



EnRoute, Russian River Valley (California) Pinot Noir 'Les Pommiers' 2007

EnRoute is yet another Coastal California Pinot Noir venture by an iconic Napa Valley winery. The group led by Dirk Hampson and Larry Maguire also owns Far Niente, Nickel & Nickel and Dolce. They are following in the footsteps of Duckhorn (Golden Eye) and Joseph Phelps (Freestone) by dipping their toes into the ever more dynamic world of California Pinot Noir. EnRoute will focus on a number Russian River Valley vineyards purchased by the partnership. The debut release of Les Pommiers is sourced primarily from their Manzana Vineyard in the very cool Green Valley sub-region of the Russian River Valley. (Note: The 2008 is a blend of several vineyards.) It is a classically big California Pinot, meaning simply it is rich and dense on the palate, reflecting the California sunshine in the best possible way. Ripe raspberry and cherry are the dominant aromas, though there is a lovely touch of the earth, with an attractive floral backnote, hints of minerality and subtle leafy character. The tannins are smooth, allowing for a long, polished finish. As debuts go, this one's socko.

94 Robert Whitley *Oct 21, 2009*