

# ROAD 31 WINE CO.

*grin-inducing pinot*

Spring 2005

Dear Truckers:

This release is a bit belated (as many of you have pointed out), but I wanted to make sure the wine was ready...

Well, the true excuse is a different call from nature. Owen Whitley Fortner joined the winemaking team at 10:49am on January 22, entering the ring at the fighting weight of 6 pounds, 12 ounces. Although his ten tiny little fingers aren't quite ready to start picking grapes just yet, he's been getting his first tastes of the noble varietals (via his mother). Early returns indicate a preference for Pinot.

It's been a great year for Green Truck. Half this past year's batch went to truckers on the mail list, and the rest got gobbled up at restaurants. Since the last time I wrote to you with the list of 15 or so California eateries featuring "da Truck," five more establishments took the final cases of the vintage: Meadowood Country Club in Napa now has it for their guests, Boulevard Restaurant and Town Hall in San Francisco started with the wine, and The Kitchen in Sacramento became an official trucker as well. Finally, Spago in Palo Alto not only added it to their list, but I got asked to do a \$10K/plate (yup, \$10K/plate!) dinner alongside Wolfgang Puck to help raise money for Tsunami relief. It was great to help; we secured over \$500K for the cause. And when Wolfgang personally told me he loved my wine, I nearly choked on my prosciutto-wrapped asparagus.

The truck may be mighty, but the batches still tiny, so I still have not yet sent out samples to reviewers. But, critics seem to get their hands on bottles nonetheless. Bob Ecker of *Gayot Travel and Restaurant Guides* wrote some of the most flattering prose about Green Truck in an article entitled *Napa Valley Bargain Wines*: "...this Pinot ranks with many of the finest from Burgundy and Oregon. Go ahead, try it and find out for yourself. True Pinot lovers will go gaga over this wine."

OK, enough tooting of the horn (pardon the pun). The greatest satisfaction has been the loyal truckers who have sent a constant stream of e-mails and have come to the caves in person. For those of you who stopped in and beat me at bocce, I demand a rematch. You know who you are.

I now offer up the '03 to you. Since we've been sold out of the '02, I've been digging into the '03 recently for dinners and tastings. I know, I know; it hasn't been officially released yet; but hey, I make the stuff. The early feedback is a definite chorus of "the best Green Truck yet." Whereas the '02 was the earthier side of Pinot, this one is the bolder, more lush side of "the heartbreak grape." The vintage and the addition of a new vineyard are the keys; see the attached.

The ordering process is like last year, (as straightforward as I can muster), with the form on the reverse of this letter. Priority will be given to orders returned by April 10, and a special nod given to those who have put previous vintages in their cellar and/or those that drive green trucks themselves. The shipment will go out late-April. And, if all this confuses you, just call.

Finally, at the request of many of you out there, I am starting a "Plog" (Pinot-log) to keep folks updated on the vintage, the truck, and general musings about winemaking, life, and the winemaking life. You can find it at [greentruckcellars.com](http://greentruckcellars.com). If you like my drivel, there's even a way to get notification whenever new posts appear. Monthly is my goal, with increased frequency during harvest.

I hope this letter finds you happy, healthy, and, well, getting more sleep than our newborn is allowing my wife and me. I look forward to sharing with you the grin-inducing new vintage of Green Truck Cellars Pinot Noir Napa Valley. Keep on truckin'...

Kent Fortner (Winemaker/Truck Owner)



NAPA VALLEY

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