
TASTING HIGHLIGHTS

8 California Pinots for the Holiday Table

New reviews of go-to reds for your end-of-year dinner parties



Wrath specializes in Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Syrah, and Sauvignon Blanc from Monterey. (Chris Leschinsky)



By Aaron Romano

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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.

While last week we made a compelling case for [Chardonnay as an excellent wine choice for Thanksgiving](#)

[\[https://www.winespectator.com/webfeature/show/id/7-Thanksgiving-Chardonnay-Wines-57227\]](https://www.winespectator.com/webfeature/show/id/7-Thanksgiving-Chardonnay-Wines-57227), the food-friendly and

versatile Pinot Noir should also be on your shopping list for all your upcoming holiday and end-of-year dinner celebrations.

Pinot's generous fruit profile, soft tannins and fresh acidity are a great match for the myriad turkey trimmings and other dishes that will grace your table this season. Even the most staunchly particular wine drinkers won't turn their nose up at a glass of one of these eight Pinot picks from California.

DAVID BRUCE Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2016

Score: 91 | \$50

This lengthens out nicely, featuring a mix of dried berry and cherry flavors that are flanked by robust savory and spice notes. Firmly structured, with a taut finish that offers graphite hints. Drink now through 2022. 5,000 cases made.—*Kim Marcus*

SCHERRER Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2013

Score: 91 | \$48

Vibrant and suave, offering juicy red currant, raspberry and rooibos tea flavors that feature hints of cream. Pastry notes show on the finish, with medium-grained tannins. Drink now through 2022. 1,080 cases made.—*K.M.*

WRATH Pinot Noir Monterey 115/667 2016 Score: 91 | \$35

Firm acidity supports a rich array of dried date, cherry and raspberry flavors that are finely textured. Hints of cocoa powder show on the decadently spiced finish. Drink now through 2023. 427 cases made.—*K.M.*

BUENA VISTA Pinot Noir Carneros 2016 Score: 90 | \$25

Finely structured and delicate, with bright minerality to the dried cherry and berry flavors. Peppery hints show on the rich finish. Drink now through 2020. 6,337 cases made.—*K.M.*

GEHRICKE Pinot Noir Los Carneros 2015 Score: 90 | \$32

Plush, with creamy richness to the dark cherry and plum tart flavors. Chocolate and Asian spice notes fill the finish. Drink now through 2021. 2,026 cases made.—*K.M.*

SEAN MINOR Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2016 Score: 89 | \$22

Focused, with fresh-tasting cherry, currant and mulled berry

flavors that are supported by sinewy acidity. Hot stone notes show on the finish. Drink now through 2021. 5,000 cases made.—*K.M.*

CASTLE ROCK Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Reserve 2017

Score: 88 | \$18

Rich and well-spiced, with creamy accents to the brambly red fruit flavors. The open-textured finish features tea and cola notes. Drink now. 4,508 cases made.—*K.M.*

KENWOOD Pinot Noir Sonoma County 2016 Score: 87 | \$16

Juicy, with creamy and toasty notes to the dried cherry and roasted plum flavors. Mocha hints show on the finish. Drink now. 40,000 cases made.—*K.M.*