



# The WINE ADVOCATE®

## The Independent Consumer's Bi-Monthly Guide to Fine Wine CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIR & CHARDONNAY: Recommended New Releases

### CALERA

CALERA	2002	CHARDONNAY	CENTRAL COAST	(\$14.00)	WHITE	87
CALERA	2000	CHARDONNAY	MT. HARLAN	(\$34.00)	WHITE	90
CALERA	2001	PINOT NOIR JENSEN VINEYARD	MT. HARLAN	(\$50.00)	RED	92
CALERA	2001	PINOT NOIR MILLS VINEYARD	MT. HARLAN	(\$40.00)	RED	91
CALERA	2000	PINOT NOIR MILLS VINEYARD	MT. HARLAN	(\$40.00)	RED	90
CALERA	2001	PINOT NOIR REED VINEYARD	MT. HARLAN	(\$45.00)	RED	90
CALERA	2000	PINOT NOIR REED VINEYARD	MT. HARLAN	(\$45.00)	RED	89
CALERA	2002	PINOT NOIR RYAN VINEYARD FIRST HARVEST	MT. HARLAN	(\$40.00)	RED	89
CALERA	2003	PINOT NOIR RYAN VINEYARD SECOND HARVEST	MT. HARLAN	(\$40.00)	RED	87
CALERA	2001	PINOT NOIR SELLECK VINEYARD	MT. HARLAN	(\$55.00)	RED	90+

An excellent value in California Chardonnay, Calera's **2002 Central Coast Chardonnay** offers a light green/gold color as well as attractive aromas of honeysuckle and white flowers, medium body, little oak, and a pleasant finish. It is ideal for drinking over the next 1-3 years. The more seriously endowed, light gold-colored **2000 Chardonnay Mt. Harlan** exhibits a reticent but promising nose of poached pears, acacia flowers, and sweet honey. Crisp, with more minerality in addition to a brioche/leesy component, a good texture, and a fine finish, this medium to full-bodied white should drink well for 3-4 years. The light ruby-hued **2003 Pinot Noir Ryan Vineyard Second Harvest** reveals a restrained bouquet of sweet cherries and a hint of strawberries. Its medium body, crisp acidity, Côtes de Beaune-like personality, and well-balanced finish suggest it should be consumed over the next 3-5 years. The **2002 Pinot Noir Ryan Vineyard First Harvest** displays a deeper ruby color along with an earthy, spicy, underbrush, allspice, and red cherry-scented nose. While bolder than its younger sibling, it is an elegant, delicate Pinot to enjoy over the next 5-6 years.

I tasted four 2001 Calera Pinot Noirs, including the **2001 Pinot Noir Reed Vineyard** (a 4.4 acre parcel) whose light ruby color could cause it to be mistaken for a rosé. Notions of saffron, earth, kirsch liqueur, and spice emerge from this delicate, but authoritatively flavorful, medium-bodied spicy Pinot. Reminiscent of a premier cru from the Côtes de Beaune, it should be consumed over the next 7-8 years. The **2001 Pinot Noir Mills Vineyard's** (14.4 acres) medium ruby color is followed by aromas of flowers, sweet cherries, cranberries, and strawberries, medium to full body, outstanding depth as well as ripeness, a broad,

more succulent texture, and a plusher personality. More obviously fruity than the Reed, this attractive 2001 is one of the most forward Pinots from Calera. The medium ruby-tinged **2001 Pinot Noir Jensen Vineyard** (13.8 acres) exhibits a floral, forest floor, Côtes de Nuits-like aromatic profile with plenty of black cherries in the background. It possesses a silky texture, but there is also plenty of tannin and structure in this big, fleshy, flamboyant effort. Rich and accessible, it may evolve and drink well for 10-12+ years. Slightly darker-hued is the **2001 Pinot Noir Selleck Vineyard** (4.28 acres). Spicy and earthy, with hints of underbrush and stems, it is a Burgundian-styled Pinot with brooding richness and impressive potential, but it requires coaxing from the glass. There is plenty here, but it will benefit from another year or so of bottle age. All of these **2001s** were significantly more nuanced and impressively endowed after five hours of aeration. While I do not necessarily believe in decanting Pinot Noir, I would certainly pull corks on these wines.

The **2000 Pinot Noir Mills Vineyard** is a light to medium ruby-colored offering, displaying a distinctive spearmint-like component intermixed with aromas of cherries, underbrush, earth, and spice. With moderate tannin as well as good acidity, it will drink well for 5-10 years. The **2000 Pinot Noir Reed Vineyard** reveals a lighter ruby color along with classic scents of underbrush, stems, beet root, and sweet cherries in the background. While there is considerable clout and authority on the palate, the wine is tightly-knit. It should drink well for 7-10 years.

Barrel samples of the **2002s** were all impressive, but these wines are not yet in the marketplace. Approximate ratings include Selleck (92-94), Jensen (90-94), Reed (90-92), Mills (89-91). Tel. (831) 637-9170.

