



- Erin Larkin (November, 2023)

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**95**

### 2022 Valli Bendigo Vineyard Pinot Noir

The 2022 Bendigo Vineyard Pinot Noir is lovely, every which way. The fruit is concentrated and supple, and it has liveliness and freshness from the acidity, but the tannins bring that forth in the mouth as well. This is a beautifully shaped wine, more curved and flowing than static or straight. A wine of substance, it is also a wine that has restraint and space. It's skillfully handled and super impressive. 14% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

**94+**

### 2022 Valli Gibbston Vineyard Pinot Noir

The 2022 Gibbston Vineyard Pinot Noir is mineral and yet fleshy on the nose, with cherry pip and star anise, both of which pull through onto the plate. There's cracked fennel seed, pink peppercorns, blond tobacco and finely milled white pepper to close. The fresh acidity eddies about like leaves caught in a whirlwind updraft, and it freshens all aspects of the palate. In conjunction with the tannins, this really pulls the flavor across through to the finish. Balanced, superb. 14% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

**94**

### 2022 Valli Waitaki Vineyard Pinot Noir

The 2022 Waitaki Vineyard Pinot Noir is light and fine, both in the glass and aromatically. On the palate, the wine is so fine and littered with crushed shells, river stones and cherry skin. This is fragrant and lithe, pretty and detailed. It is all of these things, but it is not short. It spools through the long finish, like a fishing rod reel in cast. As there will be no 2023 Waitaki Vineyard Pinot Noir, make hay while the sun shines, I say. A beauty. 12.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

**93+**

### 2022 Valli Bannockburn Vineyard Pinot Noir

On the nose, this 2022 Bannockburn Vineyard Pinot Noir is savory and spicy. There is clove and sumac, pastrami and raspberry pip, with black tea, tobacco and brine. This is a lovely wine. There's loads of freshness and density and yet capaciousness. It has an "open-throated" finish, loose-weave without being slack. 2022 was the 25th anniversary of Valli, and Grant says, "We really picked the eyes out for our 25th anniversary year." 14% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

**93**

### 2022 Valli The Real McCoy Gibbston Vineyard Pinot Gris

This is a skin-contact white wine/orange wine. Exciting. Frankly, I love skin contact Pinot Gris. The 2022 The Real McCoy Gibbston Vineyard Pinot Gris spent approximately four weeks on skins (same as the Pinot Noir), and on the nose, it leads with orange oil, beeswax, white/spring flowers, white pepper, star anise, Campari, rosemary, hints of clove and brine. It is super pretty, and soft(!) in the mouth, with lovely fresh acid that wraps around the phenolics. What a lovely wine. It matured in neutral oak for 11 months, with 100% malolactic fermentation. 13.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap. The drinking window is quite conservative. You can go your own way.

**92**

### 2022 Valli Waitaki Vineyard Riesling

The 2022 Waitaki Vineyard Riesling is soft and talc-y in the mouth, with tight cheesecloth and brine, stewed Granny Smith apples and cloudy apple juice through the finish. This has a quenching aspect to it—a satisfying, full sort of experience in the mouth. Just like having a large glass of cold, cloudy apple juice—a little salty, textural ... good. I thought the residual sugar was five or so grams; however, I am told it is higher—15 to 18 grams per liter. I got it wrong because the acid is so high. It has lovely balance. 10.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap.

**93**

### 2023 Valli Waitaki Vineyard Pinot Gris

The 2023 Waitaki Vineyard Pinot Gris is incredibly fresh on the nose and leads with pear drop and green apple skins, white pepper and sourdough crust. In the mouth, the wine is creamy, nutty and silky; it unfurls rather than "lands" in the mouth, and the fine acidity spools through the finish. Good wine! 13.5% alcohol, sealed under screw cap. Waitaki is the coolest subregion in New Zealand. Partially barrel fermented (48%), the barrel component went through malolactic fermentation, and the wine matured for about six months in neutral oak.