A small boat made by a family friend floats on the home's Monet-style pond.

View from the VINEYARD

A traditional French country home graces the Domaine Margelle Vineyards near Silverton

By ***Margaret Foley*** ■ Photography ***Steve Tague***

Marci and Steve Taylor often finish a day's work by taking an evening stroll along the red rock walls that define Domaine Margelle to inspect the vineyard.

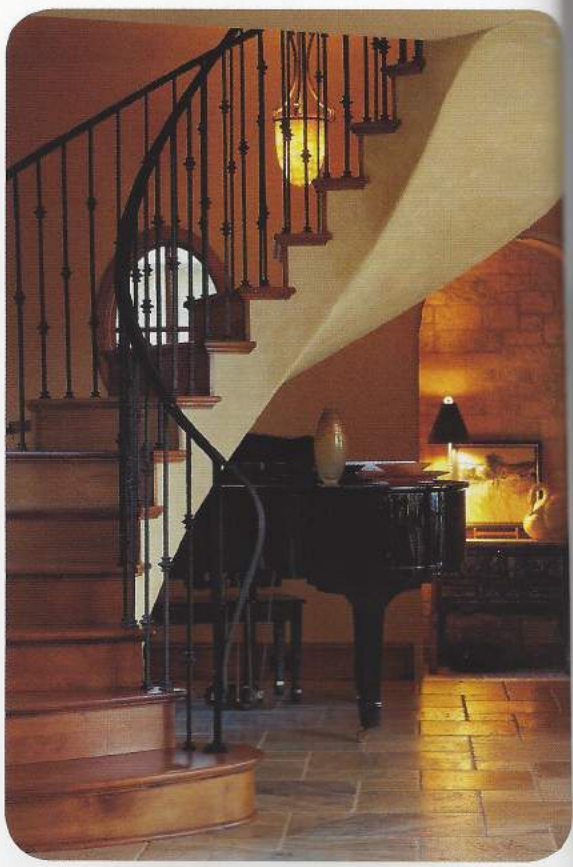
As you drive up a curving road lined with fir trees that ends at a home with a tower, you could be forgiven for thinking you were transported to France. The home of Marci and Steve Taylor, who own Domaine Margelle Vineyards near Silverton, was designed to look like a traditional French country house. "Growing up, I was always interested in France," says Marci. "I was lucky to travel there with a French friend, and she introduced me to the warmth and friendliness of her family and friends, and I wanted the home to reflect that."

The Taylors bought the 130-acre property, which overlooks vineyards and the distant Coast Range, in 2005. Its 50 acres of vines were originally grown as a commodity crop, and they began by reworking the property. "We worked every Sunday for two years hacking blackberries, building walls and sculpting the forests," says Steve.

To plan the property, the Taylors worked

RIGHT: The curved staircase by Portland woodworker Jim Davenport creates an alcove for the grand piano.

BELOW: A sculpture made from one of the vineyard's grapevine roots stands below a favorite painting.



A large fireplace anchors the great room. The fleur-de-lis on the fireplace mantel, which contains the damper, is from Rejuvenation.

A Juliet-style window and balcony railing create visual interest above the dining area.

The home is faithful to the architecture of the Dordogne. "We had a French winemaker visit," Marci says. "When he walked into the house he said he felt as if he'd driven up the hill from Portland and somehow entered France."

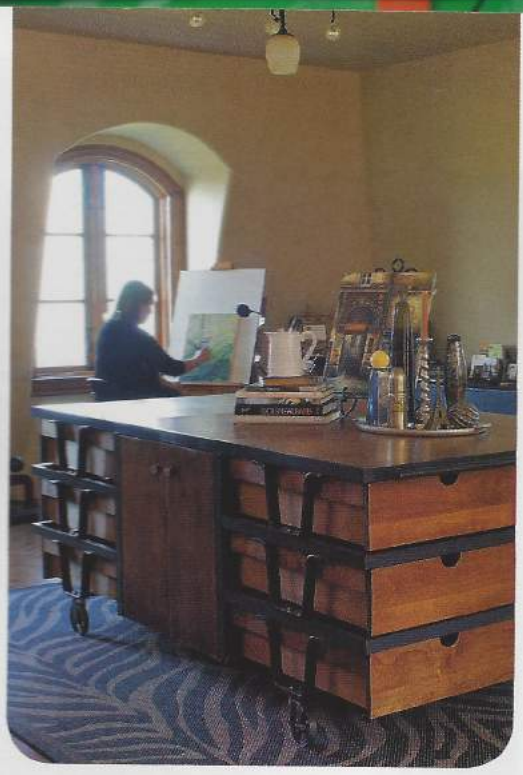
with creative consultant Nick Thomas of Nick Thomas Design in Portland, who oversaw the project and also fabricated the home and vineyard's metalwork. "The property is orchestrated so that there are discoverable destinations, such as the manoir, the cottage, the barn and the landscape visible from the house," says Thomas. "The property and its paths are designed to lead you places."

Domaine Margelle Vineyards takes its name, which translates as Stone Wall Estate, from the long red walls built from excavated rocks. Jose Martinez, a gardener who had worked for the Taylors at their Portland residence, built the walls. "Jose told me he could build rock walls, so he brought his whole family out one Saturday and built a section of wall to show us," says Marci. "The wall around the vineyard is officially known as the Martinez Family Wall."

To design the home, the Taylors hired Seattle-based architect Tom Kuniholm. As Francophiles, they wanted the home to reflect the architecture of their favorite region, the Dordogne, with its slate roofs, yellow limestone and protective, decorative metalwork. "I had traveled in that region, and they showed me their Dordogne photos, which gave me a real sense of the style they wanted," says Kuniholm. "I was excited about doing an organic, rustic home that looked as if it had come together over time, and that worked into the landscape's contours."

ABOVE: Marci tastes a Domaine Margelle pinot noir at the kitchen island.

RIGHT: The knobs of the Lacanche range complement the kitchen's tones.



An art studio gives Marci a quiet, well-lighted place to paint. The large art table holds supplies, including a collection of rubber stamps.

Siting the house was a crucial decision. "Marci and I spent a year working on sight lines, deciding how to connect the house with the property," says Steve. "People advised us to build the house on top of the hill, but it needed to settle into the property. Leaving some hill beyond it settled the house into the land."

The home's irregular roofline reflects traditional French country homes and the fact that they were often added onto over the years. The limestone from Utah has the same yellow shades as the limestone found in the Dordogne. The home spreads horizontally to take advantage of the landscape. "We wanted it to look like one of those places that had been added onto, so that played into the fact that I wanted everybody

A covered eating area allows the Taylors to enjoy the outdoors year-round. "I like all the home's outdoor areas," Marci says. "You can wander around and find the place you want to sit."

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RIGHT: "I love my home's staircases," Marci says. "The amount of craftsmanship in them is incredible."

BELOW: From above, this staircase leading to the wine cellar resembles a teardrop. "When the architect drew this teardrop on the plan, I was so excited," she says. "It's beautiful."

The wine cellar's open design ensures that the wine bottles are a major visual element of the space.

A favorite dining spot provides unimpeded views. "This place has the rolling hills we love in France and Italy," Steve says. "We fell in love with that and the old-crop vineyard."

to have a view," Marci says. "My house is long and skinny because we wanted everybody to be able to see the views."

Completed in 2008, the 5,600-square-foot, four-bedroom, and six-bathroom house functions as a private home as well as a business and a public space for tastings and special events. Its design allows it to accommodate groups but still remain private.

The front door opens onto a foyer with a grand piano, a spiral staircase to an upper gallery and steps to a great room. The room is anchored on one side by a custom fireplace created in the living area by Portland artist Ron Wagner, and by the kitchen on the other. The sculptural hood over the Lacanche range was also built by Wagner, and the two pieces help unify the space. The room has floor-to-ceiling views and opens onto a series of terraces. In the back, a copper-framed bay window with a small table and chairs creates a quiet area. "It's one of my favorite spots," says Marci. "You can sit here in the morning with your coffee or in the evening with your wine and be drawn into the view."

A teardrop-shaped staircase off the kitchen leads to a vaulted basement hallway opening to the wine cellar. Unlike many wine cellars, the Taylors' cellar does not have heavy casework to store the wine. Instead, thin metal frames designed by Thomas provide a transparency that exposes the bottles and their colors. A tall, narrow table with a glass top allows visitors to easily engage with each other, and a collection of some of the Taylors' favorite bottles under the glass tabletop provides topics for conversation. "Those are meaningful

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The Taylors relax in the cozy, copper-lined bay window, which creates a counterpoint to the openness of the great room.

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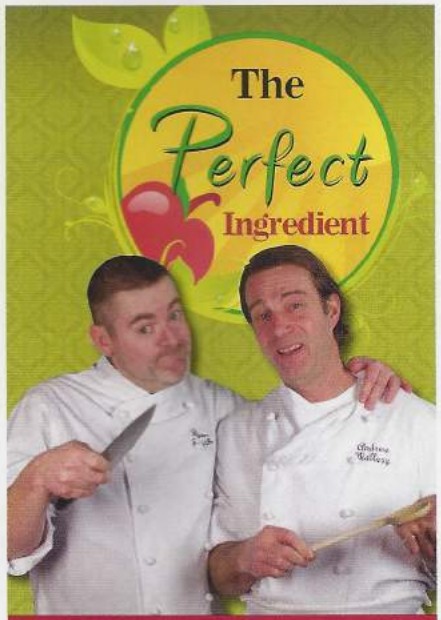

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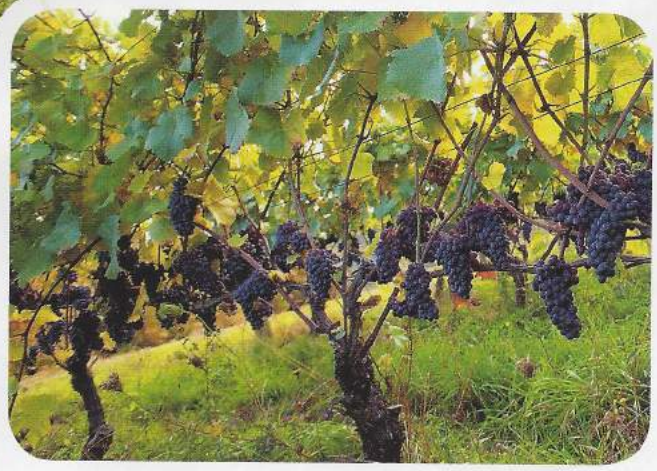
The vineyard's stunning and varied landscape makes it a popular wedding venue. The Domaine Margelle grapevines range from five to 25 years old.



signature bottles," says Marci. "It could be a wine we enjoyed, remind us of a place we liked or tell some other story. For example, I can look down and see a wine from the year I got married."

Operating the vineyard has taken the Taylors' lives in a different direction and created a family business where their adult daughters, Megan and Brianna, can be involved. The Taylors knew nothing about growing grapes or making wine when they purchased the vineyard, but they have learned on the job, from other winemakers and by taking classes at Chemeketa Community College, which has a vineyard management and winemaking program. The vineyard's grapes are sold to another winemaker, and the Taylors buy back what's needed to bottle their own pinot gris and pinot noir.

Part of the impetus for building the vineyard and the home was to create something tangible. "There's the amount of work that it takes to manage all this, and then there's this magic that makes it work and gives it a long-term vision that will last beyond us," says Steve. "We're winding up, not down. Try something that seems impossible when you've turned 60, and it will give you something interesting to do for the next 25 years."

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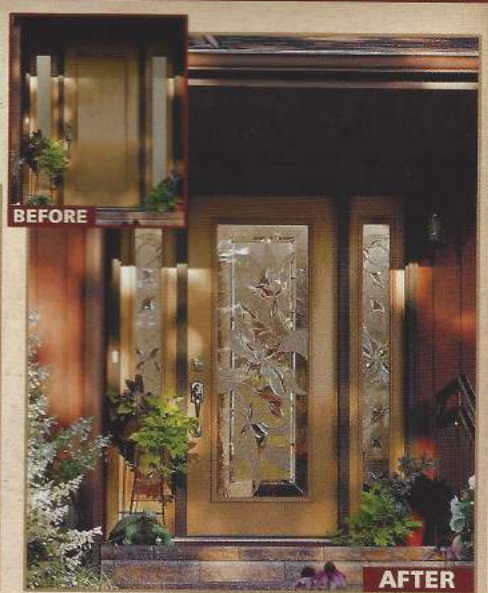

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