



One to Watch By: Jordan Mackay

PEAY VINEYARDS

If a vineyard can be a spiritual home to more than just vines, Peay Vineyards on California's remote and rugged Sonoma Coast is the quintessence of such a place. In a California where many vintners are multi-millionaires who get into wine as a second career or hobby, Peay Vineyards was founded and is now run by a family that lives on site.

The vineyard was planted in 1998 by two young brothers, Nick and Andy Peay, who sought to indulge their passion for wine as well as test their belief that the most expressive wines are made from cool vineyard sites. The location is the 'true' Sonoma Coast; that is, it actually borders the coast. On a south facing slope composed

of low-vigour sand and clay, the vines bask in sunshine during the afternoon, while the mornings are spent chilling in coastal fog. These conditions encourage the development of fully ripe fruit flavours that are held taut by juicy acidity.

The wines are exceptional. Made with a deft hand by winemaker (and Nick Peay's wife) Vanessa Wong, they refuse to compromise structure and integrity for show fruit and heft, though in great vineyards they have both. But with Nick in the Vineyard, Vanessa in the winery, and Andy delivering the wines to restaurants and shops by hand—the strength of the family is the strength of the wines.

Peay Vineyards, Chardonnay 2004 ★★★★★

'We make what the vineyard gives us,' says Andy Peay, 'and it gives us acid.' That is evident in this un-Californian Chardonnay, which smells of fig, pear and lemon with a mineral edge. Lean and structured in the mouth, the acidity is mouthwatering and the finish clean and persistent. **\$45; US markets**