

Patty's Pinot Closet Newsletter

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San Luis Obispo County

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Patty's Pinot Closet publishes this newsletter on the enjoyment and appreciation of Pinot Noir. We welcome you to enjoy the newsletters and to share them with others. This, my seventh newsletter, covers San Luis Obispo County Pinot Noirs from California. Tasting occurred at wineries, wine festivals, and during very lovely dinners and lunches.

COPIA Features Oregon Wine and Food during July Includes many special wine tastings, lunches and dinners. I've listed a few below. See the [COPIA](http://www.copia.com) website for details.

- Daily in July - Wine & food demonstrations
 - Oregon Wine Basics -- From the Willamette to Walla Walla, learn the ins and outs of the Oregon wine industry. Includes one taste.
 - Life in Vine: A Year in the Vineyards -- A 50-minute visual presentation exploring the year-long cycle of growing wine in the Willamette Valley. "*[this] loving tribute to the Oregon vineyards is lushly photographed amid rolling green hillsides, fog-shrouded slopes, brooding skies and breathtaking sunsets.*" David Shaw, LA Times
- July 10 - 12:00 - 2:00 pm - Oregon Vintners Panel Discussion
- July 10 - 2:00 - 4:30 pm - Oregon Walk-Around Winetasting
- July 18 - 1:00 - 2:30 pm - [Oregon Abundance](http://www.oregonabundance.com) with Rolland Wesen Cooking Demonstration

San Luis Obispo County Food and Wine

Food At the last Harvest Celebration Annual Fall Event in Edna Valley, I enjoyed a ragout of mushrooms served over polenta by A&M Mushrooms. I came home and experimented using shiitake mushrooms cooked in Pinot Noir and served them over polenta. I'm especially fond of shiitake mushrooms and have found the dried shiitakes at Trader Joes are especially good if you can't find fresh. The dried shiitake seem to impart a more intense flavor.

Recipes

Shiitake-Pinot Noir Ragout My recipe for [Shiitake-Pinot Noir Ragout](#) uses both dried and fresh shiitake, however, you can use all of one or the other. I use a small amount of both Black Currant Conserve and Vinegar in this recipe to add a lovely depth of complexity. The Shiitake stand up very well to the intense flavor of this recipe. I've served it on polenta, toast, noodles, and croutons and I prefer the polenta.



Shiitake Mushroom Ragout over Polenta

Spice & Herb Blends, Rubs and Seasonings Cook Book Spices and herbs have a limited shelf life. I therefore believe that rather than buying expensive spice and herb blends, it's better to mix them up as you need them. I've made my collection of more than 40 recipes available for sale at [Patty's Pinot Closet website](http://www.pattyspinotcloset.com).

Restaurants Near Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley The Olde Port Inn. We asked the locals where to eat in the SLO region and every last one responded with [The Olde Port Inn](#) at the end of the 3rd pier in Port San Luis, Avila Beach, CA. The glass table tops allow diners to look at the fish in the water under the pier. I enjoyed salmon with the See Canyon Pinot Noir. Our server confided that it was the proprietor's own label.

Restaurants Near Paso Robles [Bistro Laurent](#). The locals here all steered us to Bistro Laurent and we enjoyed this country French restaurant very much. We sat outside on a warm balmy night and drank pinot noir chosen from their very good wine list containing many local pinot noirs. Located just across the downtown park in Paso Robles from the Paso Robles Inn. 1202 Pine St. • (805) 226-8191.

[Paris Restaurant & Wine Bar](#). We enjoyed a lovely lunch at the Paris Restaurant of paté and salad with crusty French bread. Located just off the park in the center of historical Paso Robles. 1221 Park Street, Paso Robles, Phone: (805) 227-4082.

I first became aware of the Paso Robles area as a child when my Aunt and Uncle were guests of William Randolph Hearst at the nearby Hearst Castle. Today the Hearst Castle is a California State Park and a wonderful place to visit while in the area. Not far from Paso Robles and the Hearst Castle, on the coast at Cambria, CA, you'll find one of my favorite restaurants, [The Hamlet](#) at Moonstone Gardens. Whenever my Husband and I drive the Pacific Coast Highway, HWY 1, we stop for lunch and have the best calamari in the world.

Accommodations near Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley [The Cliffs Resort](#) in Shell Beach, CA. Located on the cliffs overlooking Shell Beach, we enjoyed a beautiful room overlooking the large pool and the beach. Before dinner we sat in their great bar watching the sunset and enjoyed a local pinot noir.

Accommodations near Paso Robles [Paso Robles Inn](#). Located in downtown Paso Robles across from the historic old park. Updated rooms surround the beautiful gardens and stream in the center of this beautiful old inn. Restaurants such as Bistro Laurent and Paris are a short walk across the historic park in the center of Paso Robles. 1103 Spring Street, Paso Robles, CA 93446, (805) 238-2660, (800) 676-1713, Fax (805) 238-4707.

Edna Valley and Arroyo Grande Valley Wine Events

World of Pinot Noir. Last March the [Fourth Annual World of Pinot Noir](#) occurred at The Cliffs Resort in Shell Beach, CA. More than 120 wineries poured their pinot noir into Reidel glasses. Pinot Noir producers came from Australia, New Zealand, Oregon, Burgundy, Germany, and California. Tastings, seminars, lunches and dinners filled the two days. This year Kent Torrey of the Cheese Shop in Carmel presented a Pinot Noir and Cheese Seminar. The event ended with a Santa Barbara-style Paulee dinner at Au Bon Climat.

The Fifth Annual World of Pinot Noir has just been announced for Friday and Saturday, March 4 - 5, 2005 at The Cliffs Resort, Shell Beach, CA.

Central Coast Wine Classic July 15-18 in Shell Beach, CA. A spectacular annual wine celebration, to attend call (805) 544-1285 for [details](#) on events.

14th Annual Harvest Celebration November 4 - 7, 2004 ~ SLO Vintner's & Growers Association's [Grand Tasting](#) includes a Live and Silent Auction. The weekend offers a Farmers Market Tour and Progressive Food & Wine Pairing, a Winemakers' Dinner, and a Farmers Market Food Fair & Cooking Demonstration. Please call 805-541-5868 for reservations and tickets!



SLO 13th Annual Harvest Celebration

Paso Robles Wine Country Wine [Events](#)

Windward Vineyard Pinot Noir & Mushroom Pairing Sat. June 19, 2004, 11 am-5pm in Tasting Room. A vertical tasting of [Windward Vineyard](#) Pinot Noir paired with a variety of mushroom hors d'oeuvres.

[2nd Annual Wine & Blues Festival](#) July 15, 2004 WestFest 2004, Paso Robles, CA

2004 Paso Robles Harvest Wine Tour October 15, 16 & 17, 2004. [Details](#)

23rd Annual Paso Robles Wine Festival Mid May 2005, includes Winemaker Dinners and Winery Events. [Details](#)

Paso Robles Wine University September 18-19, 2004, Courses, tours, and tasting. Learn winemaking, wine tasting and viticulture from the vintners and growers of Paso Robles Wine Country. Designed to offer students a hands-on interactive program about wine and viticulture, PRWU explores every aspect of wine production from terroir to taste. [Details](#)

[Click Here](#) for a complete list of Pinot Wine Festivals.

San Luis Obispo County Pinot Noirs

SLO contains two distinct wine regions – one in the Northern section of the county (Paso Robles) and one in the Southern section of the county, see map on the right, (Edna Valley, Arroyo Grande Valley, Avila Valley and Nipomo). San Luis Obispo County vineyards increased 72 percent in the last ten years. That's one of the most dramatic increases of any wine region in America. [Click Here](#) for a SLO county wine map.

Edna Valley AVA: Franciscan padres first planted grapes at Mission San Miguel Archangel in downtown San Luis Obispo in the 1780s. Located halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, the valleys have East - West orientations with a maritime influence. Loam and clay topsoil overlay calcareous marine deposits promoting complex flavors. Marine air flowing directly from the Pacific Ocean creates a long, cool growing season. Close by are Avila Valley and Nipomo which are not yet AVAs.

Arroyo Grande Valley AVA: About eight miles from the Pacific Ocean and just south of the Edna Valley, the valley runs northeast to southwest opening directly on the sea. It is one of the coolest and most temperate areas in California with steep hillsides and good drainage. These ideal conditions result in a long and mild growing season, with bud break typically occurring in



SLO AVAs.

mid-February, flowering in early May, and harvest in mid-September.

San Luis Obispo Vintners and Growers Association represents viticultural interest in the [Edna and Arroyo Grande Valley](#).

Paso Robles AVA: As you enter the Paso Robles Wine Growing area from the East you encounter a large fountain with flowing red or white wine (water). I'm not sure what determines the fountain's water color but I've seen it both ways. Located in the Northern part of SLO County, the Paso Robles AVA's reputation centers around Rhone Varietals. In 1882, rancher Andrew York established York Mountain Winery – the first commercial winery in the Paso Robles region. The oldest winery in continuous operation in this county.

Watch for the Pinot Noir coming out of the area west of Paso Robles. Here Pacific Ocean breezes come through the Templeton Gap in the Santa Lucia Mountain Chain. Temperatures drop as much as 50 degrees in a day. Here, you'll also find rocky limestone and sloping well-drained soil.



Opolo Vineyards Pinot Noir on a hillside West of Paso Robles

Dr. Stanley Hoffman, assisted by Andre Tchelistcheff, brought fame to this area with the Hoffman Mountain Ranch (HMR) Pinot Noir in the 1970s. In Burgundy in 1976 or 1977, a blind tasting occurred between the HMR Pinot Noir and Domaine de la Romanée-Conti (DLR) Burgundies and the HMR won. They repeated the tasting in New York and once again the HMR won. Today, the HMR vines belong to Adelaida Cellars.

A Magnitude 6.5 earthquake hit the Paso Robles area on Monday, December 22, 2003. Two people lost their lives and about 40 buildings collapsed or were severely damaged. The Bistro Laurent was closed for two months and relocated to a nearby winery while repairs were made. Many wineries suffered loss of inventory as barrels tumbled and bottles broke.

[More Information](#) on the Paso Robles Wine Area.

All of the wines listed in the newsletters are listed on the [website](#). Where possible, prices listed below have been taken from the winery website or other retail sources and are included for relative comparison only. Your price may be different.



Fountain as you enter the Paso Robles AVA from the east.



2003 Earthquake Aftermath
Photo by: Joshua Marrow, Simpson Gumpertz Heger

Winery	Year	Price	Rank	Description
Chumeia Vineyards Garys' Vineyard, Santa Lucia Highlands	2000	28.00	96	Inky, Ruby, Garnet, complex, Nose: Earthy, Smokey, Toasty, Blackberry, Mouth: Dark Fruit, Silky
Chumeia Vineyards Garys' Vineyard, Santa Lucia Highlands	2001	28.00	96	Med Intensity, Ruby, Garnet, Nose: Earthy, Smokey, Toasty, Blackberry, Mouth: Dark Fruit, Mushroom, Velvety
Adelaida Cellars HMR Estate	2000	45.00	95	Big bodied, dark colored intense wine with aromas of black fruits. Big and velvety in the mouth with a long lovely aftertaste.

Windward Vineyard Monopole Estate	2001	30.00	93	Med Intensity, Ruby color with aromas of Spice and Black Cherry. Earthy, Silky, Mushroom, Dark Fruit in the mouth with a lovely complex finish.
Windward Vineyard Monopole Estate	2002	30.00	93	Med Intensity, Cherry color with aromas of Spice and Black Cherry. Velvety, Earthy, Black Cherry tastes with an elegant complex long finish.
Au Bon Climat Arroyo Grande Valley, Talley Rosemarys' Vineyard	2001	34.00	92	Full bodied, ruby-garnet color with black cherry and spice aromas. Wonderful wine
Kynsi Winery Paragon Vineyard	2000		92	Dense ruby-garnet wine with aromas of berries, cherries and cinnamon. Long toasty oak aftertaste
Chimere Winery Paragon Vineyard	2001	30.00	91	Full bodied ruby-garnet color with aromas of cherries, raspberries, cranberries, and spice. Silky in the mouth with good acid. Nice long aftertaste.
Domaine Alfred Califa	2001	42.00	91	Full bodied and ruby-garnet color. Aromas of earthy black cherries, licorice and tea. Long finish
Opolo Vineyards Estate	2002	32.00	91	Dense, cherry color, with aromas of chocolate, earthy, and Black Cherry. Tastes of velvety dark fruit and spice.
Alapay Cellars	2001	18.00	90	Medium bodied, ruby-garnet color with black cherry and spice aromas. Tastes of smokey cherries, well balanced velvety wine.
Harrow Cellars Avila Valley Vineyards	2002		90	Medium bodied ruby-garnet color with mint coming through in the aromas. Well balanced with a pleasant aftertaste.
Laetitia Vineyard & Winery Les Galets Vineyard	2001	60.00	90	Light bodied ruby color with earthy aromas of cherries and berries. Cherries, raspberries, and pepper in the mouth with a medium finish.
See Canyon Vineyards Arroyo Grande Valley	2001	20.00	90	Medium intensity garnet color with raspberries, carmel, butter with a spicy finish
Stephen Ross	2001	28.00	90	Medium bodied dark ruby wine with flavors of blueberries and oak. Soft in the mouth with a nice berry finish.
Talley Vineyards Rincon Vineyard	2001	45.00	90	Aromas of cherries, cranberries and spice. Big in the mouth with good tannins and a long aftertaste.
Windward Vineyard Monopole Estate	1999	30.00	90	Med Intensity, Ruby-Garnet wine with Earthy, Toasty, Black Cherry aromas. Complex satin tastes with a long lovely finish.
Domaine Alfred Chamisal Vineyard, Estate Bottled	2001	28.00	89	Fruity, floral aromas with tastes of cherry and blackberry. Nice medium length aftertaste
Edna Valley Vineyard Paragon Vineyard	2002	20.00	89	Medium bodied, ruby-garnet color with aromas of earthy cherry, spice. Silky and elegant on the palate with a nice aftertaste.
Savannah-Chanelle Central Coast	2001	35.00	89	Medium intensity ruby color with black cherries and earthy mushroomy aromas. Tastes of velvety black fruit with a good balance and a very long aftertaste.
Anapamu Cellars Monterey County, Olson Ranch	2002	16.00	88	Medium bodied with a black cherry, earthy aromas and tastes.
Baileyana Winery	2001	23.00	88	Medium bodied, ruby colored, black cherry, berry and spice aromas. Silky in the mouth.
Chumeia Vineyards Domaine Alfred	2002	16.00	88	Ruby, Med Intensity, Nose: Smokey, Black Cherry, Mouth: Silky, Black Cherry

HRM Rex Goliath SLO, The World's Largest Rooster	2001	6.95	88	Full bodied dark colored with big velvety taste. Good buy for an everyday wine.
Meridian Vineyards SBC	2002	16.00	88	Medium bodied with aromas of black cherry and pepper. Big in the mouth with flavors of black cherry and vanilla with a medium length aftertaste.
Windward Vineyard Monopole Estate	2000	30.00	88	Lt Intensity, Ruby-Garnet color with aromas of Spice and Black Cherry. Velvety tastes of earthy dark fruit and hints of spice.
Adelaida Cellars HMR Estate	2002	25.00	87	Light bodied with cherry, earthy, and Asian spice aromas.
Laetitia Vineyard & Winery Estate	2001	25.00	87	Medium bodied with plum and spicey clove aromas. Velvety black cherry on the palate. A long smooth aftertaste.
Lane Tanner Winery Lano Rouge, SLO	2002	20.00	87	Full bodied dark colored blend of Pinot Noir, Syrah, and Valdigue (a main component of Gamay Beaujolais). Aromas of raspberries, roses, brown sugar, and watermelon. Tastes of black fruit, black pepper and licorice. Long firm aftertaste.
Talley Vineyards	2001	28.00	87	Aromas of earthy black cherry, spice and tea. Tastes silky with a nice finish.
Wild Horse Central Coast	2001	22.00	87	Medium intensity with ruby-garnet color. Aromas of blackberry, spice, and earth. Cherry flavors and a medium finish.
York Mountain Winery	2000	25.00	87	Light bodied, ruby-garnet color with aromas of earthy cherries, perfume and spice. Velvety red fruit on the palate.
Zenaida Cellars Estate	2001	22.00	87	Medium bodied, ruby-garnet color with aromas of cherries and spice. Tastes of velvety black cherries.
Mirassou Winery Central Coast	2002	10.00	86	Light bodied, ruby-garnet color with aromas of strawberry, cherries and plums. Tastes of red berries and earthy, smokey characteristics. Short length aftertaste
Wolff Vineyards	2002	24.50	86	Medium bodied, ruby-garnet color with strawberry aromas and nice body and balance.
York Mountain Winery	2001	15.00	86	Light bodied, ruby-garnet color with aromas of Mushroom and Cherry. Tastes of red fruit.
Zenaida Cellars Estate	1999	21.00	86	Medium bodied, ruby-garnet color with aromas of black cherry and spice. Earthy, velvety, black cherry tastes.
Chumeia Vineyards Central Coast	2001	16.00	85	Lt Intensity, Ruby, Garnet, Nose: Raspberry, Cherry, Mouth: Red Fruit
Wedell Cellars Edna Valley	2001	33.00	85	Medium bodied wine with berry flavors and bouquet.

Corrections: These corrections have been added to the cumulative review list on the [website](#).

In the Victoria, Australia Newsletter, Vol 2, #3, the Portree 2003 should have been 2002 and the cellar door price is A\$35.00.

Subsequent Newsletters: will cover Tasmania, Sonoma, Napa, and other Pinot Noir growing areas.

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