

PLATINUM SERIES



Select, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers

In 1976, a German expatriate named Robert Stemmler opened a winery in the Dry Creek Valley Region of Sonoma County. He was a graduate of the famed Bad Kreuznach Wine College in his native Germany who had made his way to California in 1961.

Upon reaching California, Robert Stemmler was immediately employed at the Charles Krug Winery in Napa Valley and later at such noted wineries as Inglenook in Rutherford and Simi in Sonoma. Along the way his reputation as a solid and foresighted winemaker continued to grow.

As Robert Stemmler Winery grew and prospered, Stemmler chose to explore the potentialities of his favorite varietal that had heretofore met with little acceptance in California, the soft and subtle and hard to grow Pinot Noir.

His first releases were in 1982 and by 1984's vintage, critics were hailing the Robert Stemmler Pinot Noir as the "Best Pinot Noir in America."

In 1989, Stemmler sold his winery to a German company, A. Racke GmbH, who continues to operate the winery today. Its total production of around 10,000 cases is approximately what it was when it was sold to the German company.

"What we were interested in was finding a winery that was poised to specialize," explained Anna Moller-Racke, who is resident winegrower/president of the modern day Robert Stemmler Winery. Moller-Racke's personal resumé contains a solid wine background in production. She was formerly the director of vineyard operations for the iconic Buena Vista Winery for many years.

"We were very fortunate since the winery met our needs in terms of economy of scale," she continued. "It was just at the time of the Pinot Noir breakthrough as far as consumer acceptance, and a great deal of the praise for the varietal's success was given to Robert's wines. Each winery at the time was making a number of different varietals and I think Robert Stemmler Winery was one of the first to really specialize in just one particular varietal."

Today's current makeup is about 80% Pinot Noir and the remainder in Chardonnay. Moller-Racke

also serves as the president of another small winery, Donum Estate that draws from the common 125-planted acres in the Carneros Region of Sonoma.

Even the number of employees has remained smallish, with a total of ten handling the myriad of chores and responsibilities a modern winery provides.

"We are really small and I like it that way," Anna Moller-Racke explained further. "Right now, we all do a little bit of everything and it all seems to come together in the wines. I think I was named President because my department (Winegrowing) was the largest."

Accolades and critical praise have remained constant for Robert Stemmler Winery for more than the past two decades and show no signs of abating. Robert Stemmler Winery wines continue to win top competitive awards in categories dotted with wines that are a good deal more expensive.

"The key to our success is quite simple," Moller-Racke added. "The fruit we get from Carneros is among the finest in California and everyone knows that is the real key to any successful wine."

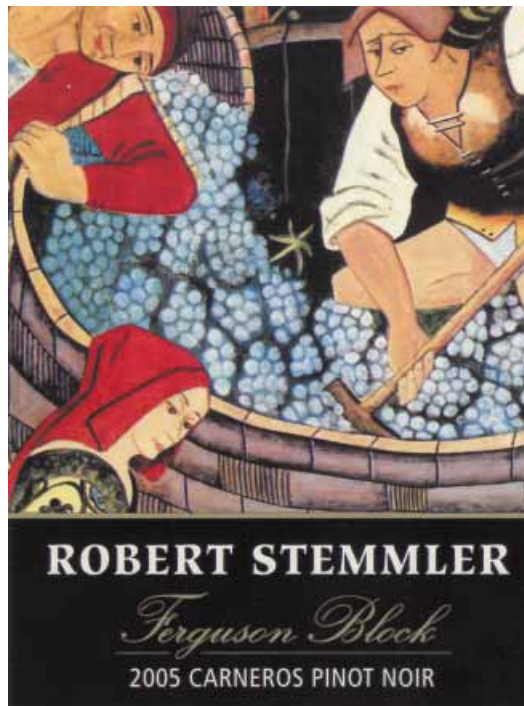
She is also quick to point out that the advent of Phylloxera in the area just before the beginning of the 1990s was actually a blessing in disguise for her vineyards. "Even though it

took Carneros almost a complete decade to replant, the resultant quality increase brought us back into the forefront of viticulture." Many experts are quick to agree. Many new Chardonnays and even more Pinot Noirs from the region are gathering kudos whenever presented to the general public.

And founder, Robert Stemmler, now 81, is currently in retirement but still assists whenever his winery calls. Moller-Racke has now taken over the tradition of making world-class wines under the Stemmler name.

All this is quite rewarding to Anna Moller-Racke, who sees her winery as a continuing presence in the fine wine market.

"We only do one wine," she smiled, "but we do it really, really well." Reminded about the Chardonnay she also produces, she added happily, "Well, make that two wines, but both are really good."



The road to great wine begins at your door.

TASTING NOTES



Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

Our project started in 2000 when the idea of creating an estate-based, high-end Pinot Noir was born. By 2001 the Donum Estate was established and Robert Stemmler became one of the two labels under this project. Our 120 acres of vineyards are over 80% planted to Pinot Noir. Our goal is to showcase small lot Pinot Noirs that are site specific. Farmed with the utmost attention to detail, vinified to illuminate the various sites, our wines are always good examples of the vintage and are solid and well made from vine to wine.

Our Estate is very complex from the different selections/clones, to its topography, soil types and vine age. All these variations bring richness to our wines. The Ferguson vineyard is an important part of our program. Planted in '74 to a Martini selection of Pinot Noir on a Haire Clay soil, these vines are like veterans. They know the drill, they have seen drought and wet conditions, they know about the wind in Carneros and the heatwaves around Labor Day.

Vines remind me so often of people. They are no longer youngsters but bring consistency and layering to the table. Martini gives us perfume and elegance. The cool growing conditions of Carneros give the structure (acid) or back bone to the wine. The 2005 Ferguson is a perfect example of this laying and the complexity of flavors.

The wine has a continued conversation with the consumer, is elegant and strong and is one of my favorites in our cellar.

Enjoy.

Anne Moller-Racke
Winegrower

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TASTING NOTES

700 Cases Produced

A handcrafted limited release from Robert Stemmler Winery, the 2005 Carneros Pinot Noir was produced from the Ferguson block of The Donum Estate, the oldest portion of the vineyard site. Planted in 1974, the Ferguson block is responsible for the winery's quintessential Pinot Noir known for its perfect balance of intensity and elegance. This beautiful wine has achieved remarkable critical acclaim including **93 Points** from *Wine & Spirits* magazine and **93 Points** from *Connoisseurs' Guide*. "From its very rich, well-defined, ripe-cherry aromas to its ample, and impressively concentrated flavors, this tour de force Pinot Noir hits all the right marks and it vies for top honors both for its keen balance and for its enormous fruit. Downright fleshy in feel, yet always bright and alive, it will be hard to resist in the near term but has the fruity stamina to develop famously for another five or more years." Also the recipient of **92 Points** from *The Wine Report* and **90 Points** from *Wine News*, Robert Stemmler's 2005 Carneros Pinot Noir's delicious heady mix of cedar, strawberries, and cranberries with pair wonderfully with beef and lamb dishes. Aged 11 months in oak. 100% Pinot Noir. Enjoy now until 2012.



REORDERS

Continuing the legacy of Pinot pioneer Robert Stemmler, the 2005 Carneros Pinot Noir exemplifies the caliber of this producer's outstanding California Pinots. With one of the first Pinot Noir success stories in the state and consistent critical acclaim from top industry publications, this finely built, persistent, and elegant Pinot Noir is an excellent selection to enjoy tonight, or to age gracefully in your cellar for years to come.

The **Robert Stemmler 2005 Carneros Pinot Noir** retails winery-direct for \$44.00 per bottle. As a *Platinum Series* member your very special pricing is as follows:

Half-Case-\$39.00 /bottle (\$234.00)

Full-Case-\$37.00 /bottle (\$444.00)

[Plus shipping]

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