

**Averill Creek Vineyard****2005 Pinot Noir  
(Vancouver Island)**

Andy Johnston, who opened Averill Creek last year with wife Wendy, has set his sights on making one of Canada's top Pinot Noirs. That was one reason why he rejected the Okanagan (too hot, in his view) and opted for the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island, a cool terroir analogous to Oregon.

Born in Britain, Johnston spent 27 years as a doctor in Alberta, dreaming of becoming a winegrower. When he decided in 1998 to switch careers, he started to prepare by working a vintage in Tuscany. Contacts made there led him to work vintages in France, Australia and especially in New Zealand. Now, he models his practices on those of a Martinborough vintner named Larry McKenna, who makes some of New Zealand's best Pinot Noirs at a winery called Escarpment Vineyard.

One thing Johnston has to do differently, however, is tenting the Pinot Noir each spring, covering the buds with plastic skirts for a few weeks. This accelerates the vines, providing some insurance that the Pinot Noir is ripe before Vancouver Island's October rains.

Johnston pulled off a fine Pinot Noir in 2005, a wine that is dark in colour and has aromas of raspberry. On the palate, there are flavours of cherry and minerals, with a spicy toasty note from the 11 months that the wine aged in French oak. The structure is still firm, with a promise of a silky texture as it ages. 88 points.

Reviewed November 16, 2007 by [John Schreiner](#).

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**THE WINE**

**Winery:** [Averill Creek Vineyard](#)

**Vintage:** 2005

**Wine:** Pinot Noir

**Appellation:** [Vancouver Island](#)

**Grape:** Pinot Noir

**Price:** \$23.00

**THE REVIEWER****John Schreiner**

John Schreiner has been covering the wines of British Columbia for the past 30 years and has written 10 books on the wines of Canada and BC. He has judged at major competitions and is currently a panel member for the Lieutenant Governor's Awards of

Excellence in Wine. Both as a judge and as a wine critic, he approaches each wine not to find fault, but to find excellence. That he now finds the latter more often than the former testifies to the dramatic improvement shown by BC winemaking in the past decade.