

WINE within reach

By VIRGINIE BOONE

May 14, 2008

Want to live the rock-star life without the debt? Luxury doesn't always have to be about shelling out the big bucks: the trick is quality, not quantity. If it's wine and beautiful surroundings you crave, there are plenty of oases to crawl to, enological escapes from the deserts of self-denial. There are free tasting rooms, of course, but also idyllic scenes of good value, where maybe a little something extra is offered, or a sit-down food and wine pairing unexpectedly adds up to less than the price of a bottle of that winery's wine.

So escape the tyranny of paper-sack wines and vending machine snacks and treat yourself to a fine wine experience at any number of nearby destinations.

Lynmar Winery

Current-release Lynmar wines—their pinot noirs and chardonnays are exceptionally good—are paired with meticulously made dishes by chef Sandra Simile in the Lynmar Experience (\$45), a guided tasting served at a reserved table indoors or out on the veranda or courtyard, looking out to unparalleled views of the Russian River vineyards beyond.

Many of Simile's ingredients are sourced from Lynmar's own gardens and the resulting recipes are refined yet filling. Seasonally inspired, recent examples include a roasted butternut squash and mushroom risotto with an estate Quail Hill Vineyard pinot noir.

By appointment daily 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. 3909 Frei Rd., Sebastopol, 829-3374,
www.lynmarwinery.com.