



THE DONUM ESTATE

On a quest to make the ultimate Pinot Noir, The Donum Estate has gone from start-up to stardom with a collection of some of California's finest wines.



The Donum Ranch vineyard was planted by Anne Moller-Racke in 1989-1990 on rolling hillsides that rise up off San Pablo Bay in Carneros; Winery President and Winegrower Anne Moller-Racke; The Donum Estate's consulting Winemaker is Kenneth Juhasz; Donum's grapes are hand-tended and meticulously selected to produce the best possible estate grown Pinot Noirs each vintage.

To put it simply, this month's *Pinot Noir Series* selection, The Donum Estate, is the type of winery many other wineries would like to emulate. Relatively young by industry standards, The Donum Estate is a carefully thought out, perfectly situated property that combines the absolute finest in grape growing with the exacting expertise of gifted winemakers.

First, the particulars...The Donum Estate is comprised of three vineyard properties in Carneros, the Anderson Valley, and the Russian River Valley, each uniquely suited to Pinot Noir and all farmed by the winery's passionate owner/grower Anne Moller-Racke.

The Donum Estate was founded by the Racke Family of Germany, who also owns the prestigious Robert Stemmler Winery in upper Sonoma. Donum is the pet project of Anne Moller-Racke, who recognized the value of the vineyards when they were part of the Buena Vista Winery sale to Allied Domecq in 2001.

"I first started to see the incredible possibilities when I took a really close look at Carneros," she admitted. "The Carneros terrain shaped its own destiny. All this land was formerly pastures, big expanses of rolling

grassland that fed beef and dairy herds, goats and sheep. For a number of years, the cool climates and ever present moisture off the bay wasn't that attractive to growers."

Moller-Racke feels that the advent of smaller, quality-oriented wineries shaped the future of Carneros. "When the demand for superior quality Chardonnay and Pinot Noir started in the mid 1980's, Carneros quickly became everyone's favorite place. I fell in love with the marvelous vineyards that comprise today's Donum Estate and made sure they weren't part of the Buena Vista sale."

Moller-Racke then set about to making what some insiders have called "the perfect Pinot Noir." She has developed a formula that most wineries simply cannot afford to employ. Anne limits the tonnage to about one ton per acre, well below both the Napa and Sonoma averages. She also encourages a most unique approach to making a Donum wine.

According to international winemaker Kenneth Juhasz, "Donum is a really wonderful project. We're given no case numbers (to produce). We're just asked to make a small amount of extraordinary Pinot Noir."

continued on Page 2



Anne Moller-Racke and Kenneth Juhasz walk the vineyards to inspect their estate grown grapes; Pinot Noir has become one of Carneros' most celebrated varietals; President/Winegrower Anne Moller-Racke has farmed for decades and brings a vast knowledge to her project; A picturesque autumn view of The Donum Estate.

ABOUT THE VINEYARD



The Donum Estate 2008 Carneros Estate Grown Pinot Noir comes from the 70-acre Donum Ranch vineyard, located on gently rolling hills that rise up from San Pablo Bay in Carneros. From this site, The

Donum Estate has been crafting some of the finest Pinot Noirs in the state since 2001.

The Carneros wine region is one of California's most unique appellations, bridging the Napa and Sonoma Valleys in northern

THE DONUM ESTATE, *Continued from Page 1*

Introduced with a tiny number (300 cases) in 2001, The Donum Estate has grown to produce just under 2,000 cases a year. What is neat is the fact that any future growth will depend entirely on the quality of fruit the vineyards provide.

"It is really quite simple," Moller-Racke continued. "We divide our vineyards into individual units for quality control, and each is farmed a bit differently. The rows up on the ridge have shallow soil and are better drained, and are more exposed to the wind and sun than the vines down in the swale. We call this precision farming and it's all about smaller and smaller units to ensure uniform quality control."

Moller-Racke also explained that each vintage is capable of producing grapes that will be used for The Donum Estate. Because it is not known which units will prosper under each vintage's conditions, all vines are given the same exacting care. "It's all about allowing the vines to develop their utmost potential," she added, "it just happens at The Donum Estate, we attempt to give them all painstaking attention." She is also pleased that all The Donum Estate vineyards are post-phylloxera, a fact that bodes well for the future of the winery. She also credits her other brand, Robert Stemmler Winery, with allowing her the chance to be so selective for The Donum Estate.

"Our Stemmler label makes Donum possible," Moller-Racke, pointed out. "It provides us with a wonderful array of fruit from which to select. We have been very pleased that the resulting wines have proven to be quite exceptional."

That last quote might be an understatement. Since its first release, The Donum Estate has consistently garnered superior accolades from the wine industry press and has become a hard item to find on a consistent basis, a fact aided by such limited production.

The word *Donum* (from the same Latin root as donation) literally means "gift of the land," a phrase that rings particularly true in the case of The Donum Estate. During its brief history, it has set a standard that other Pinot Noir makers will surely attempt to achieve.

California. This cool climate appellation has long been known for its elegant Pinot Noirs and it's easy to see why. Influenced by the cooling effect of the Pacific Ocean and a combination of summer fog, warm days, and a long growing season makes this spot Pinot Noir's dream come true.

Carneros became an official American Viticultural Area (AVA) in 1983. It was the first wine region in California to be defined by its climate characteristics rather than political boundaries. Today, the Carneros region is home to approximately 8,000 vineyard acres and 30 wineries.

ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Kenneth Juhasz (YOU haas) was appointed winemaker at The Donum Estate in 2005, bringing with him incredible experience and a commitment to creating wines of power and elegance that express the site from which they are from.

Kenneth's interest in enology had grown as he worked his way through school in fine restaurants and the local wine shop in his native North Carolina. After college, he eagerly pursued his passion for Pinot Noir west to the Willamette Valley. There he began working with winemaker Ken

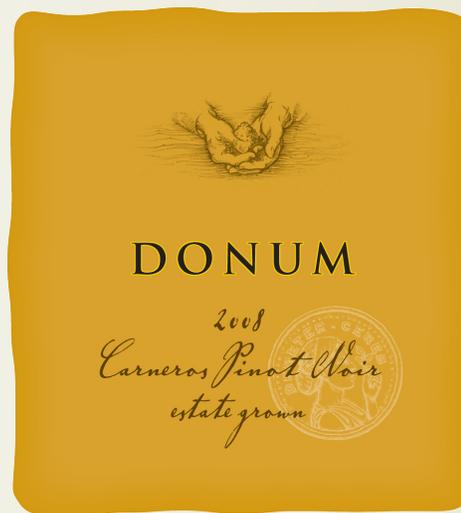
Bernards, who became Kenneth's mentor over the next few years. When Juhasz came to Carneros in 2002, Bernards helped him create and launch the "ultimate Pinot Noir project" at The Donum Estate. Kenneth became winemaker at The Donum Estate just three years later.

Kenneth further enhanced his knowledge with trips to Oregon and the South Island of New Zealand, where he spearheaded a start-up Pinot Noir operation at Hinton Estate. Now at Donum Estate, Kenneth works closely with winegrower Ann Moller-Racke and is dedicated to crafting outstanding wines from the winery's estate vineyards in the Carneros and Russian River Valley appellations.

DONUM 2008 CARNEROS ESTATE GROWN PINOT NOIR

The Donum Ranch covers the slopes of three hills in the Carneros region just north of San Pablo Bay. Nestled amid these hills is a 70-acre vineyard planted to a diverse collection of Pinot Noir. Donum's Carneros Estate Grown Pinot Noir not only comes from the best blocks in this vineyard - the *grand cru* sites - but also is a selection of the most appealing barrels within each lot. The 2008 Carneros Estate Grown Pinot Noir is rich and concentrated, displaying layers of blackberry, Bing and black cherry aromas along with subtle strawberries and rose petals in a very provocative nose. On the palate, the wine is dense and silky, with lively black cherry and berry flavors that linger through a prolonged finish.

Cases Produced: 750 Total Acidity: 0.66 g/100mL
 Alcohol: 14.4% Enjoy Now Until: 2014
 pH: 3.58



94 POINTS

- Pinot Report

93 POINTS

- Wine Spectator

91 POINTS

- Wine Enthusiast

REORDERS

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Pork Tenderloin with Tart Cherry, Port and Caraway Sauce

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| 1 large onion | 1 1/2 tsp. red wine vinegar |
| 2 lbs. boneless pork tenderloin | 2 cups fresh or frozen pitted tart cherries
(about 1 1/4 pints fresh, picked over) |
| 1 Tbs. olive oil | 1/2 tsp. caraway seeds |
| 1/2 cup Tawny Port | |
| 1/4 cup fresh orange juice | |

Heat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit.

Coarsely chop onion. Pat pork dry and season with salt and pepper. In an ovenproof large heavy skillet, heat oil over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking and brown pork. Transfer pork to a plate and in oil remaining in skillet, cook over moderate heat, stirring, until golden. Add Port, orange juice, and vinegar and simmer, stirring, 2 minutes. Add fresh or frozen cherries, caraway seeds, pork, and any juices that have accumulated on plate and bring to a boil.

Transfer skillet to middle of oven and roast pork for 30 minutes, or until a meat thermometer registers 155 degrees Fahrenheit. Transfer pork to a cutting board and let stand, loosely covered with foil, 10 minutes. While pork is standing, simmer sauce, stirring, until slightly thickened and reduced to about 1 1/2 cups. Cut pork into 1/2-inch thick slices and spoon sauce over it.

Recipe sourced from epicurious.com.



Salmon Steaks with Red Wine Butter

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|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1 cup dry red wine | 1 tsp. finely grated fresh orange zest |
| 1/3 cup finely chopped shallots (3-4) | 1 stick (1/2 cup) unsalted butter, softened |
| 1/2 cup fresh orange juice | 1 tsp. salt |
| 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar | 1/4 tsp. black pepper |
| 1 tsp. tomato paste | 4 (1-inch-thick) salmon steaks |
| 1 Turkish or 1/2 California bay leaf | 2 Tbs. olive oil |

Combine wine, shallots, juice, vinegar, tomato paste, and bay leaf in a 1-2 quart heavy saucepan and boil over moderately high heat until mixture is thick and jamlike and reduced to about 1/3 cup, about 20 minutes. Discard bay leaf. Transfer mixture to a small bowl set in a bowl of ice and cold water and stir until cold to the touch, about 5 minutes. Remove from ice water and stir in zest, butter, 1/4 tsp. salt, and 1/8 tsp. pepper with a rubber spatula until incorporated.

Preheat broiler. Line rack of a broiler pan with foil.

Pat fish dry, then brush sides with oil (2 Tbs. total) and sprinkle with remaining 3/4 tsp. salt and 1/8 tsp. pepper. Broil fish about 5 inches from heat, turning over once, until just cooked through, 8-10 minutes total. Top each salmon steak with 1-2 Tbs. red-wine butter.

Recipe sourced from epicurious.com.

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



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