



Greetings from the West Sonoma Coast. We are rolling with the punches out here, focusing on pruning in the vineyard, tasting for blends in the winery, and releasing the first batch of 2019 wines to you. Events over the past year have kept us on our toes. Since it is challenging to visit us, we decided to bring the vineyard to you and polished up our presence in print and online. We just launched a new web site which contains a lot of amazing photography (also throughout the newsletter) as well as a short video on the home page that shares our story and philosophy. We updated all of our aging recommendations, wrote new articles, and spiffed things up a touch. We also started to send out content via Instagram (peay_vineyards) and Facebook (@peayvineyards.com) and encourage you to follow us on both as we host interviews and tastings, post videos of the winery and vineyard activity, share articles and recipes, and otherwise attempt to bring more texture to the wines you enjoy. And, please continue to reach out to us with comments or questions on the wines. Despite being unable to travel in 2020, I felt like I met more of our customers through Zoom events and email than I ever had before. We will continue to host Zoom tastings in the spring focused on the newly released wines (see Calendar on web site). Of note, anyone who buys more than two cases total from the spring release is eligible to have Derek or me lead a private Zoom tasting of the new wines this spring. There is a link to book that tasting at our web site and there are only so many hours in a day, so spots will fill up quickly.

We *really* appreciated your support this past year as we navigated the virus, the fires, and our everyday chaos and uncertainty. Thank you. To a new year and a brighter tomorrow.



Andy Peay

THE 2019 VINTAGE

The 2019 growing season was pretty ideal. Due to late spring rains, we experienced a little mildew pressure in March and April. Good weather persisted throughout May and June when the flowers bloom and set fruit and yields were mostly healthy. The summer months were free of heat spikes allowing the fruit to ripen slowly and evenly. This is critical. Cool weather extends hang time and allows more phenolic compounds to evolve in our skins improving complexity and nuance in the wines. The fall was also fairly mild and we were able to pick our fruit methodically in small lots and avoid the crazy late nights we experience in warmer harvests. The real challenge came to us as the Pinot noir and Chardonnay harvest came to an end and we began to pick Syrah.

Northern California is very dry all summer and with climate change, population dispersal, and inadequate forest management, we now have a robust and damaging fall fire season. The threat of wildfires caused our utility, PG&E, to shut down power distribution throughout Sonoma and other counties in October. This meant we would not have power to refrigerate fermenting tanks of Pinot noir or barrels of Chardonnay not to mention operate sorting equipment for Syrah (and Roussanne!) The ever-resourceful Nick Peay had foreseen the potential issue and rented a huge commercial generator and had an electrician hook it up to our winery in anticipation of this event. We seamlessly switched to this power source. When PG&E switched power back on a few weeks later, however, the process did not go as smoothly

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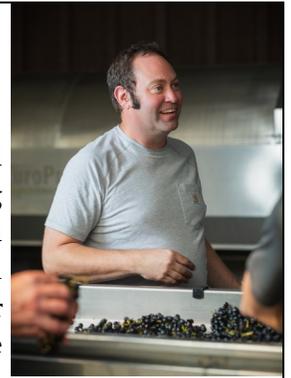
THE 2019 VINTAGE...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and Nick was very severely burned.

The response of the rest of the Peay team in crisis was notable. With one fewer set of vital hands, our production team, led by Vanessa and Orion, locked in and focused on controlling what they could – the harvest process – and let the doctors take care of Nick. We also received support from incredible neighbors like Leland Falk who stepped in to drive our tractor, load fruit, and truck it to the winery. No discussion of payment or desire for self-aggrandizement for their added efforts. It is what you do in a crisis. Turns out Orion is not only a character, but he has character. 2019 proved it.

These wines were borne out of a traumatic experience for Peay but the results were not all bad. Nick has recovered. The 2019 wines are very good. Our gratitude for the ability to grow grapes and make wine that people enjoy is deepened. And we move on. The past year has been challenging for just about everyone. Hopefully, we will emerge stronger with more conviction and, perhaps, more humility as we all look forward to happier days.

And how exactly are the 2019 wines? The 2019s are strutting their stuff out of the gate with true Peay Vineyards expression and a tension and transparency you will find very attractive. Due to the moderate and even weather, the aromas of floral, fruit, and earth are impeccably balanced and on point. Notes on each wine can be found in this newsletter and online and we are always available to answer any specific questions you may have. Just reach out.



Assoc. Winemaker, Orion LeGuyonne. The grease and the glue at Peay



THE 2021 SPRING RELEASE—GET ‘EM FIRST AND WHILE THEY LAST!

COVID changed many things in our lives including our release protocol. Now, upon release, we offer you wines based on your purchasing history and then, after the 1 month release period, we raise our online prices \$2 per bottle to the general buying public. We do not sell these wines into distribution and eventually to restaurants and retail stores for an additional six months. We anticipate high demand as the wines are excellent and have received very positive press by Galloni’s Vinous and Parker’s Advocate. When a wine is sold out, it is gone for good unless we held a few cases back for emergencies. Please contact us and we will see what we can do to find a few bottles.



To order, please use the link in the Release email you received from us on February 4th at 10 a.m. PST. It will send you straight into the Shop section of our web site. Any questions please contact either Andy at andy@peayvineyards.com or Jenn at jenn@peayvineyards.com. **Thank you.**

Don’t forget, if you order more than 2 cases you are welcome to book a **private Zoom tasting** with Derek or Andy.

Also, there will be **three Spring Zoom tastings** on May 6th (Peay), 13th (Peay), and 20th (Cep).



2021 SPRING RELEASE TASTING NOTES

2019 ESTATE VIOGNIER

145 CASES

As anyone who has tried our Viognier can attest, Peay Viognier does not often resemble the typical French or American Viognier in style. This is mostly due to our very cold location for this grape variety. The wine has a more mineral and herbal driven character with high acid and low alcohol and body. Surprisingly, for the first few minutes after popping the cork, typical varietal aromas of popcorn, lychee, and mandarin orange leapt from the bottle and had me scratching my head. When I took a sip, however, white pepper, lemongrass, kafir lime, tart fruit, and candied ginger notes emerged and the aromatic profile and the roundness in the mid-palate was pulled taut by spine-tingling acidity. Yes, this is Peay Viognier. Perhaps a touch more typical fruit profile than normal (more like the 2016 than the herbaceous 2018) but possessing all the characteristics that make our Viognier unique. We want that pure site expression to shine so we age the wine in old, neutral barrels to allow it to take on a little roundness without adding any oak flavors. I have found over the years that due to high acidity and lower alcohol our Viognier will age and be delicious for a much longer time than most Viognier. You can drink this now and for the next 3-5 years without any concern of fading. *\$46/btl during release, \$48/btl after.*



2019 SONOMA COAST CHARDONNAY

575 CASES

The 2019 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay walks the line between two worlds; capturing the silky texture and pleasure of the New World and the structure and verve of the Old World. The result is a seductive, well-balanced Chardonnay that has intensity, nuance, and depth, and does not teeter into an austere or angular experience. The 2019 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay is a blend of 80% Peay Estate fruit and 20% Searby fruit from Occidental in the southern West Sonoma Coast.

Currently, the nose features youthful high-toned notes of crème brûlée, biscuit, and resin that interplay with a white floral aroma typical of Peay Chardonnay. With a year or two more in bottle, these aromas will coalesce and move to the background allowing the more citrus and stony aromas to come to the fore as they have in the 2016 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay. The mid-palate is silky without heaviness and emphasizes mineral flavors leaving a somewhat salty and long after-taste. As is true with its cousins in the Pinot noir realm, you will receive far more complexity and quality from this Chardonnay than from its counterparts in the Old World. Can you find white Burgundy of this complexity, breed, and age-ability for \$43? Not that I have found. *\$43/btl during release, \$45/btl after.*



2019 SONOMA COAST PINOT NOIR

1,300 CASES

The 2019 continues a string of superb bottlings of the Sonoma Coast Pinot noir. This is not surprising as it is made from 100% Estate barrels of Pinot noir. Nevertheless, there is something about the aroma of the 2019 that I find particularly alluring. Bright, red fruit aromas of pomegranate, cherry skin, and raspberry interplay with floral sandalwood, hibiscus, and Rooibos tea notes. There is fruit and floral impact but the wine is not heavy or juicy, just intense. That is uncommon as floral wines tend to be “lighter” and yet this has notable depth of flavor. The finish has our signature elements of bark and black tea persisting along with the fruit notes. The 2018 and 2019 vintages were both very good growing seasons and the wines reflect their specific differences. The 2019 vintage made wines that are bright and lifted while offering a lot of pleasure while the 2018s tend to have more depth and fatness from a slightly warmer growing season. The 2019 Sonoma Coast may not have quite as long a life as the 2018 but it is more captivating on release and, in both cases, delicious. *\$43/btl during release, \$45/btl after.*



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2021 SPRING RELEASE TASTING NOTES...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

2019 SAVOY PINOT NOIR, ANDERSON VALLEY

335 CASES

Savoy Vineyard in the Anderson Valley of Mendocino County is one of California's most highly regarded, classic Pinot noir vineyards and for good reason. The wines are seductive and have concentration and depth while speaking loudly of their specific place. Though Savoy wines can be brooding and dark, the Peay Savoy always has a little floral lift due to the block of old vine Calera we blend with the Pommard and 115. The 2019 Savoy has an abundance of blackberry, dark cherry, and plum aromas and remains light on its feet due to good acidity. The "Mendocino spice" folks talk about in Anderson Valley Pinot noir has a turned earth and brown spice component that counter-balances the fruit expression of Savoy. I think Vanessa's ability to keep the wine upbeat and unencumbered by extraction and heavy-handed winemaking allows the essence of the Savoy Vineyard to shine in the wine. This 2019 Savoy is offering a lot of enjoyment right now. It may evolve in bottle a little more quickly relative to the Estate wines but due to good acidity and silky tannins, it will be great for years to come. *\$59/btl during release, \$61/btl after.*

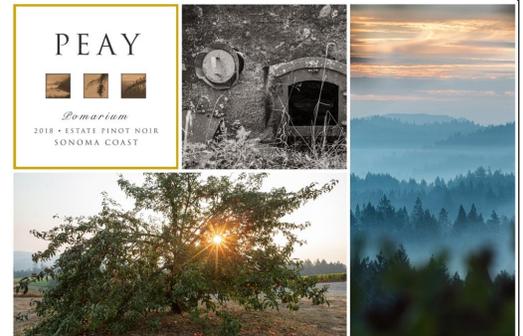


2019 POMARIUM ESTATE PINOT NOIR

540 CASES

When I tasted the 2019 Pomarium for the first time since bottling, I was really jazzed and a little surprised. Over the past 15 vintages, the Pomarium blend has become more distinct and, well, "better" as the vines have reached their middle age. The features Vanessa looks for in the grape skins (tannin development, complexity and diversity of fruit aromas, color) now occur at lower sugar levels and higher acidity. There is an emerging elegance to Pomarium that did not exist back in the aughts. The 2019 moves further along that progression even more rapidly due to the moderate, cool weather.

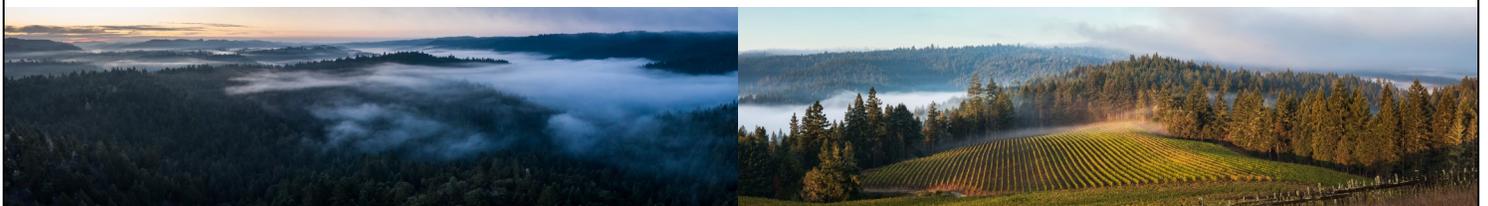
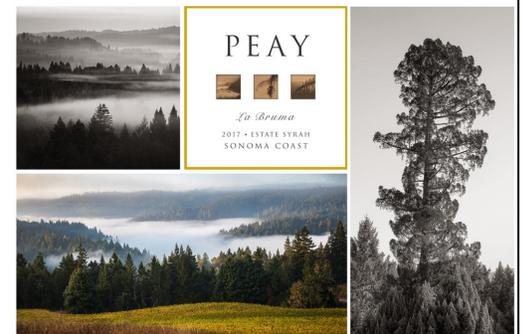
There is a livelier note in the 2019 with red fruits peeking out instead of only the usual purple and black fruits. The palate is velvety, and floral aromas of jasmine tea and rose dance around a supple mid-palate. It is not as large framed or compact as Pomarium often presents but has good depth and persistence. The 2019 is drinking well right now as the empty bottle at our tasting made evident but you can age it for years/decades. *\$59/btl during release, \$61/btl after.*



2018 LA BRUMA ESTATE SYRAH

315 CASES

Woo hoo! It is no secret we are fans of cold climate Syrah. And here it is, the best Syrah we have made (at least upon release...and so far!) The nose is knockout gorgeous. Cooling mint, herbal, and graphite aromas waft over a lavender, Chinese plum sauce, and blackberry core. As I took my first few sips, my toes tapped and my knees bounced. This is just about as much fun as you are allowed to have at a seated dinner. A dense, but fresh, savory mid-palate somewhat akin to the aromas in a lamb shank jus grabs you by the belly. There is so much depth without being heavy or cloying. As it is a Peay Syrah, not surprisingly, the wine clocks in at 13.0% alcohol with superb acidity that will ensure a long life ahead of it. But, I am fairly certain I will not have any of this wine ten years from now as I will either have drunk it all or failed to resist showing it off to friends and customers. You like cold climate Syrah? Drink this wine. *\$54/btl during release, \$56/btl after.*





WE LAUGHED.
WE CRIED.
WE ZOOMED.
we made it.

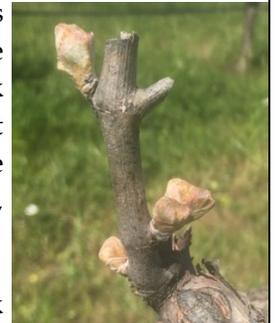
It's fine.
We're fine.
Everything
is fine.

'TIS A SEASON FOR

hope

Reviewing the holiday cards we received this past year, I came upon a few above that captured what 2020 was all about. What a year! In March, we all took a seat on a long, never-ending roller coaster of emotions. And, here we are, back in Spring again, full of hope and promise that we will emerge from the ashes of 2020, born anew. Some are making plans to travel, see family, and dine out once vaccinated. All of us are desperately waiting for life to regain some kind of normalcy. I know I am.

I've heard people say that being in quarantine and staying and working at home is like living in the movie Groundhog Day where TV weatherman Phil Connors experiences the same day over and over again: each day the same as the last. Even though some aspects of a farmer's daily life during this pandemic felt like a repeat of the day before, we experience the passage of time with the growth of our vines and the development of our grapes. The daily scenes of quarantine - working and schooling from home within the same four walls with the same view - is starkly contrasted to the vines perennial growing cycle. Nature keeps marching on unaware of the quotidian goings-on of us humans. The vines were not concerned that I was really bad at teaching Common Core second grade math, or that I couldn't find toilet paper for the umpteenth time. I actually took comfort in seeing the vines change while we felt like the earth stood still. I recognized and felt fortunate that my work routinely brought me outside into the vast open air where I could take social distancing to an extreme: just me and 280 acres of forest and vineyard. So, in that sense, things felt somewhat normal: we just kept farming grapes in the vineyard in 2020, as usual.



As the quarantine set in the vines began to wake up from dormancy and disinterestedly started their yearly cycle

As Spring transitioned into Summer, the not normal became the new normal as travel for work and travel for pleasure were cancelled; as were graduations, weddings, birthdays, bar mitzvahs, funerals and, well, basically everything. Angst and malaise settled upon us like a fog even though we tried to jazz up the routine with explorations into bread baking, socially distanced Zoom get-togethers, and forays into Tik-tok, all with variable levels of success. A bright spot

was our newfound way to connect and assemble with friends and customers. Conducting Zoom tastings online was novel and many of you joined us in this interesting way of tasting and talking about wine. For some of you, this might even be preferable to tasting in person--your own couch is certainly more comfy than standing in our chilly cellar or enduring the stomach churning drive out to our vineyard!



The grapevine flowers bloomed as they normally do at the transition from late spring to early summer. At this juncture, Mother Nature spared us the rain and cold that could threaten the crop. We adapted to our new situation as we required masks to visit a grape grower (in this case Bob Hopkins who grows the grapes for our Cep Rose and Sauvignon blanc) but not the actual grapes--although I find that a mask helps with my pollen allergies.

We found that, in some respects, our adaptation wasn't all that hard. We farmers are somewhat used to things being beyond our control. Weather dictates whether we have a good-sized crop, a small crop, or no crop at all. Even if we do have a crop, in the bat of an eye, all can be destroyed by the elements. Mother Nature can seem awfully cruel at times but, in actuality, she is basically indifferent. Dealing with

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EVERYTHING IS FINE...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Mother Nature during the growing season is challenging enough as a winegrower but doing it during a pandemic proved to be particularly knotty and, at times, we felt quite helpless. Even though we try to plan for challenging scenarios when it comes to the grape harvest, this year we were thrown some sinking curve balls.

In the early summer, after we had completed many rounds of interviewing to hire our interns for the upcoming vintage, we were faced with the unexpected presidential proclamation to ban incoming workers and students on student visas. This meant that the talented interns we had planned to host from Australia and New Zealand on an agricultural educational exchange at our winery were going to be denied entry. So, we had to start all over from square one on our interviews and hiring. And unlike in other work scenarios, the grapes didn't stop on their path of growth and development. They steadily marched on whether we had interns or not. Harvest was coming.

When I say that one of the hardest things about living under the shroud of the pandemic is home schooling, I think I will get more than a few loud, emphatic "Amen's!" from the parents among us. Like many of you, I was relieved when my sons' school laid out a very careful and detailed plan to return to in-person learning. This meticulously orchestrated back to school week coincided, however, with our week of bottling which also coincided with one of the hottest and longest heatwaves we have ever experienced. Under the threat of rolling blackouts cutting off power during bottling (a *very* problematic scenario), I convinced the bottling line and the rest of our crew to show up before dawn to finish each day's bottling run before the power shut-downs. The extreme heat had already hampered our progress by causing the labelling machinery to burn out, a dubious "first" for the bottling vendor. But, we rolled with the punches, jab stepped, ducked, swerved. And, then, bam! Wicked thunder and dry lightning caused wildfires to break out



The view from the golf course up the hill from my house in Healdsburg the week of bottling.



The second hotter but thankfully shorter heat wave hit the winery two and a half weeks later.



The new normal: packing a "go bag" for evacuation. My son saw that I didn't have a stuffie for myself and packed one for me in my bag.

simultaneously all over California causing evacuations, longer power outages, and the unravelling of the first week of school. I now know what triggers anxiety in me: checking evacuation maps and watching the hot zones increase in size and creep nearer to our house with each passing hour as we attempt to finish bottling, find child care, plan for an evacuation, and, oh, did I forget to mention pick grapes from the Hopkins Vineyard in the Russian River Vineyard for our Rosé? So, again, the grapes keep moving along no matter what is happening in our world. Alas, let's not

forget there is a pandemic raging with fellow humans becoming sick and some succumbing to the virus. Damn.

After that turbulent week, I narrowly escaped with my sanity and turned my attention to preparing the winery for harvest. Due to the heat spell accelerating ripening and our boys' school suddenly reverting back to remote learning, I found myself not yet fully staffed both at the winery and on the home front as the "troops" had not yet arrived let alone "been readied", so to speak. After working for many months seeing no one other than my husband and my surrogate husband, Orion, I was quickly, and all at once, facing the various logistical and practical challenges of assembling and working with a team under Covid-safe guidelines. As we were rapidly ramping up for the onslaught of grapes, the second heatwave hit just as both my kids went into revolt, as did the two helpers I had hired to assist us with remote learning and childcare. I don't know if it was the added duress of everything exacerbated by remote learning but they all cried mutiny. At the parent-teacher Back-To-School Night, a fellow winemaker parent blurted out with a quavering voice, "This is the hardest vintage of my life!" And I, who probably had 30 vintages to her well experienced 15-20 years, felt *exactly* the same way. I typed her a private message in the chat, "I know what you are going through". Earlier that day a winemaker who had been making wine for forty years shared with me similar sentiments and it helped to know I was not alone. We were all bringing in grapes as fast as was humanly possible bracing for the next shoe to drop. It wasn't just one thing or the other: the oppressive heatwaves, **Continued on page 7**



VISIT THE WINERY OR VINEYARD

We encourage you to come visit us this year at the winery or vineyard. It is a special experience that is only available to our Mailing List customers and, for the first time ever, on weekends.

This is not a cattle call tasting in a room with a bar led by someone who knows little about the wines. We are scheduling private tastings for 1-2 hours with either advanced sommelier Derek Reijmer, the farmer/owner Nick Peay, or associate winemaker Orion LeGuyonne. Fellow Peay customers will tell you it is a bit of a hike out to the vineyard but well worth it for time spent at a table out on the lawn eating cheese, drinking wine, and taking in the view. At the winery, we also meet by appointment during the week and weekends for a tasting in the cellar or on the crush pad depending on COVID circumstances. You can book your tasting at www.calendly.com/peay-tastings. Any questions, please email Derek at Derek@peayvineyards.com. We look forward to hosting you soon.



EVERYTHING IS FINE...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

or the fires bringing back the trauma of past fires, or the absurdist torture that is home schooling, or that we were working 16-20 hours a day as we do during harvest but under circumstances that were just not normal, or...It seemed as if the culmination of everything was snowballing into a giant super nova of what everyone had eventually referred to simply as "2020", as if that in itself explained everything. And yet, grapes needed to be made into wine.

I, frankly, was kind of tired of being resilient, something that we have been constantly called upon to be the last couple of years. There was a scene that unpredictably played in my mind of the movie Forrest Gump where Vietnam War vet Lt. Dan was lashed to the mast of a boat in the middle of a squall raving and screaming at the giant waves and battering rain with delirious fervor punctuating every word with a pause for emphasis, "You'll...never...sink...this...boat!" Although I would have done anything for a real rainstorm at that point, I was gladdened to rely on my associate winemaker Orion's words of encouragement that he likes to say when things look daunting, "C'mon you got this!" And, indeed, WE did have it. So, even though I felt like Monty Python's limbless Black Knight cockily threatening to bite his adversary's ankles, I rallied the kids, the sitters taking care of them, the winery crew, and most importantly, myself, and trumpeted, "We got this!" No matter what the 2020 vintage and/or anything else 2020 planned to throw our way, WE GOT IT.

I remind myself that even though 2020 is over, the end of the year marks nothing more than the end of a calendar year. The fight against this pandemic, and our unpredictable weather, is not yet over. Even though the vintage, and alas, the whole year, was full of challenges related to Mother Nature and other things beyond our control, making wine entails nowhere near the level of duress and danger that our medical workers go through to care for those who have contracted the COVID-19 virus. People have died by the disease and their families live with the memory of its effects. I am so grateful that I am personally healthy as is my family and that we can even hope for better days ahead. The vines will keep growing according to their cycle and with hope we will be there for another year, another vintage. It's fine. We're fine. Everything is fine.



I forget that it is hard to taste wine through a mask!



Ever thankful that Nick is with me once more to truck the grapes.



STEELHEAD TROUT

I have gone out to dinner only once this past year. It was a remarkable night with my wife spent on the beautiful and well-spaced outdoor patio of the Morris restaurant in San Francisco. A fishmonger had brought up spiny lobster, uni, and other delicacies of the sea for Gavin, the chef, to prepare. Despite this dearth of eating out occasions, I am not cooking at home more often during lockdown. I am ordering take out 1-2 times per week, supporting local restaurants and, well, seeking to spice up the household menu as I have grown a little bored of my cooking. But, ten months in, take-out is also beginning to grate on me. So, I am experimenting. I know it is not popular of me to say, but God I hate baking. All the precision and measuring; not how I like to cook, it turns out. I do like pan frying, though!



Below is an easy dish to prepare that was well received by my in-house panel of critics (wife, mom, and two pre-teen boys). Really, the most important ingredient is the steelhead (aka Rainbow) trout. It has a special texture that is silky and buttery. Farmed steelhead is fine, in fact, preferable, in some ways (gets the Green Rating from Seafood Watch). It is widely available in the SF Bay Area but I'm not sure about the rest of the U.S. For seasoning, I like curry, harissa, and related Indian and Middle Eastern spices and use madras curry (the yellow one) below. You can swap it out for a more herbal preparation if you prefer. I served this with braised and roasted fennel which is a snap and a white wine friendly side dish. I included that recipe below, as well. You can riff on this base recipe by adding orange juice, saffron, pine nuts, pomegranate, Parmesan, etc. To round out the plate serve new peas or French green beans when they come back into the market, and maybe some farro as a filler. Oh, and the Viognier and the Chardonnay would be delicious with this meal.

TROUT

Trout fillet—1 per person

Eggs—2

Splash of water

Panko flakes—enough to dredge

Madras Curry—a lot more than you think

Cayenne —just a pinch to liven flavors

Salt—flake, not iodized

1. Crack the 2 eggs in a flat baking dish and add a splash of water and whisk to make a wash. In another flat baking/casserole dish, mix the panko flakes, curry, cayenne and salt. Dredge the fillet through the panko and press a little on the flakes so they adhere well. Do on both sides.
2. Heat the oil in a non-stick pan (or regular but non-stick is ideal as easy to flip the fish with a snap of the wrist and easy to clean.)
3. Fry for about 1-2 minutes on each side depending on the thickness of the fillet. Be watchful not to overcook as you want to preserve that silky and buttery interior which should look a little pink and slick like medium rare salmon. Top with lemon wedge.

BRAISED FENNEL

2-3 medium to large Fennel

Butter—lots

White wine

Water

OJ (optional)

Parmesan (optional)

1. Cut off the stalks of the fennel where they meet the bulb and, if green tops, keep for later. Slice the fennel bulb from top to bottom parallel with the stem into 1/4 to 1/2" inch rounds. Cut out the hard triangular-shaped foot at the base of each round leaving just enough to hold the fennel petals together.
2. Turn the oven to 400 degrees. Turn burner to medium high under pan. Arrange the slices one layer thick in your cast iron or other oven-ready pan. Cut the butter into chunks and drop in the spaces between slices. Use enough so the butter bubbles and covers the entire pan surface when you shake it. Cook until the down side is golden brown with a few lightly burnt areas. Flip and do the same on the second side.
3. When second side is browned, add a 1/2 cup of white wine, preferably one without too much oak on it, freshness is not important (so last night's wine is great.) Add enough water to the pan to go about 3/4 of the way up the fennel. If interested, add orange juice now as well. Cover with tin foil, put in the oven.
4. After 20 minutes or so, check the fennel. Should be soft but not mushy. Remove the foil and turn the heat up to 500. Cook for 10 minutes to crisp the topside. If desired, add grated parmesan and brown.
5. Remove from the oven, arrange the pieces on a plate and chop the fennel tops over the braised fennel to add some licorice zing.

