

2009 Sojourn Cellars Pinot Noir, Gap's Crown Vineyard

RATING: 93 DRINK: 2011-2019

An up-and-coming hillside vineyard seen more and more in Sonoma is the Gap's Crown Vineyard on the Sonoma Coast. The 2009 Pinot Noir Gap's Crown Vineyard, made from some whole clusters, is one of the deeper, more saturated ruby-colored Pinot Noirs from Sojourn. Very Burgundian, with deep raspberry, forest floor, and black cherry fruit as well as hints of earth and mineral, there is a sense of spring flowers as well in this complex, deep, rich, full-bodied Pinot Noir, which is stunning. It has loads of black and red fruits, and to me is the most complex of the Pinot Noirs in the Sojourn Cellars portfolio. It is also a blend of the more modern clones, 113, 114 and 828. Already drinking well, with lots of complexity, it should continue to do so for 7-8 more years.

2009 Sojourn Cellars Pinot Noir, Wohler Vineyard

RATING: 92+ DRINK: 2011-2017

The 2009 Pinot Noir Wohler Vineyard is from another site planted with Dijon clones 115, 667, 828, and treated similarly (50% new French oak, bottled unfinned and unfiltered.). It has a slightly darker hue to its ruby color, more raspberry, boysenberry and darker fruits, and slightly more restrained aromatics. It kicks into gear in the mouth, with a slightly fuller, richer, more structured and denser mouthfeel than the Russian River. This is an example of a less silky and less seductive style, but one with more power, muscle, richness and length. It should drink well for 5-6 years and is a beautifully made, pure Pinot.

2009 Sojourn Cellars Pinot Noir, Rodgers Creek Vineyard

RATING: 92 DRINK: 2011-2021

The seventh Pinot Noir, the 2009 Pinot Noir Rodgers Creek (which sits on a high ridge of the Petaluma Windgap) is made from Dijon clone 777. Attractive underbrush and forest/moss notes intermingle with cherry and spice box. The complex aromatics of this dark plum/ruby wine are very Burgundian. The sweetness of fruit, an inner core of depth and richness, as well as the vibrancy and medium to full-bodied mouthfeel result in a complex, intense wine to drink over the next 7-10 years.

2009 Sojourn Cellars Pinot Noir, Sangiaco Vineyard

RATING: 91+ DRINK: 2011-2017

From a well-known, even iconic site for Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, the 2009 Pinot Noir Sangiaco Vineyard comes from Dijon clones 115 and 777. The color is similar to the other Pinot Noirs, dark ruby with some lightening at the edge. With pure cherry and raspberry notes as well as hints of herbs and loamy soil, the wine is medium to full-bodied, not as open or expressive as his three previous offerings, but deep and impressively built, with outstanding concentration and flavor authority. It has crisp acidity and should drink nicely for at least 5-6 years. It could benefit from another 6 months of bottle age.

2009 Sojourn Cellars Pinot Noir, Ridgetop Vineyard

RATING: 90+ DRINK: -

More herbs, earth, underbrush and forest notes are present in the medium ruby-colored 2009 Pinot Noir Ridgetop Vineyard. This wine has crisp acids, shows more tartness than several of the other cuvees, and comes from an impeccable vineyard source, the Ridgetop Vineyard, managed by Thomas Brown and Fred Schrader, with Ulises Valdez working in the background as well. It is a very cool-climate, high-elevation site, and the wine is feminine and in need of more time to reveal its full personality. Everything is here, and I suspect plenty of complexity will emerge with another year of bottle age, but this was the most challenging Pinot to taste from Sojourn.

2009 Sojourn Cellars Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast

RATING: 90+ DRINK: 2011-2017

The 2009 Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast, which is a blend from two sites, Rodgers Creek and Keller Estate, is another wine made from the modern clones 115, 777, 667 as well as the older Pommard selection. More saffras/rootbeer notes intermixed with herbs, flowers and berry fruit make for a complex, cool-climate impression aromatically, and a good, fleshy, medium to full-bodied mouthfeel, with more spice and earthiness, jump from the glass. Winemaker Erich Bradley seems to have the Midas touch with the beautifully opulent, round and generous texture he builds into these wines without any sense of weightiness. Purity and nicely integrated wood, tannin and acidity are also admirable. This wine should drink well for 5-6 years.

2009 Sojourn Cellars Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley

RATING: 90 DRINK: 2011-2015

For starters, the enormous seductiveness of the 2009 Pinot Noir Russian River (from modern Dijon clones of 115 and 667 planted in the Sapphire Hill vineyard) has a medium to dark/ruby color and a gorgeous nose of sweet black cherries, spice box, flowers, and berry fruit. Medium to full-bodied lush, silky, with some hints of underbrush and loamy soil, this is a fleshy, opulent style of Pinot Noir to drink over the next 3-4 years.

2008 Sojourn Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon, Beckstoffer Vineyard Georges III

RATING: 93 DRINK: -

From the grand cru Beckstoffer Georges III Vineyard, the 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon has the biggest mouthfeel, with full-bodied, powerful creme de cassis notes intermixed with camphor, graphite, and Asian spice. Layered, thick, and rich, this wine showcases this extraordinary site beautifully. It should drink well for 15-20 years where well-stored.

2008 Sojourn Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon, Proprietary Cuveé

RATING: 92 DRINK: 2010-2025

The 2008 Proprietary Cuveé has lots of blackberry, mocha, toast, and white chocolate notes, full-bodied opulence, and impressive concentration, texture, and length. It is already drinkable and should continue to drink well for up to 15 or more years.

2009 Sojourn Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon, Spring Mountain District

RATING: 91 DRINK: 2010-2022

More blue fruits, boysenberry, and spring flowers are present in the 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Spring Mountain, which has excellent density and a slightly sweeter, more elegant style than the more muscular Howell Mountain. Of course, the tell-tale blue fruits dominate more than the red and black ones. This wine is drinkable now and should continue to offer intriguing consumption for another 10-12 years.

2008 Sojourn Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon, Home Ranch Vineyard

RATING: 90 DRINK: 2011-2021

The 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Home Ranch (100% Cabernet Sauvignon, aged in 40% new French oak and bottled unfiltered and unfiltered) is a forward, showy style of Cabernet Sauvignon. Silky tannins and loads of blackberry and black currant fruit intermixed with licorice, smoked game-like notes, velvety tannins, and attractive opulence are all present in this endearing, seductive, yet concentrated Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon. There is no reason to defer gratification with this dense ruby/purple-colored wine. Rich and delicious, it begs for a grilled slab of prime beef. Drink it over the next decade.

2008 Sojourn Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon, Howell Mountain

RATING: 90 DRINK: 2010-2025

The 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain exhibits an opaque ruby/purple color, notes of crushed rock, blueberry, and boysenberry, good structure, tannin, and a medium to full-bodied mouthfeel. This is an impressive wine. The tannins are sweet and not overwhelming, and the wine is both powerful and elegant. It should drink nicely for 10-15 years.