

**Wente Vineyards****2005 Petite Verdot
(Livermore Valley)**

There aren't too many of these bad boys out there in the wine universe. Petite Verdot is usually relegated to the "also ran" components of big-assed Bordeaux blends and massive Zins. It also shows up as the steroidal component of Merlots and Cabernets that need a little pumping up, as it were. Here, it gets to star in its own show, with Touriga as the

supporting act.

Of all the Small Lots wines on Wente's list, this one grabbed me by the throat and demanded to be taken home. From the first glance, it is deserving of your full attention. Gorgeous and regal in the glass, its dark black purple color hints at the enormous power you are about to imbibe. Scents of blackberry, anise, chocolate mint wafers, caramelized onions, saffron and caraway are intriguing enough, but the flavours are simply stunning. With a lovely texture, this wine is as complex as its aromas indicated. Big cherry and bubbling baked plum tart flavours mix with prosciutto, caraway and anise. The tannins are perfect, just the way winemaker Karl likes them. The finish rocks with rich spices, like nutmeg and cinnamon, and a hint of tobacco.

A very powerful, satisfying wine that really makes a long-lasting statement. Serve with a big prime rib with horseradish cream sauce, or a rich pasta dish with sundried tomatoes, eggplant, basil and kalamata olives. Appropriate music would be Muddy Waters, Aretha Franklin, The Guess Who and Jimmy Hendrix.

Reviewed February 21, 2008 by [Laura Ness](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Wente Vineyards](#)

Vintage: 2005

Wine: Petite Verdot

Appellation: [Livermore Valley](#)

Grapes: [Petit Verdot](#) (85%), [Touriga Nacional](#) (15%)

Price: \$35.00

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.