

Raymond Vineyards

photos by Rob Brown

PURCHASED BY JEAN-CHARLES BOISSET in 2009, this bastion of Napa Valley has been producing notable wines since the early 1970s. After five generations of family winemaking, it's headed in a new direction and an exciting evolution is taking place.

Wine guru Philippe Melka was hired to help choose and consult with a dedicated winemaker. After interviewing dozens of qualified candidates, Boisset and Melka decided that Stephanie Putnam would lead the vinous way. As Director of Winemaking, Putnam—the former winemaker at Far Niente—understands Napa Valley and how to craft the varietals that give this global wine hub its highest acclaim.

Although Putnam's signature is not yet reflected in the following Raymond Reserve Selection wines, I want to showcase these stellar releases with a nod to what can only be a glorious future.



Raymond 2008 Reserve Selection Chardonnay, Napa Valley (SRP \$17) entices with a floral prettiness on the nose. The fragrance lingers and moves to honeyed melon on the palate with a delicate creamy-lightness. White pomegranate speaks up and makes its slow exit to the finish. **92**



Raymond 2009 Reserve Selection Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley (SRP \$16) is bright and crisp, with a sweet-to-tart trio of tangerine, grapefruit and lime zing. **90**



Raymond 2007 Reserve Selection Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley (SRP \$32) opens up with such a unique perfume, a celebrity could put her name behind it. Pomegranate, candied cherry and jasmine play an exotic role with a smattering of white pepper and tobacco. Boisset's portfolio has its French roots in Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, but they came to California to interpret Napa Valley Cab. **93** ■■



Publisher's PICKS



PHOTO: CATHY TWIGG-BLUMEL

Meridith May visits Raymond Vineyards.

In each issue THE TASTING PANEL's Publisher and Executive Editor, Meridith May, selects her favorite wines and spirits of the month. Check here for the latest arrivals in our offices, the hottest new brands on the market and an occasional revisited classic.



Worthy of a smooch.



French-style double bizou.



Wildly infatuated.



Seriously smitten.



Head over heels in love.