

The Press Democrat

Scouting for the tastiest Thanksgiving high-end Sonoma County pinot noirs



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Wine writer Peg Melnik had a blind tasting this week of high-end pinot noirs for Thanksgiving.

The flight was impressive and our wine-of-the-week winner — Sojourn, 2012 Sangiacomo Vineyard Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir — just edged out the Merry Edwards, 2012 Georganne Pinot Noir. Both reeled in 4.5 stars. Peruse our list of quality pinot noirs.

TOP PICK

Sojourn, 2012 Sangiacomo Vineyard, Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, 14.5 percent alcohol, \$54. ★★★★★½

A complex pinot, with a range of flavors — bold cherry, anise and white pepper. The pinot's earthiness plays to its gorgeous fruit. Crisp acidity. A rock star.

Other impressive wines

Merry Edwards, 2012 Georganne, Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, 14.4 percent, \$57. ★★★★★½

This aromatic pinot draws you in and its flavors make you linger. Complex, with notes of blueberry, cassis and cocoa. What wins you over is its depth. A knockout.

MacPhail, 2012 Mardikian Estate, Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir, 14.5 percent, \$85. ★★★★★h

Bright fruit marries well with a touch of earthiness in this pinot. Aromas and flavors of cherry, pomegranate and dried herbs. Worth the splurge.

Patz & Hall, 2012 Jenkins Ranch Pinot Noir, 15.4 percent, \$60. ★★★★★h

A lovely pinot with jammy fruit. Notes of raspberry, wild strawberry, white pepper and mineral. Refreshing acidity. Great balance. Lingering finish.

Small Vines Wines, 2012 Estate Cuvee, Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, 13.6 percent, \$55. ★★★★★h

This pinot has bright cherry, with a hint of cranberry, buoyed with crisp acidity. Herbs and spice in the mix, but it leads with its vibrant fruit. Impressive.

Williams Selyem, 2012 Foss Vineyard, Sonoma County Pinot Noir, 14.2 percent,

\$55. ★★★★★h

A complex pinot with layered flavors of black cherry, lavender and sandalwood. Bright acidity. Lovely.