



## RUSSIAN HILL ESTATE

Dedicated to the production of world-class Pinot Noir and Syrah, Russian Hill Estate Winery finds the perfect home in Sonoma County's Russian River Valley - increasingly recognized as among the best winegrowing regions in the world.



The University of California Davis is usually associated with the wine industry through its oenology program and it is an accepted fact that its thousands of wine program graduates constitute the who's who of today's modern California Wine Industry. But such is not always the situation.

Take the case of this month's *Pinot Noir Series* selection, Russian Hill Estate Winery. Russian Hill's owners Ed Gomez and his wife Ellen Mack were both doctors connected with UC Davis, but neither was involved with the school's oenology activities. Gomez was in fact head of the school's Dermatology Department while Mack gained her degree in Neurology, and met Gomez while attending Davis as an undergraduate.

The two were later married and Ed Gomez and Ellen Mack began a long-term love affair with the wine business that actually had its origins in home winemaking. Several years later, Gomez began tiring of the rigors of academic medicine. He enlisted the help of his nephew Patrick Melley and started a small winery in a warehouse in Benicia sometime in 1993.

Four years later in mid-1997, Gomez and Mack began devoting their full time and efforts to their new Russian Hill Estate Winery. They purchased a prestigious 21-acre property in northern Sonoma County whose neighbors included Sonoma-Cutrer, Williams & Seylem, Kistler, Dehlinger and Rochioli to name a few. In other words, they were in *the* area of Sonoma County that arguably produced the finest wines in the region, if not the entire state.

Russian Hill Estate's property actually touches the famous Dutton Ranch and an agreement was reached whereby Dutton Ranch provides actual vineyard management for Russian Hill.

However, all decisions regarding the property's direction are made by Ellen Mack who was always interested in farming, after spending a good part of her childhood in Europe.

Several years ago, Mack left her medical practice to enter the wine business on a full time basis. "I tended to try and make the vines better than they were," she offered. "When we started, many of our vines weren't really robust. I guess it was the case of the doctor in me

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Top: Russian Hill Estate Winery's President, Ellen Mack, takes a moment to stand with her award-winning vineyards in Sonoma County.



Russian Hill's Estate Winery is a beautiful Sonoma wine country destination in the heart of the Russian River Valley.

## ABOUT THE VINEYARD



Russian Hill's 2006 Estate Vineyards Pinot Noir comes from the Tara Vineyard and Sunny View Vineyard, both of which are estate grown and located near the winery in the Russian River Valley.

Tara Vineyard was planted for Russian Hill by the renowned Dutton Ranch in 1998 and its inaugural vintage Pinot in 2001 was awarded top marks including Best of Class and Gold Medals, and the vineyard's success has continued

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attempting to care for the sick vines." Mack still does much of the vineyard work herself and has even planted her own block of Syrah. As a child, her German grandparents always provided wine with her meals and this initial appreciation for the grape and its products provided the impetus for her determination to propel Russian Hill Estate's vineyards to superior levels.

Ellen Mack feels her winery's prime location in Sonoma's coolest growing area makes it ideal for the growing and production of both Pinot Noir and Syrah. "The area affects the flavor profile of each grape," she explained. "The varietals grown here are actually better than from other areas around us."

Her husband and partner, Ed Gomez, feels right at home in the Russian Hill facility as well. "Ed could probably be called a frustrated engineer," she added with a smile. "He loves to design the winery and much of its equipment. Over the past several years he has modified much of the tanks and machinery we utilize on an everyday basis. We even have our own functioning bottling line that was rebuilt from used equipment that gives us a good deal of flexibility and allows us to bottle our own wines. Ed loves to purchase older items that are either broken or in disuse and make them work better."

Patrick Melley, meanwhile, utilized his restaurant industry background along with an excellent palate, and stayed on to become the project's award-winning winemaker. His insights into the complicated varietals the winery produces are well conceived and enthusiastically received.

Russian Hill's present capacity is just over 5,000 cases with future case goals no higher than the 8,000 case level. Ed Gomez 's stated objective is to produce really world-class wines from his wife's estate grapes, "wines that I myself can be really proud of."

Given the incredible location of the Russian Hill Estate property and the unrelenting determination of both Ed Gomez and Ellen Mack to succeed, the wines of Russian Hill Estate stand alongside those of its well-known neighbors. We are proud to offer this *Pinot Noir Series* selection for your consideration and enjoyment.

unabated ever since. Sunny View Vineyard is found six miles south of the winery and is the site for much of Russian Hill's Pinot Noir production. The site also has five acres of Viognier, which is sold to several prestigious wineries for their production.

The Russian River Valley's fog-cooled climate and rich alluvial soils provide the perfect conditions for growing Pinot Noir and other 'cool-climate' grape varieties and its wines are increasingly recognized as among the best in the world, while the appellation is often quoted as one of the top in the country. It seems Russian Hill Estate Winery has found the perfect home.

## ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Winemaker Patrick Melley gave up a career in the restaurant business to join his uncle Ed in the pursuit of making great wine. Melley was a restaurant manager and had enjoyed developing wine lists for a wide range of restaurants, both national and international, allowing him to not only study the changing styles in wine that were attracting new consumers, but to refine his own palate

as well. When the opportunity arose for him to make his own wines, he went for it.

A largely self-taught winemaker, Melley began as a home winemaker and after specializing in Merlot and Cabernet at Benicia Cellars for 5 years, went on to co-found Russian Hill Estate Winery with his aunt and uncle in 1997.

At Russian Hill, Melley is able to pursue his love of Pinot Noir and Syrah and make wine from Estate vineyards. With the roots of his winemaking skills attained through home winemaking and self education rather than formal training, and with his wide exposure to the wine drinking public, Melley has developed an incredible understanding of wine styles and winemaking techniques and is showing great talent at Russian Hill.

## RUSSIAN HILL 2006 ESTATE PINOT NOIR

Russian Hill's 2006 Estate Vineyards Pinot Noir is comprised of fruit from two of the winery's estate vineyards: Tara Vineyard and Sunny View Vineyard, both located in California's Russian River Valley appellation of Sonoma County. This luscious Estate Pinot greets you with deep aromas of black cherry, tobacco and nutmeg, and on the palate, the flavors broaden to include plum, boysenberry, blueberry and licorice with hints of tobacco that add complexity. The *Pinot Report* says the Russian Hill 2006 Pinot Noir is "amazingly rich and fragrant; this is a silky, delicious Pinot that works with anything from roasted meats to an earthy mushroom pasta. And on top of all that, it's *a terrific value.*"



Cases Produced:	1,129	<b>95 POINTS</b>
PH Balance:	3.53	<i>-Pinot Report</i>
Total Acidity:	0.69 g/mL	<b>GOLD MEDAL</b>
Alcohol:	14.4%	<i>-American Fine Wine Competition</i>
Enjoy now until:	2012	

## REORDERS

GOLD MEDAL WINE STORE

RUSSIAN HILL	Retail Price Winery-Direct	Club Price 2-bottle Members	Club Price 4-bottle Members And Multiple Series Members	<b>SAVE up to 20% OFF Winery Direct</b>
<b>2006 Pinot Noir</b>	\$35.00/btl.	\$30.00/btl. <i>Save 14%</i>	\$28.00/btl. <i>Save 20%</i>	

2 bottle min. order.

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### Wild Pacific Salmon with Pinot Noir Braised Leeks

Serves 4

#### For the leeks

2 leeks cleaned and cut in half lengthwise  
2 Tbsp Butter  
¼ cup chicken stock or broth  
1 ½ cups Pinot noir  
Salt & fresh ground black pepper

#### For the Salmon

1 ½ pounds center cut wild Salmon filet with the skin and pin bones removed and cut into four equal serving pieces  
2 Tbsp Olive oil  
Salt & fresh ground black pepper

In a medium saucepan over high heat, sauté the leeks in 1Tb butter until just beginning to color, approximately 2-3 minutes. Season leeks with salt and pepper. Add chicken stock and reduce liquid to 2 Tbsp. Add Pinot noir and reduce to a sauce like consistency. Adjust seasoning and remove sauce from heat, keeping warm as you prepare the fish.

Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan, season fillets with salt and pepper, and cook fish, flesh side down, over high heat for 2 minutes. Lower heat to medium and turn fish to cook through, approximately 5 minutes.

Reheat the sauce and finish by adding 1 Tbsp of butter off heat, swirling to incorporate. To serve, place leeks in center of the plate and top with salmon, pouring sauce alongside the leeks.



### Lamb with Wild Mushroom Ragout

2 ½ pounds boneless lamb leg  
2 pounds wild mushrooms  
3 ripe Roma tomatoes  
¼ cup olive oil  
2 tablespoons unbleached all-purpose flour  
1 onion

1 glove garlic  
4 stems of fresh thyme  
3 cups Pinot noir (or other red wine)  
1 cup chicken stock  
Salt and pepper

Cut the lamb into bite size pieces and dust with flour to coat lightly. Clean the mushrooms with a brush and cut into large bite size pieces. Rinse the tomatoes in cold water, dry with a towel and dice into small pieces. Peel the onion and dice into small pieces; chop the garlic until fine.

Place 2 medium size bowls near the stove. In a heavy pan 6 or 8 quart stock pot, heat ½ the oil until hot. Add ½ the meat and sear until golden brown only. Remove the browned meat and place in the bowl. Brown the remaining meat and place into the same bowl. Add half the mushrooms to the hot pot and sauté over moderate heat until tender. Remove from the pot and place into the second bowl. Cook the remaining mushrooms in the remaining oil until tender and place into the bowl with the other mushrooms.

Sauté the onions until tender, add the garlic and sauté for an additional minute. Stir in tomatoes and thyme. Add the wine and stock. With a wide and thick flat-ended spatula, scrape the bottom of the pot, releasing the caramelized layer from the browning of the meat and vegetables. Add the meat and heat to a simmer, but not to a boil. Gently simmer for about 2 ½ - 3 hours or until the meat is fork tender and the liquid has reduced to just below the top layer of the of the meat. Add the mushrooms and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with Cous Cous or Rice.

*Find these recipes and all of your favorites online at [GoldMedalWine.com/recipes](http://GoldMedalWine.com/recipes). We have a delicious collection of recipes to pair with your favorite Gold Medal wines!*



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