

# SOJOURN

## NEWSLETTER AND WINE OFFERING

FALL 2017

*"Life is but a Sojourn. Enjoy the best of it."—Plato*

### RAIN, RAIN, GO AWAY!

We are thrilled and thankful for the official end of the California drought ... and we are especially thankful that it has finally stopped raining. As we begin the Fall 2017 Release, we are gearing up for another spectacular harvest. The summer heat, paired with all the extra groundwater, has resulted in healthy, happy vines with sufficient canopies to allow slow ripening and complex flavor development.

Our 2015 West Sonoma Coast and Russian River Valley Pinot noir wines headline the Fall Release, complemented by two stellar Sonoma Coast Chardonnays from the storied Gap's Crown and Durell Vineyards. The hidden gems in the release are our 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon wines from Napa Valley: the robust Proprietary Cuvée and fabulous Oakville appellation wine. We are extremely proud of this line-up. Each of our Fall Release wines has received scores of 90 points and higher from *Wine Spectator*, Robert Parker's *Wine Advocate*, *Wine Enthusiast* or *PinotFile*.

The Sojourn Cellars **2015 Riddle, Ridgetop and Wohler Vineyard Pinot noir wines lead the ratings parade with scores of 94 points each**; they are all forward and drinking great right now. Yields were lower in 2015, so there is just not that much wine to go around. We encourage you to get these wines early to ensure availability. Next up is the 2015 Reuling Vineyard Pinot noir, comprised of a rare mix of Burgundy suitcase clones. This unique combination has made the vineyard and resulting wines icons of the Sonoma Coast appellation. The fifth and final Pinot noir this time around is the 2015 Russian River Valley appellation wine – always a crowd-pleaser and a great value at \$42.

2015 is the fourth vintage for Sojourn's Durell Vineyard Chardonnay, and it is a spectacular wine, full-bodied, complex and impressive. 2015 is the second release for our Gap's Crown Vineyard Chardonnay, sourced from the same highly acclaimed vineyard as our Gap's Crown Vineyard Pinot noir. The inaugural 2014 vintage of this wine sold out very quickly, and allocations are small again for the 2015 vintage.



The Sojourn Cellars 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon wines exceeded our expectations with this outstanding vintage. Our 2014 Proprietary Cuvée is a guilty pleasure blend of Beckstoffer Vineyard Georges III fruit from the valley floor in Rutherford and the incredible texture and structure of Oakville Ranch Vineyard hillside fruit. This wine is a true impress-your-friends dinner party wine. Rounding out the wine offerings in this release is our 2014 Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon. It has a full-bodied, velvety texture and is smooth as the day is long.

Great news for anyone planning to visit wine country in the coming months! We have recently completed a renovation of our Sojourn Cellars Tasting Salon in Sonoma, and we invite you to come experience our exclusive, sit-down comparative tasting. Cool tones of gray and blue, against a backdrop mural of the Gap's Crown Vineyard provide the perfect, relaxed setting to compare and contrast your favorite Sojourn wines. We hope to see you there soon!

*Erich Bradley*  
Erich Bradley  
Winemaker

*Craig Haserot*  
Craig Haserot  
Proprietor



## 2015 RIDDLE VINEYARD PINOT NOIR SONOMA COAST

Riddle vineyard is located in Green Valley near the town of Occidental in the rugged West Sonoma Coast. Situated high on a coastal ridge with a gentle slope, this vineyard overlooks many of the iconic Pinot noir vineyards of the region.

This compelling wine showcases the signature Sojourn smooth texture, balanced by ample structure for length and longevity. Its foundation is the distinctive Mt. Eden clone, which was taken as original bud wood from a prominent vineyard planted along California's Central Coast. It provides intriguing bramble berry fruit flavors and silky tannins. Clones 115 and Pommard add layers of red fruit and earth to build complexity and balance. Rusty Gaffney (*PinotFile*) writes the wine has, "admirable elegance, with opulent fruit."

Rated 94 Points

## 2015 RIDGETOP VINEYARD PINOT NOIR SONOMA COAST

Ridgetop Vineyard is owned by Fred Schrader and Thomas Rivers Brown and is located in the remote coastal mountains along the northern Sonoma Coast near Annapolis. Ulises Valdez tends to the vineyard diligently, and the resulting wines showcase his high-quality farming as well as this unique vineyard site.

2015 brought miniscule yields with tiny clusters. This wine offers explosive aromas of red and tropical fruits and burnt orange overlaying a bold strength and complexity at its core. The texture is rich and supple. It is a pleasure to drink! The vineyard is located high above the Pacific where ocean breezes are ever present and the vines struggle, resulting in concentrated flavors, provocative aromatics, and silky texture.

Rated 94 Points

## 2015 REULING VINEYARD PINOT NOIR SONOMA COAST

Reuling is an iconic vineyard located between Graton and Forestville. We are thrilled to produce wine from such a distinctive terroir. It is planted to three unique clones: Calera, and two special "suitcase" clones from the Vosne-Romanée region of Burgundy. Mark Aubert helped develop the vineyard and produced highly rated Reuling Pinot noir for ten years. The rare mix of Burgundy suitcase clones distinguishes the site.

This Pinot noir is impressive, with complex aromas of earth and forest floor that open up to dark cherry, mushroom and truffle notes that are unusual and intriguing for a California Pinot noir. According to winemaker Erich Bradley, "It really pushes the savory aspects...it's Pinot noir as I like it."

Rated 93 Points

## PURCHASING OUR WINES

The best way to acquire our wines is to purchase them directly from the winery. You will find our secure online ordering system at [www.sojourncellars.com](http://www.sojourncellars.com).

We also welcome orders via phone, fax and snail mail using the personalized order form included with this newsletter. To ensure fulfillment of your allocation, please log in or return your order form as soon as possible. If you would like additional bottles, please fill in the "Wish List Requests" column, and we will do our best to accommodate your requests.



## 2015 DURELL VINEYARD CHARDONNAY SONOMA COAST

Durell Vineyard has been the source behind some of the most sought-after Chardonnay wines, and we feel fortunate to work with two outstanding vineyard blocks that combine to make something special. Our 100% Old Wente clone Chardonnay was harvested at night and pressed to extract only the highest quality juice.

We fermented in French oak barrels to produce an expansive wine that illustrates the balance and exceptional character of the vintage. Rusty Gaffney of *PinotFile* writes that the wine is, "Nicely perfumed with aromas of lemon, apple, spice, vanilla creme, brioche and nuts. The palate is infused with citrus, but also pear and apple flavors with a hint of oak. A solid wine that is not too rich or lean, with a smooth but not creamy mouthfeel and some finishing verve."

Rated 93 Points

## 2015 GAP'S CROWN VINEYARD CHARDONNAY SONOMA COAST

As our most mineral-driven Chardonnay, this wine possesses layers of depth and nuance. The Price Family Vineyards team farms Gap's Crown to the highest standards of quality and with exacting precision. We source Chardonnay grapes from two distinct blocks within the vineyard, each providing key elements of the final blend. Clusters are typically small and dense.

Zesty aromas of citrus, flint, and floral notes lead to flavors of stone fruit. The texture is smooth and persistent. This Chardonnay will appeal to both Francophiles and New World Chardonnay fans alike. According to Robert Parker, this wine is "medium-bodied, the palate is still quite tightly-knit with a wonderful concentration of spicy apple and stone fruit superbly supported by great tension. Drink now through 2025."

Rated 93 Points



## 2015 WOHLER VINEYARD PINOT NOIR RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

Our original Russian River Valley Pinot noir from Wohler Vineyard has become a classic. Pinot noir clones 667 and 828 form the foundation, providing a rich, lush core. A touch of Wädenswil 2A clone adds focus and earthy aromatics. The 2015 blend resulted in a wine that Rusty Gaffney described as, "an array of pleasing aromas ... including black cherry, cola and spice. Noticeably sappy on the palate, with opulent flavors of spiced Bing cherry, purple berries, mocha, and cola."

Wohler Vineyard is located at the junction of Wohler Road and Eastside Road just minutes from the iconic vineyards that originally established the Russian River Valley as a world-class growing region for Pinot noir.

**Rated 94 Points**

## 2015 RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY PINOT NOIR

Our 2015 Russian River Valley Pinot noir is a blend of three vineyards. Wohler and Riddle vineyards make up the majority, and in 2015 we included components from the famed Pratt Vineyard located in the Freestone Hills. Pratt provides additional layers of dark fruit and notes of forest floor, in addition to depth and structure on the palate. It balances out the red fruit profile and lush texture from Wohler and Riddle.

The resulting blend has a firm, balanced structure and multiple layers of red and dark fruit, earth and floral notes. This Pinot noir exudes intriguing aromatics that lead to a lush, silky texture. It has medium-ruby color and is drinking exceptionally well right now.

**Rated 91 Points**

## 2014 PROPRIETARY CUVÉE CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY

Proprietary Cuvée is our optimal blend of Cabernet Sauvignon from renowned Napa Valley vineyards. We produce a Proprietary Cuvée only in vintages when we can create a blend of exceptional quality and aging potential. This wine showcases two exclusive vineyards – famed Vineyard Georges III in Rutherford and the hillside Oakville Ranch Vineyard.

The resulting wine shows gorgeous red and dark fruit aromas that lead to flavors of dark cherry, earth and mouth-watering chocolate. Savor it now or sock it away for years to come. In the words of Robert Parker, "full-bodied, concentrated and voluptuous, it fills the mouth with generous ripe black fruits, supported by firm, grainy tannins and finishing long."

**Rated 93 Points**

## 2014 OAKVILLE CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY

This wine was made primarily from grapes grown at Oakville Ranch Vineyard, located in the hills among famous Cabernet neighbors Dalla Valle, Pedregal and Backus vineyards. The lauded 2014 vintage provided ideal weather conditions for the grapes to ripen optimally under the care of esteemed organic viticulturist Phil Coturri. This wine spent nearly four weeks fermenting on skins to ensure that the tannins and fruit flavors were balanced. The resulting wine is rich and vibrant, offering vivid flavors of blackberry, raspberry and mocha, with hints of graphite.

Oakville Ranch Vineyard sits at 1400 feet overlooking Napa Valley. The sprinkling of clay over volcanic rocks, high elevation and western exposure produce a unique terroir that results in powerful, rich, structured wines.

**Rated 92 Points**

## THE ART OF BLENDING

Blending is at the heart of many famous wines of the world, notably the great blends of Bordeaux, Champagne, and Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Flavor nuances, aromatic complexities, and layers of texture can be woven into a wine through blending to represent the style and vision of the artist. For this reason, many winemakers liken their work in the cellar to that of a chef in a Michelin restaurant.

Most Sojourn wines are designed to represent a single vineyard and vintage. Blending individual components is still at play, but is secondary to the inherent characteristics of the vineyard site. In contrast, masterful blending is on display in the Sojourn Proprietary Cuvée. With this extraordinary wine, Erich and his team have the artistic freedom to create something remarkable, even exceeding the potential of the vintage through synergies and artful decision making.

The Proprietary Cuvée is designed to represent the best of Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon, and our 2014 cuvée is a testament to this endeavor. It is bold, yet lush; elegant, yet robust, with complexities that showcase the synergies of bold Oakville hillsides and the rich Rutherford Dust of valley floor soils. Our blending method starts with planning our vineyard sourcing, purposeful use of oak barrels from specific forests and toasting levels, and keeping individual blocks and small fermentation lots separate to retain blending options. The process culminates with thoughtful blending trials where we evaluate how individual barrels from multiple distinctive lots come together to create an exceptional wine with textural layers and complexities that match our high expectations of these extraordinary Napa Valley vineyard sites. We are thrilled to offer this wine and hope you enjoy the results of our blending process.

A Votre Santé!







## VISIT US IN SONOMA!

Sojourn Cellars has completed a four-month renovation of our popular Sonoma Square Tasting Salon. Enhancements include new wine country chic furniture and a wall mural that gives guests the feeling that they are tasting wine right in the middle of Gap's Crown Vineyard.

"The configuration of our Tasting Salon has always been akin to welcoming visitors into our home," notes Sojourn proprietor Craig Haserot. "With our recent renovations, the salon is now more emblematic of the superior quality of our wines, and it allows us to create even more gracious and memorable guest experiences."

We are also pleased to welcome our new Director of Hospitality, Amanda Murphy. Amanda comes to us from the Napa Valley side of wine country, where her vast knowledge and experience will be a huge asset to the Sojourn Cellars Tasting Salon and team. Please join us in welcoming Amanda!

## CONTACT US

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## WOHLER VINEYARD SPOTLIGHT

Russian River Valley is a region rich in history. Grape growing and winemaking are integral to the story of the land and its past. The valley is named for the first non-natives to settle in Sonoma County. The Russians, who settled along the Sonoma coast at historic Fort Ross from 1812 to 1841, left a significant impact on the area. By 1876 viticulture was well established in the Russian River Valley.

Fast-forward to the current era and ever since the 1970s, the Russian River Valley has been synonymous with high-quality Pinot Noir—decades before the grape became fashionable. Often quite cool and fog-enshrouded, the Russian River Valley commonly sees 40-degree temperature changes in a single day.

Developed in 2006, Wohler Vineyard in Forestville sits in the heart of the famed Russian River Valley within sight of the Russian River and historic Wohler Bridge. The combination of climate and Goldridge soils provides an environment classically situated for the growing of ultra-premium Pinot noir. Sojourn sources fruit from four distinct blocks within the vineyard: Dijon 667 and 828 clones come from the highest

elevation and best-draining blocks on the property, while 115 and Wädenswil 2A are planted in cooler, lower locations.

This vineyard produces wines on par with the best that the Russian River Valley has to offer. Sojourn has produced a single vineyard bottling from Wohler since 2009. Pinot noirs from this vineyard possesses a rich, lush core, with focus and balanced acidity that opens up to earthy aromatics and flavors. There is a brightness to this wine that differentiates it from the others in the Fall Release line up.

