



PLATINUM SERIES



Select, Ultra Premium, Collectable Wines from California's Best Winemakers

After the infamous dot-com crash of 2000, many in the high tech world were left scrambling. Amidst the bust, however, came a very unexpected success story that is the basis for this month's *Platinum Series* selection, Sojourn Cellars.

Ex-computer software salesman Craig Haserot decided to move to Sonoma County after the crash, hoping to pursue a new career path while escaping the cold weather of San Francisco. Haserot began playing tennis at the local Maxwell Farms Regional Park and struck up a friendship with doubles partner, Erich Bradley, who was then the winemaker at Arrowood Winery and Audelssa (both in Sonoma). Bradley specialized in producing Cabernet Sauvignon from select local vineyards.

Haserot and Bradley bonded over their passion for Pinot Noir, and began playing with the idea of making their own wine. Haserot had the background in sales and marketing, while Bradley was happy just making wine – without all the business details. It was the beginning of a wonderfully successful friendship and business partnership.

In 2001, the two made 150 cases of project Cabernet from Sonoma's Glen Ellen vineyard and the finished product was better than they ever could have anticipated.

"When we released the Cab, it was actually really good and we realized there was potential with our wines," Haserot explained. "The following year, we upped the Cab production to 250 cases and then to 350 cases in 2004."

With Bradley's experience in making Sonoma Cabs, it was only natural that Cabernet Sauvignon would be the first endeavor for Sojourn Cellars, but it wasn't long before their love for Pinot Noir led to new experimentation.

"Our real passion was always Pinot, so in 2004 we decided to make 210 cases of Sangiacomo Vineyard Pinot Noir," Haserot stated. This first Pinot release took home 95 and 92-point ratings and really set the stage for the caliber of wines produced thereafter.

What Haserot and Bradley didn't anticipate was the reaction 2004's *Sideways* movie would have on the California Pinot Noir industry. "Our sales literally took

off!" Haserot enthused. The two increased their Pinot production tenfold and what started out as an avid hobby had become an incredibly successful business move.

When Haserot and Bradley brainstormed names for their budding winery, a friend aptly suggested *Sojourn*, which actually has two significant meanings: the French *sojourner* refers to a journey, vacation or road trip, while the English *sojourn* implies rest, relax and respite.

"That's how we came up with the lawn chair," Haserot explains about the wine label's simplistic depiction. "People really like it, too. It's how drinking a glass of wine should be."

Sojourn Cellars' celebrated Tasting Salon concept in downtown Sonoma further promotes the winery's appealing philosophy with a living room-type setting of cozy furniture and a dining room table (no tasting bar). Both Haserot and Bradley join guests for private tasting sessions to share their limited production, highly rated wines. The Tasting Salon is certainly unique in its personal approach to wine tasting, and the customers seem to be enjoying themselves as well.

At a current production level of 5,000 cases, Haserot is comfortable with the size of Sojourn Cellars and would like to only slightly increase the production size in the coming years.

Sojourn does not own its own vineyards, which gives them the flexibility to select fruit from some of the most distinguished vineyards in Sonoma and Napa Counties. By helping direct farming operations, the Sojourn team can assure that their grapes are produced using world-class growing techniques. Looking into the future, the Sojourn team plans on seeking out new vineyard locations to further diversify their already exceptional line-up.

Sojourn Cellars has become one of the most reputable boutique wineries in California, with nearly every vintage of every wine garnering 90+ scores from the top wine industry periodicals. A reputation of this caliber is rarely seen, and it's no question that the Sojourn wines are all in high demand. Please enjoy this month's *Platinum Series* feature, a stellar wine from a now legendary winery. Cheers!



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TASTING NOTES

92 POINTS

— *Wine & Spirits magazine*

91 POINTS

— *Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate*

91 POINTS

— *Wine Enthusiast*

600 Cases Produced

Sojourn Cellars' 2013 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay is a blend of unique lots from several distinct Sonoma Coast vineyard sites. Chardonnay fruit from the Sangiacomo Vella and Green Acres ranches form a foundation of bright aromatics and balance, while fruit from the Sangiacomo Roberts Road Vineyard adds minerality and length to the wine, and fruit from the famed Durell Vineyard adds a layer of rich fruit character and body. Lastly, a touch from the Campbell Ranch Vineyard rounds out the blend with tropical notes, focus, and tension. The 2013 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay offers notes of white peach, apple butter, quince, and white flowers with striking concentration and excellent balance. Aged 11 months. 100% Chardonnay. Enjoy now until 2018.



Dear *Platinum Series* Members,

Our 2013 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay is a blend of several unique lots from three distinct vineyards spanning this cool-climate appellation. We sourced grapes from Sangiacomo, Durell and Campbell Ranch Vineyards, spanning the far reaches of the Sonoma Coast appellation.

The 2013 growing season began early, with a warm and dry spring that continued with moderate heat that allowed the Chardonnay to develop complex flavors at lower Brix levels. Dry weather in both winter and spring resulted in smaller berry sizes with high levels of concentration and detailed aromatics. A lovely nose of stone fruit, apples and white flowers led to rich flavors and an intriguing mix of depth and vibrancy on the palate.

Refreshing and layered, this wine is a fabulous blend of old-world style and new-world eloquence. It is a pleasure to drink, with wonderful fruit, a touch of minerality, and crisp acidity that lengthens the finish. Each component of the blend was fermented separately in French oak barrels utilizing 30% new oak. After 11 months of aging, the components were blended together to create a winemaker's cuvee that is expressive of the cool climate, nuance and balance of the Sonoma Coast appellation.

Enjoy the wine!

Cheers,

Craig Haserot
Proprietor, Sojourn Cellars

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REWARDS

Sojourn 2013 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay

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