



The Wine Press

Medal Winning Wines from California's Best Family-Owned Wineries.

La Follette Wines
North Coast of California





La Follette 2014 North Coast Pinot Noir

North Coast of California

The La Follette 2014 North Coast Pinot Noir is the culmination of years of exploring vineyards in the outer reaches of California's North Coast wine region. This bottling is a blend of fruit from Mendocino County and the Sonoma Coast's Petaluma Gap wine growing regions, and it beautifully captures the essence of the Pinot Noir grown here. The wine opens with an exuberant bouquet of cherry, berry and cinnamon bark, with just a touch of forest earthiness. A silky entry offers a wild strawberry note and leads to vibrant, fresh acidity, fine grain tannins and red fruit notes of cherry, hibiscus and red currant. Notes of juicy berry and brown spice emerge on the mouthwatering finish. Overall, this is a complete and palate-pleasing rendition of coastal Pinot Noir. Aged in oak. Enjoy now until 2022.

91 Points - Antonio Galloni's *Vinous*

91 Points - Tasting panel

90 Points - Wine Enthusiast magazine



La Follette 2014 North Coast Chardonnay

North Coast of California

The North Coast appellation encompasses some of the coolest vineyards in the state. Here, the characteristic foggy mornings, mild afternoons, and chilly evenings contribute to bright fruit and crisp acidity - traits that are distinctive and delicious in California Chardonnay. The La Follette 2014 North Coast Chardonnay is a blend of fruit from two organic vineyards in Mendocino County and one Old-Vine Chardonnay vineyard in the Sonoma Coast. The Old-Vine Chardonnay ripens slowly, adding gravitas and volume to the overall blend. An inviting bouquet of vanilla bean, biscuit and lemon zest notes come together on the nose, while the creamy palate offers elegant yet energetic flavors that are balanced with fresh minerality and acidity. This is a fresh, harmonious blend that is distinctively coastal in style. 100% Chardonnay. Enjoy now until 2019.

90 Points - Wine Enthusiast magazine

90 Points - Tasting panel

HOW WE CHOOSE OUR WINES: Gold Medal Wine Club showcases two wines each month from only the best small wineries of California. Featured wines include those which have earned medals in the top wine-industry competitions or have been highly rated by a respected national wine publication (see goldmedalwineclub.com/resources/wine-ratings). On occasion, we feature a pair of wines which are newly released by the winery and which medals and reviews are forthcoming. Each and every selection is a superb wine made in small quantities and with very limited distribution. There are over 3,000 wineries in California producing thousands of different wines. Only wines fitting the above criteria are considered in choosing the featured selections each month.



La Follette Wines



A boutique Sonoma County winery is intensely focused on crafting terroir-driven Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from some of the North Coast's most expressive and interesting vineyards.



La Follette Wines' Tasting Room is located just 15 minutes from downtown Healdsburg in Sonoma County. The warm and inviting space offers visitors the opportunity to take a sensory tour of the North Coast AVA, tasting wines that express the unique notes of their vineyard site and the appellation.

It all began almost a decade ago as an attempt to create an ongoing dialogue between a number of select vineyards to showcase two of California's premier grape varietals, Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

California's North Coast growing region was chosen as the major grape source for La Follette Wines' initial releases due to its incredible assortment of growing areas and the diversity of climate and soils it offers to the band of farmers that have made the North Coast one of California's premier growing areas.

La Follette Wines is owned by Pete and Terri Kight who also own well-respected Quivira Vineyards in Sonoma's Dry Creek Valley, as well as the highly acclaimed Torbreck Vintners in Australia's Barossa Valley. Kight is the CEO of electronic bill pay pioneer *CheckFree* and an avid devotee of fine wines.

La Follette Wines is named for the founding winemaker of the entity, Greg La Follette (see Spotlight Section) and began

operations in 2008. A total of 5,000 cases were initially released and the number has steadily increased to the present level of around 10,000 cases.

"We have a business plan that calls for us to reach another 5,000 or so cases around 2020," informed Greg Ralston, La Follette Wines' general manager. "It all depends on the will of the consumer market, but the signs are quite encouraging."

Since its inception, the predominantly Sonoma-sourced company has been an excellent negotiant model for the Northern California wine industry. With no estate vineyards, LaFollette Wines has prospered on long-term contracts with growers from a number of highly-rated vineyards. Included are the likes of renowned Sangiacomo Vineyards (both their Robert's Road Vineyard and Green Acres Vineyard) as well as Charles Heintz Vineyard, Hawk's Roost Vineyard, Van Der Kamp Vineyard and several others. The grape-growing group represents an outstanding selection of fruit from specific terroirs that reflect the flavors and intensities of each specific site.

"We are quite selective about the fruit we buy," added Greg Ralston. "We are looking for certain features from the fruit that will complement our style of winemaking. In order to produce outstanding wines, much care must be given to the selection of fruit."



Vineyards are the heart of La Follette, as their unique terroir are central and indispensable to the success of the wines. La Follette works with some of the North Coast's best vineyard sites and strives to craft wines of refinement and finesse.

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Simone Sequeira, Winemaker

The winemaking team at La Follette Wines is among the best in the country with substantial experience and expertise. Founding winemaker Greg La Follette was principle winemaker until leaving the entity in 2016. His associate winemaker, Simone Sequeira, has been with the winery since its inception and maintains the attention to detail that is necessary to produce exceptional wines. Sequeira’s work experience includes a stint at Taft Street Winery in Sebastopol and foreign stints at the prestigious Clos de Vougeot in Burgundy and also with a top winery in Argentina early in her career.

Sequeira believes her greatest asset is her nose in making wines. “I feel like I’m receiving nonverbal messages and clues all day long from ambient aromas inside and outside the winery,” she revealed.

Nowadays, Winemaker Ehren Jordan serves as consultant at La Follette Wines. Jordan is a former winemaker-of-the-year (2008) and has been associated with such luminaries as Turley Wine Cellars, Failla Wines and Neyers Vineyards. Enough said.

La Follette Wines

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A number of appellations are involved in La Follette Wines’ releases, so the all-encompassing North Coast Appellation is the designation of choice for the winery. The huge successes of late for the North Coast AVA have been a boon to La Follette Wines and numerous wineries that employ similar blending practices in the area. Since the North Coast AVA is the coldest in Northern California, Burgundian varietals such as Pinot Noir and Chardonnay have thrived in its elevated vineyards and cold weather temperatures.

La Follette Wines is a wonderful story of insight and planning that provides great value for its wines that are products of high-caliber (and costly) vineyards. Such wineries are necessary

to balance the profusion of expensive products that emanate from the same vineyards under different labels.

Our hat’s off to La Follette Wines and its excellent collection of award winning wines.





Food pairings from La Follette Wines



Grilled Pork Tenderloin with Sage Almond Pesto & Wilted Red Cabbage with Bacon & Strawberries

Pair with the La Follette 2014 North Coast Pinot Noir

1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 bunch fresh thyme, leaves only
 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
 2 pork tenderloins (about 1lb each)
 Salt and pepper to taste

Sage Pesto:

1/4 cup packed sage leaves
 1/4 cup unsalted roasted almonds
 1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1 lemon (zest from half and a squeeze of juice)
 1 clove garlic
 Salt and pepper to taste

Wilted Red Cabbage:

1 1/2 lbs red cabbage, sliced thin
 4 strips thick-cut bacon
 1 cup strawberries, sliced thin
 1 tsp sugar
 1/4 cup red wine

Combine the oil, garlic, thyme, and vinegar in a medium size dish. Add the pork tenderloins and combine to coat them thoroughly. Rotate occasionally for at least 1 hour; overnight is best. Preheat grill to med/high (400 degrees). Remove pork from marinade; place on clean preheated grill. Turn pork approximately every 4 minutes to brown on all sides; approximately 16 to 20 min. or an internal temperature of 137. Remove the pork from the grill and let rest for 10 min. before slicing. **For the Sage Pesto:** place all the ingredients in a blender and pulse until combined yet chunky. **For the Wilted Red Cabbage:** in a medium size pot on medium heat, cook bacon until brown and crispy; discard excess grease. Add cabbage, strawberries, sugar, and red wine, stirring occasionally for about 5 min. on low heat. Check seasoning before serving. *Recipe provided by La Follette Wines.*



Aromatic Chicken

Pair with the La Follette 2014 North Coast Chardonnay

For the Spice Paste:

1 lemongrass stalk, dry outer layers removed, inner core chopped
 1 in piece of fresh ginger, coarsely chopped
 2 kaffir lime leaves (find at an Asian market, or ask your produce person - they probably have them!)
 3 shallots, peeled and chopped
 A bunch of cilantro stalks (finally a use for them! Save the leaves.)
 2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
 Chilies (to taste), deseeded and finely chopped

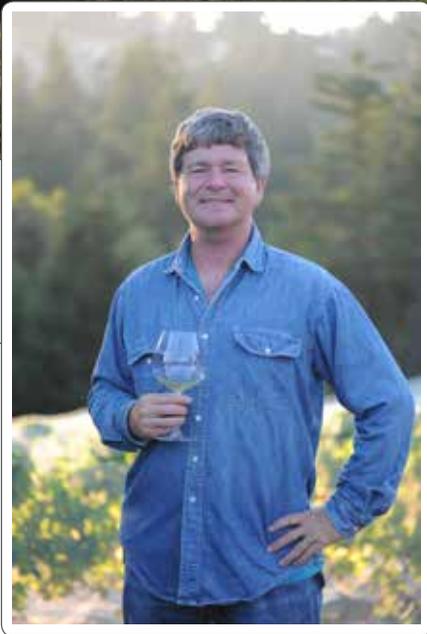
1 tsp fish sauce
 1 tsp turmeric

For the Chicken:

3 Tbs vegetable oil
 3 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
 12 de-boned chicken thighs (or breasts), roughly cubed
 2 Tbs fish sauce
 8 oz. chicken stock
 1 tsp sugar
 2 lemongrass stalks, dry outer layers removed, inner core chopped

For the Spice Paste: purée all the ingredients together in a blender or food processor. **For the Chicken:** heat the oil in a wok, then add the garlic and sauté until golden. Add 1 Tbs of the paste along with the chicken and stir well. Add the fish sauce, chicken stock, sugar and lemongrass. Stir well and simmer for 15 minutes. Garnish with the coriander leaves and serve with rice. *Recipe provided by La Follette Wines.*





Greg LaFollette, In The Spotlight

Founding Winemaker Greg La Follette is something of a legend in winemaking circles around Sonoma County, with good reason.

La Follette’s career began as a musician. At 17, he became the bagpiper for the Queen Mary berthed in Long Beach, California. “I wanted to be a winemaker since my teens,” admitted La Follette. “But who in Los Angeles becomes a winemaker?” La Follette eventually transferred to UC Davis to pursue his dream of becoming a winemaker and was able to complete his post grad work on how Burgundian winemaking techniques affect mouthfeel. That experience fostered an attachment for both Pinot Noir and Chardonnay that affected La Follette’s entire winemaking career. “A bottle of the 1961 Domaine de la Romanee-Conti Le Montrachet (considered by many to be the finest white Burgundy in the world) put the icing on the cake for me as far as Burgundies were concerned,” he added.

For the past fifty years, Greg La Follette has plied his trade as a world class winemaker. As winemaker or consulting winemaker, he has been responsible for wine entities such as Flowers Vineyards and Winery, Alquimista Cellars, Steelhead Vineyards and Tandem Wines to name a few. He is Sonoma’s most revered winemaker and was honored as **Winemaker of the Year** in 2010. He has also been tagged “Prince of Pinot” by the website of the same name.

La Follette points out that, “Perhaps the biggest lesson is that a wine is a sum of its parts and the biggest part is the land itself and that we as spokespersons for the land must revere the rocks, sun, wind and rain - everything that ultimately affects the growing of the grapes.”

He also alludes to his mentor, wine icon and winemaking teaching legend Andre Tchelistcheff, who often extolled him to “Live the wine.”

Greg La Follette is a proponent of balanced wines and chides the adage that low yields make higher-quality wines. “A broad generalization” he said, referring to the low yield maxim. “It is more likely that high-end wines from vines that are cropped too low are actually worse than if the vine has a balanced crop. This leads to runaway alcohols. If the vine isn’t balanced, it will pay no attention to ripening its grape tannins. Then you must pick the grapes at higher sugar percentages to produce flavor-ripeness and that leads to higher alcohols, lower acidity and jammy flavors. Balanced vines mean balanced wines, it’s as simple as all that.”

Awards and accolades have come by the bushel to Greg La Follette and his portfolio of finely textured wines. Throughout the years, his wines have earned a reputation both for their quality as well as their price/value relationship.

He continues to preach the gospel about terroir and its effect on the wines that are produced from specific areas. “Each site, each vineyard has uniqueness, a specialness that can be listened to and partnered to,” he stated. “If I do anything well, it is listening to my vineyards and inviting the land to share its voice in every glass of wine.”

Luminaries such as Greg La Follette are increasingly difficult to find in the California wine industry as it continues to grow and prosper. When profitability and status become bywords in the wine arena, many growers and vintners succumb to the pressures of the industry. Not so with Greg La Follette, a humble and resolute man who remains true to his origins and his passions.

It is our pleasure to spotlight Greg La Follette for our Gold Wine Club members.





Wine Region: North Coast AVA

Northern California's North Coast AVA (American Viticultural Area) encompasses growing areas in six California counties and covers more than 3,000,000 acres along the coast of the Golden State.

Mainstay designations such as Napa Valley, Sonoma County and Mendocino County are the headliners and the North Coast Appellation is home to the most wineries in California.

With the rise in popularity of the amazing Pinot Noir grape, added attention has been given to the North Coast AVA and its sometimes fierce weather conditions. While officially classified as Mediterranean/maritime in climate, the area's altitude variances and wind conditions have made it one of the most desirous places for growing the hard to handle Pinot Noir and to a lesser degree the Chardonnay.

The long, rough-edged rectangle that is the North Coast AVA measures a little over 120 miles from South to North and about half that from west to east. Summer temperatures in



the North Coast AVA are significantly lower (while winters are noticeably milder) than the inland growing areas and provide a higher quality of fruit. While many of the sub-regions (Napa Valley, Sonoma County etc.) are delineated by national, state or county borders, the North Coast AVA is defined by topography, hydrography and other geographical factors.

Many winemaking gems originate within this AVA and consumers should take note of each wine's origins when making their selection. Such prudent shopping will seldom be disappointing.

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Wine Winyard: Test Your Wine IQ!



What is a Tastevin?

A Tastevin is the old wine tasting cup used by wine producers, tasters, and sommeliers. Many sommeliers in Europe would wear this small silver cup on a chain around their neck. The cup is concaved and faceted, allowing winemakers back in the days of candlelight to catch as much of the light as possible to evaluate the wine. It was also used to appreciate the color of wines, especially the reds, and to test the quality and clarity of the wine. The silver dimples on the cup were designed to capture and reflect light to allow the wine's true color and clarity to be revealed.

Where is the largest consumption of wine per capita in the world?

According to the California Wine Institute, more wine is drunk per person in the Vatican City (with a population of just 842 people) than in any other country in the world.

Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary wine aromas: what's the difference?

Primary aromas are those distinct smells that are derived from the fruit itself. These aromas may present themselves as fruity or floral in nature. It is these aromas that allow us to differentiate between different wines in their youth. Violets, rose, chamomile, green apple, lemon-lime citrus, black and red berries would all fall under the Primary aroma category. Secondary wine aromas are influenced by the fermentation process and are especially due to the winemaker's choices. The most common influence in secondary aromas is oak. Example secondary aromas include nutty, buttery, vanilla, cedar, and other wood-like notes. Tertiary wine aromas come into play if the wine has undergone an aging process. The longer and more extensive the aging, the more a wine's aromatics will be influenced. Example tertiary aromas are oxidative character traits like coffee, caramel, toffee, and cocoa, or reductive notes like earthy nuances, wet forest floor, mushrooms, or vegetable-like components.

The Gold Medal Wine Store



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LA FOLLETTE	Retail Price at Winery		Gold Medal Membership Rewards Pricing*		
			2+ btls.	6+ btls.	12+ btls.
2014 North Coast Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast/Mendocino	\$22.00/btl.	2-Bottle Members:	\$19.50	\$17.83	\$17.00
		4-Bottle Members:	\$19.50	\$17.00	\$15.75
2014 North Coast Chardonnay Sonoma Coast/Mendocino	\$22.00/btl.	2-Bottle Members:	\$19.50	\$17.83	\$17.00
		4-Bottle Members:	\$19.50	\$17.00	\$15.75

*Effective per bottle prices after Membership Rewards discount is applied at checkout.

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