



Robert Parker's Wine Advocate

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Reviewed by Antonio Galloni

I tasted a wide range of superb Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs with proprietor Brian Talley and winemaker Eric Johnson. Talley remains one of the great estates in California that has yet to be fully discovered. As a result, prices remain exceedingly fair considering the quality of what goes into the bottle. Stylistically, Talley prefers the more taut, mineral side of Chardonnay, while the Pinots tend to emphasize perfume over sheer size. Native fermentations, little new oak and minimal SO₂ are all part of the gentle treatment these wines receive in the cellar. The 2010 harvest was characterized by a long growing season. Budbreak was early and temperatures remained cool throughout most of the year, with the exception of a period of heat in mid-September. The harvest was ten days later than 2009, with the Pinot coming in before the Chardonnay. Overall yields were on the low side.

2010 Talley Vineyards Chardonnay Estate, Arroyo Grande Valley

The entry-level 2010 Chardonnay Estate is a gorgeous wine. Here the fruit shows the slightly richer aromatic and flavor profile of Chardonnay. Pastry, lemon, pears and white flowers are some of the notes that flesh out in the glass. This is another terrific wine for the money. The Estate is mostly Rincon, with a dash of Rosemary's. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2016. **90 points**

2010 Talley Vineyards Chardonnay Oliver's Vineyard, Edna Valley

Talley's 2010 Chardonnay Oliver's Vineyard wraps around the palate with layers of refined, finessed fruit. The Oliver's impresses primarily for its textural elegance and pure harmony. It isn't an obvious Chardonnay, but rather a wine built on finesse and the brighter aromas and flavors of the grape. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2019. **93 points**

2010 Talley Vineyards Chardonnay Rincon Vineyard, Arroyo Grande Valley

The 2010 Chardonnay Rincon Vineyard is one of the richer, bolder wines in this lineup. The Rincon is made from two parcels; one planted with the Wente clone, the other with Clone 4, but it is the weight and sheer power of the Wente that comes through most. Dried pears, butter, spices and layers of voluptuous fruit mark the creamy, textured finish. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2020. **92 points**

2010 Talley Vineyards Chardonnay Rosemary's Vineyard, Arroyo Grande Valley

The richness of the Rincon and the subtlety of Oliver's come together in the 2010 Chardonnay Rosemary's Vineyard. The 2010 possesses remarkable depth, polish and nuance from start to finish, all supported by layers of vibrant, saline minerality. It is a wine of impeccable breed and pure class. This is the coolest of the Chardonnay sites Talley works with, which gives the wine its distinctive acidity. The Rosemary's is a rare Chardonnay of true distinction. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2020. **94 points**

2010 Talley Vineyards Pinot Noir Estate, Arroyo Grande Valley

The 2010 Pinot Noir Estate wraps around the palate with expansive layers of expressive dark red fruit. Mint, flowers and anise develop in the glass, adding further depth. This is another deep, beautifully nuanced wine, especially for the money. The Estate is a blend of fruit from Rincon and Rosemary's. Winemaker Eric Johnson used some stems in the Rincon fruit, while the Rosemary's was fully destemmed. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2018. **90 points**

2010 Talley Vineyards Pinot Noir Stone Corral Vineyard, Edna Valley

Talley's 2010 Pinot Noir Stone Corral Vineyard boasts a deep, serious core of dark cherries, tar and spices. This is an especially large-scaled, broad-shouldered wine from Talley. Layers of fruit build to the extroverted, flashy finish. The richness of the fully destemmed fruit comes through in spades. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2020. **92 points**

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2010 Talley Vineyards Pinot Noir Rincon Vineyard, Arroyo Grande Valley

The 2010 Pinot Noir Rincon Vineyard floats onto the palate. Sweet dried cherries, flowers, mint and savory herbs are some of the many nuances that take shape in the glass. The use of 30% whole clusters gives the wine an attractive sense of lift and polish. Sweet, perfumed and impeccably balanced, the Rincon impresses for its overall harmony and finesse. In 2010, the Rincon is delicate and harmonious from the very first taste. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2020. **93 points**

2010 Talley Vineyards Pinot Noir Rosemary's Vineyard, Arroyo Grande Valley

Rich and seductive, the 2010 Pinot Noir Rosemary's Vineyard is endowed with serious structure. Black cherries, mint and sweet spices flesh out beautifully in this large-scaled, striking Pinot. This is a vivid, multi-dimensional Pinot from Talley. Layers of sweet, perfumed berries linger in the empty glass. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2020. **93 points**