

Vinoterica

THE BOCANOVA RESTAURANT

Wine Club



May • 2016

Beyond Expectation...

Pinots of the So. Hemisphere

In the wine world, as in life, expectations can be a funny thing. Sometimes they can set a context for the proper evaluation of a wine (or experience).

Other times, however, they can create a bias against the unfamiliar that keeps one from enjoying the riches that may be hidden within. In the case of **Pinot Noir** wines, for example, expectations are often clung to with a ferocity that borders on religious extremism!

This month I'm bringing you two Pinot Noir wines that challenge expectations in delightful ways. They are *not* Burgundies, *not* Carñeros, *not* Willamette, *not* Russian River, *not* Santa Rita Hills—and the one that *is* from an expected region, New Zealand, is not even red!

2014 Richmond Plains Nelson Blanc de Noir
(Nelson, South Island, New Zealand)

Richmond Plains is a very small family winery that, in addition to more traditional offerings, produces New Zealand's first still *Blanc de Noir* from both certified organic and biodynamic grapes. Vinified as a white wine with only minimal skin contact, its faint pink diamond color is reminiscent of the great *Blanc de Noirs* of *Champagne*. The vineyard location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean on New Zealand's South Island is blessed with the longest number of sunshine hours in New Zealand, cool autumn nights, and the free-draining soils of ancient river beds forming mineral-rich alluvial plains. This imparts both palate richness and bright focus to the wine—in every sense a fine Pinot Noir except for those elements that would be derived from the skins.

I find this Blanc de Noir to be an exciting wine—aromatic with citrus blossom, green pear and biscuit characteristics. Flavors are fully fleshed with attractive pear, baked apple, peach and nectarine in a

subtle melange. Not what you'd expect, which is just the point!

2011 Lafken Pinot Noir, Single Vineyard
(Valle de Leyda, Maipo, Chile)

When we first visited **Miguel Besoaín**, winemaker, at his *garagista* winery on the western foothills of the Andes mountains, this wine was still in one of the reclaimed tanks that he collects based on his experience of putting particular wines in the size and shape of tanks best suited to their individual character. Tasting this wine from tank was like hearing a baby speak its first complete sentence with perfect grammar; you knew something great was going to emerge. Fast-forward to 2016, and here you have the wine with its vocabulary fully matured: aromas of dark cherry, red plum and a hint of nutmeg; elegant and balanced on the palate with an undercurrent of dark chocolate; some smoky notes on the finish; and that ever-present desire for another sip.

With only 350 cases produced, we are fortunate indeed to receive enough to offer wine club members a truly unexpected treat in a Pinot Noir made with love and acute attentiveness. As Miguel writes, "*At Lafken, we produce limited quantities of hand-crafted wines, with our families participating in the entire process. We strongly believe that winemaking must be clean and in harmony with the environment, and our commitment to quality is our trademark without which we simply wouldn't be making wine. The identity of our wines is a result of our premium grapes, the sustainable management of our vineyards, our hand harvesting at the optimal moment of grape maturity, and our personal winemaking, which takes place in a small garage, combining both traditional methods and modern technology.*"

Cheers!

David

Don't Forget Our Wine Club Tasting & Pickup Party!

Come preview these very cool wines (plus some others) on Saturday, May 14th, for our Wine Club Members' free tasting and shipment pickup party. Bring some friends, too!

As always, this tasting is open to the public for a bargain \$10 tasting fee (waived if joining the wine club). Not subscribed yet? Have a friend who would love to join? Go to <http://vinoterica.com> and sign up today!

It's a fun way to take home your monthly wines, taste something special, and meet other club members.

Pickup Party and Tasting, every 2nd Saturday, 2-5pm. Bocanova Restaurant Bar Area. Members free; non-members \$10. Happy Hour food menu available starting at 3pm.