



ACCLAIM FOR OUR 2015 AND 2016 VINTAGES

DUMOL

## JEB DUNNUCK

*Stylistically, Smith makes a fresh, vibrant style of wine, yet I never find them lacking for depth and or texture... [The] Chardonnays... are made in a reductive, age-worthy style and the clear majority have distinctly Burgundian profiles... [and] the top Pinot Noirs are certainly up with the crème de la crème of the region. ...DuMol also produces a handful of world-class Syrahs, as well as one of the top examples of Viognier coming out of California. Both the 2015s and 2016s reviewed here are terrific wines... — Jeb Dunnuck, June 2018*

### 2015 TENCH VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

**97 POINTS** There are some seriously good wines coming from this vineyard, which is on the edge of Oakville, and Smith's 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Tench Vineyard is up with the best of them. Awesome blue fruits, scorched earth, graphite and dried soil notes all emerge from this full-bodied, ripe, powerful Cabernet Sauvignon that still shows the purity, finesse, and elegance that's the hallmark of DuMOL wines. It has the ripe, sexy fruit of the vintage, and will drink nicely for 20 years or more.

### 2015 BALLARD VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

**95 POINTS** The 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Ballard Vineyard comes from a larger vineyard on Spring Mountain. (just across from Togni) that's surrounded by redwoods. It was planted in 2001 and Andy gets all clone 337 for this wine. Its deep purple color is followed by a wild, savage, complex bouquet of blueberries, bay leaf, pinewood, and forest floor. It's full-bodied and concentrated on the palate, yet also elegant and seamless, with a weightless texture. It has a classic old-school feel and is going to evolve gracefully.

### 2015 METEOR VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

**94 POINTS** The 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Meteor Vineyard (I wrote Château Margaux-like in my notes) offers a perfumed, elegant bouquet of crème de cassis, sandalwood, flowers, and spices. Possessing medium to full body, a silky, incredibly elegant and seamless texture, and fine tannin, it's already impossible to resist, yet like the straight Napa Valley cuvée, it's capable of lasting for two decades.

### 2015 NAPA VALLEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON

**93 POINTS** Released in January of this year, the 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley has a deep, Saint-Estèphe-like (for some reason I always find these Old World comparisons in Andy's wines) character in its pure, deep black and blue fruits, graphite, and lead pencil aromas and flavors. With full-bodied richness, terrific freshness, and a building sense of minerality, it's certainly approachable today, yet is going to evolve gracefully for two decades or more.

### 2015 GREYWACKE VINEYARD EDDIE'S PATCH SYRAH

**98 POINTS** Seemingly more Hermitage-like compared to the more Côte Rôtie styled 2016, the 2015 Syrah Greywacke Vineyard Eddie's Patch offers in-your-face notes of blue fruits, graphite, ozone/lite gunpowder, and background meatiness. It's a deep, serious wine that has a stacked mid-palate, plenty of tannins, and a great, great finish. It's certainly one of the top Syrahs in this report, as well as from anywhere in California.



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### **2015 FINN PINOT NOIR**

**95+ POINTS** The flagship 2015 Pinot Noir Finn has more tanning as well as density. Terrific notes of dried flowers, red currants, menthol, and earth, medium to full body, a layered, concentrated mid-palate, and a great, great finish all define this seriously good Russian River Pinot Noir. It's one of the tighter, more backward 2015s from Andy Smith, but it's packed with potential. Give it another 2-3 years, and it's capable of keeping for over a decade.

### **2015 DUMOL ESTATE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR**

**96 POINTS** The 2015 Pinot Noir Estate Vineyard is a step up over the 2016 (splitting hairs) and offers slightly more depth and richness. Savory red and black fruits, scorched earth, and savory spices all give way to a medium to full-bodied, deep, rich, mineral-laced 2015 that has enough depth and structure to keep for a decade or more.

### **2015 WIDDOES VINEYARD RYAN PINOT NOIR**

**93 POINTS** Deeper and richer than the 2016, the 2015 Pinot Noir Widdoes Vineyard boasts tons of red and black fruits intermixed with more spice and floral elements with time in the glass. Possessing a bigger, richer mid-palate, as well as a more in-your-face personality, this medium to full-bodied Russian River Valley Pinot Noir has integrated acidity and a great finish.

### **2015 CHARLES HEINTZ VINEYARD ISOBEL CHARDONNAY**

**95 POINTS** Leading off the 2015s, which Andy said might be his favorite Chardonnay vintage ever, the 2015 Chardonnay Charles Heintz has a racy, vibrant style as well as plenty of citrus blossom, lemon rind, and honeycomb aromas and flavors. It's medium-bodied, pure, and elegant on the palate, with a deep, earth, minerality.

### **2015 CLARE CHARDONNAY**

**97+ POINTS** Serious notes of citrus blossom, pineapple, and mint emerge from the 2015 Chardonnay Hyde Vineyard, and it has some serious oomph in both its aromas and flavors. Concentrated, still tight and slightly angular, yet with riveting purity and elegance, it's a tour de force in California Chardonnay that needs another year in bottle and will keep for 10-15 years.

### **2015 RITCHIE-LORENZO VINEYARDS CHLOE CHARDONNAY**

**97 POINTS** The 2015 Chardonnay Ritchie-Lorenzo Old Vines Vineyard (it's two-thirds from Ritchie and one-third from Lorenzo) is a big, rich, classic Russian River Chardonnay that has loads of ripe orchard fruits, honeysuckle, dried herbs/earth, and spice all soaring from the glass. It's another impeccably balanced, pure, classic effort from this estate that does everything right.

### **2015 DUMOL ESTATE VINEYARD CHARDONNAY**

**97+ POINTS** The 2015 Chardonnay Estate Vineyard is another steely, concentrated, almost austere wine from the estate that's going to demand cellaring. Dried herbs, citrus, white flowers, and salty minerality give way to a medium to full-bodied, concentrated, backward Chardonnay that has awesome potential, yet needs another year of bottle age.

### **2015 LIA VIOGNIER**

**93 POINTS** The 2015 Viognier Lia (which is now called Wild Mountainside) is another beautiful Viognier. Tangerine oil, orange blossom, salty minerality, and spice give way to a rich, fat, opulent white that has good acidity, fabulous purity and a great finish. It develops more citrus and white flower notes with time in the glass and is a great Viognier.



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### **2016 TENCH VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

**95-97 POINTS** As with the 2015s, I think the 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Tench Vineyard will be the gem of the trio. Huge notes of blackberries, currants, crushed rocks, and graphite, as well as subtle tobacco leaf, all flow to a full-bodied, powerful Cabernet Sauvignon. With a stacked mid-palate, impressive tannin levels, and a great finish, it's going to demand 2-3 years of bottle age, but is a brilliant wine in the making.

### **2016 BALLARD VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

**94-96 POINTS** The 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Ballard Vineyard shows the more mountain/cooler terroir of Spring Mountain in its cassis, damp earth, currant bud, and floral aromas and flavors. Full-bodied, elegant, and seamless, with the purity of the 2016 vintage, it's another seriously good Bordeaux blend.

### **2016 METEOR VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

**93-95 POINTS** Tasted out of barrel, the 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon Meteor Vineyard looks to be a stunner. Tobacco leaf, piney/forest floor, spring flowers, and ample red and blue fruit characteristics all emerge from this ripe, concentrated, yet elegant 2016.

### **2016 GREYWACKE VINEYARD *EDDIE'S PATCH* SYRAH**

**96+ POINTS** From the Greywacke Vineyard (this is a new vineyard for this cuvée), the 2016 Syrah Greywacke Vineyard Eddie's Patch is reminiscent of a release from the Côte Brune side of Côte-Rôtie. Ample crushed rocks, smoked meats, ozone, pepper, and ripe black fruits give way to a full-bodied, seamless and elegant Syrah that continued to gain in stature and depth as it sat in the glass. Perfectly ripe, impeccably balance, and long, give it a year or two and enjoy over the following decade or more.

### **2016 DUMOL ESTATE VINEYARD SYRAH**

**97 POINTS** Even better, and a dead ringer for a top Cornas from the likes of Pierre-Marie Clape or Allemand, the 2016 Syrah Estate Vineyard comes from a tiny 1.5-acre vineyard on the Sonoma Coast. Meaty, peppery, bloody, and incredibly complex, with lots of black olive, cracked peppercorns, smoke, and ripe, dark Syrah fruit, it has building tannin, awesome mid-palate depth, and a remarkable purity, elegance, and balance about it that's going to keep it drinking beautifully for 10-15 years.

### **2016 WILD MOUNTAINSIDE SYRAH**

**95 POINTS** While the Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs get most of the love from this terrific estate, don't miss their Syrahs! The 2016 Syrah Wild Mountainside is a power-packed, deep, rich, concentrated beauty that offers sensational, northern Rhône-like notes of blackberries, white pepper, bacon fat, and wild scrub/sagebrush-like aromas and flavors. Medium to full-bodied, seamless, and perfectly balanced, it's a beautiful Russian River Valley Syrah that will keep for over a decade.

### **2016 WESTER REACH PINOT NOIR**

**92 POINTS** Leading off the Pinot Noirs, the 2016 Pinot Noir Wester Reach is one of the releases that only goes out to distribution and isn't offered on the mailing list. It's a textbook wine from this estate and is ideal for readers looking to understanding the style of this estate. Wild strawberry, violets, and forest floor aromas and flavors, medium body, light tannin, and a charming, layered, balanced style all make for a brilliant Russian River Pinot Noir to drink over the coming 4-5 years.



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### **2016 WIDDOES VINEYARD *RYAN* PINOT NOIR**

**93 POINTS** From the cooler Green Valley portion of the Russian River, the 2016 Pinot Noir Widdoes Vineyard shows the classic, balanced, yet sexy style of this vintage. Terrific black raspberries, blueberries, ground herbs, and floral notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, forward, textured 2016 that has good acidity and impeccable balance. It's going to keep for 10-12 years, although there's no need to delay gratification either.

### **2016 WILDROSE ESTATE PINOT NOIR**

**94 POINTS** The 2016 Pinot Noir Wildrose Vineyards comes from an estate parcel planted in 1999. It saw one-third whole clusters in the fermentation and was brought up in a mix of new and used French oak. Lots of savory red fruits, wood smoke, forest floor, and meaty notes give way to a medium-bodied, elegant, layered Pinot Noir that has loads to love. It's one of the more complex wines in the lineup.

### **2016 JOY ROAD VINEYARD PINOT NOIR**

**91 POINTS** From a high density 2004 planting in the Sonoma Coast on pure sand soils, the 2016 Pinot Noir Joy Road Vineyards is rounded, seamless, and incredibly charming, even at this young age. Light red fruits, pomegranate, violets, and wild strawberry notes flow to a medium-bodied 2016 that has outstanding length and balance. Drink it over the coming 5-6 years.

### **2016 HIGHLAND DIVIDE PINOT NOIR**

**93 POINTS** The 2016 Pinot Noir Highland Divide shows a savory style to the Russian River with lots of dried herb and darker berry fruit aromas. It's medium-bodied, seamless, and silky, with a beautiful forest floor/sous bois-like character developing with time in the glass. It too should drink beautifully for at least 4-5 years.

### **2016 DUMOL ESTATE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR**

**94 POINTS** A selection from the estate vineyard in the Russian River Valley (this cuvee represents roughly 24% of the total from vineyard), the 2016 Pinot Noir Estate Vineyard is a mix of mostly Calera clones, with a little bit of the Swan clone. Like all the wines here, it was brought up in a mix of new and neutral French oak. Black cherries, currants, smoked earth, dried herbs, and some savory, herbal, meaty notes all emerge from this medium to full-bodied, concentrated, yet seamless and beautifully textured Pinot Noir. It's one of the gems in the lineup, yet these are all impressive Pinot Noirs worth your time and money.

### **2016 FINN PINOT NOIR**

**97 POINTS** Unquestionably the top wine, as well as one of the top handful of wines in the vintage, the 2016 Pinot Noir Finn is, as always, a blend of the Estate (55%) and Occidental Roads (45%) vineyards. It has a huge attack, a big, full, deep mid-palate, building tannin, and extraordinary notes of red currants, underbrush, leafy herbs, and sous bois. With lots of concentration, lots of acidity, and lots of tannins, it's an awesome effort that needs to be forgotten for 3-5 years and enjoyed over the following decade. Hats off to winemaker Andy Smith for this blockbuster effort.

### **2016 WESTER REACH CHARDONNAY**

**93 POINTS** Moving to the Chardonnays, the 2016 Chardonnay Wester Reach comes from a site in the Russian River, yet is further west, toward the Sonoma Coast. Medium-bodied, vibrant, and elegant, with juicy acidity and notes of white flower, citrus blossom, tangerine and subtle minerality, it's an incredibly elegant wine that builds nicely with time in the glass.



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### **2016 HIGHLAND DIVIDE CHARDONNAY**

**93 POINTS** From two vineyards spanning between 300 and 800 feet in elevation, the 2016 Chardonnay Highland Divide is from the Mount Eden and Hyde Wente clones and was brought up mostly in neutral barrels. It's another clean, pure, elegant wine from Andy that has notable concentration, notes of tangerine, lemon peel, floral and cream notes, medium body, and beautiful purity.

### **2016 CHARLES HEINTZ VINEYARD ISOBEL CHARDONNAY**

**96 POINTS** From cooler, foggy site just east of Occidental, on the edge of the Green Valley portion of the Russian River, the 2016 Chardonnay Charles Heintz comes from 35-year-old vines, was barrel fermented and aged, and bottled unfined. This deeper, richer, more powerful Chardonnay boasts sensational notes of honeyed orchard fruits, brioche, and salty minerality. With integrated acidity, a big, rich mid-palate and a great finish, it's a quintessential Sonoma Coast Chardonnay to drink over the coming decade or more.

### **2016 DUMOL ESTATE VINEYARD CHARDONNAY**

**95+ POINTS** From a high-density planting on the Sonoma Coast, the 2016 Chardonnay Estate Vineyard is one of the more reductive, closed, backward wines in the lineup. Crushed rocks, white flowers, citrus rind, and lemon notes, as well as a matchstick-like reductive character, flow to a deep, concentrated, beautifully pure Chardonnay that will benefit from 2-3 years of bottle age and keep for 10-15 years.

### **2016 LORENZO VINEYARD CHARDONNAY**

**94+ POINTS** I also loved the 2016 Chardonnay Lorenzo Vineyard, which comes from a 1974 planting of old Wente clones located just outside of Sebastopol. This cuvée comes from a slightly higher elevation, sandy portion of the vintage and offers beautiful minerality in its white flower, citrus blossom, mint, and lemon curd aromas and flavors. It's worth noting the 1996 Marcassin Chardonnay came from this site, and this 2016 is a beautiful, pure, seamless effort that has serious amounts of class.

### **2016 RITCHIE VINEYARD CHLOE CHARDONNAY**

**97 POINTS** The 2016 Chardonnay Ritchie Vineyard comes from one of the top terroirs in the Russian River, and Andy has been working with two parcels from this vineyard since 2001. David Ramey and Mark Aubert also source fruit from these same parcels. This crazy good effort is a match for a Grand Cru White Burgundy and has a reductive, complex, layered style as well as sensational minerality, spice, white flowers, and orchard Fruits. It needs 2-3 years of bottle age (I'm not sure bottles would last that long at my house) and will keep for 10-15 years.

### **2016 HYDE VINEYARD CHARDONNAY**

**98 POINTS** One of my favorites in the lineup was the 2016 Chardonnay Hyde Vineyard, which comes from 23-year-old vines planted in one of the reference point vineyards in Carneros. Lemon, apricot, spice, flower oils, and tangerine skin are just some of the nuances here, and it builds with time in the glass. Deep, awesomely concentrated, and structured, yet still seamless and weightless, give it a year or two, count yourself lucky, and enjoy bottles over the coming 10-15 years.

### **2016 WILD MOUNTAINSIDE VIOGNIER**

**94 POINTS** I was pretty much blown away by the 2016 Viognier Wild Mountainside, which is up with some of the best expressions of this variety coming out of the New World. Flower oil, pineapple, apricot and some tropical notes all flow from a deep, rich, concentrated Viognier that stays vibrant and fresh. It's a dead ringer for a Condrieu from the likes of Vernay or André Perret.