

**Jamesport Vineyards****2005 Pinot Noir, Sarah's Hill
(North Fork of Long Island)**

Almost everyone in the wine industry spews the cliché "our wines are made in the vineyard." Like every cliché, however, sometimes it's true. Jamesport Vineyards is one such instance. Winemakers may be the celebrities of the wine world - even here on Long Island - but the good ones know how important a top vineyard manager is. It's a symbiotic relationship unlike any other.

Les Howard, winemaker at Jamesport Vineyards, gets to work with one of North Fork's best, Ron Goerler Jr, who also happens to own Jamesport Vineyards. Goerler has been growing grapes for much of his life. His father, Ron Goerler Sr., planted Jamesport's first vines in 1981, making him only the fourth person to plant vines on Long Island. Almost from the beginning, the Goerler family earned a reputation for growing some of the best fruit around - and deservedly so. Howard, who joined Jamesport Vineyards in 2005 after stints at Pindar Vineyards, Wolffer Estate and Bedell Cellars, is taking that quality fruit and turning it into quality wines.

Long Island Pinot Noir can be spotty — both in terms of quality and price - but Jamesport Vineyards' 2005 Sarah's Hill Pinot Noir (\$45) shows potential, though it's a bit quiet in it's youth. It is extremely dark for a Pinot - no doubt because of the hot, dry growing year. With only a short time in the glass, the wine unfurls and shows off a pretty, complex nose with aromas of ripe cherries, cola, mixed spice, vanilla and subtle earth. The palate is velvety with red fruit - cherries, cranberries and plum - the main flavor components with just a little vanilla and spice. The tannins are low and well integrated. The nose was much more interesting and layered than the palate right out of the bottle, but two days open helped the palate expand. This is a young wine that should age well and evolve over time

Reviewed June 19, 2008 by [Lenn Thompson](#).

Other Awards & Accolades

Gold Medal - 2007 New York Wine and Food Classic

THE WINE

Winery: [Jamesport Vineyards](#)
Vineyard: Sarah's Hill
Vintage: 2005
Wine: Pinot Noir
Appellation: [North Fork of Long Island](#)
Grape: [Pinot Noir](#)
Price: \$44.95

THE REVIEWER**Lenn Thompson**

Lenn Thompson writes about New York wines for *Dan's Papers*, *Long Island Press*, *Long Island Wine Gazette*, *Edible East End* and *Hamptons.com*. Two words describe his taste in wine — *balance* and *nuance*.

Lenn prefers food-friendly, elegant wines to jammy, over-extracted fruit bombs and heavy-handed oak. When reviewing, Lenn tastes each wine three times — alone right after opening, with food, and again the next day — believing that 90-second reviews are unrealistic and not how the average person enjoys wine.