

# Wine Spectator

## TASTING HIGHLIGHTS

### 8 Exceptional 2023 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noirs at 91+ Points

Sonoma County's marquee Pinot Noir region shines in the 2023 vintage, with outstanding-rated reds



Sangiacomo Vineyard is a prime source for many Sonoma Pinot Noir producers, including Sojourn, and often yields exciting results. (Stevan Nordstrom)

■ Jun 16, 2025

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

The **Sonoma Coast AVA** begins on the shores of the Pacific Ocean and moves inland, even overlapping other appellations such as the Russian River Valley, Petaluma Gap, and Los Carneros. This week's **Tasting Highlights** covers the outstanding **Pinot Noir** quality from the 2023 vintage on the Sonoma Coast, which saw cool spring and summer temperatures lengthen the ripening period, allowing for fresh and concentrated wines.

Friends Craig Haserot and Erich Bradley began **Sojourn Cellars** in 2001 with a small batch of Cabernet Sauvignon. The winery has since grown to produce 21 different wines, including several single-vineyard Pinot Noirs. However, this Sonoma Coast Pinot bottling is blended from eight lots sourced from throughout the Sonoma Coast. The resulting wine has much to offer: fresh raspberry and boysenberry fruit, dried anise and rose hip notes.

**Merryvale** owns four vineyards in Napa Valley and is better known for making **Cabernet Sauvignon** and **Chardonnay**. The winery purchases grapes for this Pinot Noir from two terrific vineyards on the Sonoma Coast: Sunchase and Durell. Both sites are at the western base of Sonoma Mountain, north of Petaluma, catching cool westerly breezes at elevations above the fog line, giving the grapes extra sunlight without sunburn. Winemaker Jeff Crawford makes a stylish Pinot Noir with raspberry and blood orange flavors.

Sean and Nicole Minor founded **Sean Minor Wines** in 2005 to make affordable, high-quality wines. Their elegant Signature Series Pinot Noir, which shows strawberry puree and cherry preserve flavors, is the lowest-priced wine in this Tasting Highlight at \$28, a significant feat in a category where single-vineyard bottlings can often fetch \$100.

## New Reviews of 2023 Pinots from the Sonoma Coast



### ASTON

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2023

Score: 93 | \$45

**WS review:** Distinctive, slightly high-pitched aromas and flavors of loganberry and cherry compote lead the way, along with apple wood, iris and sassafras elements that help fuel the juicy, almost gutsy finish. Sleek acidity harnesses it all, though; there's just some brief cellaring needed to let this unwind. Best from 2026 through 2033. 780 cases made.—*James Molesworth*



## FAILLA

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2023

Score: 93 | \$36

**WS review:** This is suave, with a mulled edge to its raspberry, damson plum and blood orange notes, which sparkle with savory and rose hip details. Finishes with light-handed echoes of sandalwood and *sous-bois*. Drink now through 2030. 9,480 cases made.—*J.M.*



## MERRYVALE

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2023

Score: 93 | \$48

**WS review:** Stylish and focused, with a steady beam of raspberry and blood orange pâte de fruit supported by red tea, wood spice and sassafras hints. The finish is juicy but restrained. Drink now through 2031. 1,540 cases made.—*J.M.*



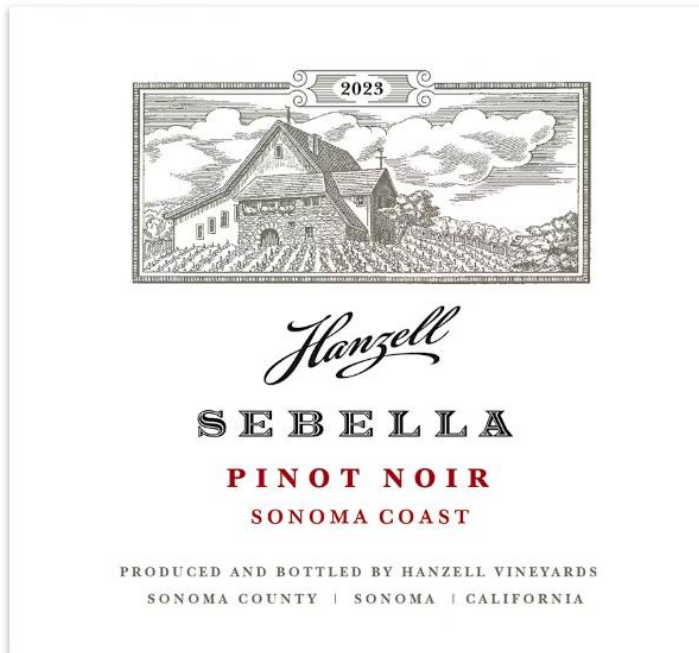
## SOJOURN

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2023

Score: 93 | \$48

**WS review:** Leads off with a fresh, juicy burst of raspberry and boysenberry fruit that cruises through, pulling in dried anise and rose hip notes along the way. A lightly singed balsam wood frame holds the finish. Drink now through 2031. 2,550 cases made.—*J.M.*



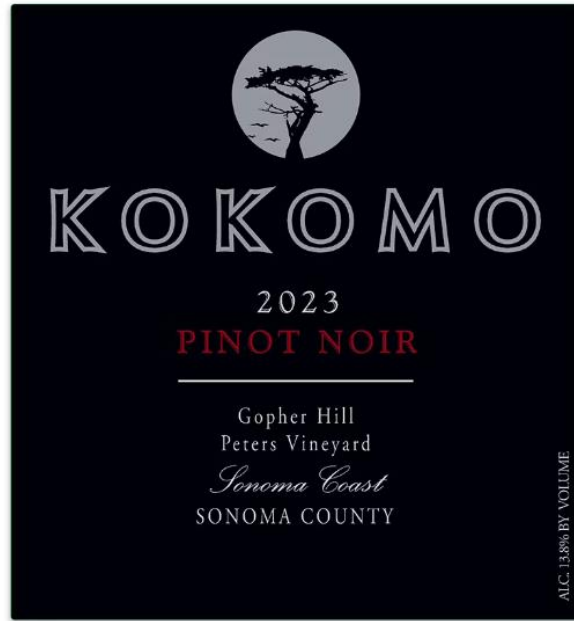


## HANZELL

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Sebella 2023

Score: 92 | \$45

**WS review:** Shows mouthwatering cut right from the get-go, with an intense core of bitter cherry, damson plum and pomegranate that works nicely with the subtle, chalky minerality. There's a potpourri echo through the taut finish. A lovely example of the minerally style. Drink now through 2031. 2,375 cases made.—*J.M.*



## KOKOMO

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Gopher Hill Peters Vineyard 2023

Score: 92 | \$48

**WS review:** Offers a succulent burst of blood orange, damson plum and morello cherry compote flavors laced with rose petal, sandalwood and red tea notes through the caressing finish. Delicious. Drink now through 2030. 800 cases made. —J.M.



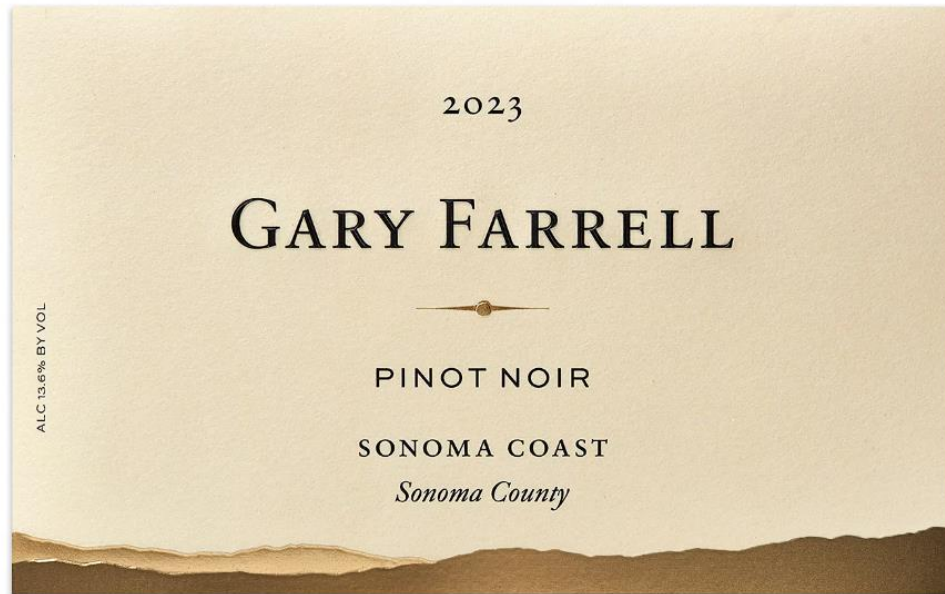


## SEAN MINOR

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Signature Series 2023

Score: 92 | \$28

**WS review:** Elegant in style, with notes of gently warmed strawberry puree, cherry preserves and red licorice infused with rose hip and sandalwood on the charming finish. Drink now through 2027. 3,000 cases made.—*J.M.*



## GARY FARRELL

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2023

Score: 91 | \$50

**WS review:** Punchy and fresh, with delicious morello cherry and raspberry notes followed by hibiscus and rose petal details that give this lift on the finish. Drink now through 2027. 2,860 cases made.—*J.M.*

## What Do Sonoma Coast Pinot Noirs Taste Like?

The vast Sonoma Coast appellation covers more than 500,000 acres, and wine styles vary depending on the vineyards' location. Wines from cool, windy sites nearer to the Pacific Ocean tend to have a bracing profile with well-defined acidity. Sites that are warmer or less influenced by coastal breezes often contribute a punchier fruit profile to the wines. As we see with the 2023 vintage, wineries offer many impressive and diverse versions of Pinot Noir, a grape known for being particularly expressive of its *terroir*.

In addition to the wines highlighted above, this week's list includes several Sonoma Coast bottlings from notable Pinot Noir producers and vineyards, including picks from [Aston](#), [Failla](#), [Hanzell](#), [Kokomo](#) and [Gary Farrell](#). Even better, several of these producers offer excellent values for the category, making wines of fantastic quality at prices under \$50. Continue your exploration and get our score and tasting notes for more [recently rated Sonoma Coast Pinot Noirs](#)!