

# EXECUTIVE WINE SEMINARS

Your Guide *to the World*  
*of Fine Wine*

## EWS TASTINGS

As posted on [www.erobertparker.com](http://www.erobertparker.com)

### North Coast Pinot Noir

*EWS Blind Tasting - April 25, 2006*

**W**hile many people champion the high quality of Pinot Noir currently being made in California, we have noticed that Pinots from the North Coast appellations (Russian River Valley, Sonoma Coast, Napa/Carneros, and Anderson Valley) are leading the way toward gaining respect and admiration for high end California Pinot. In our opinion, in the past five years or so, the best Pinots from these regions have been as exciting as any ever made in the New World. Given our feelings, it made perfect sense for EWS to offer a blind tasting of outstanding California Pinot Noir, concentrating exclusively on these North Coast appellations.

As great Pinot Noir is what we crave, the EWS team happily gathered 13 of the finest recent Pinot Noir releases (within the past year) from these North Coast appellations. All had impressive credentials; several were rare, hard to find "cult" Pinots with huge scores on their résumés from the top wine critics. Our simple objective was to find the "best of the best."

As a group, we were happy with the wines, although our conservative scores are more indicative of the youthfulness of the wines rather than the grumpiness of our traditionally tough New York crowd. All 13 wines received at least two votes, a clear indication that opinions were all over the place. Every wine had backers and detractors. Hence, our "consensus" tasting notes are harder to write with so much dissention and differences of opinion in the room. In the end, 2003 J. Rochioli "West Block" was the winner, just nipping our "cheapy ringer" (**the amazing 2002 Scherrer "Russian River Valley"**) by one point. But as you can see by the voting, all wines gathered at least a few fans.

Too bad you couldn't be there with us to draw your own conclusions.

The following are consensus tasting notes, written to share commentary, descriptors, and convey the overall impression the group had for each wine. Wines were poured in three flights from numbered bags (1 - 13) and are listed below in the order they were poured. Participants were asked to vote (by number) for their three favorite wines. We award three points for every first place vote, two for every second place vote, and one point for

every third, allowing for ties. Price listed represents approximate retail. Voting tallies:  
1st/2nd/3rd

#	Wine (33 voters)	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	Total Points
2	2003 J. Rochioli "West Block" (Russian River Valley)	7	4	3	32
9	<b>2002 Scherrer (Russian River Valley)</b>	4	7	5	31
11	2000 Marcassin "Blue-Slide Ridge Vineyard" (Sonoma Coast)	3	5	4	23
5	2003 Paul Hobbs "Hyde Vineyard" (Carneros, Napa Valley)	4	2	4	20
3	2003 Kosta Browne "Kanzler Vineyard" (Sonoma Coast)	5	2	0	19
13	2002 Dehlinger "Goldridge Vineyard" (Russian River Valley)	2	4	3	17
6	2003 Martinelli "Bondi Home Ranch" (Green Valley, Sonoma County)	3	0	7	16
10	2003 Williams Selyem "Ferrington Vineyard" (Anderson Valley)	2	2	2	12
4	2003 Patz & Hall "Hyde Vineyard" (Carneros, Napa Valley)	1	1	3	8
1	2002 Hartford Court "Arrendell Vineyard" (Russian River Valley)	1	1	2	7
7	2003 Kistler "Cuvée Catherine" (Russian River Valley)	1	1	0	5
12	2003 Failla "Hirsch Vineyard" (Sonoma Coast)	0	2	1	5
8	2000 Marcassin "Marcassin Vineyard" (Sonoma Coast)	0	2	0	4

**1) 2002 Hartford Court "Arrendell Vineyard" (Russian River Valley) - \$80 - 7 points (1/1/2) - 90 rating...**

**2) 2003 J. Rochioli "West Block" (Russian River Valley) - \$100 - 32 points (7/4/3) - 94 rating...**

**3) 2003 Kosta Browne "Kanzler Vineyard" (Sonoma Coast) - \$200 - 19 points (5/2/0) - 92 rating...**

**4) 2003 Patz & Hall "Hyde Vineyard" (Carneros, Napa Valley) - \$55 - 8 points (1/1/3) - 90 rating...**

**5) 2003 Paul Hobbs "Hyde Vineyard" (Carneros, Napa Valley) - \$80 - 20 points (4/2/4) - 92 rating ...**

**6) 2003 Martinelli "Bondi Home Ranch" (Green Valley, Sonoma County) - \$90 - 16 points (3/0/7) - 91 rating...**

**7) 2003 Kistler "Cuvée Catherine" (Russian River Valley) - \$150 - 5 points (1/1/0) - 87 rating ...**

**8) 2000 Marcassin "Marcassin Vineyard" (Sonoma Coast) - \$350 - 4 points (0/2/0) - 90 rating...**

**9) 2002 Scherrer (Russian River Valley) - \$30 - 31 points (4/7/5) - 94 rating** Medium-light color. Gorgeous nose offers a cornucopia of scents including smoke, violets, spice, oak, bacon fat, cherry vanilla, and black cherry. Complex, yet balanced in the mouth; this is a clean, focused, beautifully knit, perfectly balanced wine with very good acidity. Not a heavyweight, this Pinot was made in a drinkable, thoroughly enjoyable style. Above all, the finish was extremely long, quite possibly the longest of all 13 wines! As is our custom, this wine was included in the tasting as an inexpensive "ringer." Given this showing, 2002 Scherrer RRV at \$30 represents **UNBELIEVABLE** value! **Our hats off to the Scherrer family for this amazing accomplishment.**

**10) 2003 Williams Selyem "Ferrington Vineyard" (Anderson Valley) - \$100 - 12 points (2/2/2) - 90 rating...**

**11) 2000 Marcassin "Blue-Slide Ridge Vineyard" (Sonoma Coast) - \$325 - 23 points (3/5/4) - 93 rating ...**

**12) 2003 Failla "Hirsch Vineyard" (Sonoma Coast) - \$55 - 5 points (0/2/1) - 89 rating...**

**13) 2002 Dehlinger "Goldridge Vineyard" (Russian River Valley) - \$60 - 17 points (2/4/3) - 91 rating...**

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