

Fine wine

Local wineries receive acclaim for their pinot gris and pinot noir selections

By Jennifer Sudick
Freelance Editor

Jim Bernau started making wine nearly 10 years before he could drink it.

Inspired by the wine his father allowed him to taste, the Willamette Valley Vineyards founder and his brother experimented with wine production in his home near Roseburg.

"Some of my bottles are still in the crawl space in the house we lived in," Bernau said.

The University graduate and former ASUO president owns one of about 450 Oregon vineyards, a market that has grown considerably in the past several decades, according to Sundance

Wine Cellars manager Steve Baker.

"It's been a buyer's market for sure, which is great for the consumer," Baker said. "Oregon has had five superb vintages in a row."

Baker said a recent grape glut due to a mid-'90s spike in the number of Oregon vineyards has helped create bargains on some of Oregon's best wines, with many pinot noir and pinot gris bottles available for \$15-\$20. Recently, these wines have gained national recognition for their quality and price.

"Before this recent phenomenon, it was tough to find a really good pinot noir in that price," he said. "That quality of wine has never been better."

Oregon's long cool growing season

— stretching from spring until early fall — makes an ideal climate for pinot noir and pinot gris, Baker said. Unlike the warmer climate necessary for growing chardonnay, merlot and zinfandel — grown mostly in the famed wine-producing region of Napa Valley, Calif. — pinot noir and pinot gris require moderate-to-cool weather and a slow riping process.

"You really get superior flavor development and complexity when it is struggling to get ripe," Baker said.

Bernau said the thin-skinned grape commonly grown in Oregon is fragile and excels only in narrow weather requirements. Since the weather in Oregon stays cooler than in California by at least a month, the grapes mature more slowly, trapping

nuances in flavor and aroma.

"Our pinot noir are much more sophisticated and balanced in my opinion," Bernau said. "California wines you sit and drink like you would a Pepsi. Hey, I'm an Oregonian. I'm biased. A lot of Californians would disagree with me."

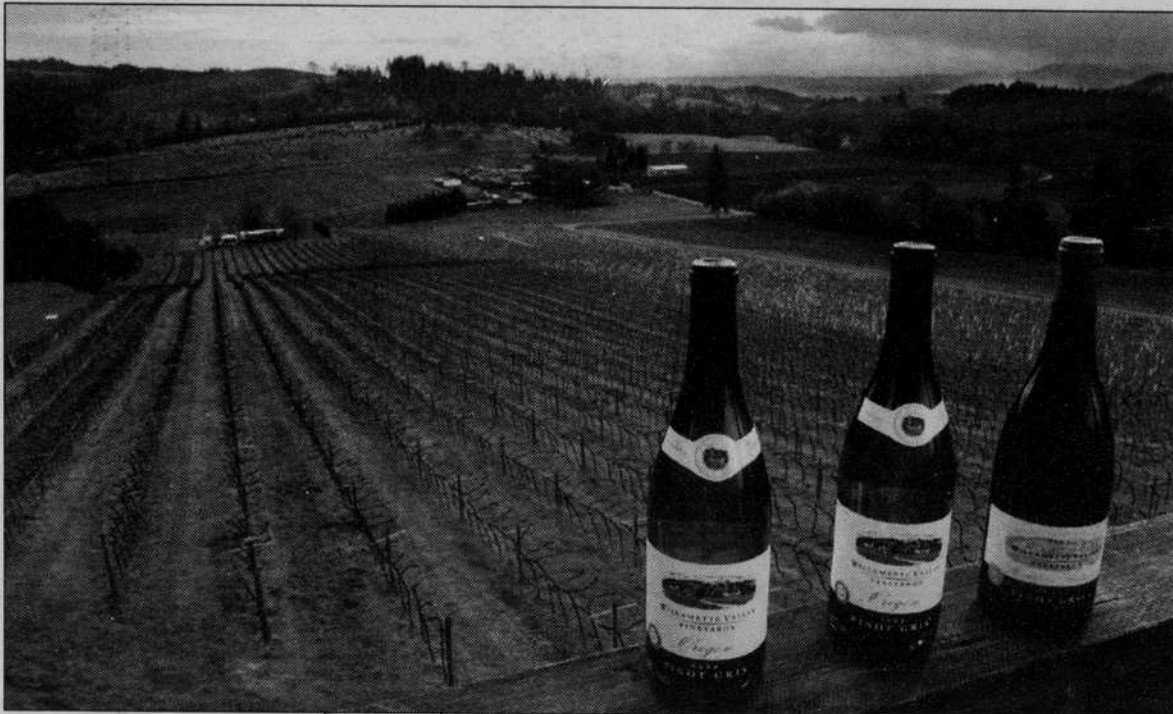
Miles Johnson, director of marketing for King Estate Vineyard, an 810-acre winery located about 20 miles southwest of downtown Eugene, said Oregon's wet growing

conditions are completely different than the southern climate.

"Right on the 45th parallel area here in Oregon we get wet winters, with water tables built up naturally by mother nature," Baker said.

Oregon wine: Then and now

Bernau, whose winery is located just south of the 45th parallel in Turner, Ore., attributed the growth of the Oregon wine industry to Californian Turn to **WINE**, page 18



Adam Amato Senior Photographer

Willamette Valley Vineyards covers about 260 acres in Turner, Ore., near Interstate 5.

Excitement. Adventure. Surprise. Thrills.

This ain't your parents travel agency... it's yours.



Paris.....\$537
London.....\$528
Cancun.....\$466
Costa Rica.....\$366

Hostels & transfers:

FIJI

5 nights, 3 islands

From:

\$304

CANCUN

5 night accomm.

From:

\$275

Fare is round trip from Eugene and prices are per person. Subject to change and availability. Tax not included. Restrictions and blackout apply. Fares are valid for students, faculty and youth under 26.

One stop. No hassles.

We've got everything you need for your next trip.

STA TRAVEL

www.statravel.com

877 1/2 East 13th St.
(541) 344.2263

STUDENT TRAVEL & BEYOND

ONLINE >> ON THE PHONE >> ON CAMPUS >> ON THE STREET

2004
Allied Health

GRADUATE SCHOOL FAIR

Your future in the health care professions begins here.

Wednesday, April 28
EMU Ballroom
10am - 3pm

School Information Sessions:

Wednesday, April 28
in the EMU River Rooms
3:30pm - 4:20pm and 4:30pm - 5:30pm

Career Center
220 Hendricks Hall • (541) 346-3235
<http://uocareer.uoregon.edu>



Spring '04
Career Fair

Cultivate your career opportunities

Wednesday, April 28
EMU Ballroom
10am - 3pm

Career Expo

How to make the Career Fair work for you

Monday April 26, 12:00pm - 1:00pm
Tuesday, April 27, 4:00pm - 5:00pm
Room 12, Hendricks Hall

Career Center
220 Hendricks Hall • (541) 346-3235
<http://uocareer.uoregon.edu>

