

# PinotFile

The First Wine Newsletter Exclusively Devoted to Pinotphiles

*"If You Drink  
No Noir  
You Pinot Noir!"*

## *Sojourn Cellars: Pull Up a Lawn Chair*

"It is a common saying, and in everybody's mouth, that life is but a sojourn." Plato

Craig Haserot and Erich Bradley are two friends who first met on the tennis courts of Sonoma and decided to launch a partnership to produce artisanal wines. Using the meaning of sojourn as a rest or respite, they started Sojourn Cellars, appropriately displaying a lawn chair on the label. They are one of the few wineries in California to specialize in both Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon. Since their first vintage of Pinot Noir in 2004, they have steadily increased production of vineyard-designate wines and in 2010 will be releasing six Pinot Noirs along with three Cabernet Sauvignons.

Erich Bradley is a native Californian from the San Francisco Peninsula who became intrigued by wine when his family bought a 26-acre ranch in Sonoma County's Valley of the Moon complete with an 8.5-acre vineyard and a 500 case winery. As part of the sale, the Bradleys were taught winemaking. Erich later studied winemaking at University of California at Davis and viticulture at Santa Rosa Junior College and was mentored by winemakers Richard Arrowood of Arrowood Vineyards & Winery and David Ramey of Ramey Wine Cellars. In 2003, Erich became the winemaker for Audelssa Estate, a winery at Mountain Terraces Vineyard in Sonoma Valley, where he still makes wine today. He produces a Mountain Terraces Cabernet Sauvignon for both Audelssa Estate Winery and Sojourn Cellars. In 2007, he became winemaker for Hop Kiln and HK Generations wines. Erich's wines have garnered widespread acclaim among both the press and consumers.

Craig Haserot is the man behind sales, management and promotion of the Sojourn Cellars label. He is an ex-computer software salesperson who decided to move to Sonoma County after the crash and pursue a new career. He began playing tennis at Maxwell Farms Regional Park where he struck up a friendship with Erich Bradley. Both had a passion for wine, especially Pinot Noir, and soon they were talking about launching a winery together. Erich was only interested in making wine and Craig had the background in sales and marketing. They started in 2001 with the release of 150 cases of

Sonoma Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and by 2004 they added Pinot Noir to their production lineup. The 2004 Sangiacomo Vineyard Pinot Noir was well received at the same time that the movie 'Sideways' was grabbing popularity and sales of Sojourn Pinot Noir took off.

In late 2008, Craig engineered the opening of a unique Tasting Salon, just off the square in the town of Sonoma at 141 East Napa Street. Guests are invited for a personal 45 minute seated tasting of Sojourn wines conduction by the winemaking staff, or Craig or his wife Ellen. I know Craig and if he is available, he is certain to grab your attention with his smile and enthusiasm. There is no charge for tastings, and the Salon can receive up to 12 guests. Reservations are available at 707-938-7212.

Craig and Ellen Haserot have adopted a yellow Labrador retriever named Ziggy that has been trained to detect 2,4,6- trichloroanisole (TCA) or cork taint. She spent several months in training with Steve Sullivan who supplies products to the wine industry. The dog can detect TCA in oak in amounts as small as four parts per trillion! The dog has worked part time for Stavin closures using her nose to detect TCA. She also likes to chase tennis balls.

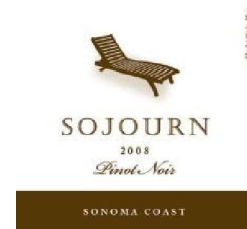


The 2008 lineup of Sojourn Cellars Pinot Noirs is very impressive. Intense sorting is practiced both in the field and in the winery. Whole berry (100% de-stemmed) native fermentations are carried out in small open-top fermenters with punch downs by hand. The must is gently basket pressed and the Pinot Noirs are raised in 50% new French oak barrels. The wines are bottled unfinned and unfiltered. I recently sampled three of the 2008 releases and was enticed by the generous aromatics.

### [2008 Sojourn Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir](#)



14.3% alc., pH 3.72, 550 cases, \$39. A blend from several vineyards in the Sonoma Coast AVA including the Fedrick Vineyard, Windsor Oaks Vineyard and Sangiacomo Vineyard. All Dijon clones (115, 667, 777). · Very lovely scents of black raspberries, cassis and underbrush. A strikingly smooth and easy going wine featuring the redder spectrum of Pinot fruits including strawberries and raspberries with a hint of sassafras. The tannins are very supple and the whole package is perfectly harmonious. I could sip this one all night. The wine faded a bit the next day from an opened and re-corked bottle so drink this one up now.



## 2008 Sojourn Gap's Crown Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir

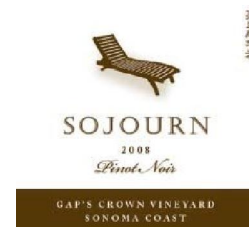
14.7% alc., pH 3.63, 440 cases, \$48. This vineyard is located on Roberts Road just above the Sangiacomo Vineyard on the west-facing slopes of Sonoma Mountain in the Petaluma Gap. • Nuanced aromatics featuring notes of spiced plums, pine pitch, wooded forest and a little good funk. Intense and concentrated darker fruits are set off by a hint of white pepper and oak. Very smoothly textured with a pleasing fruity persistence on the finish. Not as expressive now as the other 2008 Sojourn wines and needs to shed some tannin. This wine has a way to go before it completely reveals itself. That said, the wine possesses obvious potential. Very good.



## 2008 Sojourn Sangiacomo Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir



14.5% alc., pH 3.66, 580 cases, \$48. This vineyard is located at the western base of Sonoma Mountain. Clones 115 and 777 are from blocks that are more than ten years old. • Plenty of Pinot singing here beginning with enticing aromas of mixed berry jam and spice box including cardamon. Delicious rainbow of berry fruits discreetly concentrated and beautifully layered. Silky smooth in the mouth with remarkable persistence on the aromatic finish. The fruit is pulled into perfect alignment with fine acidity and tannin and the oak adds just the right nuances. Heaven sent.



A fourth Pinot Noir was released in the 2008 vintage from Rodgers Creek Vineyard in the Sonoma Coast. Sojourn Cellars wines are largely sold through a mailing list with some retail distribution. Visit the website at [www.sojourncellars.com](http://www.sojourncellars.com).