

## 2021 Ernest Vineyards Pinot Noir Cleary Ranch

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A medium ruby hue, the 2021 Pinot Noir Cleary Ranch is a bit more high-toned, with floral, elegantly woven layers of fresh cinnamon, roses, raspberry, and crushed stones. Medium-bodied, with good tension, fine tannins, and crunchy acidity, it delivers citrus-driven notes of pomegranate, dusty earth, and orange peel. Superbly balanced and linear, this will improve as it unfolds over the next 10-15 years. Drink 2025-2035.

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*As a West Sonoma Coast Vintners association member, Ernest Vineyards is based out of the Freestone-Occidental area and was founded in 2012 by Erin Brooks and Todd Gottula. In 2017, they established their custom crush facility called Grand Cru, across the street from DuMOL. The wines for this report were tasted in Sonoma with winemaker Joseph Ryan, who joined the team in 2018. Over the past few years of tasting these wines, I have become more impressed with the direction of this estate. Initially, I was drawn to their crisp, Burgundian-inspired whites, especially the refreshing, herbal-tinged Aligoté, which I considered an outstanding and versatile value for the wine list when I was a wine director in New York. Looking at the 2021 vintage, the bar has been raised across the board, and I highly encourage readers to seek out these wines, which retain a vibrant sense of place. Their Chardonnay and Pinot Noir offerings are certainly deserving of more attention and worthy of cellaring.*

**- Audrey Frick (7/21/2023)**

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