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## TASTING HIGHLIGHTS

# 10 Diverse Sonoma Wines Up to 90 Points

New reviews of Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon and more from leading Northern California appellations



Dry Creek Vineyard has 185 vineyard acres in Sonoma's Dry Creek Valley, including Endeavour Vineyard, a source of Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. (Courtesy of Dry Creek Vineyard)



By April Louis

Aug 8, 2022

*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.*

From foggy, coastal vineyards terrific for growing Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, to inland valleys and mountains ideal for Cabernet Sauvignon, Sonoma is home to a variety of distinctive climates and wines. This week's selection reflects that diversity, highlighting impressive white, rosé and red wines from throughout the region, several priced \$30 or less.

[Crossbarn](https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Crossbarn) [<https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Crossbarn>], from [trendsetting winemaker Paul Hobbs](https://www.winespectator.com/articles/legends-of-california-chardonnay-073122) [<https://www.winespectator.com/articles/legends-of-california-chardonnay-073122>], produces a range of attractively priced wines, including the Cabernet Sauvignon below, one of this week's top scorers. Using grapes from the Alexander Valley and Moon Mountain [AVAs](#) [[https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/american\\_viticultural\\_area\\_%28ava%28](https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/american_viticultural_area_%28ava%28)], it delivers energetic dark fruit notes with anise and spice accents. Beyond Cabernet, you can look to [CR Graybehl](https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=CR+Graybehl) [<https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=CR+Graybehl>]'s Grenache with raspberry, sassafras and smoked pepper notes. Hailing from Dry Creek Valley, it was fermented [whole cluster](https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/whole_cluster) [[https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/whole\\_cluster](https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/whole_cluster)] with [native yeasts](https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/native_yeast) [[https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/native\\_yeast](https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/native_yeast)], adding to its structure and complexity.

Originating in France's Jura region, Trousseau may not be the best-known grape used in Sonoma, but it's definitely worth trying, especially if you love lighter-bodied reds. [Copaín](https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Copain) [<https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Copain>]'s Russian River Valley Trousseau is a great example with fresh red fruit and herb notes. It's also a delicious warm-weather red that can be [served lightly chilled](https://www.winespectator.com/articles/robert-camuto-chilled-reds-of-summer) [<https://www.winespectator.com/articles/robert-camuto-chilled-reds-of-summer>]. Speaking of chillable wines, [Pedroncelli](https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Pedroncelli) [<https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Pedroncelli>]'s rosé is a quaffable blush jammed with bright cherry and raspberry flavors. Winemaker Montse Reece uses Zinfandel for this pink, taking advantage of the grape's naturally high levels of refreshing acidity.

As for white wine, [Red Car](https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Red+Car) [<https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Red+Car>]'s Chardonnay blends grapes from the winery's estate vineyards, including two in the acclaimed Fort Ross-Seaview subappellation. Mere miles from the Pacific Ocean, the area's cool climate leads to



longer [hang times](https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/hang_time) [https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/hang\_time] and wines with dynamic acid profiles more akin to Chablis. In this case, the result is a juicy 2019 with apple, citrus and tangerine notes. For an even lighter white wine, look to [Lucky Rock](https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Lucky+Rock) [https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Lucky+Rock]'s Sauvignon Blanc. Alexander Valley grapes anchor this regional blend, resulting in vibrant herb, citrus and stone fruit notes. Even better, at just \$17, it's a fantastic value and a delicious option for summertime sipping.

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## CROSSBARN

Cabernet Sauvignon Sonoma County 2019

Score: 90 | \$45

**WS review:** Delivers a nicely energetic and enticing beam of crushed plum and boysenberry fruit that sparkles with anise and sweet spice notes. This is toasty on the finish, but the fruit wins out easily. Drink now through 2026. 16,421 cases made.  
—James Molesworth

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## SUSIE BYNUM

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2020

Score: 89 | \$25

**WS review:** Lightly steeped red and black cherry fruit shows a light zip of blood orange, with black tea and anise notes. This is a little woody along the edges, but there's good energy at the core. Drink now through 2026. 680 cases made.—*J.M.*

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