

PINOT NOIR PRESS

GOLD MEDAL
WINE CLUB'S



v07i03



HERITANCE WINES

One of the pioneers of the Napa Valley wine industry, Bernard Portet applies his legendary style to an exciting new winery project that honors his French family's remarkable winemaking heritage.



The famed Stanly Ranch Vineyard in Carneros, Napa Valley was selected as the fruit source for this month's *Pinot Noir Series* feature; Heritance Wines are made in Saint Helena, Napa Valley; Heritance Wines' owner/winemaker Bernard Portet; Portet carefully checks the sugar levels of his ripening grapes with a refractometer tool.

It is seldom than anyone can claim to be a ninth generation anything, much less a world renowned member of one of France's great winemaking families. Bernard Portet, 69, is such a man.

Portet can trace his roots back to 1698, or further. "Most of the records before the French Revolution were lost in church fires and the like," he explained. "But my family has been making wine since the beginning of the 18th Century as far as we know."

Portet himself was born in Cognac, just north of Bordeaux. His father Andre had vineyards there that sold produce to the big Cognac houses that was made into the internationally acclaimed brandy that bears the town's name.

In 1955, Andre Portet was appointed regisseur (estate manager) for the heralded Chateau Lafite Rothschild in Pauillac, one of the historic communes above Bordeaux. Chateau Lafite, as it is popularly known, is still considered one of the premier wines in the entire world.

Bernard Portet remembers walking the vineyards of Lafite as a youth with his father. "My father would explain why Cabernet Sauvignon was planted in a particular spot and why Merlot preferred a cooler environment. At the time I wasn't

really sure why the terroir made such a difference to the wines."

After completing high school, Bernard studied agronomy, viticulture and enology at universities in Toulouse and Montpellier. A trip in 1968 to California's Napa Valley changed his life forever. Impressed by the similarities of Napa Valley and French growing regions, Portet took a job two years later to establish a world class winery that was to become known as Clos du Val Winery.

He selected property in the then unknown region known as Stag's Leap District in the southern region of Napa Valley. Stag's Leap was a relatively cool growing place that seemed perfect for cultivating the type of grapes that fit Portet's winemaking style.

By picking grapes at relatively low sugar levels, Portet was able to control the balance and acidity of his wines. Consumers and publications alike marveled at his early wines and their classic Bordeaux style. Medals came raining down and Clos du Val was a remarkable success.

When Portet finally retired from his position as Co-founder, Vice-Chairman and Winemaker at Clos du Val Winery near the end of 2008,

continued on Page 2



Portet checks over the freshly harvested grapes; Bernard Portet with his son, Olivier; Grapes are carefully put through the crusher/destemmer prior to fermentation; Fall in the beautiful Carneros, Napa Valley region.

ABOUT THE VINEYARD



First planted in the late 1800's, the historic Stanly Ranch is located in the south-eastern part of the Carneros region of Napa Valley. The vineyard holds an important distinction in the modern viticultural history of Carneros, with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay clonal trials conducted there in the 1950's by Louis Martini, the Wente family, and UC Davis. Today, Stanly Ranch is home to Chardonnay and Pinot Noir clones that originated

he had no idea he would reenter the wine business as soon as 2010. A chance meeting with Don Chase, a former executive with a number of California wineries, provided Portet with an opportunity to start a new winery with his close friend.

“Don wanted to start a new wine venture and insisted that I be part of it. We got together and decided to go for it,” Portet explained. The new endeavor became *Heritage*, an amalgam of both ‘heritance’ and ‘inheritance,’ a pair of significant words in the life of Bernard Portet. Plans were made and grapes were purchased for the winery’s first release, a 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon.

“I was quite happy with the way it was received,” Portet revealed. Heritage Wines’ style is modeled after the classic “Old World” and combines fruit and elegance in the bottle. Contrasted to some of the modern behemoths that feature higher alcohol and very fruit forward wines, Heritage offers an excellent representation of well-made wines that are very food friendly and easy to consume.

“We have had a great reception for our wines in fine restaurants throughout the country,” Portet’s partner in Heritage Wines, Don Chase, added. “These places tend to know good food pairings and are appreciative of our style of wines.” Now in its sixth year, Heritage Wines has become well respected for its dignified wines and authentic style.

Portet is happy he’s not the last in his family to enjoy the fruits of the wine business. His son, Olivier has followed his father into the business and has served as marketing director for the venture since its inception.

“Olivier was born into the wine business, just as I was and all the generations before us. It’s in his blood just as it is in mine. I hope he is successful and carries on the family tradition for many years,” Portet finished.

Bernard Portet contends that he is a simple, humble man, much in the tradition of his fathers and ancestors. Since the Portet Family has been at it more than 314 years, and possibly even longer, history seems to be in their favor.

in the Cote d’Or region of Burgundy, France. This property is farmed to the highest standards of sustainability and quality, and has become highly regarded for its excellent Burgundian-style fruit. Very few producers have access to Stanly Ranch, and Heritage Wines was given a special opportunity to produce its 2011 Stanly Ranch Pinot Noir.

The Carneros AVA is quite unique in that it straddles the Napa and Sonoma County lines. With its proximity to the cool fog and breezes from the San Pablo Bay, it is considered Napa's best growing area for Pinot Noir.

ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Bernard Portet is considered to be one of the pioneers of the Napa Valley wine industry, and continues to make a name for himself with the wonderful wines of Heritance. When he started the brand in 2010, Portet decided to use his signature *assemblage* winemaking style, in which he blends different lots of wine to craft a finished wine that is greater than the sum of its parts. The

diversity of vineyard and varietal components from various Napa Valley sources has provided him an ideal opportunity to showcase

this assemblage style and create uniquely distinctive wines for the Heritance brand.

While he continues to utilize the assemblage style, Portet has also began crafting tiny batches of vineyard-designated wines. There may only be a few barrels made of these new wines, and they may not be produced each year, but the selection process is rigorous and the lots will only be set aside when deemed truly exceptional. The first, but certainly not the last, of these special vineyard-designated offerings is this month's featured 2011 Pinot Noir from the famed Stanly Ranch in Carneros, Napa Valley.

Portet certainly has an appreciation for the distinctive winegrowing regions of Napa Valley, and combining that with his artistic winemaking style, he takes the idea of *terrior* to an exciting new level.

HERITANCE 2011 'STANLY RANCH' PINOT NOIR

Brilliant deep ruby in color, the Heritance 2011 'Stanly Ranch' Pinot Noir has bright, intense aromas of red fruit and cherry, a hint of spice, and nice underlying woody tannins. The palate is powerful, rich and generous with a good underlying structure and fresh flavors of juicy cherry fruit, white spices, and a hint of mint. It's nice long finish is typical of the cool climate in the Napa-Carneros region. Try pairing the Heritance 2011 'Stanly Ranch' Pinot Noir with poultry, lamb or pork, mushroom dishes and blue or goat cheeses. Aged in French oak.

Cases Produced: 217
Enjoy Now Until: 2016



90 POINTS

- *TheTastingPanel.com*

GOLD MEDAL WINE STORE

HERITANCE	Retail Price at the Winery	Members Only Special Pricing
2011 Pinot Noir	\$45.00/btl.	Save 13%-23% online!

Order Online: www.goldmedalwineclub.com/winestore

Toll Free: 1-800-266-8888

These special discounts are available only to club members, gift recipients and gift givers. Remember to **login** to see your prices online!

*2 bottle min, per wine, per order. Shipping and tax (if applicable) not included in above prices. Call for details.



Grilled Beets with Blue Cheese

2-3 bunches of the beets of your choice (about a dozen). We like Chioggia or Golden Beets
 1/4 cup and 1 Tbsp olive oil
 1/8 tsp salt
 1/8 tsp pepper
 1/2 cup of Heritance Pinot Noir
 1 tsp of Worcestershire
 Either 1 tsp dried, or 1 Tbsp fresh thyme
 1/2 cup blue cheese, crumbled
 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley

Clean and remove tops/bottoms from beets. Peel them and cut into uniform thickness slices - about 1/8-1/4 of an inch.

In a large bowl, combine 1/4 cup of olive oil, salt, pepper, Pinot Noir and Worcestershire, and dried or fresh thyme. Toss beets in mixture until thoroughly covered.

Heat grill to medium hot - not open flame or so hot you can't hold your hand over the grate for a few seconds. Place beets on grill from the bowl. When bowl is empty and beets are on the grill, rinse bowl and return to side of grill. Cook beets 10 minutes (until grill marks on first side, and tender after turning).

After grilling, place beets back in bowl originally used to toss and add another Tbsp of olive oil, and the blue cheese. Toss. Garnish with fresh parsley. Serve warm, or can be made ahead of time and served at room temperature. *Recipe provided by Heritance Wines.*



Grilled Lamb Chops with Peperonata

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for brushing	Scant 1/2 cup golden raisins
6 oil-packed anchovies, finely chopped	2 Tbsp drained capers
3 red or yellow bell peppers (about 1 1/4 lbs), thinly sliced	1 Tbsp sugar
1 small sweet onion, thinly sliced	1/4 cup white wine vinegar mixed with 3/4 cup of water
3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced	Salt & freshly ground pepper
	8 small lamb chops (5 to 6 oz. each)

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. In a large, deep skillet, heat the 1/3 cup of olive oil until shimmering. Add the anchovies and cook over high heat, stirring, until dissolved, about 1 min. Add the peppers, onion and garlic and cook, stirring, until softened and lightly browned, about 10 min. Stir in the raisins, capers and sugar. Add the vinegar mixture and simmer over low heat until the peppers are very tender and the liquid is slightly reduced, about 5 min. Season with salt and pepper and keep warm.

Heat a cast-iron grill pan until very hot. Brush the lamb chops with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill the chops over high heat until they are lightly charred, about 1 minute per side. Transfer the grill pan to the oven and roast chops for 3 minutes for medium meat. Serve the lamb chops with peperonata. *Recipe provided by Heritance Wines.*

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!



Gold Medal Wine Club
 5330 Debbie Road, Suite 200
 Santa Barbara, California 93111

Toll Free: 1-800-266-8888
 Fax: 1-800-266-8889
www.goldmedalwineclub.com