

ROAD 31 WINE CO.

grin-inducing pinot

Spring 2011

Dear Trucker:

Before I offer up wine to you, I want to tell you about how my six-year-old son is terrified of the tooth fairy.

I couldn't understand the petrified look on his face, until I listened to my own words: "*I know that your tooth just randomly fell out of your mouth, but now you get to put it under your pillow, and tonight, while you are sleeping, despite our alarm system, an odd little winged creature is going to sneak into the darkness of your room...*" Oh, the horror! The horror!

Likewise, when I present this wine to you, I fear that saying "2009 was a glorious year" might resonate the same way. After all, 2009 marked that whole financial Armageddon thing. But the truth is, Mother Nature doesn't have a stock portfolio, and she couldn't care less about credit default swaps. In fact, in 2009 she delivered the last in a string of three fantastic drought years; "fantastic" because stressed vines yield super-concentrated flavors. 2009 was her crowning third act, her "Return of the Jedi," her "Return of the King."

The 2009 Road 31 Pinot Noir Napa Valley is beautiful, yet beguiling. Yes, it is sunny-California Pinot Noir—blackberry, cherry, toasty oak—but there is a hint of the Old World there too: leather, tobacco, and earth. The first impression quickens the pulse, but the wine's structure is such that five years in the cellar will yield even more poise, depth, and beauty. Those who enjoyed the 2007 and 2008 will love the 2009; it takes the best of both of those, turns it up a notch, and adds a surly French accent.

The enclosed card provides instructions for securing your allotment via the Web. I've just changed over to a spiffy new e-commerce platform, but your experience should be roughly the same as prior years. I continue to cover ground shipping on a case or more. As always, contact me if you'd like to order the old-fashioned way or if your allotment seems out of whack; allocating is far from a perfect science. The order window closes April 5, so hemming and hawing is not advised. With only 800 cases crafted, I make no promises about availability after that. I ship all the orders the week of April 11 unless otherwise requested.

In the end, my son came up with a creative solution to the tooth fairy issue: he simply put his tooth under a pillow on the downstairs couch and penned a simple note asking the tooth fairy to please not come into his room. Indeed, he was rewarded in the morning with four shiny quarters.

And trust me, this Pinot Noir is one GREAT thing that came out of the scary story that was 2009. I would be honored to share it with you. Keep on truckin'...

Kent Fortner
(Winecrafter/Truck-Owner/King of the Road)



NAPA VALLEY

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