

# Rave: Calera de Villiers Pinot Noir

*(Love being able to depend on a winery!)*

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**AUGUST 11, 2010**

As I've mentioned, I've been tasting my way through a slew of under-\$20 California Merlots, and frankly, it's been painful.

Here's how my evenings have tended to go: open a couple of the Merlot bottles, taste, spit, pour down drain. Then reach for a really nice red — either from my own stock or another sample — to essentially renew my faith in wine. I've put quite a dent in my good bottle collection this way, by the by... (Though I have managed to find a handful of standout Merlot values — more about those soon.)



The other night, I reached for a new single vineyard bottling from Calera — **one of my favorite California producers** — the Pinot Noir de Villiers Mt. Harlan. I just love it when my faith in something is rewarded...

**Calera 2007 Pinot Noir Mt. Harlan de Villiers** (\$35). Offers bright, effusive aromas and flavors that include **rich black cherry and deep plum**, waves of chocolate and an array of warm spices, picking up **touches of mineral**, sweet smoke and vanilla through the youthful, fruity finish.  **Tempting now but should age nicely**, 5-8 years.