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WINE COUNTRY

Pinot Classic and Paulée dinner in Sonoma (Video)

Video highlights from the annual Russian River Valley Pinot Classic and Paulée in Sonoma. Including a tour by Jean-Charles Boisset of the 18th century appointed grounds at DeLoach Vineyards.



CLINTON STARK

05.27.2014 | Comments



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Stark Insider video outtakes from the Russian River Valley Pinot Classic and Paulée.



Wine country and the people here never cease to surprise and delight. Over the weekend Paulée took place in Sonoma. That smile that you in the photo down below – that's the result of a long weekend well spent in wine country. Who knew I could make about 150 new friends in only two days (and, in person no less!)?



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The annual dinner that invites guests to sing along in the vineyard under the stars, enjoy a gourmet three-course meal (prepared this year by DeLoach's gregarious Chef Michel Cornu) and bring copious numbers of wines with stories to match to share with others, was the center piece of the Russian River Valley Pinot Classic. Despite attending an endless array of these sorts of shindigs over the years for Stark Insider, this one was one for the ages.

One thing that's easy to forget sometimes is that Sonoma is markedly different than its more famous inland neighbor. While Napa is built up and can challenge drivers during tourist season with a wicked left turn on a congested Highway 29, Sonoma actually has what I'd call "back roads." Wine country back roads. The ones that wind, dip and sneak through overgrown forests. And even a historic single land bridge that crosses the Russian River itself. It's magnificent (and possibly therapeutic with the right music) to just drive around. Also—what?!—no cell reception. Getting a signal can be tricky in Sonoma. It's hilly, coastal and even though the region is only about an hour north of San Francisco, you might as well be trying to get a few bars from T-Mobile while dancing barefoot across the arctic circle; though there was nothing frigid about our weekend in Sonoma. The temperature pushed into the hundreds, and cooled off nicely as the sun went down.

“Sonoma actually has what I'd call “back roads.”

We had a pretty full agenda that included stops at numerous wineries on Saturday and Sunday.

STARK INSIDER EVENT CALENDAR

MAY 2014

- 24 - 26 APR - JUL
WRONG'S WHAT I DO BEST
 San Francisco Art Institute
 Event Type : Theater and Live Performances
- 18 - 15 MAY - JUN
SOUTH PACIFIC
 The Cushing Memorial Amphitheatre
 Event Type : Theater and Live Performances
- 28 MAY
PEN/MAN/SHIP
 Magic Theatre
 Event Type : Theater and Live Performances
- 30 - 1 MAY - JUN
BOTTLE ROCK NAPA VALLEY
 Event Type : Food and Wine Theater and Live Performances
- 30 MAY
OFF THE GRID SAN FRANCISCO
 Fort Mason Center
 Event Type : Food and Wine
- 30 MAY
TRIASSIC PARQ
 The Eureka Theatre
 Event Type : Theater and Live Performances

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First we attended an informative seminar, "The Neighborhoods of Russian River Valley." Notable trade, winemakers and writers (Steve Heimoff was there with his cute dog Guss, and closed off the session with **some charming prose from his book about the RRV**) guided attendees through the nuances of the various sub-AVAs (ah... just a slightly political topic these days). A flight featuring wines from Green Valley, Laguna Ridge and Middle Reach complemented the discussion perfectly.

Later we stopped by Carrozzi Vineyard, where we met up with owners Stephen and Cheryl Carrozzi who shared with us their story about they got into the wine business before heading to the photo booth for vineyard irreverence (as we're wont to do around here). Both Stephen and Cheryl were working it, pouring their wines for all comers, and even sharing chocolates made by their daughter.



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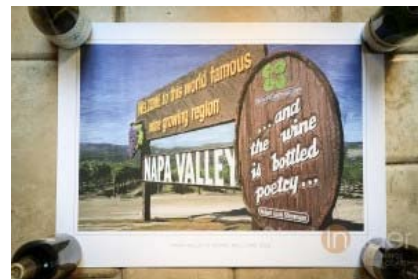


WEARABLES



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IN WINE COUNTRY



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TECH TRENDS

After a quick refresh back at the Thomas George guest house where we were staying (stunning in every sense of the word), we braced ourselves for what would come next: a tour of the new DeLoach barrel room, and 18th century time machine with none other than Jean-Charles Boisset. Fresh off a flight from Paris (and hours away from jetting to Hong Kong), and with sparkling in hand, he guided us through what had to be the most energetic, most fun, most ridiculous, most informative, most over-the-top wine tour I've ever had the pleasure to witness.

Premium Sonoma Pinot Noir

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Now shipping exquisite 2012 vintage made in Russian River Valley, CA



✕ **ALSO SEE: Stark Insider TV: The King of Tacos (Loreto, Baja Sur, Mexico)**

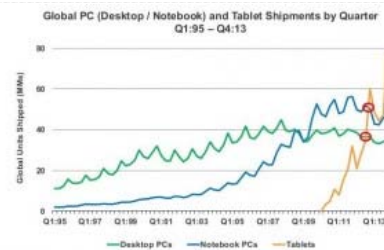
Paulée, of course, is one of those wine country experience you ought to consider including on your bucket list. One thing I didn't realize—naivety and all—was how much wine everyone brings. Part of the joy of Paulée is the sharing that goes on – sharing wines, sharing stories, sharing amazing food. Then there's that interesting little song, with lots of boisterous singing, and clapping (three times during the

meal no less!) – watch the video outtakes below for a glimpse of that.



Some sparkly before touring the new DeLoach Vineyards 18th century makeover. Remember. It's not Sonoma. In the words of Jean-Charles Boisset, it's Sonommmmmaaaa! Photo: courtesy of DeLoach Vineyards.

On Sunday, we made stops at Moshin Vineyards, the "hummingbird" winery owned by a former San Jose State math teacher. Then stopped for lunch at VML. The grounds looked



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ON THE TOWN



San Francisco Weekend: BottleRock Napa, Pen/Man/Ship, Star Chefs Gala, Triassic Parq

MOBILE



It's All About the Bezel: LG G3 takes on Apple iPhone, HTC One



THE TEAM

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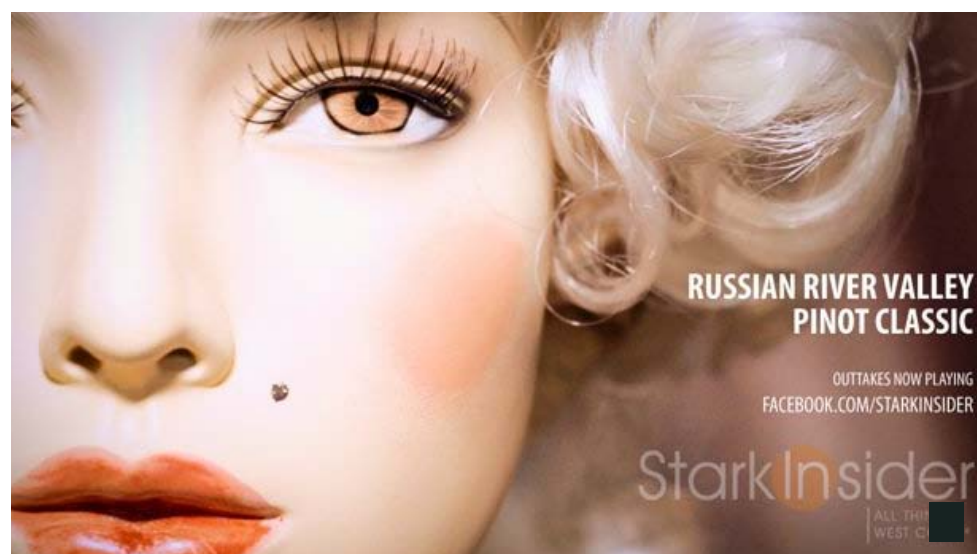
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Day+Night.

familiar. Then I realized this used to be Chris Donatiello's stomping grounds – it was waaaaay back when **we featured him on SI**. Chris, who we were fortunate enough to sit at during the previous night's extravaganza, has now setup shop on Healdsburg Square; and plays a prominent role in organizing RRV winegrowers and leading their efforts to unite marketing and branding efforts.

We'll have the full episode of the Russian River Valley Pinot Classic 2014 up soon on Stark Insider. For now, we've cut together a highlight reel that you can watch below or **on Vimeo**. Quick tip: those making wine country/vacation plans for 2015, make note of this event, and consider making it a cornerstone of your itin.

Be sure to follow Stark Insider on **Twitter** and **Facebook** – where we often first share videos/photos of our wine adventures (and often live).

WATCH: Russian River Valley Pinot Classic & Paulée | Sonoma (Outtakes)



Russian River Valley Pinot Classic & Paulée | Sonoma (Outtakes) from Stark Insider on Vimeo.

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CLINTON STARK

Clint is based in Silicon Valley and co-founded Stark Insider. A new media venture, the goal was to fill the increasing gap in arts and food & wine coverage. This site has consumed his every fiber. Yet, he still has time to talk Android, praise Pebble, and **shoot videos**. More: [Clint's story...](#)

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