

# Pinot Noir Press



## RICHARD G. PETERSON

A long time vintner with one of the most storied resumes in California, Richard G. Peterson has been a major contributor to the state's wine industry and finally starts his own namesake winery.



This month, we are pleased to offer a Pinot Noir from California winemaking legend, Richard (Dick) G. Peterson. Dick Peterson has been an innovator in the California wine industry since the late 1950's. He has worked with several industry leaders including Andre Tchelistcheff and Ernest and Julio Gallo, and was pivotal to the success of such wineries as Beaulieu Vineyards, The Monterey Vineyard, Atlas Peak Vineyards, and Folie a Deux. He is also the author of the celebrated autobiographical book "The Winemaker," which chronicles California's fascinating wine revival following the repeal of Prohibition. Today, he is finally putting his own name on a wine bottle, crafting two limited production wines for his own boutique brand, a Brut Rose sparkling wine and an Old-World, Burgundian-style Pinot Noir.

Both of Dick Peterson's wines feature the unique Wrotham clone of Pinot Noir that was first discovered in Wrotham Village in southeast England, and in all likelihood, was the descendent of cuttings introduced there by the Romans some 2,000 years ago. The Wrotham clone produces a distinctly rich color and spicy character that is not often found in Pinot Noir wines. When Dick Peterson was introduced to the clone in 1980, he was so impressed that he brought the first and only Wrotham

Pinot Noir cuttings back to California and planted two small vineyards in northern Napa Valley and Monterey County's Santa Lucia Highlands. To this day, these two sites are the only Wrotham Pinot Noir vineyards in America.

The Richard G. Peterson wines are made in extremely limited quantities and, not surprisingly, have received a number of lofty ratings from the industry's top periodicals and wine competitions. The inaugural vintages were 2004 for the Brut Rose and 2013 for the Pinot Noir.

Aside from Dick Peterson's numerous accomplishments in the wine industry (see *About the Winemaker* on backside), he is also especially proud of his daughters who followed him into food and wine - Heidi Peterson Barrett has made wines for Screaming Eagle, Grace Family Vineyards, Dalla Valle Vineyards and others (several of which have received perfect 100-Point scores), and Holly Barrett has worked as a chef at Chateau Mouton-Rothschild, Krug and RemyMartin, and Tantris, and currently teaches food and wine dynamics at the Culinary Institute of America.

Dick Peterson's 50-plus years in the wine business have created a rich legacy. We are thrilled to feature his beautiful namesake Pinot Noir to our wine club members and celebrate his incredible contributions to the California wine industry. Enjoy!

## ABOUT THE WINEMAKER



Born in Iowa during the Great Depression, Dick Peterson grew up on his family's farm and was introduced to home winemaking at an early age. After earning his Ph.D. in Agricultural Chemistry from UC Berkeley, he began his career with E & J Gallo Winery where he eventually became Research Director and Assistant Production Manager, in charge of all winemaking. In 1968, he replaced Andre Tchelistcheff as Winemaker for Beaulieu Vineyards and in 1974, became Winemaker and President of The Monterey Vineyard. In 1986, he became Winemaker and President of Atlas Peak Vineyards in Napa Valley. Dick Peterson also invented many wine techniques that are still in use today, such as 'no topping, bung-and-roll,' a practice for barrel aging red wines. He is also the original designer of the steel barrel pallet which allows wine barrels to be handled mechanically instead of by hand. The pallets are now used in most American wineries and in many around the world. Dick has founded and been members of several professional wine societies and is a sought after judge at prominent national and international wine competitions. Today he lives with his wife, Sandra, on their seven acre farm in Napa Valley.

## RICHARD G. PETERSON 2015 PINOT NOIR Santa Lucia Highlands

The Richard G. Peterson 2015 Pinot Noir is a blend of two distinct clones - 50% R-4 clone and 50% Wrotham clone, which Dick Peterson brought back from England in 1980. His Old-World, elegant Burgundian-style Pinot Noir offers undertones of earthy minerality with flavors of black currants, cardamom, fresh porcini mushrooms and smoked meats. This wine is beautiful now, but it will age gracefully for years to come. Aged 14 months in oak. 100% Pinot Noir. Enjoy now until 2025.

**92 POINTS**

– Antonio Galloni

**92 POINTS**

– James Suckling



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