

SCORE: 94

2015 Sojourn Cellars

Riddle Vineyard, Sonoma Coast, Pinot Noir

14.4% alc., 350 cases, \$59. This vineyard is located in the cool Green Valley of Russian River Valley near the town of Occidental. Planted in 2008 at high density of 3.5' x 6' in Goldridge soils. Clones 115, "828," Pommard and Mt. Eden taken as original bud wood from a prominent vineyard planted along California's Central Coast. 100% de-stemmed, open-top native yeast fermentation, aged in French oak barrels, 50% new. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Moderate garnet color in the glass. Shy, but seductive aromas of darker cherries and berries, spice and floral intricacy. Well-structured with a mid weight core of forest-tinged purple berry fruits. Admirable elegance, with opulent fruit and that appealing West Sonoma Coast savoriness. Beautifully composed, with a fat and lifted finish.

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Ridgetop Vineyard, Sonoma Coast, Pinot Noir

14.4% alc., 200 cases, \$59. This is one of those secluded West Sonoma Coast vineyards that is very hard to get to. It is owned and managed by Thomas Rivers Brown and Fred Schrader with Ulises Valdez caring for the vineyard. It is surrounded by redwood trees at 1,100 feet elevation. This unique site, located near Annapolis, is rather tropical. Yields are miniscule with concentrated flavors as vines struggle to grow in Goldridge loam soil and remnants of ancient seabed. Clones 115, 667 and 777 were fermented separately. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Soaring aromas of dark red cherry and berry with a compliment of spice and sous-bois. Exotic and foresty in the mouth, with engaging flavors of purple berries, pomegranate, blueberry and pine needle. Gentle in demeanor, with well integrated oak, and a juicy, persistent finish. Even better when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle showing loads of enchanting black cherry, purple berry and spice flavors. This is a unique wine with character.

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Reuling Vineyard, Sonoma Coast, Pinot Noir

14.4% alc., 325 cases, \$69. This vineyard was planted in 2000 under the direction of Mark Aubert and Peter Michael Winery and is composed of 12.2 acres of Pinot Noir planted to Calera and two distinct "suitcase" selections reportedly from the Vosne-Romanee region of Burgundy. 100% de-stemmed, native yeast fermentation in open-tops, aged in French oak barrels, 50% new. Bottled unfiltered and unfiltered.

Moderately light garnet color in the glass. Aromas of black raspberry, game and earth come to the forefront. Flavors of black raspberry, boysenberry, and black cherry are complimented by a riff of graphite and forest floor. Silky in the mouth, with balanced ripe fruit tannins, deft oak in the background, and a noticeably long finish. Even better when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.

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Wohler Vineyard, Russian River Valley, Pinot Noir

14.2% alc., 600 cases, \$48. This vineyard, located in Forestville, was replanted in 2006. This wine is sourced from five distinct blocks planted to clones 667, "828," 115, 777 and 2A. Clones were vinified separately. 100% de-stemmed. Open-top fermentation with native yeasts, aged in French oak barrels, 50% new. Bottled unfinned and unfiltered.

Moderate garnet color in the glass. An array of pleasing aromas arrive in the glass, including black cherry, cola and spice. Noticeably sappy on the palate, with opulent flavors of spiced Bing cherry, purple berries, mocha, and cola. Very polished despite its richness, with modest tannins and a cherry-fueled finish. Still inviting when tasted the following day from a previously opened and re-corked bottle.

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2015 Sojourn Cellars

Durell Vineyard, Sonoma Coast, Chardonnay

14.3% alc., 450 cases, \$48. Cleaned-up Wente selections. Whole cluster pressed, fermented with native yeast and aged in French oak barrels, 40% new. 100% malolactic fermentation. Bottled unfinned.

Light golden yellow color in the glass. 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 too lean, with a smooth but not creamy mouthfeel and some finishing verve.