

# PEAY VINEYARDS

FALL RELEASE

ISSUE 22



As we related in the spring newsletter, the 2011 vintage was cold and wet. Though we made some of our most delicious wines, they were not plentiful. We lost about 60% of our crop either through reduced yields or declassification of wine. For the vineyard designate wines, we made even less than 60% of the normal amount in order to be sure they were exemplary and would deliver the quality you and we expect. This comes on the heels of the 2010 vintage where our production was off 50% due to a small set and a cold and wet fall. This has meant that for the past 2 years demand has far outstripped supply which my micro-economics professor (hello Andy) tells me can be a good place to sit. Well, he has not been in my chair the past week.

I wish to apologize to all of you who attempted to order from the fall release and discovered that in a very short period of time we were sold out of all wines. In conjunction with a small amount of wine for sale, we also experienced much greater demand as we have become more established around the country. There is a silver lining, however; we will release the plentiful and very good 2012 vintage next spring. We will not have issues like this in the foreseeable future as, so far, the 2013 vintage yields, though less than 2 tons/acre, are also fairly good and quality looks high (did I just tempt fate?)

So, you will not find an Order Form at the end of this newsletter as in years past. We ran through all of our library and personal wine trying to fulfill requests for wine from customers who had missed the very short window for purchasing. At this juncture, the tap is dry. We will continue to improve on our allocation process to provide more time for you to order and hope to never again experience such a short release period. We want you to know that we appreciate the loyalty and commitment from our mailing list customers and the last thing we want to say is, "sorry, we have no wine." I will work hard to be sure I do not have to say that until at least the time the newsletter arrives at your door and you have time to ponder what you would like.

Now, what else is new at Peay Vineyards? The last 4 acres we planted in 2008 are coming into production. We planted an acre plus each of Viognier, Chardonnay and Pinot noir. They are promising and the new clones allow us to continue to fine tune our wines and discover what works well out here on the coast. Ah, we will also introduce a special three barrel cuveé—Elanus—next year. Mum's the word on that until next year other than to say we will only make it in rare, exceptional vintages and 2012 was one for us. And, lastly, in case you missed it, this past July we received some recognition from Jay McNerney in the *Wall Street Journal*. If you'd like to read the article it is on our web site. He says what you already know or else you would not be on our mailing list. Thank you to those who sent an email of congratulations. We were thrilled and, no, we will not double our prices (sorry, Andy, again I fail you).

I will be traveling a little bit next year to spread the word on the 2012 vintage. I have enjoyed meeting many of you at various wine dinners and events. On page 4 you will see a few places I intend to visit next year. If you would like to arrange a dinner at a restaurant or at someone's home, please contact me at [andy@peayvineyards.com](mailto:andy@peayvineyards.com) and we shall see what we can put together.

Until then, we wish you an enjoyable close to the summer, our apologies for any frustration with this fall's release, and our sincere gratitude for your interest and support.

- Andy Peay



# THE 2011 VINTAGE: ELEGANCE → INTENSITY → FOCUS

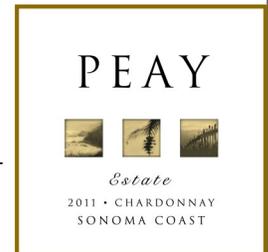
Though a challenging growing year, the 2011 wines superbly display our terroir and, as a result, we believe we made some of our best wines. They are well-balanced and proportioned possessing body and intensity but are light on their feet. They are crafted for medium-term aging and will reward you in the next 3-7 years.

The bad news, we had very little wine to release and it sold out quickly. Notes on the wines are below and will be included in your shipment. And, we regret to inform you that there is no 2011 Roussanne/Marsanne to release this fall. We made 45 cases of the 2012 and will release it next fall.

## 2011 *ESTATE* CHARDONNAY

240 CASES

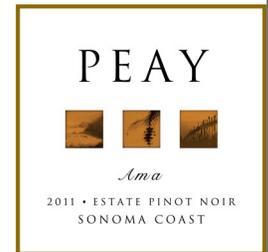
Our *Estate* chardonnay has an intense bright beam of minerality that harkens to our cold spot on the far West Sonoma Coast. Some years there can be a little fat in the front of the palate that becomes more focused as the wine carries to the back of the mouth. The 2011 *Estate* Chardonnay does not have that fruity, fat or rich characteristic. It features yeasty, limestone, and quince inflected qualities. There is some pear in the nose but the toasty, chalky notes become more powerful once on the palate and further pronounced with some time in a decanter. It is medium-bodied (12.7% alcohol) with great acidity and a long finish. Drink a bottle now and age the rest for 5-7 years. One of my — Andy's — favorite wines we have made.



## 2011 *AMA ESTATE* PINOT NOIR

180 CASES

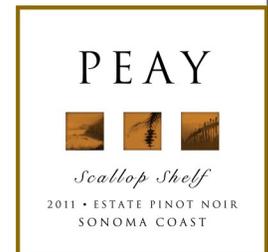
The *Ama Estate* cuvéé has become more refined in each vintage and has emerged as a very distinct expression of Pinot noir from our vineyard. There is a plum and blackberry core of fruit on the nose that evolves into dark cherry with light floral and spice notes keeping it lifted on the palate. The forest floor quality found in all of our pinots serves as a very good counterpoint to the richer fruit profile. *Ama* is a touch more masculine than *Scallop Shelf* with more tannins and brass notes. It has medium body (13.2% alcohol) and is quite approachable now but with more bottle age the aromas will integrate and become a very exciting wine.



## 2011 *SCALLOP SHELF ESTATE* PINOT NOIR

300 CASES

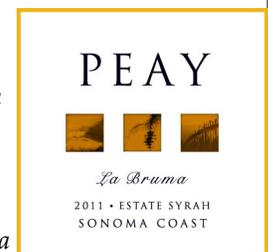
The 2011 *Scallop Shelf Estate* Pinot noir is a classic expression of this cuvéé. Cherry skin, cranberry and orange rind aromas are supported by sandalwood and cedar notes. The mouth features a tea, brass/copper and dried leaves quality that accounts for the range and complexity of this wine. It is medium bodied (13.1% alcohol) with very good persistence on the finish. *Scallop Shelf* has the somewhat ethereal quality we admire in Pinot noir. Customers who gravitate toward the *Scallop Shelf* for this quality will be pleased with the 2011 though we have noted that the *Ama* cuvee in 2010 and 2011 also shared this characteristic. With time the mid and back palate of our wines say more about Peay Vineyards and less about each cuvéé. The wines are still very distinct but there is a fraternal quality in them that reveals their shared heritage.

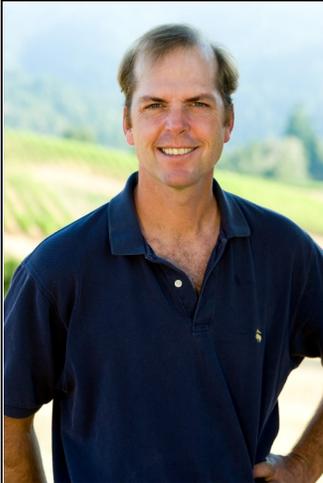


## 2011 *LA BRUMA ESTATE* SYRAH

98 CASES

Our syrah are not the bombastic, large-framed, fruit-driven monsters you find grown in warm climate syrah areas. All of the classic cold climate syrah aromas are evident in the nose of the 2011 *La Bruma Estate*: tart red berry and blackberry fruit with floral highlights, hints of iodine and white pepper, lead pencil and flint. We picked the fruit very late at low sugars after many rains and, as a result, our sorting was severe to be sure what we made was excellent. I am amazed by how good this wine is, perhaps we were too severe in our sorting! At a recent wine festival, the 2011 *La Bruma Estate* Syrah was tasted blind by the audience and panelists against 10 other syrah many at double the price and *La Bruma* stole the show. Due to the low alcohol, high acidity and moderate tannins this wine should age well and should be consumed in the mid-term, 5-7 years from vintage.





## “WATER SOMMELIERS: THE NEXT BIG TREND?” - NICK PEAY

I read the title above this morning in *The Daily Meal (All Things Food and Drink)* and had a good chuckle. Apparently, the author was talking about more than just whether you'd like still or sparkling. His bottom line was that the establishments that are employing a water sommelier or training their servers/sommeliers on their extensive offerings of water options are attempting to improve the quality of the experience for you, their customers, in a meaningful way. Uh, sure, I guess? It reminded me how in the competitive restaurant world, risk-taking to get a leg up means starting a new trend, or second best, following the new trend just to stay au courant. Remember sake and beer pairings? All Natural wine lists? Just what is the genesis of beverage trends in the wine business and why do certain trends fade into fads while others broaden our known world of wine?

Wine is a many-splendored thing. There are so many choices of what to consume, each option supported by an encyclopedia of information attempting to explain why it is a unique voice amid the din. I have lying around here somewhere my “Galet,” the seminal tome of all grape varieties including all known synonyms of each used to make wine the world over. It must be three inches thick. Think of it, thousands of sub-genus (*Vitis*), sub-species (*vinifera*), varieties; that is, types of grape that are used to make wine. *Vitis vinifera* is an ancient plant indeed, a wild weed that has been proliferating and with each seed formed (likely) creating a new variety. Some wine drinkers and many of you reading this enjoy the very act of collecting the information, learning about different varieties, and delving into the story behind a single wine. In this digital age there is so much information readily available. In fact there is more information about the wines than there are wines available. How can I taste Rkatzitali if almost all that is produced in Georgia is going to Russia, and none is coming anywhere near here?

To help channel all of this information somebody must narrow down my choices. Your favorite fine dining establishment or fine wine store can't stock everything, so somebody has the responsibility of 'wine buyer,' and that person is limiting what I can choose to experience at his establishment. Or to look at it another way, someone is helping me discover and try new wines they have tasted with me in mind, a conduit of information *and* experience. For that I am most grateful.

These wine buyers are, in essence, tastemakers. If they lead, do you follow? When are they creating or following a trend and when is it mere sideshow circus-ry? There are many types of lists but at minimum a successful buyer will offer a range of wines in style and price that work with their restaurant's food. Beyond this straightforward task, a wine buyer can distinguish herself/himself by identifying the formerly obscure or overlooked wine(s) that will be the next popular wine and offer you an experience you had not even considered when you walked in the door. Nailing this can mean job security or career advancement and maybe even the envy of his or her peers. Think of Shelly Lindgren from A16's Southern Italian list—with selected California wines, including Peay. In large part due to her championing Southern Italian wines you will find Nero d'Avola, Nerello Mascalese, Falanghina—and a host of other wines whose names tangled my brain when she relayed them to me in the early 2000s—on wine lists across the country. She started a robust trend because the wines had something to say that was real. They were not the result of winemaking gimmickry or a desire to be hip. They were and are a revelation to drinkers and have now become standard options on most Italian wine lists.

But not everything that is promised to be remarkable becomes the Next Big Thing. Fifteen years ago, wine professionals and the press were touting Grenache as the Next Hot Thing. Not that the idea exactly fizzled, but varietal Grenache never caught on like Pinot noir, or Merlot before it. Just wait, now that Syrah has lost its momentum, the press is hot on Grenache again. Will it happen this time? Does it offer something unique that drinkers need to experience and have as one of their beverage options? Have

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**WATER SOMMELIERS...CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE**

we been missing something vital?

Old world winegrape growers are steeped in tradition, often restricted in their choices of what to plant and how to grow it. That means the whim of the wine-consuming public either alights on their little corner of the world, or not. In California, we are still trying to figure out what will grow well where, and as far as restrictions go, it is the wild west, plant whatever you wish. Can the grower here tap into the bubbling currents of the wine cogniscenti and plant today's (or tomorrow's) new hot wine grape? Absolutely! It is quite possible though that before the five years it takes to raise the vines and make a wine out of their grapes are up, the new trend has changed, and the fickle fad-chasing wine consumer has moved on. Grafting over mature vines shortens time to market a little (three years?), but changing varieties is a distinct gamble. Sticking with what you know can be judged, perhaps unfairly, as the action of the avaricious grower instead of the passionate grower who is obsessed with and less willing to throw over half a lifetime's dedication and knowledge for mere whimsy.

We grow mostly Pinot noir (34 acres), some larger plantings of Chardonnay (7 acres) and Syrah (8 acres), and a few acres of "experiments." In our pursuit of trying to find what grows well where, we have not continued to try new varieties as we are quite keen on the varieties we already grow and feel we are only scratching the surface of what there is to know about them. I am still daily impressed with these new discoveries and feel I am learning everyday how I can best coax the ideal expression of our vineyard in the wines.

So, no Poulsard experiment is in the pipeline, no Lagrein on the way, and, no, there won't be any Peay Agg-ouzoum. Sadly, for that you will have to head to Daghestan.



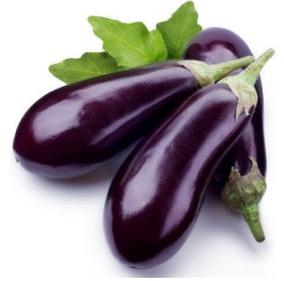
**UPCOMING DINNERS & EVENTS**

<b>Daniel Patterson from Coi- Book release luncheon at CIA Greystone, Peay pouring wines</b>	10/26	St. Helena, CA	www.ciachef.edu
<b>Fall Open House</b>	11/9	Cloverdale, CA	RSVP: andy@peayvineyards.com
<b>Farallon Pinot Fest Tasting</b>	11/23	SF, CA	www.farallonrestaurant.com/pinotfest
<b>Taste of the South at Blackberry Farm— featured Vintner</b>	1/9-12	Walland, TN	www.southernfoodways.org
<b>In Pursuit of Balance Tasting— NYC</b>	2/4	NY, NY	www.inpursuitofbalance.com
<b>NY Peay Dinner— location TBD</b>	2/5 or 6	NY, NY	To be announced via email
<b>Charleston Food &amp; Wine Festival</b>	3/7-9	Charleston, SC	www.charlestonwineandfood.com
<b>In Pursuit of Balance Tasting— SF</b>	3/10	SF, CA	www.inpursuitofbalance.com
<b>NY Peay Dinner— location TBD</b>	3/13	NY, NY	To be announced via email
<b>Chicago Peay Dinner— location TBD</b>	4/8 or 10th	Chicago, IL	To be announced via email
<b>WSCV's W.O.W. Chicago Festival</b>	4/9	Chicago, IL	Ticket information to be emailed in December
<b>Peay Wine Dinner at B. Tillman at Byrd Cookie</b>	4/25	Savannah, GA	To be announced via email
<b>High Museum Wine Auction</b>	4/27-30	Atlanta, GA	Www.atlanta-wineauction.org



## EGGPLANT CAPONATA: AMAZING. JUST TRY IT!

I met Steven Satterfield from Miller Union Restaurant in Atlanta 3 years ago and fell in love with the simplicity and deliciousness of his food. So much so that it has become my dining room when I am in Atlanta. His cuisine focuses on locally-sourced, seasonal ingredients with a Southern twist. It was the twist—all these southern vegetables prepared in time honored ways that I do not see in California - that hooked me.



Steven came out to the West Sonoma Coast last August to cook for our annual West of West Wine Festival. We spent a week cooking and eating together as we also teamed up for dinners for auction winners and customers at our barn house. One day while chopping garlic he said he loved eggplant. I shrugged in response. Okay, I know I am supposed to love all vegetables but only in rare cases—often when it is handled by someone of middle eastern descent—do I ever get excited by eggplant. Steven was set to change my mind. And he did. I raved as I scooped mouthfuls of his eggplant caponata at the West of West Grand Dinner. My table wiped out our plate and started hunting for lonely dishes sitting unrequited at other tables. Here are a few words about the dish from Steven. You will find this recipe in the cookbook Steven will release next year.

- Andy

“Caponata is a Southern Italian eggplant relish, sometimes savory with capers and olives, sometimes sweet with raisins and sugar. Always sweet and sour, it can be served hot, cold or room temperature, and the flavor profile depends on which region of Italy your from. This is my bastardized version of how I think they would make it in the South. I like eating it cold on toast, warm as a side dish, or underneath griddle chicken. It's delicious with fresh herbs like basil, parsley and mint.

I am fascinated by people's reaction to eggplant. If you ask someone what they think about eggplant, most folks reply ‘meh’. Translation: I don't love it and I don't seek it out. This recipe is a game changer. If you think you don't like eggplant, make this and get back to me.”

- Steven Satterfield

### Main Ingredients

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 6 cups 3/4-inch diced eggplant (about 1 large or 3 small globe eggplants) skin on
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt, divided use
- 6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided use
- 1 cup small-diced yellow onion (1/4-inch pieces)
- 4 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 2 cups diced ripe tomato (1/2-inch pieces), juices and seeds included
- 1/4 cup golden raisins
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tsps. capers
- Chiffonade of parsley and mint leaves for garnish

### Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Place the eggplant in a bowl and toss with 1 tablespoon kosher salt. Transfer eggplant to a wire rack over a pan or paper towels and set bowl aside. Allow salted eggplant to sit for 30 minutes.
2. Do not rinse eggplant. Transfer eggplant back to the bowl and toss with 1/4 cup olive oil. Spread the eggplant in a 2-inch deep roasting pan and cook until slightly caramelized but still intact, with a creamy texture on the inside, almost sticky--anywhere from 45-60 minutes. (Since some pieces will be a little smaller than others, try a random sampling across the pan.)
3. Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil in a frying pan over medium-low heat. Sauté the onion, garlic, thyme and chile flakes with 1 1/2 teaspoons salt until tender, about 8 to 10 minutes.
4. Add the chopped tomatoes and remaining 1 1/2 teaspoon salt. Stir for 3 minutes. Add the raisins, vinegar, honey, and black pepper. Stir to combine. Return to a simmer and allow to cook for 5 minutes.
5. Pour the sauce from the pan over the eggplant and stir to combine. Allow caponata to cool and rest for about 1 hour. Serve at room temperature or reheat before serving; top with fresh parsley and mint. It is even better served the next day.

