SD, TX, WY	CT, DC, FL, GA, IL, IN, LA, ME, MI, NH, NJ, NY, ND, NC, OH, OK, SC, TN, VT, VA, WV, WI	HI
1	\$ 14.60	\$ 15.60	\$ 16.75	\$ 19.10	\$ 19.80	\$ 26.15
2	\$ 16.50	\$ 18.50	\$ 19.65	\$ 22.75	\$ 23.70	\$ 30.25
3	\$ 20.60	\$ 22.85	\$ 24.75	\$ 29.20	\$ 30.40	\$ 35.70
4	\$ 22.50	\$ 25.75	\$ 28.10	\$ 32.90	\$ 34.80	\$ 37.40
5	\$ 25.40	\$ 28.95	\$ 32.65	\$ 40.95	\$ 42.45	\$ 43.85
6	\$ 25.40	\$ 28.95	\$ 32.65	\$ 40.95	\$ 42.45	\$ 43.85
7	\$ 29.15	\$ 34.35	\$ 39.40	\$ 50.40	\$ 52.05	\$ 57.10
8	\$ 29.15	\$ 34.35	\$ 39.40	\$ 50.40	\$ 52.05	\$ 57.10
9	\$ 31.95	\$ 37.65	\$ 44.00	\$ 57.55	\$ 59.45	\$ 65.20
10	\$ 31.95	\$ 37.65	\$ 44.00	\$ 57.55	\$ 59.45	\$ 65.20
11	\$ 33.30	\$ 40.90	\$ 48.25	\$ 63.25	\$ 65.50	\$ 75.25
12	\$ 33.30	\$ 40.90	\$ 48.25	\$ 63.25	\$ 65.50	\$ 75.25

