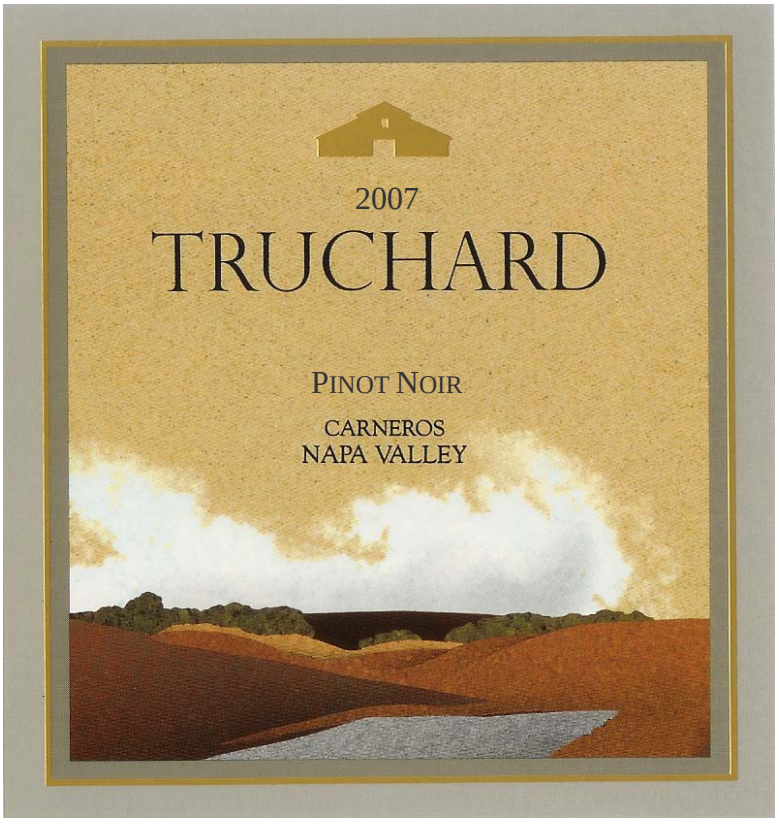
HoustonPress

Wine of the Week



2007 Pinot Noir named wine of the week

Wine Time

Wine of the Week: Truchard 2007 Carneros Pinot Noir

The Texas connection to the Truchard Winery in Napa Valley hits close to home: Back in the late nineteenth century, the Truchard family settled in Cat Spring, Texas, just west of Houston. And the Truchards just might have been the first Europeans to try to make wine in the Lone Star State when they planted vineyards on their farm.

But the Truchards found that the Texas humidity made it difficult to raise fruit for wines like those that they remembered from their home in Beaujolais, France (overabundant moisture makes it nearly impossible to control rot in mildew on the vines).

The Truchards ultimately became truck farmers, growing a variety of crops -- but not grapes.

It would take three generations before winemaker and current patriarch Tony Truchard would fulfill his family's dream of producing fine wine.

After years of successful practice as a medical doctor, he was able to purchase property in the Carneros subzone of Napa Valley, where shallow clay-rich soils and the proximity to the ocean are ideal for the production of clean, fresh, balanced wines with great aging potential. That was back in 1973, long before the California wine boom exploded.

Today, the Truchards are considered one of the top growers in California, with 75 percent of their fruit going to other wineries, the remaining 25 percent reserved for the production of their exclusively estate-grown wines. The 2007 Carneros Pinot Noir by Truchard is fresh and clean on the nose and rewards the food lover with the classic bright acidity that makes wines raised in Carneros stand apart from the crowd.

At just $11 by the glass at Backstreet Café, this wine is a favorite of sommelier Sean Beck, who likes to pair it with the crispy pan-seared duck. You'll also find it for under $30 at Spec's, where some of the 2005 is also still available -- a great value for Pinot Noir from one of California's top growers and winemakers.