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As Seen on...www.thecorkscrooge.com, Monday March 21, 2010, By Dallas Lawrence

The Cork Scrooge

Never drink another terrible budget bottle of red wine again. Value wines tasted from around the world under \$15 so you don't have to (it's a tough job we know!).



Saturday Night Special – 2005 Oak Knoll Pinot Noir Vintage Reserve

Because I know every now and then you want something a little more than your typical \$12 Safeway value bottle of red, today's "Saturday Night Special" (one day late I know – I am going to blame the 20+ hour flight from DC to Australia in delaying my post) offers something for those willing to spend a little extra to get something a little extra.

This week's wine comes from the pioneering Oregon vintners of Oak Knoll winery. The second generation family owned establishment is renowned for its long list of Gold and Silver medal winning Pinot Gris and Pinot Noir and I had the opportunity to chat with their wine team a few weeks back. They were so confident in their wines that they sent the cork scrooge a few bottles to taste and review – no strings attached. This week's review is of one of those wines – the 2005 Oak Knoll Pinot Noir Vintage Reserve from Willamette Valley.

First off, I have to be honest here: I am not typically a Pinot Noir fan. They tend to be far too fruity and lacking complexity in my experience. The few I have delved into recently were only border line drinkable for someone who likes a meatier wine with a bit of attitude.

So, with this in mind, you can imagine my surprise when *I popped the cork on this 2005 and found myself immediately taken in by the hints of cinnamon and peppery spice that made for one very nice first impression. Right from the bottle I knew this was my kind of Pinot – not too sweet and with a nice light acidity and berry finish on the back end to keep things exciting.*

Much to my surprise, this wine got even better with time. 15 minutes after enjoying my first slightly chilled glass I poured a second, and then 10 minutes later, a third. Each successive glass was smoother and a bit more full bodied.

Fair warning: if you prefer the limp, fruit flavored and lifeless Pinots that are flooding the wine isles these days, this wine will likely not be up your alley. The 2005 Oak Knoll Pinot Noir Vintage Reserve is a big boy Pinot for those that like a bold wine not afraid to give your taste buds a solid kick. In others words, this was my kind of wine. You can order the 2005 for less than \$30, as well as many of the winery's other value reds and whites (some starting as low as \$7) online at www.oakknollwinery.com. Cheers!