

11/27/12 California's Russian River Valley appellation, in Sonoma County, is an excellent source of Pinot Noir.

Wine Spectator

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8 Exciting Sonoma Pinots

New reviews of Russian River Valley Pinot Noirs from the 2010 vintage

2010 ended up as a great vintage for California Pinot Noir, even though it had some challenges for vintners. The year was marked by frosts, poor fruit set, cool weather and low yields, and there were heat spikes and rain at harvest. A warm summer saved the vintage, and areas like Sonoma County's Russian River Valley did particularly well, where the heat was offset by coastal proximity and cool nights, which added complexity and silky tannins. This week's picks celebrate some of the terrific wines that are a result of all of those elements—**an exciting list of 2010 Russian River Valley Pinot Noirs from well-known Pinot producers.**

SMALL VINES Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2010 *Score: 91* | \$55

Weaves a complex mix of ripe cherry, huckleberry, crushed rock and dried berry, gaining depth and length on the long, detailed finish. Drink now through 2021. 263 cases made. —*J.L.*

DUTTON-GOLDFIELD Pinot Noir Green Valley of Russian River Valley Fox Den Vineyards 2010 *Score: 91* | \$58 Offering a taut mix of sour cherry, red candy, raspberry and red plum, this is intense and persistent on the finish. The acidity keeps the flavors lively. Drink now through 2020. 392 cases made. —*J.L.*

WILLIAMS SELYEM Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Olivet Lane Vineyard 2010 *Score: 91* | \$75 Benefits from a kiss of creamy oak, with a supple texture and flavors built around ripe raspberry, black cherry and subtle earth notes. Gains on the finish. Drink now through 2021. 224 cases made. —*J.L.*

MERRY EDWARDS Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Coopersmith 2010 *Score: 90* | \$60 Rich yet compact, with tight crushed rock, ripe plum and wild berry flavors that are intense, focused and slow to unfold, ending with a touch of graphite and smoke. Best from 2014 through 2022. 670 cases made. —*J.L.*

MERRY EDWARDS Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Olivet Lane 2010 *Score: 90* | \$62 Intense, ripe, and vibrant, with lively acidity and crisp tannins. Turns dry and crisp on the finish, where the flavors are focused and persistent. Drink now through 2020. 780 cases made. —*J.L.*

WILLIAMS SELYEM Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Allen Vineyard 2010 *Score: 90* | \$82 Offers a solid core of rich dark berry and raspberry that is firm and tight, easing up a little before ending with subtle rose petal and earthy notes. Drink now through 2021. 266 cases made. —*J.L.*

WILLIAMS SELYEM Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Eastside Road Neighbors 2010 *Score: 90* | \$52 Exhibits a mix of dense, rich raspberry and wild berry that evokes classic Russian River Valley Pinot, running deep and persistent on a long, full finish. Drink now through 2022. 881 cases made. —*J.L.*

WILLIAMS SELYEM Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Rochioli Riverblock Vineyard 2010 *Score: 90* | \$78 Fresh and snappy, with fresh, vibrant raspberry, plum, crushed rock and wilted rose, showing both firm structure and supple texture. Impressive length. Drink now through 2020. 479 cases made. —*J.L.*