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Gil Lempert-Schwarz | WINE OF THE WEEK



Backhouse Pinot Noir

Posted: Nov. 21, 2012 | 2:03 a.m.

Wine: Backhouse Pinot Noir.

Grape: Pinot noir

Region: California

Vintage: 2011

Price: \$7.99

In the glass: Backhouse Pinot Noir is a vibrant semitranslucent crimson color with a firm, deeply colored core going out into a fine, slightly pinkish light-garnet rim definition with medium-high viscosity.

On the nose: There are good amounts of crushed black plums, strawberry crush, cran-cherry juice, milk chocolate, ground star anise, with bright red flowers, light mint and fruit-driven minerals rounding out the layered toasty nose.

On the palate: The wine has immediate nice grip without masquerading as syrah, which happens a lot in California. There are fresh, bright, crushed red berries, cherries, plums, raspberry coulis, cranberry fondant and copious amounts of phenols and fruity minerals with underlying hints of aniseed powder.

The midpalate seems rich and forward with good amounts of balance between fruit and acidity, as well as good tannin structure that reflects where the wine is coming from. The finish is very fine with hints of candied cranberries and faint oak references. It is a very Burgundy-like pinot noir.

Odds and ends: I love pinot noir for the Thanksgiving turkey and everything that goes with it. Many will argue that with all the sweetness going on at the table, we're better off with a white wine, such as German riesling, but pinot and turkey make an elegant and harmonious statement.

Given that this wine is so young, I put it through an experiment with a great wine aerator tool that was sent to me by Vinturi. This nifty device enables you to pour the wine through its crystal clear aerating Lucite "funnel," which completely changes the way the wine presents itself in the glass. It instantly opens the wine up and broadens it on the palate to the point where a very austere, "closed" and especially young wine delivers a much wider scale of aromatics on the spectrum of both the nose/smell and the taste/palate. It employs a sort of instant micro-oxygenation of the wine and delivers it in the glass ready to taste and drink, but with its full potential now opened up.

The simple way of proving that it works wonders, is by pouring a glass of wine through the Vinturi and one without. It can seem like a completely different wine when comparing the two, but it is a matter of chemistry at work. It can make not only for a fun game on Thanksgiving or at a wine evening, but as an excellent gift for Christmas. I highly recommend Vinturi for both novice and professional alike.

As for Backhouse Pinot Noir, it is available at an incredible price, giving us reason to give thanks. This pinot should drink well not just through this holiday season, but also next year's. Happy Thanksgiving.

Gil Lempert-Schwarz's wine column appears Wednesdays. Write him at P.O. Box 50749, Henderson, NV 89106-0749, or email him at gil@winevegas.com.

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NATION & WORLD

- Palace says Duchess of Cambridge expecting a baby
- Comedian Katt Williams arrested in Seattle
- Bon Jovi talks charity, tour
- BBC adapting Rowling's 'Casual Vacancy' for TV
- 'Guardians,' 'Ralph,' 'Brave' lead Annie Awards
- Chatting with 'Hot in Cleveland's' comedy quartet
- Book traces odd journey of Cohen's song
- Study shows growth in second screen users
- La Scala: Verdi-Wagner polemics 'ridiculous'
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Ron White | Fri. 12/7 10:00 p.m.
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