

T&T

WINE • FOOD • TRAVEL

SPRING/SUMMER
EDITION

Touring & Tasting



DeLoach Vineyards



TOP: THE RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF DELOACH'S REMARKABLE VINEYARDS.

BELOW: THE SOIL AND TERROIR OF THE RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY ARE THE SECRETS TO PRODUCING SUPERIOR VARIETALS.

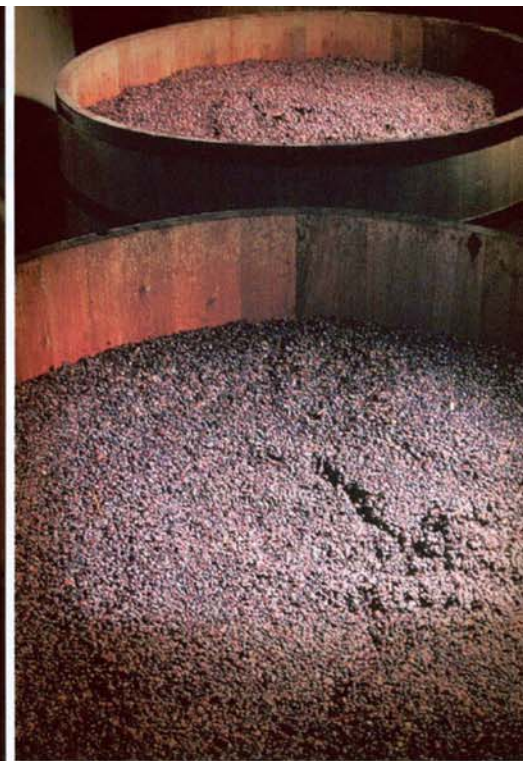


Dazzling yellow flowers are portents of the beautiful wine to come from the 22 acres embracing DeLoach Vineyards. The flowers are part of an intensive rehabilitation process that began over two years ago and will culminate with the planting of new Pinot Noir and Chardonnay vines this spring. As one of the pioneers of the Russian River Valley and a consistent innovator, DeLoach will farm the land surrounding the winery based on meticulous biodynamic principles.

The overall approach behind biodynamics at the vineyard is to treat the farm as a self-sustaining, living entity that avoids the cycle of depen-

dence on fertilizers and pesticides. This is maintained with a balanced, diverse ecology. Looking to the future with a fresh focus on sustainable farming practices, the complete program at DeLoach involves the use of cover crops and the application of biodynamic preparations and composts. "At the end of the day, biodynamics is about respecting all elements of life," says Ginny Lambrix, DeLoach's Director of Winegrowing.

The winery also promotes biodiversity on the estate with chickens, koi fish, and a half-acre organic vegetable and herb garden featuring a rainbow of heirloom tomatoes, peppers, peas, eggplants,



ABOVE: PINOT NOIR GRAPES SIT IN OPEN-TOP FERMENTING BARRELS FROM BURGUNDY.

LEFT: WINEMAKER GREG LA FOLLETTE IS CONSIDERED A MASTER VINTNER.

corn, and squash, to name a few. Citrus trees bear Eureka lemons, blood oranges, and Bears limes. Apples, pears, peaches, and berries thrive in

Weekend Farmers Markets in June, DeLoach Vineyards gives Sonoma visitors, as well as local residents, the unique opportunity to take home

mentors, and hand punch-downs (pigeage), with the goal of ensuring the true expression of the varietal and Russian River *terroir*. The unique qualities of each of the wines across the portfolio are particularly evident in the O.F.S., "Our Finest Selection," and Vineyard Designate tiers, which are created from select barrels and vineyards specifically to highlight the different locations and *terroirs* around the Russian River Valley and Sonoma County. During the spring and summer of 2007, visitors can taste half a dozen limited-production Pinot Noirs, Chardonnays, and Zinfandels from these exclusive regions.

"At the end of the day, biodynamics is about respecting all elements of life."

— GINNY LAMBRIX, DIRECTOR OF WINEGROWING

season, and seven types of basil scent the air.

At DeLoach Vineyards, the Sonoma experience is about more than just great wine. It's reaping the rewards of the harvest as a family and sharing the bounty of the region with the community. With the opening of DeLoach's annual

just-picked produce, fresh eggs, and honey cultivated from the same soil as the winery's award-winning Pinot Noir.

The winemaking team uses ancient Burgundian techniques to craft the wines, including small batch pressing, four-ton open top fer-

WHAT TO BUY

'05 Russian River Valley Chardonnay

Aromas of fresh cut grass, honeysuckle, and butterscotch with a long, smooth finish.

'05 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

Black cherry and raspberry with strawberry, pomegranate, licorice, cola, and spices.

'03 Russian River Valley Zinfandel

Ripe blackberry, cassis, and spicy cedar with rich flavors of mulberry and blueberry fruit.

DE LOACH VINEYARDS

1791 Olivet Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
(707) 526-9111
Fax: (707) 526-4151
www.deloachvineyards.com
Tasting Room Open Daily 10-4:30

GETTING THERE

DeLoach Vineyards is located 60 miles north of San Francisco, just west of the city of Santa Rosa. Take Hwy. 101 North to the River Rd. exit, head west 5 miles to Olivet Rd. and turn left. The winery is located 1.5 miles down on the right side.

Ginny Lambrix— A Natural Passion

By James O. Fraioli

While on vacation in South Africa about five years ago, Ginny Lambrix tasted her first “real wine.” Up until that point, she never had the money to buy such wine. She was working as a chemical ecologist in former East Germany at the time, and it was then that she decided to make wine. Within a year, she was studying Horticulture and Agronomy in the Master’s program at the University of California, Davis, with an emphasis in Viticulture and Enology. After stints at Hendry Ranch in Napa, Concha y Toro in Chile, and Lynmar in the Russian River Valley, she joined DeLoach in 2004.

Today, Lambrix is the Director of Winegrowing. She is excited to be at DeLoach, working with Winemaker Greg La Follette, and helping to lead the winery in its pursuit of biodynamic farming. Lambrix finds it rewarding to apply the ecological principles she studied years ago to today’s art of growing grapes and making wine.

T&T: *What is it about working in Sonoma that you like? And at De Loach?*

Ginny: Definitely the people! My growers are open to suggestions, hard working, thoughtful, and passionate about what they do. I feel we have created a real community committed to making the most expressive, terroir-driven wines possible. At De Loach, the freedom to build the

community and think outside the conventional farming paradigm has been invaluable. It’s wonderful to work for a company that addresses environmental concerns with both farming practices and innovative packaging.

T&T: *I’m aware DeLoach emphasizes biodynamics, i.e. sustainable farming in its grape-growing practices. Despite the apparent advantages it has to the environment, do you think biodynamics really plays a role in the quality and taste of wine?*

Ginny: I do think it translates to the wine. Some of my favorite vineyard designates are farmed according to biodynamic principles, specifically the Porter Bass and Masut vineyards. These wines are complex and evolve in the glass in unique ways. From a scientific standpoint, the yeast cells that conduct the fermentation tend to make a more complex aromatic profile when they have to scrounge for nutrients. With biodynamic farming, the different amino acids translate to different esters, which provide fruit and floral aromas. Many crops farmed organically have been shown to have more color than their conventional counterparts, too.

T&T: *De Loach has long been noted for its noble Burgundian varieties of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, along with California’s iconic Zinfandel grape. Are there other particular varieties that interest you? Do you manage those differently?*

Ginny: I am very seduced by Sauvignon Blanc, and we do manage that varietal differently. We are less inclined to pull leaves if shoot positioning allows for dappled light. Pulling leaves tends to eliminate the grassy characters, which are an underlying signature in Sauvignon Blanc. This year, we harvested the same Sauvignon Blanc vineyard in two separate picks. The first pick we skin contacted to ensure we pulled out as many of the grassy, mineral elements as possible. The second pick had a more tropical flavor profile and a higher pH. The combination is much better than either alone could have produced.

T&T: *What has been your greatest achievement when converting vineyards to sustainable operations? And can a winery expect immediate results?*

Ginny: I managed a vineyard that was conventionally farmed and in the process of converting to organic. Last year, I remember looking at the hillside and seeing a very measly cover crop growing. It looked more brown than green. After applying a load of compost made with the biodynamic preps (by me) and changing the farming practices, this year we have a beautiful green hillside. The property owners are thrilled and call me Dr. Ginny.

T&T: *How far can wineries like DeLoach go in the way of sus-*



DELOACH VINEYARDS DIRECTOR OF WINEGROWING GINNY LAMBRIX.

tainable farming methods? Will there be an eventual limitation or is the sky the limit?

Ginny: If anything, we are shunning new technology and looking back at the method of farming people have used since Roman times. The largest obstacle we face is the chemical companies. Some of them really scare growers. Last month, I attended a seminar on weed control where the images presented by a chemical sales rep were chilling. Essentially, he said if you don’t use herbicides, you will lose the farm. What he failed to mention was that if he could get you to erode your topsoil down the hill all winter, the nutrients would disappear and he could make money selling you not just herbicides but fertilizer. Then, as your vines grew vigorous in response to these fertilizers, he could sell you plenty of fungicides. And the cycle would continue annually. Getting people to recognize these tactics for what they are is the greatest challenge I face.

James O. Fraioli lives in Santa Ynez, California, and writes on food, wine, and travel for numerous publications.