

## James Laube's Recommended California Pinot Noirs

Nearly 750 wines were reviewed for this report. A free alphabetical list is available at [www.winespectator.com/093014](http://www.winespectator.com/093014). WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.

### TOP WINES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>MARCASSIN Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast</b> Marcassin Vineyard 2009 Amazingly seductive, from the aromas of smoky, toasty, creamy oak to the richer mix of wild berry and raspberry fruit.	97	\$125
<b>KOSTA BROWNE Pinot Noir California 4-Barrel 2012</b> Rich, showing spice box, creamy oak and red and dark berry flavors, with mocha, espresso, vanilla and cedar on the finish.	94	\$84
<b>MARCASSIN Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast</b> Blue-Slide Ridge Vineyard 2009 Pure, rich and graceful, this brims with complex red berry, blueberry, raspberry, cinnamon and spice notes, gaining on the finish.	94	\$90
<b>W.H. SMITH WINES Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast</b> Marimar Estate Vineyard 2010 Well-crafted, deep, intense and layered, with tiers of mocha-laced blueberry, raspberry, licorice and subtle nutmeg notes.	94	\$48
<b>A.P. VIN Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands</b> Rosella's Vineyard 2012 A rich and full-blown version, with dense, expressive dark berry, mocha, toasty oak and spicy, peppery notes.	93	\$52
<b>DE LOACH Pinot Noir Mendocino County Masút Vineyard</b> Vineyard Designate 2010 Beautifully crafted, rich, smooth and supple, with a pretty array of rich black cherry, plum and raspberry fruit.	93	\$45
<b>EMERITUS Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Hallberg Ranch 2011</b> Impressive, offering richness, vibrancy and subtle charm, with snappy blackberry, red berry, spice, sage and underbrush notes.	93	\$42
<b>GARY FARRELL Pinot Noir Russian River Valley</b> Stiling Vineyard 2011 A rich and layered Pinot, with black cherry, plum, raspberry and floral notes. Shows impressive density, weight and balance.	93	\$50
<b>FOXEN Pinot Noir Santa Maria Valley Julia's Vineyard 2012</b> Offers pure, rich layers of wild berry, raspberry and berry jam that fan out gracefully, ending with a chorus of berry notes.	93	\$64
<b>KOSTA BROWNE Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast</b> Kanzler Vineyard 2012 Focused on a rich core of dark berry, raspberry and savory dried herb notes, this gains depth and dimension midpalate on.	93	\$84
<b>LORING Pinot Noir San Luis Obispo County</b> Aubaine Vineyard 2012 Pure and vibrant, with tiers of snappy wild berry, blueberry and boysenberry flavors. Gains richness and depth on the finish.	93	\$50
<b>MARCASSIN Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast</b> Three Sisters Vineyard 2009 Fragrant, with enticing anise, black licorice and red berry scents, this is firm, focused and vibrant on the palate.	93	\$75
<b>PETER MICHAEL Pinot Noir Fort Ross-Seaview</b> Le Caprice 2012 While tight and tannic, this slowly unfolds to reveal a more supple, graceful core of plum and wild berry fruit.	93	\$110
<b>ROAR Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands</b> Rosella's Vineyard 2012 Alluring, offering a mix of supple, graceful plum and blackberry flavors, with pretty floral scents. Harmonious and elegant.	93	\$52

### TOP WINES (continued)

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>SCHERRER Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Big Brother 2009</b> An expansive version, with cherry, Asian plum, wilted rose and black licorice notes. Gains depth, finesse and traction on the finish.	93	\$55
<b>SIDURI Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands</b> Rosella's Vineyard 2012 Rich and harmonious, brimming with fresh, vibrant raspberry, blackberry and boysenberry flavors. Beautifully balanced.	93	\$49
<b>VISION CELLARS Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands</b> Las Alturas Vineyard 2011 Deep, rich and layered, with tiers of red and black fruit, highlighted by raspberry, blueberry and boysenberry flavors.	93	\$48
<b>CASTLE ROCK Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Reserve 2012</b> Firm and ripe, with plum and berry flavors that are intense and pure.	90	\$18
<b>CHERRY PIE Pinot Noir Sonoma-Monterey-Santa Barbara Counties Cherry Tart 2012</b> Rich and approachable, with berry, cherry and plum flavors.	90	\$25
<b>PALI WINE CO. Pinot Noir Santa Barbara County</b> Huntington 2012 Floral and spicy, with dark berry, mocha, roasted herb and earth notes.	90	\$23
<b>DE LOACH Pinot Noir Central Coast 2012</b> Firm and rich on the palate, this version is lightly aromatic.	89	\$20
<b>PALI WINE CO. Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Bluffs 2012</b> An appealing red, offering a mix of red and dark berry fruit.	89	\$23
<b>ACACIA Pinot Noir Carneros 2012</b> An open, direct wine, with ripe, snappy plum and raspberry flavors.	88	\$24
<b>CASTLE ROCK Pinot Noir Mendocino County 2012</b> Shows dried herb and forest floor notes, with dried red berry flavors.	88	\$13
<b>HESS SELECT Pinot Noir Central Coast 2012</b> Offers red and dark berry, creamy oak, spice and fresh-turned earth.	88	\$20
<b>LULI Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands 2012</b> Intense and tannic, with dense, extracted dark berry fruit.	88	\$20
<b>MEIOMI Pinot Noir Monterey-Santa Barbara-Sonoma Counties 2012</b> Bold, ripe, vibrant and complex, with expressive berry flavors.	88	\$22
<b>SANTA BARBARA WINERY Pinot Noir</b> Santa Barbara County 2012 Intense, tight and young, with vibrant berry and floral scents.	88	\$18
<b>SEBASTIANI Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2012</b> Offers flavors of bay leaf, dried herb, tea, berry and baking spices.	88	\$19
<b>BONTERRA Pinot Noir Mendocino County 2012</b> Offers a complex mix of flavors, centered on blueberry and blackberry.	87	\$16
<b>BRIDLEWOOD Pinot Noir Monterey County 2012</b> Fresh and snappy, with vibrant blackberry and wild berry fruit.	87	\$18
<b>CASTLE ROCK Pinot Noir California California Cuvée 2012</b> Presents dried berry, crushed rock, rhubarb and wild strawberry notes.	86	\$11

### TOP VALUES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>CASTLE ROCK Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Reserve 2012</b> Firm and ripe, with plum and berry flavors that are intense and pure.	90	\$18
<b>CHERRY PIE Pinot Noir Sonoma-Monterey-Santa Barbara Counties Cherry Tart 2012</b> Rich and approachable, with berry, cherry and plum flavors.	90	\$25
<b>PALI WINE CO. Pinot Noir Santa Barbara County</b> Huntington 2012 Floral and spicy, with dark berry, mocha, roasted herb and earth notes.	90	\$23
<b>DE LOACH Pinot Noir Central Coast 2012</b> Firm and rich on the palate, this version is lightly aromatic.	89	\$20
<b>PALI WINE CO. Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Bluffs 2012</b> An appealing red, offering a mix of red and dark berry fruit.	89	\$23
<b>ACACIA Pinot Noir Carneros 2012</b> An open, direct wine, with ripe, snappy plum and raspberry flavors.	88	\$24
<b>CASTLE ROCK Pinot Noir Mendocino County 2012</b> Shows dried herb and forest floor notes, with dried red berry flavors.	88	\$13
<b>HESS SELECT Pinot Noir Central Coast 2012</b> Offers red and dark berry, creamy oak, spice and fresh-turned earth.	88	\$20
<b>LULI Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands 2012</b> Intense and tannic, with dense, extracted dark berry fruit.	88	\$20
<b>MEIOMI Pinot Noir Monterey-Santa Barbara-Sonoma Counties 2012</b> Bold, ripe, vibrant and complex, with expressive berry flavors.	88	\$22
<b>SANTA BARBARA WINERY Pinot Noir</b> Santa Barbara County 2012 Intense, tight and young, with vibrant berry and floral scents.	88	\$18
<b>SEBASTIANI Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2012</b> Offers flavors of bay leaf, dried herb, tea, berry and baking spices.	88	\$19
<b>BONTERRA Pinot Noir Mendocino County 2012</b> Offers a complex mix of flavors, centered on blueberry and blackberry.	87	\$16
<b>BRIDLEWOOD Pinot Noir Monterey County 2012</b> Fresh and snappy, with vibrant blackberry and wild berry fruit.	87	\$18
<b>CASTLE ROCK Pinot Noir California California Cuvée 2012</b> Presents dried berry, crushed rock, rhubarb and wild strawberry notes.	86	\$11

