



## USA, California, Central Coast: Recent Releases from the Santa Cruz Mountains

featuring Drew Family Winery  
reviewed by William Kelley

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### **2016 Pinot Noir Fashauer Vineyards**

The 2016 Pinot Noir Fashauer Vineyards is also quite reserved at this early stage, exhibiting pretty aromas of raspberries, candied peel and earthy spices. But on the palate, it's the most ample and satiny of Drew's Anderson Valley Pinot Noirs, with succulent acids, a fine-grained and open-knit chassis of tannin and a mouthwateringly mineral finish. **(93 points)**

### **2016 Pinot Noir Fog-Eater**

A delicate, high-toned wine from the Anderson Valley, the 2016 Pinot Noir Fog-Eater offers up delicate aromas of red berries and sweet spices, followed by a medium-bodied, mouthwateringly acid-driven palate with bright fruit flavors and light structuring tannins. Its fine-boned style won't be for everyone, but it's a pure and tangy expression of an extreme site. **(90 points)**

### **2016 Pinot Noir Mid-Elevation**

The 2016 Pinot Noir Mid-Elevation opens in the glass with notes of sweet wild berries, subtle espresso roast and forest floor. On the palate, it's medium to full-bodied, ample and nicely concentrated, with rich, youthfully chewy structuring tannins and a generous core of sappy fruit. **(92+ points)**

### **2016 Pinot Noir Valenti Ranch**

Located six miles from the Pacific at 1,200-1,350 feet on an east-facing ridge, this is one of the most extreme sites in the portfolio, and the 2016 Pinot Noir Valenti Ranch is correspondingly

taut and focused, offering up notes of wild berries, coniferous forest floor and earthy spice. On the palate, it's medium-bodied, concentrated and layered, built around a tangy line of acidity and framed by rich tannins. Both the marginal nature of the site and the small yields make themselves felt in this coiled, serious Pinot Noir that's crying out for 3 or 4 years in the cellar. **(93+ points)**

### **2016 Pinot Noir Wendling Vineyard**

The 2016 Pinot Noir Wendling Vineyard is quite youthfully reserved, unfurling in the glass with reticent aromas of ripe cherry and spice. On the palate, it's medium-bodied, with a deep core of fruit, a tangy line of acidity and rich, fine-grained structuring tannins: promising raw materials, but it's in need of 2 or 3 years of bottle age before it will reveal all its cards. **(91+ points)**

### **2016 Syrah Perli Vineyard**

At fully 2,200 feet above sea level, this high-altitude site is above the fog line and thus catches more sun, but that's tempered by the cooling influence of the Pacific, as it's only ten miles from the ocean, making the 2016 Syrah Perli Vineyard simultaneously bright and concentrated. The wine opens in the glass with a youthfully reserved but pure nose of dark wild berries, licorice, subtle cracked black pepper and acacia flowers, followed by a medium to full-bodied, richly structured palate, with a chassis of ripe, velvety tannins that's largely concealed by a deep core of dark, crunchy fruit. Cellar it for 2 or 3 years and follow it for a decade. **(93+ points)**

### **2016 Syrah The Ornbaun**

Offering up aromas of dark berries, citrus zest and subtle tapenade, the 2016 Syrah The Ornbaun is medium-bodied, velvety and layered, with tangy acids, fine-grained tannins and a mouthwatering finish. Simultaneously supple and focused, it's a beautifully elegant cool-climate Syrah. **(90 points)**

### **2016 Syrah Valenti Vineyard**

Revealing a sapid bouquet of elderberries, blackberries, licorice and smoked meats, the 2016 Syrah Valenti Vineyard is medium-bodied, supple and expansive, with fine tannins and a distinctly saline, mineral quality, balanced by the tangy acids that characterize all these offerings from Drew Family Cellars. Succulent and incipiently savory, this will really reward a few years in the cellar. **(94 points)**

### **2016 Viognier Valenti Ranch**

Offering up notes of crisp apricot, peaches and honeysuckle, the 2016 Viognier Valenti Ranch is a delicate, medium-bodied interpretation of this frequently buxom grape, checking in at a modest 13.3% alcohol. Elegantly textural and succulent on the palate, it concludes with a mouthwatering and fragrant finish. **(90 points)**

### **2015 Pinot Noir Estate Field Selections**

The second release from the Drews' estate vineyard, located on a south-facing slope on Mendocino Ridge 3.3 miles from the Pacific Ocean and at 1,250 feet in elevation, the 2015 Pinot Noir Estate Field Selections is very attractive, wafting from the glass with notes of cassis, cherries, caramelized orange rind, currant leaf and subtle notions of cocoa nib. On the palate, it's medium to full-bodied, ample and expansive, with a lavish attack that segues into a more controlled, tautly structured and nicely concentrated mid-palate. The acids are succulent and the tannins are ripe, so the balance is there for a decade's evolution in the cellar. **(93 points)**

