

Introducing Tyler Pinot Noir

A question we frequently ask our favorite winemakers is "who do you think is the next great winemaker?" When we put that question to several of our favorites in Santa Barbara, they all gave up the same name: Justin Willet. So it wasn't long before we caught up with Justin, learned what he's up to, and immediately wanted in on the action. At a recent wine seminar, we featured several "best of class" Santa Barbara winemakers (you'd know the names), and after the event, Justin was clearly the buzz of the room. We took more orders for his wines than any other by a long shot.

So who is Justin Tyler Willet? This wine wunderkind's passion developed early. His experience as wine director at restaurants in both LA and Santa Barbara got his wine juices flowing. His journeyman years were spent working under the legendary Joe Davis at Arcadian Winery crafting some of the purest expressions of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay on the California coast. He founded the Tyler Winery in 2005... at the tender age 23. With his first vintage, Justin fell just one point short of producing all 90-point wines according to none other than Allen Meadows, the Burghound. In fact, Allen went on to urge his readers "with the very limited production levels...it's almost a necessity to get on the mailing list."

This wine was offered to us exclusively due to our strong support over the last few years. In fact, we are the only store in the country to carry it. Due to such tiny production (like 70 cases for some wines), we've previously not been able to put together a proper offer. Well, we've finally secured enough (hopefully) to spread the word. With 2008 being his third vintage, Justin feels these may represent some of his best wines to date. They have an "energy" he hasn't seen before. We'd have to agree. Our focus on this offer is the 2008 Santa Barbara Pinot Noir, but we do have a limited supply of his '07 single vineyards and his stunning Presidio vineyard Chardonnay. That wine was a total showstopper at a recent staff tasting.



2008 Tyler Pinot Noir Santa Barbara County \$34.95

This one wine may best capture what Justin is achieving. It is mostly Dierberg Vineyard (Martini clone from Block 3 with a little clone 31 from Block 5) with 15% Bien Nacido (western edge of main bench, 667) aged in 20% new French oak. This is not a declassified regional blend, but a two-vineyard cuvée that delivers at the heights of the single vineyard Pinots yet sells for the price of a "village" level wine. 188 cases produced.

91 points Josh Raynolds (International Wine Cellar): "Vivid red. Spicy strawberry and raspberry aromas are complemented by musky herbs and dried flowers. Light-bodied but impressively deep in flavor, offering sweet red fruits and suggestions of candied rose, with bracing minerality. I really like the blend of richness and vivacity here."

Also highly recommended:

2007 Tyler Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills La Encantada Vineyard \$44.99 - 93 IWC
2007 Tyler Chardonnay Sta. Rita Hills Zotovich Vineyard \$34.99 - 91 IWC
2007 Tyler Chardonnay Santa Barbara County Presidio Vineyard \$44.99 - 91 IWC

Cheers,

Woodland Hills Wine Co.

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