

Stephen Tanzer's
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Lynmar Winery

By Josh Reynolds

Dijon clones are ill-suited to warmer pinot-growing regions such as most of the North Coast, says Hugh Chapelle. "The Dijon clones belong over there, where they came from. They desiccate quickly and you lose freshness, which is what makes pinot pinot." Chapelle was far from the only winemaker who appears to be rethinking whether Burgundian clones are appropriate in any but the coolest California spots. "They can be great but the vineyard has to be cool enough for the fruit not to go over the top." The 2006 season posed a series of potential problems, said Chapelle, "starting with the fact that it was very humid in the Russian River Valley, which meant mildew-and then the potential for botrytis at harvest time. Selection was extremely important."

2006 Lynmar Winery Pinot Noir Jenkins Vineyard Russian River Valley, 91 Points

(\$60) Bright red. Lively raspberry and cherry aromas are complemented by fresh rose and baking spices. Bouncy strawberry and raspberry flavors pack serious flavor punch but also possess impressive clarity and mineral cut. Finishes long, with compelling sappiness and spicy character.

2006 Lynmar Winery Pinot Noir Terra de Promissio Vineyard Russian River Valley, 91 points

(\$60) Deep, saturated red. Highly aromatic bouquet of wild strawberry, raspberry and smoky minerals. Juicy, sharply focused red fruit flavors offer very good energy but no undue weight. The long, spicy finish reveals no obvious tannins. A very pretty wine, with excellent clarity and persistent finishing minerality.

2006 Lynmar Winery Chardonnay La Sereinite Russian River Valley, 91 Points

(\$70) Bright gold. Honeyed pear and apricot aromas are complicated by dusty minerals and anise. Fat and sappy, with sneaky acidity adding vivacity and grip to the deep orchard fruit flavors. Finishes with impressive persistence and a late jolt of licorice. This spent 14 months on its lees and saw no new oak.

2005 Lynmar Winery Pinot Noir Five Sisters Vineyard Russian River Valley, 92 Points

(\$100) Deep red. Powerfully scented nose offers smoky blackberry, cherry and dried rose. Pure dark berry flavors gain freshness with aeration, taking a turn to zesty raspberry and dusty minerals. Impressively focused and energetic for such a rich wine, finishing with excellent lift and snap. Leaves a strong spicy quality behind. (JR)