

UC-Davis. But a family trip to Burgundy in 2007 was a “phenomenal experience.” Morgan had the chance to meet and talk wine with some of the region’s best viniculturalists, and changes followed: “After 2007, we toned down the [use of new] oak” to make wines in which the “fruit is more obvious” and the wines ready to drink much sooner. A recent special issue of the *Wine Spectator* rated two Broadley 2009 bottlings at 91 points, excellent scores.

Recent vintages have not been easy. Morgan remembers “rain at harvest” for 2007, but some experts still rate that vintage as one of Broadley’s best; 2008 “was a really late year,” saved by a cool, dry fall; 2009 was “hot at harvest,” producing “bigger, chunkier” wines, but also wines that tasters — and raters — loved.

The 2010 harvest, coming at the end of what locals dubbed “the summer that never was,” developed slowly, becoming “very scary” and very late, the “latest year we had.” The grapes hung on the vines, slowly ripening while harvesting crews waited anxiously for good weather.

They had to delay the harvest so long that flocks of migratory robins and starlings, so thick they looked like clouds, descended on the vineyards and feasted on the ripe fruit: “We lost 13 tons of grapes to the birds,” Morgan recalls (see p. 2). But the harvest yielded the “best wines we made in the last 10 years,” wines “more promising than the ‘08s.”

Some of the 2010 wines are just coming into the market and are being met with considerable wine buzz. These might be the best ever. Meanwhile, the 2011 wines are resting in their barrels — but tasting very good, very Broadley.

After a brief flirtation with other varietals (e.g., Chardonnay), the Broadleys have specialized in pinot noir, possibly the world’s most challenging grape to grow and wine to make. The Broadley pinot style has become distinctive and recognizable, noted for being firm,



complex, with deep, intensely fresh fruit flavors that run the spectrum from ripe cherries to blackberries, wrapped in a warm cloak of oak. They also show a certain spiciness.

Altogether, Broadley pinots trip across the palate in layers of flavors, usually with a long, lingering finish. The wines also show levels of acidity that makes them

particularly food-friendly; this is also a characteristic of the great pinot noirs from Burgundy.

In 1980, Craig Broadley went looking for what he then called a “tubular taste,” a flavor profile close to what he’d encountered in great red Burgundies, “kinda like a snake going down your throat.” Broadley’s wines now seem to approach that profile, though Craig — and now Morgan — are their own sharpest critics; they never over-hype and are always looking for the next, better, wine.

In recent years, the Broadleys have contracted with other growers to exchange grapes. Most notable in those trades have been the grapes from the frequently honored Shea Estate Vineyard (Broadley 2009 Shea Pinot Noir, WS 91 pts.). They’re also experimenting with other grapes, like Grenache and syrah. When the 2011 bottlings are released, the Broadley 2011 Grenache, we predict, will be a tippler’s favorite.

Claudia and Craig now have a nice, modest house overlooking their vineyard. On a clear day, from their deck at about 600-foot elevation, they can see across the valley as far north as Mt. Hood, then the string of snow-capped Cascades, including Adams and Washington, south to the Three Sisters. Craig insists they can see Eugene (Claudia asks: “We can see to Eugene?” Craig replies: “Well, you can’t see the people waving, but yes.”)

It’s a grand view. Just down the hill, they can also see the home of Morgan, Jessica, Olivia and Savanna. The Broadleys have made quite a home for their vines, their wines and their family.

These days, sleepy, bucolic Monroe is quickly gaining a name as prime country for vines and wines (see p. 6). Vineyards sometimes replace tree farms on the hillsides. Of that new growth, Craig says, “I think it’s great.”

“The more wineries, the better,” Morgan adds. ❖

*Broadley Vineyards is at 25158 Orchard Tract Rd. in Monroe; for more information, visit [broadleyvineyards.com](http://broadleyvineyards.com) or call 541-847-5934.*

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