

# PLATINUM SERIES

Select, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers

Even though Chronicle Wines owner Mike Hengehold was born and raised in Sonoma where his father grew grapes, it wasn't until later in college that he realized he had a calling in the wine industry. As a business student (finance and marketing) at Miami of Ohio University, Hengehold took a class called Geography of Wine that featured lecture and lab work that covered many of the finest wine producing areas of the world. When he saw Sonoma portrayed as a world-level grape producing area, Mike knew his future rested within the confines of the California wine industry.

After graduation, Mike Hengehold returned to Sonoma and took a cellar rat job at nearby Kenwood Winery where he learned the dos and don'ts of the winery business. "I needed to experience the eating and breathing of the wine business," he recalled recently. "And, also, the wonderful artistry of the whole situation, something that is all important to me."

Next came a long eight-year stint with mammoth wholesaler Southern Wine & Spirits, where Hengehold learned the marketing side of wine. Toward the end of the eight years, his primary duty was the national sales management job for Luna Vineyards of Napa Valley, and its owner Mike Moon. The relationship between the two developed along with Mike's passion for Burgundian varietals, and in particular, Pinot Noir.

"I had been to Europe on a number of occasions, and became particularly fond of Burgundy and its great grape varietals, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay," Hengehold related. "My father grew Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, the most difficult grape in the world to grow correctly."

Sensing his friend's propensity for Pinot Noir, Mike Moon suggested the two form a company to produce a world-class Pinot Noir, a varietal that both felt had come into its own in California. Further conversations brought about the formation of Chronicle Wines, the name for the new entity.

Hengehold chose to keep his new project sleek and profitable and brought in heralded winemaker Ted Lemon to make the first Chronicle wines. Using sources in both Anderson County and Sonoma, the first release (of 700 cases) came to fruition in 2006.

"We sought exceedingly great fruit and put that

fruit into the hands of a most talented winemaker in the person of Ted Lemon. These vineyards were all marquee sites that possessed the terroir-focused fruit that could eventually produce really distinct first-class wines," he added.

The name Chronicle Wines was derived from the literal meaning of the word; that being an account of the pedigreed material told over a period of time without manipulation from the author. In other words, the grapes are made into wines that become great over time and are so recognized.

Chronicle Wines' first releases were extremely well received, and a loyal following began to form.

In Mike Hengehold's own words, "We created an image of a wine with an old soul to it, made in a timeless style that unfolds over a period of time. For that reason, we pick earlier than most and our wines need more time to come together. This is exactly what occurs throughout Burgundy, where

many of the world's greatest wines are made."

To that end, Chronicle Wines' label has an embossed clock face producing a chronologicalized element with an old classic feel.

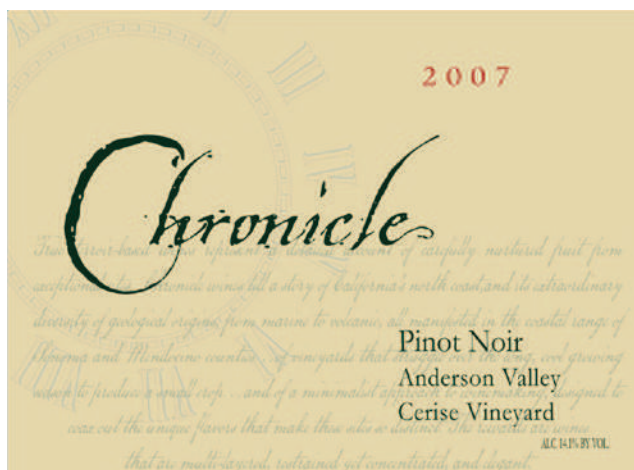
One of the Anderson Valley's premier vineyards, the Cerise (Cee-r-ize) Vineyard is the source for this month's wine. Located on steep hillsides just above the town of Boonville, the vineyard is fifteen years old and is comprised of numerous two-acre plots on the rocky knolls that comprise the property. The vines are grown organically and struggle to produce small quantities of intense Pinot Noir fruit.

Asked about expansion, Mike Hengehold is vehement in his desire to keep his fledgling company on the small side. He will eventually fit some Chardonnay into Chronicle Wines, but he is adamant about limiting his Pinot Noir production.

"We will do about 600 cases of the Pinot Noir in 2010," he finalized. "And that's about it. If I intend to keep our quality at the A-I level, that's where I should be. I have a developing mailing list and much of my wine is pre-sold, I am happy to say. In my mind, scarcity is an important element in our industry."

Would that more winery owners and winemakers join Mike Hengehold in his meritorious quest.

We would all be the better for it.



*The road to great wine begins at your door.*

## TASTING NOTES



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# Chronicle

Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

"True terroir-based wines represent a detailed account of carefully nurtured fruit from an exceptional site. Chronicle wines tell a story of California's north coast, and its extraordinary diversity of geological origins, from marine to volcanic, all manifested in the coastal range of Sonoma and Mendocino counties...of vineyards that struggle over the long, cool growing season to produce a small crop...and of a minimalist approach to winemaking, designed to coax out the unique flavors that make these sites so distinct. The results are wines that are multi-layered, restrained yet concentrated, and elegant."

This mantra is the guiding force behind Chronicle, and is printed on the front label of every bottle produced. No single wine embodies this philosophy better than the *2007 Chronicle Cerise Vineyard Pinot Noir*.

Cerise is perched on a steep hillside overlooking the town of Boonville. The vineyard is separated into clonal blocks, each no larger than a few acres, and all farmed organically. Here the vines struggle to yield 1.5 to 2.5 tons per acre in the very best years.

2007 was indisputably one of those years - in California, it has been dubbed the vintage of the decade. The Anderson Valley was blessed with ideal conditions for crafting complex, age worthy Pinot Noir. Sunny but cool breezy days in this northern coastal valley enabled the development of great natural acidity with a fine backbone of ripe tannins. Together these provide a structural core balancing the concentrated black cherry mid-palate.

In their February 2010 issue, the *Wine Enthusiast* described the 2007 Chronicle Cerise Pinot Noir as "delicious and compelling, and should develop over the next 6-8 years." That's if you can wait that long.

I hope you enjoy the 2007 Chronicle Cerise Pinot Noir as much as I enjoyed the journey of producing it.

Sincerely,

Mike Hengehold  
Proprietor - Chronicle Wines, Sonoma

CHRONICLE WINES • PO BOX 1854, SONOMA, CA 95476 • (707) 939-8140

## TASTING NOTES

### *556 Cases Produced*

Located between 800 and 1,200 feet above the floor of Anderson Valley, Chronicle's Cerise Vineyard spans forty acres of steep slopes and small blocks, with optimal exposure to both fog and cooling breezes from the ocean. The site consistently produces grapes that epitomize what we love about Anderson Valley fruit – great complexity with abundant dark fruit tones, substantial tannins, and an underlying sweetness. With bright pure flavors and plenty of natural acidity (necessary characteristics for elegant, balanced Pinots), the 2007 Cerise Vineyard Pinot Noir was the standout wine of the vintage for Chronicle Wines. *Wine Enthusiast* magazine scored the Pinot Noir a stunning, but well-deserved, **96 Points**: "Crisp in acidity, with a silky, elegant texture, it shows complex flavors of cherries, raspberries, cola, orange zest, Asian spices, and earthy rhubarb. It's dry, but with a rich, fruity-oaky sweetness. Delicious and compelling." The 2007 Pinot Noir's intriguing herbal aromas and rich fruit flavors are supported by its incredible lift, structure, and dense tannins on the lingering finish. Aged 16 months in French oak. 100% Pinot Noir. Enjoy now until 2014.

## REORDERS

Multi-layered, restrained yet concentrated, and elegant, the Chronicle 2007 Cerise Vineyard Pinot Noir represents a detailed account of carefully nurtured fruit from an exceptional site. Winemaker Ted Lemon coaxes the unique flavors that make this vineyard so distinct, and masters a beautiful expression of north coast Pinot Noir.

The **Chronicle 2007 Cerise Vineyard Pinot Noir** retails winery-direct for \$60.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

2-Bottle Members..... \$48.00 /bottle\*

4-Bottle Members &

Multi-Series Members.....\$45.00 /bottle\*

\*2 bottle min. order [Plus shipping]

Call: 1-800-266-8888

Fax: 1-800-266-8889

E-mail: [orders@goldmedalwine.com](mailto:orders@goldmedalwine.com)

Website: [www.GoldMedalWineClub.com](http://www.GoldMedalWineClub.com)