

# GOLD MEDAL WINE CLUB'S *Pinot Noir Press*



v06i02



## *CRU* WINE COMPANY

A portfolio of wines that embrace the incredible diversity of California's premium viticultural areas, the CRU Wine Company offers a rare, boutique perspective from the Central Valley.



CRU's Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir comes from two of the region's most reputable vineyard properties; French Oak barrels are the standard at this Madera-based boutique winery; Winemaker Ken Post has some Valentine's Day fun with fermentation; freshly picked grapes wait their turn in the state-of-the-art Madera winery.

Richard Spencer never thought he would one day find himself in the wine business, much less the owner of Madera, California-based CRU Wine Company. The Wisconsin native and long-time resident of Fresno was deeply involved in the construction business and took part in building many of North Central California's hospitals, schools and numerous other large buildings.

At one point in his life, Spencer thinks it was around the age of 40, he began drinking wine as his choice of beverage.

"It was almost like it was the thing to do socially," Spencer recalled in a recent interview. "Before it was always beer, but the more I drank wine the more I enjoyed it. My wife Karen and a couple of our really close friends actually made a number of trips over the next few years to Bordeaux and some of the other great wine areas of the world."

Spencer also began collecting wine and now has a cellar with too many bottles to even count. He says he enjoys Bordeaux a great deal but is equally at home with a number of top California wineries.

Just over a decade ago, an unusual event occurred that ultimately thrust Richard Spencer into the wine industry.

"I had a friend who owned a winery that wasn't doing very well," he recalled. "He wanted to get out of the business and I wanted to help him out, so I would up buying some of the used equipment. The idea at the time was to move the equipment somewhere else or maybe sell it. Well, one thing led to another and we finally decided to do it ourselves. We located a nice 19-acre piece of land in Madera with an empty building on it and agreed to do it up right."

The CRU Wine Company was founded in 2003 and today serves as a jewel in the Central Valley, where smallish boutique wineries are the rarity rather than routine.

"We wanted to do everything first class," Spencer added. "With my background in construction, I was there to see it all through."

Spencer admits to being a hands-off owner and had chosen to employ a top-notch management team for CRU Wine Company. He did however, have a hand in deciding to separate CRU from others in the Central Valley who relied on Central Valley grapes for their wines.

"We wanted to utilize grapes from a number of sources that would provide us the ability to make a wide range of

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Winemaker Ken Post and Director of Sales Ryan Doglione check out the ripening vines at Santa Maria's Sierra Madre Vineyard; Siphoning out fresh Pinot Noir after fermentation; Owner Richard Spencer; The CRU tasting room offers visitors the opportunity to explore the winery and barrel sample various wines.

## ABOUT THE VINEYARD



The CRU 2010 Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir is part of the brand's 'Appellation Series' in that it is crafted to represent the appellation as a whole with its distinguishing characteristics. Winemaker Ken Post carefully selected two vineyards in the Santa Maria Valley - the famed

Sierra Madre Vineyard and Garey Vineyard - and believed these two sites, blended together, would create a wine with extra layers

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wine styles, from both the cool, coastal regions and the warmer inland appellations. We have managed to stick with that philosophy and it seems to have worked out quite nicely," added Spencer.

The CRU Wine Company actually represents three unique portfolios that each embrace the diversity of California's premium viticultural areas. The flagship *CRU Wines* brand focuses on premium Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs from the cool coastal climates of Monterey, Santa Lucia Highlands, and the Santa Maria Valley. The *Mariposa Wines* brand represents Bordeaux style wines and Mediterranean inspired blends from Napa, Paso Robles, and the Sierra Foothills, and the *Yosemite View* brand is the company's approach to entry-level, every day drinking wines from northern California's wine country.

The name *CRU*, by the way, is a French term identifying prestigious vineyards and the wines made from them, embodying the classification of select vineyard sites and their unique indigenous style - a perfectly suited name for this handcrafted brand of wines.

The *CRU Wines* brand has grown to include four Chardonnays and two Pinot Noirs, with just 3,000 cases produced overall. These wines have tiny production numbers and therefore are nearly impossible to find outside of the winery's tasting room in Madera, California.

Since 2006, the wines have been made by acclaimed winemaker Ken Post, who brings a dedicated, passionate energy to the CRU team and its portfolio of site-driven wines.

As the CRU Wine Company celebrates its ten years of success in California's Central Valley, owner Richard Spencer has much to be thankful for and, along with the rest of the crew, looks forward to what the future will bring.

of complexity and serve as a true representation of what Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noirs are all about.

The Sierra Madre Vineyard lies near the western edge of the Valley, in northern Santa Barbara County. It is one of the state's most famous properties for Pinot Noir since it consistently produces small berries with intense flavor, color and concentration - all essential qualities for top-level wines. The Garey Vineyard is named after the tiny township of Garey in the Valley, and it's located on the northern edge of the elevated Santa Maria mesa. It was originally planted in the late 1990's to be the Robert Mondavi Corporation's premiere vineyard in the region.

# ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Native Californian Ken Post began his career on the family ranch in Paso Robles. There, his family farmed 1,800 acres of alfalfa and various grains until the ranch was sold in the late 70's. At that time, Ken pursued a second career in highway construction. His firm contracted with the State of California and private organizations in providing highway paving, resurfacing, and oiling services. While this was a

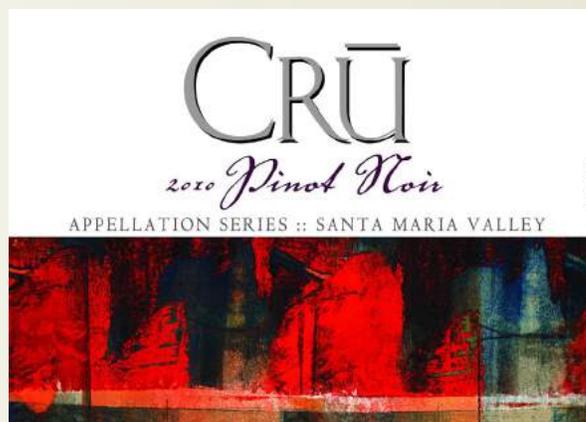
lucrative business, Ken wished to spend more time with his family and retired at the age of 40. It wasn't long before Ken craved more activity and decided to pursue his love of wine.

After enrolling in Fresno State's Enology Viticulture program and earning his degree, Ken began his third and final career as a winemaker in the Central Valley. He first worked for the respected small winery Oak Hollow, and then joined the CRU Wine Company in 2006. He has since been much of the spirit behind the company image and his love for winemaking shines through in each and every bottle he produces.

## CRU 2010 SANTA MARIA VALLEY PINOT NOIR

CRU's 2010 Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir comes from two vineyards in this coveted Central Coast appellation - the Sierra Madre Vineyard and Garey Vineyard. Winemaker Ken Post blended the fruit from these two sites to bring extra layers of complexity to this luscious Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir. Dark cherry red in color, the CRU Pinot Noir has an intriguing nose with aromas of raspberry, strawberry, forest floor and earth. The palate is smooth yet vibrant with flavors of blackberry, cranberry, tangerine and spice. Try pairing the CRU 2010 Santa Maria Valley Pinot Noir with beef stew, cioppino, or risotto.

Alcohol: 14.3%      Barrel Aging: 9 months  
 pH: 3.55      Cases Produced: 438  
 Total Acidity: 0.68 g/100mL      Enjoy Now Until: 2016



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<b>2010 Pinot Noir</b>	\$42.00/btl.	\$35.50/btl. <i>Save 15%</i>	\$33.50/btl. <i>Save 20%</i>	

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### Old Fashioned Beef Stew

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|--|--|
| 2 Tbs. cooking oil                       | 2 large carrots, sliced                  |
| 2 lbs. sirloin, cubed                    | 2 lbs. tomatoes (canned or fresh)        |
| 2 medium celery stalks with tops, sliced | 1 ten oz. package frozen corn            |
| 2 tsp. salt                              | 1 ten oz. package frozen cut green beans |
| 1 tsp. pepper                            | 8 red new potatoes, washed and cubed     |
| 1 medium bay leaf                        | 1 ten and a half oz. can beef bouillon   |
| 1 tsp. dried marjoram                    | 2 cups red wine                          |
| 2 tsp. dried basil                       |  |

In heavy 6-quart Dutch oven, heat oil just to smoking. Add meat all at once and brown rapidly, stirring constantly until all of the cubes are browned. Reduce heat and add onions, celery, and spices. Cook until onion is just tender. Add remaining ingredients. Stir well to combine. Cook over medium-low heat until meat is tender and all vegetables are very tender, approximately 1 hour. Add more wine or beef stock during cooking to keep meat from drying out. I like to coat the potatoes with olive oil, crushed garlic and basil in a baggie for two hours before roasting them for ten minutes at 450 degrees on a cookie sheet. This will add tons of flavor to your stew! *Recipe sourced from CRU Winemaker, Ken Post.*



### Cioppino

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 3/4 cup butter                    | 1 cup water                                |
| 2 onions, chopped                 | 1 1/2 cups white wine                      |
| 2 cloves garlic, minced           | 1 1/2 lbs. large shrimp, peeled & deveined |
| 1 bunch fresh parsley, chopped    | 1 1/2 lbs. bay scallops                    |
| 2 (14.5 oz.) cans stewed tomatoes | 18 small clams                             |
| 2 (14.5 oz) cans chicken broth    | 18 mussels, cleaned & debearded            |
| 2 bay leaves                      | 1 1/2 cups crabmeat                        |
| 1 Tbs. dried basil                | 1 1/2 lbs. cod fillets, cubed              |
| 1/2 tsp. dried thyme              |  |
| 1/2 tsp. dried oregano            |  |

Over medium-low heat, melt butter in a large stockpot, add onions, garlic and parsley. Cook slowly, stirring occasionally until onions are soft.

Add tomatoes to the pot (break them into chunks as you add them). Add chicken broth, bay leaves, basil, thyme, oregano, water and wine. Mix well. Cover and simmer 30 minutes.

Stir in the shrimp, scallops, clams, mussels and crabmeat. Stir in fish, if desired. Bring to boil. Lower heat, cover and simmer 5 to 7 minutes until clams open. Ladle soup into bowls and serve with warm, crusty bread! *Recipe sourced from allrecipes.com.*

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



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