

**Hahn Estates****2005 Pinot Noir
(Monterey)**

Vintner Nicky Hahn pushed the notion of a Santa Lucia Highlands AVA back in 1988 because he wanted to differentiate his Cabernet Sauvignon from the often-vegetal Cabs grown elsewhere in Monterey. Now even he admits that the AVA is more suitable for Pinot Noir. This wine carries a Monterey appellation, but the bulk of the fruit is from Hahn's three Santa Lucia Highlands vineyards, which are toward the middle and the south of the AVA.

Winemaker Adam LaZarre thinks this is the beefiest Hahn Pinot to date, but it's still a graceful wine, displaying bright cherry flavors, a slight herbal note and some nice spiciness. It's structured yet supple, with a long finish. The wine spent 10 months in French oak barrels, 65 percent of them new, and the oak is very well integrated into the finished wine. All in all, it's a Pinot that offers a lot of flavor and elegance for a modest price tag. LaZarre suggests drinking it with baked salmon, lamb chops with a honey-mustard glaze or a pecan-crusted duck breast on a bed of baby greens. The wine also has the structure to age for a couple of years, if you prefer.

Reviewed November 15, 2007 by [Laurie Daniel](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Hahn Estates](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Pinot Noir

Appellation: [Monterey](#)

Grape: Pinot Noir

Price: \$23.00

THE REVIEWER**Laurie Daniel**

Laurie Daniel, wine columnist for the *San Jose Mercury News*, has been reviewing wine for more than 10 years. She doesn't use numbers, preferring to describe her recommended wines and let consumers decide for themselves.

Laurie believes that bigger isn't necessarily better; she's partial to wines of balance, finesse and character. Her particular interests are Pinot Noir (versions that really taste like Pinot, that is) and aromatic whites like Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling and Gewürztraminer.