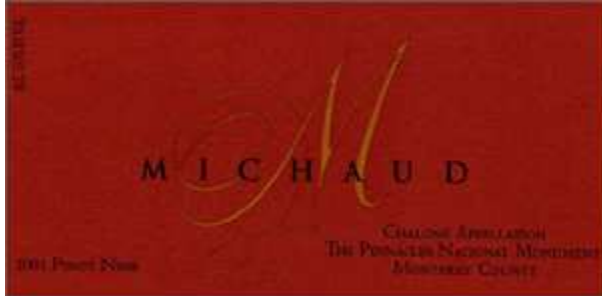


WINE RECOMMENDATION

**Michaud Vineyard and Winery****2003 Pinot Noir, Estate
(Chalone)**

Michael Michaud has spent pretty much his entire career working with Chalone appellation grapes, first at Chalone Vineyard and now at his eponymous label. He

started planting his vineyard in 1981 and established the Michaud Vineyard brand in 1997. At first Michaud produced a little Chardonnay; Pinot Noir joined the lineup in the 2000 vintage, and he's added Pinot Blanc (actually Melon de Bourgogne), Sangiovese and Syrah since then.

Michaud's vineyard is at about 1,500 feet, toward the cooler northern end of the appellation. I find that most Chalone AVA wines, even the Chardonnays, [require several years in the bottle](#) to show their best sides. Recognizing that, Michaud takes the step of holding back his wines longer than most producers of Chalone AVA wine, which explains why the 2003 Pinot is the current release. Nevertheless, the wine, which sells for \$38, is still quite tight, with flavors of cherry and mineral surrounding a firm core of acid and tannin. There's a long finish. Older Michaud Pinots have fleshed out a bit more and picked up nuances of lavender and cedar. Michaud recommends decanting the wine to help it open further.

Reviewed March 28, 2007 by [Laurie Daniel](#).

THE WINE

Winery: [Michaud Vineyard and Winery](#)

Vineyard: Estate

Vintage: 2003

Wine: Pinot Noir

Appellation: [Chalone](#)

Grape: [Pinot Noir](#)

Price: \$38.00

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.