

Sean Minor Returns

[Editor: Mr. Minor never really left. What went missing was the author's brain.]

We were excited to [get an e-mail from this old favorite](#). And we were even more thrilled to discover that **Sean is still making pinot noir**. We ordered a mixed case. This review will cover tastings made over the course of a week. We've [reviewed Sean's wines before](#), but somehow he fell through the ever-widening cracks in our brains.

We had remembered – incorrectly, as it turns out – that Sean had stopped making pinot noir. Thankfully, a helpful employee refreshed our ever more failing memory. He stopped making *Carneros* pinots, shifting instead to the Russian River Valley and Sonoma Coast AVAs.

The Wines

His **2016 Central Coast pinot “Four Bears” (\$16)** opens with mild aromas of black cherries and leather. The palate is lush and full with flavors of chocolate covered cherries and a hint of spice. The finish features long, smooth, silky tannins. Another terrific deal.

The **2016 Central Coast chardonnay “Four Bears” (\$14)** tends to lemon curd. Aromas of citrus and smoke lead to pineapple and lemon curd palate. A nice long finish rounds out the experience.

But the real champion is the **2015 Sonoma Coast pinot noir (\$22)**. Aromas of cranberries and bing cherries lead to a palate that features more cherries and spices. A long, complex finish opens with smooth tannins and a touch of acid, merging seamlessly into more spice. At \$22 per bottle this counts as a major bargain. Get this one while it lasts. And don't be afraid to let it sit for a year or two. This one has

some aging potential.

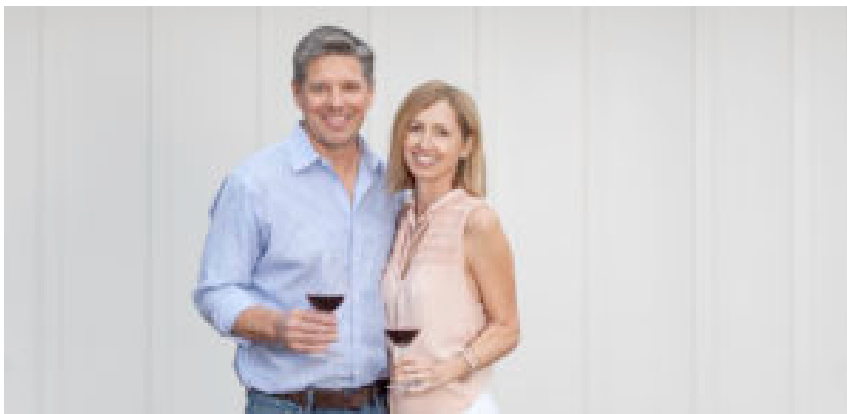
The Business

The website has been updated significantly since our last visit. Vibrant colors with a sparse, almost Japanese, layout. The design is warm and welcoming. Here's an example:



(click for larger image)

Sean and Nicole are the perfect winery couple. For those who are curious, the “Four Bears” designation refers to their four kids.



Followed by a clear, clean statement of purpose. Companies searching for a mission statement could learn a lot from this:

Not long after Nicole and I were married, we discovered our second largest monthly expense was wine. We enjoy wine every day with dinner, when friends and family come to visit, during celebrations... actually, I can't think of times we don't enjoy wine.

After a number of years in the industry, I knew there had to be a better and more affordable way to produce great wines without severe consequences on the pocket book. In 2005 we started our wine business and began producing wines from premier appellations throughout California. With the help of a family friend and colleague, Will Buckle, our initial production featured a Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, Central Coast Chardonnay, and Dry Creek Sauvignon Blanc.

Will continues to be our consulting winemaker and we collaborate on the selection and blending of all wines. Will is a graduate of UC Davis prestigious ecology program and started his career with an internship at the historic and world-renowned Chateau Laffite-Buffet. Following a stint with Thomas Hardy in Australia, Niverno Vineyards in Mendocino he worked as we both did at King Estate in Oregon. He has now settled in Sonoma County where he works closely with many of the vineyards we source from.

You will find our wines at fine restaurants and gourmet grocery stores all over the country, and of course here on our website. I am happy to share my love of wine with you.

- Sean

(click for larger image)

An interesting side note: Sean was born in Kansas “surrounded by surrounded by agriculture and the hard work and values responsible for the enviable work ethic of Midwestern people.” It happens that Tony’s maternal grandparents owned a farm in Kansas. He spent many summers there when he was a child. [Editor: That’s what Tony claims. Given the state of his memory, I would be skeptical.]

These are good folks making wines that are incredible values. If you’ve never tried them before get online and order a case or two! Here’s their team:



Stuart, Nicole, Larry, Barbara, Sue,
Sean, Kristi