

Pinot Noir Press



AMPHORA WINERY

Rick Hutchinson blends his passions for premium winemaking and handmade pottery with Amphora Winery, one of the top boutique wineries of California's Dry Creek Valley.



Founded by Rick Hutchinson in 1997, Amphora Winery is a small hands-on estate crafting a wide range of varietals from the Dry Creek Valley and beyond. Since the beginning, Rick has worked with meticulous, like-minded farmers to nurture the best grapes possible from the region's most stellar vineyards, and in turn, craft balanced, expressive wines that reflect their varietal and vineyard. He enjoys sharing his beloved bottlings with friends, family, and visitors to Amphora Winery, which is nestled in the heart of Healdsburg in Northern California.

A native of Sonoma County, Rick first became involved with wine while working at Sebastiani Vineyards at the tender age of 20 in 1975. Entering the cellar there for the first time, Rick immediately felt at home as the aromas of fermentation and wine reminded him of the enticing scents of jams and jellies in his mother's kitchen during the summer canning sessions of his youth. Over the ensuing years, Rick honed his winemaking skills by apprenticing with some of the best and most passionate winemakers in Sonoma and Napa Counties (including Doug Nalle and John Kongsgaard). Over twenty-some vintages, Rick became deeply familiar with the vines and various terroirs of Sonoma County, especially bold red

wines from the Dry Creek Valley AVA.

Around the same time, Rick joined a pottery class on a whim and discovered his natural talent and passion for working with clay. He started crafting a series of *amphorae*, similar to the original clay jars used by the ancient Greeks and Romans to store wine. When the time came to make his own wine, Rick married his passions for wine and art with *Amphora Winery*. His hand-made amphorae became the icons for his fledgling winery, and continue to grace the wine labels today.

The first release from Amphora Winery came in 1997 with a tiny amount of Zinfandel and Petite Sirah from Dry Creek Valley vineyards. Rick had made the wines and aged them in a tiny basement of an old redwood barn in a Dry Creek Valley vineyard. The tiny space was perfect for his first few vintages, but as word-of-mouth publicity built an enthusiastic following for his Amphora wines, and they began selling out before they were even bottled, Rick knew he needed a larger home for his growing winery. In 2006, he moved Amphora to its current (larger) space about a mile across the valley.

Since the move, Rick has expanded his offerings to include small lots of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, *continued on back...*





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Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay. He has also joined a mere handful of California producers of Teroldego (a rare northern Italian varietal), and more recently, added Mourvedre, Grenache, and Alicante Bouschet to the Amphora lineup - and that's just a glimpse of his current offerings! Rick actually crafts about *twenty* different varietals for Amphora Winery, which is rather impressive. Most of the grapes are sourced from Dry Creek Valley and Russian River Valley vineyards.

Rick says his winemaking style is all about balance. "Vines and wines are like people," Rick has stated. "Those with good balance live longer and age more gracefully. The total wine experience - the bouquet, the mouthfeel, and the taste - should be all-pleasing."

Amphora wines are certainly pleasing a lot of people. Several of his wines have earned prestigious medals and high-end ratings from the top competitions and wine industry publications, including this month's featured wine, the 2013 Peters Vineyard Pinot Noir. We are pleased to present this wonderful wine to our Pinot Noir Wine Club members. Enjoy!

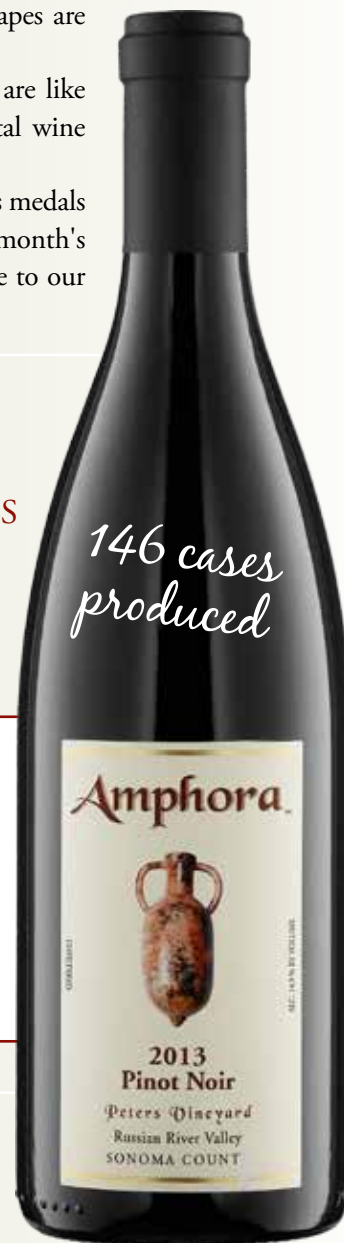
AMPHORA 2013 PINOT NOIR

Peters Vineyard, Russian River Valley, Sonoma County

Produced from the classic Peters Vineyard in the heart of the Goldridge award-winning district of Russian River Valley, the Amphora 2013 Pinot Noir is an incredible bottling. Dark garnet in color, this wine offers aromas of Christmas spice, dark cherry and black tea with rich, ripe flavors of cherry pie and red currant. Aged 10 months in oak. Enjoy now until 2021.

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