

WINE News

New Wonders, Old Favorites & Staff Highlights from
California's Central Coast...



JUNE 3, 2013 FEATURES

- 1 Staff Highlights: Pinot Noir
- 2 Introducing Saarloos & Sons!
- 3 Old Favorites: Clendenen Family Vineyards

Rediscovering the Central Coast

by Bryan Brick

K&L's Domestic team has been traveling a lot more frequently. We realized that while we continue to offer amazing wines for unbeatable prices, we needed to get back out into wine country and spend some time with the producers we love. It's part of our ongoing effort to cultivate the relationships that K&L has formed over the last thirty-plus years in the business.

What follows in these pages are highlights from my latest staff trip down the Central Coast, accompanied by Jeff Garneau, Sarah Covey, and Jim Boyce from the Redwood City store. Nothing beats the experience of walking the vineyards and meeting the passionate folks behind the wines to recharge one's dedication to our work at K&L.

In the course of our travels we discovered an array of new and exciting wines—some from old favorites, others from new wonders—and our

enthusiasm about them is palatable. From the fun and delicious wines of family-oriented Saarloos & Sons to the pure and focused wines of veterans like Brewer-Clifton, the Central Coast has it all. Do you love well made Italian varietals? We believe we've found the best California has to offer in Palmina. If crisp Riesling and Grüner Veltliner is your bag then the wines from Tatomer are sure to impress.

As you will see, we couldn't be more excited about these wines, where they came from and the people behind them. We hope to transfer some of that ardor to you with our personalized anecdotes and reviews.

However, there are simply too many great wines and stories to share here. If reading this gets your palate going, please check out our blog **Uncorked** throughout the month for more in-depth producer profiles.

Pinot Noir Roundup: Staff Highlights

2010 Brewer-Clifton Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir (\$34.99) 92 points ST, 92 points WA. A great introduction to Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir in general and to the Brewer Clifton wines in particular. With ripe red cherry and cinnamon spice notes, this is produced from Pinot Noir grapes sourced from some of the best vineyards in the region, and is ready to drink tonight. —*Jeff Garneau, K&L*



2010 Melville "Estate" Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir (\$25.99) 92 points WS; 91 points WA, ST, and WE respectively. Owner Chris Melville's mission, "to bring the vineyard to the glass," is accomplished in this wine, combining fruit from all blocks, with all 16 clones and every soil type! Pure, bright red red berry flavors and notes of savory herbs make this irresistibly drinkable. —*Sarah Covey, K&L*

2010 Claiborne & Churchill Edna Valley Pinot Noir (\$24.99) Referred to as 'The Classic', this is pure, correct

Edna Valley Pinot. It shows red cherry, red currant, and strawberry aromas and flavors, hints of spice, medium plus acidity, and medium tannin. So easy to drink, you may just want to get this wine in large quantity for summer entertaining. —*Sarah Covey, K&L*

2010 Claiborne & Churchill "Runestone Barrel Select" Edna Valley Pinot Noir* (\$39.99) A barrel selection blended by winemaker Coby Parker-Garcia. Think the sexy older sister to the 'Classic'—gorgeous! Red cherry, sandalwood, red roses, and spice.

Continued on page 3...

Key: * Direct Import PA Pre-arrival

Visit **Uncorked** to read more about
Claiborne & Churchill!

Introducing Saarloos & Sons

Bryan Brick

Sometimes you just know. I originally heard about Saarloos & Sons from Bob Lindquist at Qupé, and when Bob says someone is doing a good job, I listen. It is often the case that when you taste wines with the people behind them you get a better context for which to understand the wines; at Saarloos & Sons we instantly felt the personality of the people expressed in the wine. What also became immediately apparent was just how much this family is committed to making great wines and being true stewards to their vineyards. These are honest, dedicated farmers, but they are also dedicated to having a ridiculously good time and aren't above making an effort to engage folks through creative and fun new ways. Cupcakes with wine pairings at the tasting bar? Awesome. Gift certificates made out of barrel staves? Super cool. Letting their 6-year-old daughter decide when to begin harvest on their Sauvignon Blanc? Crazy! Writing a sustainable 250-year business plan? Now that is serious.

Good times aside, what I love most about Saarloos & Sons is simple: purity. Their wines are the essence of well-farmed fruit made gently into pure, delicious wines. We hope you'll love them as much as we do.

2010 Saarloos & Sons "Hers" Santa Ynez Valley Grenache Blanc* (\$26.99) "This stunning Grenache Blanc is made in honor of Keith Saarloos's grandmother. It is unlike any other Grenache Blanc I've tasted. Pear, citrus zest, lychee, mineral, with medium plus acidity and fabulous balance. Racy, racy, racy!" —*Sarah Covey, K&L Staff Member*

2009 Saarloos & Sons "His" Santa Ynez Valley Cabernet Sauvignon* (\$39.99) "Imagine the blackberry jam your grandmother used to make, heading out before dawn to her secret spot to pick fresh wild blackberries, then spending the rest of the day canning blackberry preserves. There is a sweetness of fruit here, a ripeness perfectly offset by a liveliness and a freshness that keeps the wine in perfect balance. The finish is framed by fine tannins that lie lightly on the tongue, caressing the palate like a finely woven cotton blanket on a cool summer night. If there is a perfect California Cabernet Sauvignon, this is it. Expertly crafted, and a pure joy to drink." —*Jeff Garneau, K&L Staff Member*



Left to right: K&L Domestic Buyer Bryan Brick, staff members Jeff Garneau, Jim Boyce and Sarah Covey, with Rarig Ross and Keith Saarloos.

Saarloos & Sons had sold exclusively direct to consumer, but at the end of our visit they offered us a couple of wines to make available to K&L customers: the 2010 "Hers" Grenache Blanc (\$26.99) and the 2009 "His" Cabernet Sauvignon* (\$39.99). We are honored to share these two wines with you.*

Need More?

There are simply too many outstanding wines to fit in this newsletter. We've compiled a list of additional must-try wines below. Look for them at your local store or browse online at KLWines.com! Feel free to email bryanbrick@klwines.com with questions.

2009 Au Bon Climat "Talley Vineyard-Santa Barbara Historic Vineyards Collection" Arroyo Grande Chardonnay*	\$24.99	2010 Ojai "Bien Nacido Vineyard" Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir	\$34.99
2010 Au Bon Climat "XXX-Nuits Blanches au Bouge" Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay	\$39.99	2001 Qupe "Bien Nacido Vineyard Hillside Estate" Santa Maria Valley Syrah	\$74.99; 1.5L \$149.99
2011 Beckmen "Cuvée Le Bec" Santa Ynez Valley Rhône Blend	\$16.99	2010 Qupé "Sawyer Lindquist Vineyard" Edna Valley Grenache	\$29.99
2012 Beckmen Purisima Mountain Vineyard Grenache Rosé	\$16.99	2009 Samsara "Melville Vineyard" Sta. Rita Hills Syrah*	\$39.99
2010 Brewer-Clifton Sta. Rita Hills Chardonnay	\$24.99	2010 Samsara "Kessler-Haak" Sta. Rita Hills Pinot Noir*	\$42.99
2011 Claiborne & Churchill Central Coast Dry Muscat*	\$24.99	2012 Tablas Creek "Patelin De Tablas" Paso Robles Rosé	\$22.99
2011 Clos Pepe "Barrel Fermented" Santa Rita Hills Chardonnay	\$24.99	2011 Tablas Creek "Côtes de Tablas Blanc" Paso White Rhône Blend	\$24.99
2011 Kenneth Volk "Jaybird" Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay	\$14.99	2012 Tatomer "Meeresboden" Sta. Barbara County Gruner Veltliner	\$23.99
2010 Ojai "McGinley Vineyard" Santa Ynez Sauvignon Blanc	\$19.99	2011 Talley Estate Arroyo Grande Chardonnay	\$23.99
2012 Ojai Rose	\$15.99	2011 Tyler Santa Barbara County Chardonnay	\$35.99
		2011 Tyler Santa Barbara County Pinot Noir	\$39.99

Key: * Direct Buy RP Robert Parker WA Wine Advocate WS Wine Spectator ST International Wine Cellar CG Connoisseurs' Guide JS James Suckling

Pinot Noir Roundup

Continued from Page 1

Drink now with decanting and food (hello salmon or pork!) or tuck away to be delighted even more in five years. —*Sarah Covey, K&L*

2011 Talley Estate Arroyo Grande Pinot Noir (\$33.99) This delicious Pinot is a combination of 85% Rincon and 15% Rosemary's vineyards, Talley's two famous estate blocks. Pretty and full of spice cake/ginger bread aromatics with bold, expanse flavors of cassis, fennel and tar, this is very complete for such a young wine. I love the way this wine unravels and rolls over the palate giving you everything it's got. Talley nailed this one. —*Bryan Brick, K&L*

2011 Loring "Aubaine Vineyard" San Luis Obispo County Pinot Noir (\$47.99) 90 points CG. Big, ripe, juicy blackberry, black currant, cassis with medium plus acidity and surprising length and balance. If you like your Pinot Noir quite lush, this wine is for you! —*Sarah Covey, K&L*

2009 Clos Pepe "Estate" Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir (59.99) 91 points ST, 90 WS, and 92 WA. This shows what Pinot can do in the Santa Rita Hills under the care of Wes Hagen, vineyard manager and brilliant winemaker at Clos Pepe. Well-balanced and delicate, with elegance and transparency that demonstrates Hagen's talent, this offers notes of red cherry, raspberry, cassis, and mineral. A very special wine to accompany a fine meal (we had it with cassoulet & duck confit with Wes) or tucked away to enjoy in 5-10 years. —*Sarah Covey, K&L*

2010 Au Bon Climat "Isabelle" Pinot Noir (\$49.99) This wine, a selection of their best Pinot Noir barrels as seen by Jim Clendenen and his crew, is just tremendous both now and certainly for the future. Deep set, yet somehow vibrant and giving, the nose here is worth the price of admission. Fennel, black raspberry and sweet toasty, yet understated, oak combine for an elegant and alluring nose. The palate is packed with delicious fruitiness but this is no simple fruit bomb. Earthen, spicy, and freshly herbaceous, this can hold its own with any Pinot in this price point! —*Bryan Brick, K&L*

**FIND HUNDREDS MORE
RECOMMENDATIONS ON
OUR STAFF REVIEW PAGE!**



Old Favorites: Clendenen Family

Bryan Brick

One of the great revelations of our Central Coast trip was rediscovering the Clendenen Family Vineyards label over lunch. You probably already know of the wines of Au Bon Climat and possibly the winery's bold, opinionated and wildly talented winemaker Jim Clendenen. Jim started this label in 2000 from family-tended vineyards as a project in which his then wife, Morgan and his kids Isabelle and Knox could make as a family. I have always thought of Jim as one of the best winemakers in the game, and I had sold the wines in the past but they have been off the radar for some time. From selected vineyards, many of which are organic and some planted by Jim himself, these wines display great acid, impeccable oaken framing and wonderful mouthfeel. We were truly shocked by the purity, accessibility and correctness of these wines.

2011 Clendenen Family Vineyards "Mesa Verde Vineyard" Santa Maria Valley Sauvignon Blanc* (\$15.99) Refreshing Sauvignon Blanc for \$16! This is quite floral on the nose. The palate is full of citrus and tropical fruits with bright acidity to really bring everything together. *Top value!* —*Jim Boyce, K&L*

2008 Clendenen Family Vineyards "Le Bon Climat" Santa Maria Valley Chardonnay* (\$39.99) 92 points WS. Perfect for folks who like rich but balanced Chards. The nutty, grainy cashew and marzipan driven nose is balanced by the fresh flavors of green apple, honey and quince. The leesy texture gives breadth and the persistent acid plenty of structure. —*Bryan Brick, K&L*

2005 Clendenen Family Vineyards "Bricco Buon Natale" Santa Maria Valley Nebbiolo* (\$29.99) As a bona fide Euro wine guy, I must admit that the best wines of California continue to challenge my long held prejudice that the old world simply does it better and cheaper. Take this Nebbiolo...it has delicious fruit, a pleasantly astringent Nebbiolo finish, and for \$30 would likely do very well in a line-up of entry-level Barolo. —*Joe Manekin, K&L*

2005 Clendenen Family Vineyards "Rancho La Cuna" Santa Maria Valley Syrah/Viognier* (\$29.99) I have a big heart in my notebook next to this! Stewed cherries, red cherry, red currant, strawberry, with hints of pepper. The Viognier waves up at you with lush fruit, making this perfect to enjoy slowly with ribs, steak, hearty dishes—but most importantly, the most jolly, hilarious people you can muster! —*Sarah Covey, K&L*

Personal Sommelier Corner: Riesling on the Rise

Chiara Shannon

Graham Tatomer is a rising star winemaker in Santa Barbara County, specializing in the unexpected: Riesling and Grüner Veltliner! Graham's wines are dead-ringers for the rich yet chiseled styles of the Wachau, thanks to his incredible talent combined with three years working under respected Austrian winemaker Emmerich Knoll. Our domestic team loved the wines so much they brought them in immediately for us to try, and we're hooked. The **2009 Tatomer "Kick-On Ranch" Santa Barbara County Riesling (\$29.99)** convinced me this guy knows his Riesling. With pure lime, peach and stone fruits, bracing acidity, and fine mineral framing, this is high caliber stuff that will complement a variety of dishes. If you desire a richer style, the botrytized and off-dry **2009 Tatomer "Vandenberg" Santa Barbara County Riesling (\$23.99)** (91 points from WA!) is generous and rich in the mouth, yet vibrant. It's laden with lush tropical and lychee fruit aromas and flavors and a finish that lingers with spice—perfect for spicy exotic fare or a sumptuous fruit dessert.

Do you need more Riesling in your life? Design your own wine club with the K&L Personal Sommelier Service! Sign up online today or email Sommelier@KLWines.com for details.

Visit **KLWines.com** for current pricing and to learn about the options and benefits of membership in our **excellent wine clubs.**

Palmina: Passion & Patience

Sarah Covey

Founded in 1995 by winemaker Steve Clifton, Palmina Winery produces a full range of wines crafted from Italian varietals grown in the region, with a passion to translate the history of those grapes to the growing conditions and vineyard sites of the very unique characteristics of Santa Barbara County. Steve believes that you must have both passion and patience to make quality wines. His experience moving from the restaurant business into winemaking and learning from the best of the area demonstrates his commitment. His wife Chrystal is an integral part of the business, having studied in Italy as an undergraduate, with a strong background in restaurants and communications. Fluent in Italian, Chrystal has been essential in the formation of the relationships with producers in Italy who have lent their wisdom, guidance and humor to Palmina's philosophy.

2012 Palmina Santa Barbara County Pinot Grigio (\$15.99) Not your Grandma's Pinot Grigio! 100% stainless steel and lees stirring lends a baked bread character to this lovely wine. Lime zest, toast, citrus, mineral with medium plus acidity and a surprising richness.

2011 Palmina Santa Ynez Valley Malvasia Bianca (\$26.99) Intensely aromatic, with lychee, apricot, citrus, and white flower notes, and a fresh minerality on the palate. Astonishing.

2011 Palmina Santa Barbara County Dolcetto (\$15.99) Red cherry, red currant, red roses, black plum, and medium tannin make this lovely, food-friendly Dolcetto perfect for dinner tonight. Pizza?

2010 Palmina Santa Barbara County Barbera (\$20.99) I love California Barbera and this hits the mark with plum, blackberry, cocoa, cassis, black currant, and faint hints of saddle leather. It is insanely good with nibbles of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, or paired with a braised pork entree.

2007 Palmina Santa Barbara County Nebbiolo (\$27.99)

Steve has great skill with Nebbiolo in Santa Barbara. A classic rendition (read: red roses, red cherry, mineral, and saddle leather with high acidity and defined tannin) this is delicious now with air and some fab Italian fare, but I'd be thrilled see it in five years.

2010 Palmina "Lumina" Santa Maria Valley Sparkling Nebbiolo Rosé (\$47.99) I could drink this every day for the rest of my life. Rose, red cherry, raspberry, strawberry, mineral...a very special sparkling that is worth the splurge.



Ancient sea bed soils at Ancient Peaks.

Under the Radar: Ancient Peaks

Jim Boyce

The Margarita Vineyard, part of the Ancient Peaks estate that was originally planted by Franciscan missionaries in 1780, is truly a site to behold. Located in the southernmost corner of Paso Robles with the Santa Lucia mountain range to the east and the Pacific Ocean fourteen miles to the west, this is one of the coolest vineyards in the region. There are five distinct soil types here: shale, sedimentary, ancient sea bed, volcanic and granitic throughout the vineyard. The ancient sea bed soils are the most impressive—massive white oyster fossils everywhere on top of the soil! The diverse soil types, combined with Ancient Peaks' sustainable practices of cover crops, natural composting, and deficit irrigation (among others) lend depth and character to the wines that can only come from this unique site. These are true terroir wines, and remain some of the Central Coast's best kept secrets for value: **2010 Ancient Peaks Paso Robles Sauvignon Blanc (\$11.99)** Round and refreshing, with nice ripe pear and gooseberry notes and great acidity. **2010 Ancient Peaks Paso Robles Merlot (\$13.99)** Refined red raspberry and black currant with a bit of barrel spice, this elegant Merlot is a steal. **2010 Ancient Peaks Paso Robles Zinfandel (\$13.99)** Fresh and jammy with lots of red fruits and bright acid—perfect for BBQs! *Top Value!* **2010 Ancient Peaks Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon (\$13.99)** Easily one of our best domestic Cab deals in the store. With plenty of black currant, blackberry, and vanilla flavors, nice acid and tannin, this has depth and structure that is hard to find at this price. *Top Value!*

:: Follow our blog **UNCORKED** for the latest news, reviews, and updates from K&L staff ::

K&L EVENTS & TASTINGS We host regular evening and Saturday tastings in each K&L store as well as many special events throughout the year. For the complete calendar of upcoming events and tastings, go to KLWines.com/Local-Events.

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