

# purely domestic wine report

DOUG WILDER :: INDEPENDENT WINE REVIEW OF CALIFORNIA, OREGON AND WASHINGTON

DOUG WILDER, PUBLISHER OF PURELY DOMESTIC WINE REPORT ANNOUNCES:  
**2011 WINEMAKER OF THE YEAR - LUC MORLET.**

Napa Valley - Over the last ten years or so I have recognized producers who I regard as 'best in class' by naming them my **Winemaker of the Year**. I look at everything within my area of focus to identify winemakers who deserve that recognition and bring them to your attention. Names like **Abe Schoener 05, Kenneth Juhasz, 06, Russell From 07, Mark Herold 04, Celia Welch 08,09 and Morgan Twain-Peterson 10** have been recognized in the past years.

The determination for WMOTY is based on my impressions of the wines they have produced 'as a body of work' in that year and is far from scientific, or precise and sometimes hangs on one or two wines. However in 2011, the answer was pretty much carved in stone at 11:30 PM on September 29th, when I crawled into my car on a foggy, wind-whipped night after tasting for eight hours atop Spring Mountain, completely in awe of what I experienced with Luc Morlet, Val Bure and Wesley Steffens. My drive down the serpentine St. Helena Road was dead quiet except for the sound of the tires on the road.

My wife had stayed up wanting to know where I had been all night. It was the first chance I had to go through the pages of my reviews and list off the ratings of Vineyard 7&8, Bure, and Morlet. **Never before have I experienced the enormous talent of a single winemaker in making such a diverse portfolio of wines;** Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc blends, Syrah, Proprietary whites, Red Bordeaux Blends and one more thing, a Sémillon Late Harvest. She would have preferred that I sit next to her on the couch to discuss this, but deep inside I felt compelled to stand as this is what the wines deserved. I began by reciting the ratings in order: 96, 95, 92, 92, 96, 97, 93, 93, 92, 99, 99, 97, 95, 94, 100, 97+, 92, 100. The reviews for these wines appeared in issue one of purely domestic wine report.

**About Luc Morlet:** In 1993, he made his first visit to California to work in wine from his family home in the Champagne region of France, returning permanently in 1996 making his mark at Newton, Peter Michael, and Staglin. In 2006, Luc and his wife Jodie launched Morlet Family Vineyards with a debut release of La Proportion Dorée, a mesmerizing blend of Sémillon, Sauvignon Blanc and Muscadelle. The year it was released, I short-listed Morlet as a winemaker to watch.

*To watch a video of the announcement, click on the link to [www.pdwr.co](http://www.pdwr.co) on the News & Reviews section of the Morlet Family Vineyards website.*

Doug Wilder – pdwr, December 17, 2011