

WINE RECOMMENDATION

**Wolff Vineyards****2005 Petite Sirah
(Edna Valley)**

Jean-Pierre Wolff and his wife, Elke, purchased the historic MacGregor Vineyard in the Edna Valley in 1999. At the time, the property was planted with 55 acres of Chardonnay, and Wolff set about planting some of the usual cool-climate grapes: Pinot Noir, Riesling, even Syrah. But Petite Sirah? Most California

Petite Sirah is planted in warm areas, not side by side with Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Wolff knew he was taking a risk when he decided to plant Petite, but Syrah performed well in the appellation, and Wolff reasoned that Petite Sirah – a cross between Syrah and Peloursin – might be a success, too. He was right.

His Petite Sirah isn't a big, jammy monster, but rather a savory creation that's reminiscent of a northern Rhone Syrah. The wine, which is aged in American oak, is a spicy, peppery Petite, with dark, robust blackberry fruit. It's a muscular wine, but it's not over the top. Its spicy nuances would make the Wolff Petite Sirah, which sells for \$21.50, a good accompaniment for various types of grilled meats, from steak to pork ribs to a juicy cheeseburger.

Reviewed August 19, 2007 by [Laurie Daniel](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Wolff Vineyards](#)
Vintage: 2005
Wine: Petite Sirah
Appellation: [Edna Valley](#)
Grape: Petite Sirah
Price: \$21.50

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.