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2006s

JULY 15, 2008

CALIFORNIA

Pinot's Second Coming

Anthill Farms' Remarkable 2006s

Since 1998, when Burt Williams and Ed Selyem sold their Williams-Selyem winery, California Pinot Noir devotees have been in search of a new icon: a producer of small-batch Pinot Noir making breathtakingly pure, transparent wines from well-chosen, obsessively managed North Coast sites.

For a while, it seemed that no one would emerge. The 2004 movie, *Sideways*, caused a stampede of Pinot planting, but too many new producers seemed happy to sacrifice purity for power and impact. Some looked to Kosta-Browne, which had been getting huge scores from *Wine Spectator* since 2005. But K-B's massive, high-alcohol style was not what purists were looking for.

The Epiphany

Then early last year, three young Californians—Dave Low, Webster Marquez and Anthony Filiberti—stepped out of the clouds. Rumblings on the boards began softly but increased in volume as 2007 wore on. In June, Josh Reynolds wrote that one of their 2005s reminded him of a Chambolle, another was “pretty stunning stuff,” while a third was a “mind-bending bargain for what's in the bottle.” And in the fall, Allen Meadows wrote simply “these guys are on to something.”

And so the cult of Anthill Farms was born. It's a little early to anoint Anthill as California's Henri Jayer for the new Millennium. Thomas Brown (Rivers-Marie),



*“These guys are
on to something.”*
Allen Meadows
Burghound

Wells Guthrie (Copain) and Eric Sussman (Radio-Coteau), for example, are also making brilliantly pure Pinots. But there is something about Anthill Farms, and the world's reaction to these guys, that is eerily promising.

A Williams-Selyem Bond

Ironically, Dave, Webster and Anthony met while working at Williams-Selyem, where they had gone to learn how, even under its new ownership, it produces such consistently expressive Pinot Noirs from such diverse vineyard sources.

The Williams-Selyem experience not only made them fast friends, it reinforced their passion for cool-climate Pinot Noirs that “express the character of the landscapes in which they were raised.” It also created a shared philosophy that to make such wines requires both minimalist winemaking and intimate involvement in the farming of each site.

After going their separate ways for a couple of years, they came back together in 2004 to create Anthill Farms, a collection of exceptional cool-climate *terroirs*, which now numbers eight, six of which are Pinot Noir. All of the wines have a purity of expression that is rare today in California, especially for Pinot. Dave, Webster and Anthony are committed to low yields, harvesting at moderate sugars, use of long, cool fermentation with some whole clusters and aging without racking and with limited new ►

Anthill Farms' Celestial 2006s

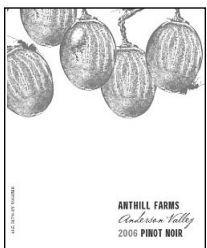
► wood. And it shows in the delicacy and perfume of all their wines.

Our Offer

The only downside to Anthill's wines is the quantities, which give new meaning to the term "small batch." In 2006, the production for each wine averaged 160 cases. But working on this scale is the only way of

assuring total control from flowering to bottling.

Though released just a few weeks ago, most of the 2006s are already sold out. And with so little made—and such intense demand—there are few merchants who will have access to even a handful of bottles of the wines. Consequently, it's a great privilege to be able to make this extraordinary offer.



2006 Anthill Farms Pinot Noir 'Anderson Valley'37.50

Josh Raynolds: "Intensely perfumed, spicy bouquet of strawberry, raspberry and fresh flowers. Deeper cherry and *amaro* flavors offer impressive palate coverage, with refreshing bitterness and good tangy lift.." 200 cs. made.

2006 Anthill Farms Pinot Noir 'Demuth' 45.00

Josh Raynolds: "Fresh raspberry and cherry aromas are complicated by fresh flowers, minerals and anise. Round and appealingly sappy, with deep red berry liqueur flavors, a silky texture and rising spiciness. Gains weight with air, finishing sweet and long, with a strong raspberry quality lingering." 150 cs. made.

2006 Anthill Farms Pinot Noir 'Peters' 45.00

Josh Raynolds: "Fresh strawberry and raspberry aromas are complicated by Indian spices, fresh rose and smoky minerals. Deep cherry and dark berries on the palate, which displays a medium-bodied, sweet character and slow-building pungency." 125 cs. made.

2006 Anthill Farms Pinot Noir 'Comptche Ridge' 49.95

Josh Raynolds: "92 rating ... suave Asian spices and minerals emerging with aeration. Bright and snappy on the palate, offering vivid red and dark berry flavors." 200 cs. made.

2006 Anthill Farms Pinot Noir 'Tina Marie'54.95

Josh Raynolds: "92 rating. Vibrant, highly expressive nose offers spicy strawberry, raspberry and baking spices. Zesty and sharply focused ... Fine-grained tannins provide shape and extend through the long, sappy finish. An impressively fresh, elegant pinot with admirable balance and purity." 200 cs. made.

2006 Anthill Farms Pinot Noir 'Abbey Harris'79.95

Josh Raynolds: "93 rating. Sexy strawberry, raspberry and blood orange on the nose, along with Asian spices and smoky minerals. Deeper-pitched on the palate, offering supple red and dark berry liqueur flavors, with energetic, spicy minerality adding vivacity. For such richness of fruit this is almost shockingly lithe and precise. Finishes with serious grip, juiciness and persistence. Pretty stunning stuff." 100 cs. made.

Four 2004 Piedmont Stars

Four highly sought-after wines from one of the great Piedmont vintages of our time.

2004 Clerico Barolo 'Ciabot Mentin Ginestra'*129.95

Antonio Galloni: "97 rating ... sweeps across the palate with stunning depth and expansiveness in its dark cherries, menthol, spices, chocolate and sweet toasted oak. It offers exceptional length and delineation, with a note of freshness that provides lift on the close. It is a profound effort from Domenico Clerico."

2004 Elio Grasso Barolo Ginestra 'Casa Mate'*79.95

Antonio Galloni: "94 rating ... a decidedly more masculine Barolo than the Gavarini. Made in a rich, weighty style, it reveals layers of deeply spiced, mentholated dark fruit, new leather and licorice sensations in an expression of Nebbiolo that engages all of the senses. It is a superb effort from one of Piedmont's unheralded producers."

2004 Bruno Rocca Barbaresco 'Rabaja'* 99.95

Wine Spectator: "97 rating. Full-bodied, with very silky tannins and a long balance of fruit and vanilla character that turns to licorice and berries."

Antonio Galloni: "94 rating ... powerful and brooding ... notable concentration and power ... rich, weighty texture, and a warm, engaging personality."

2004 Conterno-Fantino Barolo 'Sorí Ginestra'* 95.00

Antonio Galloni: "96 rating. This explosive, heady Barolo bursts onto the palate with seamless layers of ripe dark fruit, black cherries, menthol, cinnamon, pine and minerals, revealing profound depth and richness. It offers superb length, gorgeous, sweet tannins and a finish that lasts forever ... a remarkable Barolo in every way."

CORNAS

Tradition's Heir

"I was reminded of the great wines of Marius Gentaz-Dervieux"

Josh Reynolds on Franck Balthazar's Cornas

Throughout Europe, a generation committed to great traditional winemaking is in transition. They came of age during and before World War II, and the greatness of their wines is testament not only to their old vineyards but the validity of their philosophies. But, one by one, as these giants fade from the scene, who will pick up the torch?

Nowhere is an answer more urgently sought than in Cornas, arguably the most tradition-bound wine region of the Northern Rhône. Of the town's two giants, Noël Verset has now retired, while the other, Auguste Clape, is in his eighties. Who will replace them?

The Next Generation

The smart money says Thierry Allemand and Franck Balthazar. Both are exceptionally skilled winemakers and, perhaps not by coincidence, both have the privilege of now working vines once owned by Verset. But while Allemand is already a superstar, Balthazar is just getting discovered.

In fact, Balthazar's breakthrough vintage appears to be 2005, a year of soaring quality in Cornas. He made wines that have generated a buzz throughout Europe. It's our privilege to make the first major offering in America.

Even more than Allemand, Balthazar is a pure tra-



Cornas

ditionalist. He ferments whole bunches, with manual cap punching, and ages the wine in used 600-litre casks for up to two years. In the words of John Livingstone-Learmonth, Balthazar's "wines express their place faithfully with tender winemaking in support. Old vine fruit a key contributor. Classic example of Cornas."

The wine that will make Balthazar famous is his Chaillot, half of which comes from the prized 95-year-old Chaillot parcel he bought from Noël Verset. We are privileged to offer the beautiful 2005.

2005 Franck Balthazar Cornas "Chaillot"

93 Josh Reynolds

★★★★ J. Livingstone-Learmonth

\$49.95 *bt.* **\$595.00** *cs.*



Josh Reynolds: "Inky ruby. Seductive perfume of red and dark berries, kirsch and violet, with a bright mineral element. Spicy cherry and blackcurrant flavors combine richness and vivacity, picking up exotic floral pastilles on the finish. This has wonderful freshness and finishing cut, especially for a wine from a powerful, ageworthy year. Really lovely, soil-driven Cornas."

Little Hermitages

From his negociant project, Jean-Louis Chave has now released his sensational 2006 red and white Crozes-Hermitages—both from vineyards on the steep slopes adjacent to Hermitage itself. They

2006 Chave Crozes-Hermitage "Silène" Rouge . 24.95

This Crozes Rouge is a quintessential northern Rhône Syrah from granite-based soils, packed with vivid dark berry fruit, black pepper, grilled meat, earth and violet aromas and flavors. The price is unbelievable!

demonstrate Jean-Louis' masterful touch with Syrah and Marsanne ... and considering the skyrocketing price for Chave Hermitage, they are fantastic bargains. Tiny quantities available.

2006 Chave Crozes-Hermitage "Sybèle" Blanc .. 22.95

The essence of the Marsanne grown in Terres Blanches white kaolin clay soils. It is perfumed and honeyed, with beautiful peach and apricot flavors, and a glyceric texture leavened by crisp minerality. *Stunning value.*

WHITE BURGUNDY

Jean-Philippe Fichet

“As I have said repeatedly, the Fichet wines are among the very best and purest in Burgundy ... they still remain outstanding bargains.” Burghound

Meursault is on fire. Historically Burgundy's most prestigious address for white wine, Meursault has roared back with a vengeance—amidst growing evidence that the world's most complex, soil-expressive Charonnays may come from here.



Jean-Philippe Fichet

The pioneers in Meursault's resurgence were, of course, René Lafon and Jean-François Coche, but it was left to a later generation, led by Jean-Marc Roulot, to demonstrate the profound diversity of Meursault's soils. Yet, if anyone in Meursault points the way to the future, it is Jean-Philippe Fichet.

Mining for Nuance

For nearly three decades, Fichet has explored the village's *terroirs*, examining every square inch of earth and stone in his domaine. Like Roulot, he flew under the radar until recently, but it is increasingly clear that his portfolio offers one of the most stunning arrays of single-*climat* white wines in all of Burgundy.

At the core of Fichet's work is his belief in the uniqueness of Meursault's soils, whose stoniness is magnified by an exceptionally low water table forcing the vines' roots deep underground. He achieves some of the village's lowest yields, not through green harvesting, but through severe winter pruning. And he enhances his wines' expressiveness through a patient 18-month *élevage*, with little new oak and by avoiding aggressive lees stirring. (You will not find any premature oxidation in *his* wines.)

This Offer

Fichet's production is tiny. Of the eleven cuvées that come to the U.S., only about 50 cases of each are available in 2006. From this line-up, we've selected five standouts, including possibly his finest three Meursault *lieux-dits*; his celebrated Bourgogne Vieilles Vignes, from a parcel just across the road from Meursault-Charmes; and his first vintage ever from the great *premier cru*, Meursault Genevrières.

2006 Meursault Les Gruyaches \$69.95



The richest and fullest of the *lieux-dits*, this wine grew out of Fichet's understanding of *terroir*. Gruyaches is a small plot of 78-year-old vines enclosed on two sides by Meursault-Charmes. *Burghound* praises the 2006's "very rich, full and naturally sweet medium-bodied flavors" and "impressive concentration and volume on the complex and persistent finish." Tanzer calls it "Juicy and firm, with lemony acidity leavening the wine's velvety texture ..."

2006 Meursault Les Chevalières \$69.95



One of Meursault's greatest *lieux-dits*: a superb plot of 30- to 77-year-old vines in soil like that of Perrières. Intensely mineral with great delineation and length. Steve Tanzer says of the gorgeous 2006: "Enticing aromas of orange, lemon and crushed stone. Fat, silky, rich and sweet, with lovely generosity of fruit flavor and texture. Characterized more by explosive fruit than by minerality."

2006 Meursault Le Tesson \$79.95



Possibly Fichet's most complete *lieu-dit*. *Burghound* on the 2006: "Rich, full and detailed flavors that possess the best underlying tension ... as well as the best depth on the persistent finish. Lovely balance and harmony." Tanzer: "Classic lemon and mineral aromas complicated by toast and hazelnut; an essence of Meursault ... generous but not at all heavy, thanks to nicely integrated, nervy acidity ... all the elements to make an excellent bottle."

More of Fichet's wonderful 2006s on the next page ...

BURGUNDY

Two More Fabulous Fichet 2006s

**2006 Bourgogne Blanc
Vieilles Vignes
\$29.95**



From 30- to 40-year-old vines across the road from Meursault-Charmes, this wine has more Meursault character than most Meursaults. *Burghound*: “100% from Meursault vines from soil with much more gravel and rock content ... substantially richer and fuller flavors blessed with ample mid-palate fat and dry extract that confers a textured mouth feel onto the punchy and notably intense finish. Again, a terrific Bourgogne.”

**2006 Meursault 1er Cru
Les Genevrières
\$95.00**



Ranking just behind Perrières, Genevrières is often thought of as marrying Perrière's finesse with Charmes' generosity. The Fichet style gives us a great look at Genevrières—resembling Gruyaches but with more delineation. *Burghound* praises the “purity, freshness, energy” and “wonderfully intense flavors” of Fichet's 2006 Genevrières, while Tanzer calls it “juicy, intense and quite stylish, with a brisk mineral quality.”

A Pair of Great Faiveley 2006s

Corton Clos des Cortons & Chambertin Clos de Bèze

Corton Clos des Cortons and Chambertin Clos de Bèze could be not only Faiveley's best reds in 2006, but two of the vintage's towering wines. We are pleased to offer them at compelling prices, along with two rarities from the past.

**2006 Faiveley
Corton Clos des Cortons*
93-96 Tanzer
\$145.00 bottle**



Steve Tanzer: “Explosive, exotic nose offers red cherry, red licorice and mint. Huge and sweet, but with outstanding verve and lift for a wine of this dimension. Powerful red fruit flavors are punched up by pungent iodiney minerality, giving this wine outstanding energy. A great sappy essence of pinot noir in the making, and very long on the aftertaste, with tannins that are amazingly suave for Corton.”

**2006 Faiveley
Chambertin Clos de Bèze*
93-96 Tanzer
\$225.00**

Steve Tanzer: “... hints at wild berries, crushed stone and dried flowers ... with terrific intensity to its tight core of berry, mineral, floral and spice flavors. Finishes with outstanding palate-saturating length. This is likely to be one of the longer-lived wines of this vintage ... Hervet compared 2005 and 2006 to the 1961/1962 pair, noting that the '62s were balanced for long aging.”

... and Ten Years On

1996 Faiveley Chambertin Clos de Bèze* 225.00

Tanzer: “91-95 rating ... spicy and sharply delineated. Finishes with superb length and a firm tannic spine. This will require a good eight to ten years of cellaring.”

1996 Faiveley Mazis-Chambertin* 149.95

Tanzer: “90-93 rating ... Sweet and thick, even voluptuous, in the mouth ... Tannins are ripe and sweet. A terrific early showing for this wine”

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Joseph Boiron's Legacy

Bosquet des Papes' 2006 "Tradition" is a Treasure for Lovers of Pure Old-Vine Châteauneuf du Pape

For anyone long steeped in the splendor of drinking classic Châteauneuf du Pape, 1978 stands as a milestone: a year of epic richness and quality. At the old Bosquet des Papes estate, 1978 was that and more, as it was also the year when the Boiron family patriarch Joseph turned over the domaine to his son Maurice.

While Maurice and his son Nicolas have made changes at the estate, one thing that never changed was the flagship "Cuvée Tradition." It is still made just as Joseph Boiron did until 1978, in large old wood and tank, from 75% Grenache, with a small amount of Syrah, Mourvèdre and other classic varieties. The only real difference is that the old Grenache vines that provide the wine's essence are now even older, averaging a half century in age.

We used to visit the estate regularly but haven't for a few years. However, the Boirons made a rare visit to the U.S. this spring, and we were lucky to get a sample bottle of the 2006 Cuvée Tradition. We were blown away by its amazing richness and purity. It made us

long for a past when wines like this were made in great vintages throughout Châteauneuf, with no frills, just old-vine Grenache laid bare, with all of its smoky, raspberry liqueur richness, yet at a modest price.

The 2006 Bosquet des Papes "Tradition" is a welcome reminder of the inherent greatness of Châteauneuf du Pape. Don't miss it.

2006 Bosquet des Papes "Cuvée Tradition"

90-93 Josh Raynolds

\$39.95 *bt.* \$85.00 *mag.*



Josh Raynolds: "Inky ruby. Impressively ripe nose offers an exotic bouquet evoking raspberry, kirsch, incense and fresh flowers. Smoky red fruit flavors are complicated by garrigue and framed by chewy tannins. Finishes gripping and long, with lingering red fruit character and a suggestion of smoked meat. This is really complex."

Rostaing Magnums

Rare Big Bottles of 2004 & 2005 Côte Rôtie Classique

Speaking of purity, nobody in Côte Rôtie does it better than René Rostaing. This is never more true than with his *Cuvée Classique*, which is about as pure an expression of Syrah grown in Côte Rôtie's granite and schist soils as you'll find. With the barrels replaced every six years, there's little new wood to

obscure the spectacular Côte Rôtie aromatics. And the texture of the wine is pure velvet.

Because of his small production, Rostaing bottles very little of *any* of his Côte Rôties in magnum. And so it is a pleasure to be able to offer a few rare magnums of his beautiful 2004 and 2005 *Cuvée Classique*.

2004 Rostaing Côte Rôtie Classique Magnum .. 125.00

John Livingstone-Learmonth: "The palate fruit is Burgundian ... the length persists quietly, and this is perhaps its most striking feature." Josh Raynolds: "Deep ruby-red. Pepper and oak spices lift the cherry and dried violet aromas ... lively flavors of cassis, cracked pepper and rose pastille. The tannins are dusty and fine."

2005 Rostaing Côte Rôtie Classique Magnum .. 149.95

John Livingstone-Learmonth: "Has a filigree, delicate style with bone in it. This is a fine wine." Josh Raynolds: "Bright purple. Fresh, mineral-driven red berry aromas ... striking freshness and purity ... has excellent verve." James Molesworth (*Wine Spectator*): "The long, supple finish shows great focus."

ITALY & SPAIN

2003 Maculan Acininobili

A Dessert Wine Monument

“A whoppingly rich, full-bodied Château d’Yquem look-alike ... the pinnacle of sweet winemaking in Italy.” Robert Parker

Fausto Maculan’s Acininobili is often compared to Ch. d’Yquem, not only because of its richness, but because of the many passes through the vineyard required to achieve such botrytised perfection. The wine is also aged for 24 months, *à la* Yquem, in new barrique.

With an astonishing 169 grams per liter of residual sugar, the 2003 is potentially the greatest Acininobili since the legendary 1983. But **only 150 cases** of half bottles were produced, making it not only one of the world’s greatest dessert wines, but also one of the rarest. It’s a bargain at our low price. Hurry.

**2003 Maculan
Acininobili
96 Antonio Galloni**
\$65.00 half bottle



Antonio Galloni in *The Wine Advocate*: “Utterly mind-blowing in its expression of candied apricots, orange peel and cinnamon. Constantly changing in the glass, it reveals superb intensity and a stunningly gorgeous purity, with superb length and phenomenal poise. Acininobili is a selection made from botrytised Torcolato fruit. It is aged for two years in new French oak. Anticipated maturity: 2007-2017.”

2005 Les Terrasses

Priorat’s Ultimate Bargain ... in Bottles, Magnums and Jeros

Alvaro Palacios’ reputation as the greatest Spanish winemaker of his generation was established in the mid-1990’s by the first few vintages of his now \$500+ L’Ermita. But increasingly he is becoming revered—by wine lovers and winemakers alike—as the man who makes Les Terrasses.

Created from scores of mountain vineyards—many 60 to 90 years old—Les Terrasses is the wine that best expresses Priorat’s viticultural diversity. It is a daunting task that only a winemaker with Palacios’ talent, and focus, could master.

The 2005 sets a new standard for Les Terrasses’ creamy richness and old-vine complexity. We are pleased to offer it in bottles, as well as in rare magnums and 3-liter jero-boams, at great prices.

Palacios’ 2004 Finca Dofi *A Legend in the Making*



Alvaro Palacios’ Finca Dofi ranked among the great wines of Priorat’s iconic 2004 vintage. We exhausted our allocation last year but were fortunate in securing a few more cases. The price is amazing. Grab it while you can.

2004 Alvaro Palacios Finca Dofi79.95

Jay Miller: “95 rating ... scents of toast and smoke, minerals, violets, blueberries, and chocolate ... Full-bodied and harmonious, there is an opulence to the fruit which is breathtaking.”

2005 Les Terrasses

93 Jay Miller
\$34.95 bt. \$79.95 mag.
\$185 3-liter



Jay Miller: “This purple-hued wine offers an already complex bouquet of mineral, pencil lead, scorched earth, leather, and black cherry. This is followed by a full-flavored wine with layers of ripe fruit, silky tannins, and a smooth palate-feel ... a great value in Priorat, a rarity these days.”

CHAMPAGNE

René-Henri Coutier

"The Uncrowned King of Ambonnay" Richard Juhlin

Throughout its long history, Champagne was about "Style," as each House blended fruit from disparate growers and villages to produce wines of a consistent House character. It has only been in the past two decades that growers have emerged as producers, crafting wines to express individual *terroirs*. It was a story told in Burgundy thirty years ago, and we all know the miracle that has resulted.

Of the dozens of small growers contributing to this movement, one of the very best is René-Henri Coutier in the *grand cru* village of Ambonnay, whose sensational 1998 Brut has just been released. It is a marvelous reflection of the Ambonnay *terroir*: pure, rich, complex and beautifully balanced. And we are pleased to be able to offer it at an amazing price.

Gem on the Montagne de Reims

Ambonnay's *terroir*, one of the greatest on the Montagne de Reims, is prized for producing wine of great finesse, ripe fruit and suppleness. The *Grande Marque* houses prize Ambonnay fruit as a component for their blends; but Coutier makes pure Ambonnay Champagne to reveal the distinct perfume and elegance that is otherwise lost in blends.

Founded in 1880, Coutier owns about 20 acres of vines. They sell 80% to the village cooperative, leaving only the best for their own label. One-third of Coutier's vines are Chardonnay, many of which are sixty years old; in fact, René's father was the first to



plant this varietal in 1946. The balance is Ambonnay's signature grape, Pinot Noir, also largely old vines, contributing concentration, depth and great natural ripeness.

Coutier vinified and aged the 1998 Brut in stainless steel to maximize its transparency; the dosage is extremely low also to favor purity. Sixty percent Pinot Noir and 40% Chardonnay, this 1998 has a beautifully elegant and complex nose and a fresh, yet honeyed palate with a resoundingly long finish. It is a tribute to Coutier's great skill that, without blending, they've achieved a level of refinement comparable to that of the greatest *Grande Marques*.

With Champagne prices soaring, this is a great opportunity to buy a stunning vintage Champagne at an equally stunning price, but you'll need to be quick.

1998 R.H. Coutier Brut

93 Burghound

92 Richard Juhlin

\$44.95 bottle



Burghound: "An expressive nose ... moderately mature aromas with ample yeast and citrus influence where the maturity extends to the rich, full and nicely voluminous flavors that offer more than average effervescence and an agreeably sappy and persistent finish. This is lovely ... I very much like this as there is an intensity and depth of flavor on the finish that is quite seductive."

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