

WINE RECOMMENDATION

**La Rochelle Winery****2005 Pinot Noir
(Santa Lucia Highlands)**

The [La Rochelle Pinot Noir](#) program is kicking into high gear with the release of this wine and several others from equally distinctive growing regions. This approachable, pleasingly complex Pinot, from three vineyards in the Santa Lucia Highlands, is an excellent example of what characterizes Santa Lucia Highlands Pinots. It exudes bright, ripe dark raspberry aromas, with hints of orange zest, then floods your palate with pomegranate, raspberry, baking spice and pleasant hints of cola.

Even though the alcohol (15%) is up there, the texture is lovely and the acidity is quite nicely in balance. You will totally groove on the long, lush finish.

This wine is made from three vineyard sources in the Santa Lucia Highlands AVA: Sleepy Hollow (37.5%) in the north, Garys' Vineyard (43.7%) in the center, and Paraiso Vineyard (18.8%) in the south. Because the AVA runs from the Northwest to Southeast, the vineyards in the northern end are closer to the water and cooler than those in the south. Only 365 cases of this Pinot Noir were produced. It was aged for 16 months in 60% new French oak and is drinking splendidly now, although it will age well for another 5 years easily – but why wait? This is the wine to serve your friends who are squeamish about Pinot: "ewwww, it's too thin and acidic and weedy and...whine, whine..." There'll be no whining with this one.

Reviewed August 3, 2007 by [Laura Ness](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [La Rochelle Winery](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Pinot Noir

Appellation: [Santa Lucia Highlands](#)

Grape: Pinot Noir

Price: \$38.00

THE REVIEWER**Laura Ness**

A wine writer and wine judge for major publications and competitions around the country, Laura Ness likens wine to the experience of music. She is always looking for that ubiquitous marriage of rhythm, melody, and flawless execution. What is good music? You

know it when you get lost in it. What is good wine? It is music in your mouth.