

7 Vibrant California Pinots and Chardonnays

New reviews of whites and reds from Sonoma, Monterey and beyond



Photo by: Courtesy of Sojourn Cellars

Rodgers Creek Vineyard, from which Sojourn makes a single-vineyard Pinot Noir, sits at 300 feet above sea level between Sonoma and Petaluma.

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Tasting Highlights' wine reviews are fresh out of the tasting room, offering a sneak peek of our editors' most recent scores and notes to WineSpectator.com members.

California's prime Chardonnay and Pinot Noir winegrowing territory is located along the coast, where the chilly waters of the Pacific Ocean generate breezes and fog that push inland, creating cool growing conditions that lend vibrancy to the wines. Today's selection of widely available wines is representative of the different styles you can find, with some solid values to boot.

The Sonoma Coast is a sprawling appellation that encompasses nearly half of Sonoma County, including the new wind-swept Petaluma Gap appellation, home to **Sojourn's** rich Pinot Noir. Co-founders Craig Haserot and Erich Bradley tap top vineyards throughout Sonoma for their Pinots and Chardonnays. Farther north of Petaluma, **De Loach's** mineral version hails from the cool Russian River Valley.

The Chalk Hill appellation, named for its chalk-colored volcanic-ash soil, is known for Chardonnay, like **Chalk Hill** winery's structured version. **Reata's** Sonoma Coast bottling offers good bang for the buck, as does the Pinot from **Hahn** in Monterey County.

SOJOURN Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Rodgers Creek Vineyard 2017
Score: 92 / \$48

Voluptuous, with plenty of rich, toasty notes to the red fruit and spice flavors, featuring accents of cola nut and sandalwood. Hints of chocolate show on the creamy finish. Drink now through 2023. 1,025 cases made.—*Kim Marcus*

CHALK HILL Chardonnay Chalk Hill 2016 **Score: 91 / \$42**

There is good cut to the green apple, Asian pear and persimmon flavors of this white, which is savory midpalate, with a taut finish that features light buttery notes. Drink now through 2022. 14,000 cases made.—*K.M.*

THE CALLING Chardonnay Sonoma Coast 2017 **Score: 90 / \$32**

Green apple and lemongrass flavors give this a vibrant allure. Crisp midpalate, with hints of tangerine on the finish. Drink now through 2022. 4,612 cases made.—*K.M.*

DE LOACH Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2016 **Score: 90 / \$25**

Concentrated accents of slate and graphite flank the dried cherry and currant flavors in this red. The creamy finish offers sandalwood and spice notes. Drink now through 2022. 11,832 cases made.—*K.M.*

SBRAGIA FAMILY Chardonnay Dry Creek Valley Home Ranch 2017
Score: 89 / \$30

Offers aromas of peaches and cream, with flavors to match, as well as apple tart and baked pear notes. Fruity and spicy on the finish. Drink now through 2021. 3,700 cases made.—*K.M.*

REATA Chardonnay Sonoma Coast 2017 **Score: 88 / \$20**

Savory notes accent the ripe apple and citrus flavors. Flint and shiso leaf hints emerge on the finish. Drink now through 2022. 5,000 cases made.—*K.M.*

HAHN Pinot Noir Monterey County 2017 **Score: 87 / \$15**

Spicy, almost peppery, with some cedary undercurrents to the macerated red fruit flavors. Crisp finish. Drink now. 120,000 cases made.—*K.M.*