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Jermann  
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WALT  
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28 Best of the Best

## COVER STORY

**28 Wine at the Pinnacle** An elite group of winegrowing regions and the varieties they nurture have proven their excellence across time, producing benchmark bottlings that express *terroir* and pursuing innovations in viticulture and winemaking to ensure success for generations upcoming. Here, we highlight nearly 400 wines from our recent blind tastings that represent the “Best of the Best” • *Kristen Bieler, James Molesworth, Bruce Sanderson, MaryAnn Worobiec*

## Features

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**60 La Chapelle Grange** Jaboulet’s La Chapelle and Australia’s Penfolds blend a unique Syrah • *Kristen Bieler*

**62 Alphabetical Guide to Rhône Valley Wines**

**70 Washington Wines** Cabernet, Syrah and Merlot from the low-yielding but outstanding 2021 vintage show solid aging potential, while white wine fans will find values rolling in from 2022 and 2023 • *Tim Fish*

**75 Catching Up With Chris Gorman** The Washington vintner talks about his road to winemaking and his namesake winery • *Tim Fish*

### FOOD & DRINK

**78 Spirited Destinations** At many Grand Award winners, a deep wine cellar is now joined by a great spirits program. We profile five standouts • *Julia Larson, Kenny Martin, Larry Rubin, Cassia Schifter and Greg Warner*





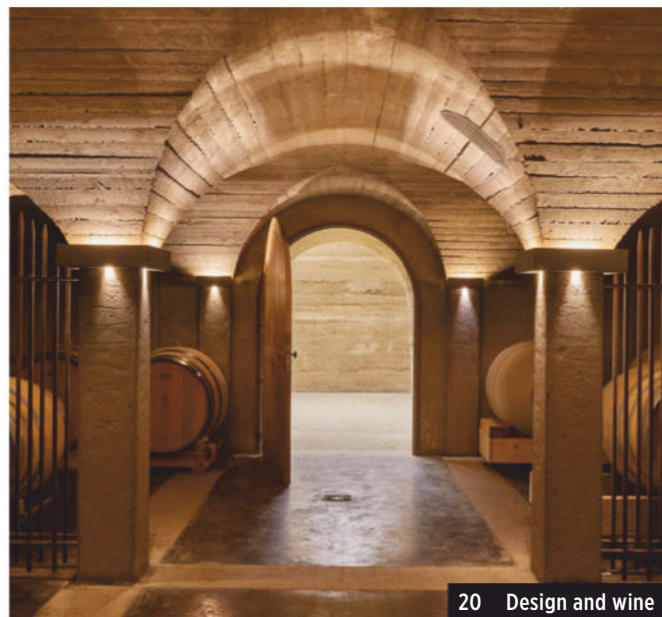
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52 Rhône Valley tasting report



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### OUR TOP-SCORING WINES THIS ISSUE



Château Cheval Blanc  
St.-Emilion 2022  
99 POINTS, \$670



Roagna Barbaresco  
Crichèt Pajé 2016  
99 POINTS, \$1,500

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**— Ratings —**

**Daily Pick**

Ratings Ratings Search Daily Pick Tasting Reports Winery Intel Insider Weekly Advance Values Vintage Charts About Our Tastings

**Daily Wine Pick Archive**  
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Jan. 08, 2025

**90** **MAISON L'ENVOYÉ**  
*Fleurie Château Vivier 2022*  
\$21  
A sappy well of blackberry coulis and red plum flavors offer a lot of juicy pleasure in this ripe yet balanced version. Shows smoked apple wood notes and a meaty, sanguine edge, with wild herbs and red licorice on the medium-weight, very balanced finish. Shows a lot of appeal. Drink now through 2029. 500 cases imported. —Kristen Bieker

Jan. 07, 2025

**93** **LIONEL FAURY**  
*St-Joseph Les Ribaudes 2022*  
\$30  
A dark, inky version, with a brooding core of black raspberry and cassis underscored by salt, iron and bread. Firmly structured, with sanguine notes of herbs, saucisson and smoke that show real power. The finish is held taut by muscular yet refined black tea tannins that need time to unwind. Drink now through 2032. 936 cases imported. —Kristen Bieker

Jan. 06, 2025

**90** **HERDADE DO PESO**  
*Alentejo Revelado 2020*  
\$25  
A well-spiced red, with lots of roasted paprika, clove and white pepper notes accenting the tannins. Firmly structured, with fine, taut tannins, this lively version is very appealing. Alicante Bouschet, Touriga Nacional and

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## The Best of the Best

Sometimes you just want the very best. Our annual Top 100 (Dec. 31 issue) is an exercise in thoughtful balance, a list of 100 wines that considers availability and price along with quality. But if you wish to experience the pinnacle of the wine world, you will want to refer to this issue's exciting cover story: "Best of the Best."

Of the myriad winegrowing regions that our editors are charged with covering each year, a select few stand out as destinations for excellence. In our blind tastings, the superlative scores that fly close to the 100-point ideal of perfection are concentrated among these *terroirs* and their most dedicated producers.

For this special package, we profile eight of these benchmark wine regions, spanning Old World and New. Our editors have compiled comprehensive lists of the top-performing bottlings from our most recent blind tastings, while also explaining the history, environmental factors and innovations that contribute to such success. Nearly 400 wines are highlighted, representing California Cabernet, California Chardonnay, California Pinot Noir, Bordeaux, Burgundy, the Rhône Valley, Piedmont and Tuscany. In many (but not all) cases, the wines are expensive or scarce. Such is the price of greatness.

Of course, even these reliable regions are not immune to vintage variation. So it takes a fair amount of intel and some degree of caution to tap into the best of what's on offer. Case in point, the current batch of Bordeaux, from the rather weak 2021 vintage, is the first since 2013 in which no wines surpassed 94 points. The fact that a handful of wines achieved as highly as they did is a testament to the greatness of Bordeaux's *terroir*. And our lead taster on the wines, James Molesworth, is already looking ahead optimistically to his report focused on the 2022s, to appear in our May 31 issue.

One of our "Best" regions is highlighted in even greater detail in this issue. Fresh off her recent visit to the Rhône Valley, senior editor Kristen Bieler, lead taster on the wines, rates the 2022 vintage 94 points overall in the North and 95 points overall in the South. The top-scoring wines from this hot and dry year span the region and include both whites and reds. In such a highly rated vintage, the quality has a trickle-down effect, resulting in a good selection of top values, most of them priced \$25 or less (see page 59).

In other news from the Rhône, you will find Bieler's exclusive reporting on innovative projects from two leading names. Jaboulet's La Chapelle is coming together with Penfolds' Grange in an unorthodox Syrah blend. Meanwhile, the



Perrin family is building for the future, with a new Château de Beaucastel winery designed in harmony with the region's land and climate.

Finally, I suspect that most of America has heard the departing U.S. Surgeon General's advisory on alcohol and cancer. But lurking beneath this headline are decades of science linking moderate wine consumption to a lower rate of mortality. Senior editor Mitch Frank has the story on the coming showdown over warning labels and moderate drinking on page 14, and weighs in with his commentary separately, on page 24.

I wish you happiness and health as you read about and enjoy the very best from the world of wine.

Marvin R. Shanken  
Editor and Publisher



# Wine Spectator

A Publication of M. Shanken Communications, Inc.

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# FEEDBACK

## Champagne Education

My compliments to Alison Napjus for bringing a much needed sense of clarity and informed understanding of the state of the Champagne region today (Columns, Dec. 31, 2024 – Jan. 15, 2025).

I spend at least 10 days a year in the region meeting both RMs (*récoltants-manipulants*) and NMs (*négociants-manipulants*) and what is apparent is that the quality of wines produced has never been higher. That the contributions of RMs over the past 25 years have brought a certain dynamism to the region is obvious. However, too little light is shown on NMs and their efforts to consistently improve their practices and their wines across the board. Napjus skillfully highlights the very fortunate state of Champagne production today for the enthusiast, and to do so in a single page is praiseworthy.

Lars M. Guy  
Madison, Conn.

## Alcohol Optional

I think Mitch Frank wrote a great article. (“Cheers to 2025,” Columns, Dec. 31, 2024 – Jan. 15, 2025). Based on his article, [I suggest it is] time for low- to no-alcohol wines. We enjoy drinking wine with dinner as it is the perfect companion for food, but do we really need the alcohol as we are not trying to get drunk? Low to no alcohol wines would also appeal to health-conscious millennials and Gen Z-ers. [The wines would need to come from] a large producer such

as Caymus, J. Lohr, Jackson Family or Penfolds and be quality wines from a wide variety of grapes. Something to think about as we head into 2025.

Paul Elwart  
Rancho Mission Viejo,  
Calif.

## Thanks for the Memories

Loved your article “The Greatness of Groth” (Nov. 30, 2024). I remember my first bottle back in 2007. I had no business spending \$40 back then, but I had just purchased a steak and figured I had already blown my weekly per diem. That bottle was so good it launched my love of Napa Cabs. Today, the only challenge I see is opening a bottle and adhering to the 1.5 glasses a week as recommended by the researchers noted in your previous edition’s article “Wine Is Healthiest Choice for Drinkers” (Grapevine, Oct. 31, 2024). No can do.

Kathy Fournier  
Golden, Colo.

Seeing your article “The Greatness of Groth” brought back memories of an incident while visiting Groth Winery in early 2000. My wife, Ellen, and I live in the eastern U.S. and are long-time wine collectors. We have traveled to Napa many times for weekends of wine tasting. In January of 2000, we attended the Groth release day for their 1998 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon.

The winery was busy that morning. The Groth employee uniform for the day was a blue jean jacket with



the Groth logo on the back. My wife purchased a jacket for each of us as a souvenir, and since it was a cool morning, we decided to wear them.

One of their features of that release day was a barrel tasting of their 1999 Cabernet. A Groth employee stood in a roped-off area and utilized a wine thief to extract wine from the barrel for the eager crowd. After wandering around for a few minutes, I returned to the barrel tasting to find my wife, in her Groth jacket, behind the rope, barrel thief in hand, pouring wine while discussing the vintage, composition and process behind the winemaking and actually sounding like she knew what she was talking about.

This lasted for about 20 minutes until Dennis Groth came up behind me and asked my wife, “Excuse me, but do you work for me?”

Ellen, never one to mislead someone, responded that she did not work there but had been happy to fill in for an employee who needed a break. The employee had obviously assumed that Ellen worked there based upon the jacket. After having an actual employee replace Ellen as the wine server, Dennis, who was a real gentleman,

spent some time with us and even signed a magnum of their 1998 Reserve for us.

We drank the bottle some years later, toasting Dennis for not throwing us off the property that day and for being a genuinely nice person.

Henry Joyce  
West Chester, Pa.

## Foothold in the Foothills

I am a retired professor from the California State University system. In 2013 my wife and I bought a property near Murphys, California (Sierra Foothills AVA). In 2014 we decided to plant a small vineyard from scratch on our rocky, terraced, southwest-facing hillside. We put in the vineyard infrastructure in 2014 and planted Mourvèdre in 2015. My police officer son Doug died in 2017 of colon cancer, and the vineyard is dedicated to his memory. My wife and I do all the work (except putting up the bird netting.) The harvest is done by family and friends. We produce about 2 tons of grapes annually and sell them locally to Jazz Cellars.

Dan Holley  
Murphys, Calif.

## CORRECTION

In the Top 100 of 2024 (Dec. 31, 2024 – Jan. 15, 2025) the correct vintage for the Penfolds Cabernet-Shiraz South Australia Bin 389 is 2022.

## Questions and Comments

If you have a comment on a story or a question about wine, we would like to hear from you. Please keep your letters brief and be sure to include your name, address and telephone number (not for publication). We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity. Write to us at Letters, Wine Spectator, 825 Eighth Ave., 33rd Floor, New York, NY 10019; send a fax to (212) 684-5424; or email us at [letters@winespectator.com](mailto:letters@winespectator.com).



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- KRISTEN BIELER

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# GRAPEVINE

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## A Federal Health Showdown on Wine

BY MITCH FRANK

Is a daily glass of wine a health helper or hazard? American consumers are understandably confused. Just before 2024 came to a close, the panel of medical experts tasked with studying alcohol consumption for the U.S. Dietary Guidelines issued a report finding with “moderate certainty” that people who drink alcohol in moderation have lower all-cause mortality than those who abstain.

But just two weeks later, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy issued an advisory calling for alcoholic beverages to carry cancer warnings, arguing that Americans are uneducated about potential links between alcohol and seven types of cancer.

The guidelines are published every five years by the U.S. departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS), and they send an important message on how Americans should view drinking. For the section on alcohol, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) convened a committee of 14 academics, who conducted an extensive review of the current relevant science. The panel authors are careful to make clear how certain they are of each finding.

Their findings support the theory that moderate consumption, which they define as no more than two drinks per day for men and one for women, offers health benefits. For example, they write that, with moderate certainty, “the committee concludes that compared with never consuming alcohol, moderate alcohol consumption is associated with lower all-cause mortality.” They also find with moderate certainty that “consuming moderate amounts of alcohol is associated with a lower risk of [cardiovascular disease] mortality in both females and males.”

The panel did find with moderate certainty that moderate consumption of alcohol is associated with a higher risk of breast cancer. They found that no conclusion could be drawn yet on a link between moderate consumption and several other cancers, including colorectal, pharyngeal and esophageal.

These findings reflect what the majority of peer-reviewed research has found in the past two decades. Moderate alcohol consumption has



Surgeon General Vivek Murthy

***“Compared with never consuming alcohol, moderate alcohol consumption is associated with lower all-cause mortality.”***

—NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES, ENGINEERING AND MEDICINE REVIEW OF EVIDENCE ON ALCOHOL AND HEALTH

been linked to lower rates of cardiovascular disease. It has also been linked to higher rates of certain cancers. But because cardiovascular diseases are still the No. 1 cause of death in the United States, moderate wine consumption is linked to a lower rate of mortality.

The surgeon general felt that the cancer risk should be highlighted, however. “Alcohol is a well-established, preventable cause of cancer,” said Murthy in a statement. “Yet the majority of Americans are unaware of this risk.” Since 1988, bottles of wine in the U.S. have carried mandatory labels highlighting the risks of driving under the influence and of drinking during pregnancy. The surgeon general does not have the power to mandate warning labels; only Congress can do that.

Normally, the NASEM panel’s report would be reviewed by the HHS and USDA officials who craft the final guidelines. The panel’s recommendations are not always adopted, but they carry a lot of weight. This year there is a second panel, convened by the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking, exploring alcohol and health; and rather than review existing scientific research, it is conducting its own. The six members of the committee are substance abuse experts.

All of which means the battle over whether the federal government should discourage moderate drinking is heating up. □



# Jean-Charles Boisset and Gina Gallo-Boisset Buy Napa's Flora Springs Winery

Jean-Charles Boisset and Gina Gallo-Boisset, the scions of two famous wine families, have purchased Flora Springs Winery in Napa Valley from the Komes and Garvey families, the founders of the company. Though Gallo-Boisset and Boisset are industry veterans, this is the first winery collaboration by the couple. The sale includes the St. Helena winery, the inventory and the flamboyantly designed tasting room on Highway 29. Neither party is disclosing the financial details of the sale.

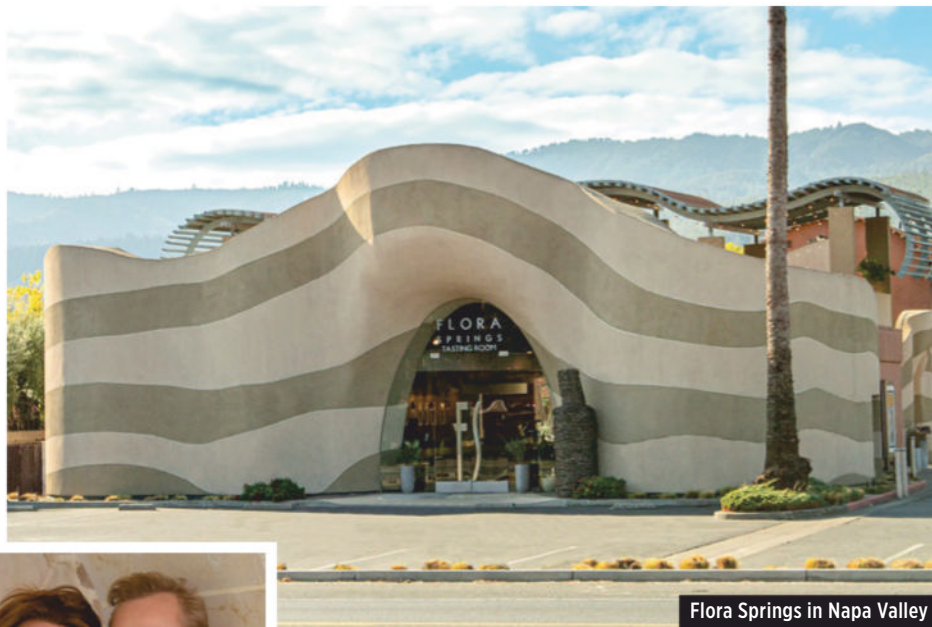
"Flora Springs embodies the family spirit we adore and are committed to continue," Gallo-Boisset said in a statement.

Boisset added, "We intend to elevate their exceptional wines to a new dimension."

Flora Springs was founded in 1978 by the Komes and Garvey families, who restored a dilapidated stone winery and ramshackle Victorian house once owned by Louis M. Martini. The winery is best known for Cabernet Sauvignon and blends such as Trilogy and Soliloquy.

In 2020, the families sold their winery facility and their 280-acre estate, including 58 acres of vines, to Daniel and Florence Cathiard, owners of Château Smith-Haut-Lafitte in Bordeaux. The French couple established Cathiard Family Estate. The Komes and Garvey families retained the Flora Springs tasting room and brand name, downsizing production by more than half to 8,500 cases annually and shifting their primary focus to direct-to-consumer sales.

Third-generation family member Nat Komes is now stepping down as general manager to focus on Jon Nathaniel Cellars, the Komes family's boutique winery in Rutherford. "I'm very excited to lead this new



Flora Springs in Napa Valley



Gina Gallo-Boisset and Jean-Charles Boisset

chapter of my family's Napa Valley winemaking legacy," said Komes in a statement.

Enrico Bertoz will continue as winemaker, working with Gallo-Boisset, a veteran winemaker at her family's company, E. & J. Gallo. The Komes family retained 30 acres of estate vineyards for their own use. "We have secured contracts with the Komes family and many of their key growers to continue the estate vision while adding our own palate of exceptional vineyards to source," Boisset told *Wine Spectator*.

Boisset is president of Boisset Collection, which owns wineries in France and California, including DeLoach, Buena Vista and Bouchard Aîné & Fils. The company also owns Oakville Grocery and the historic Calistoga Depot. Together, Boisset and Gallo-Boisset own Ink House Inn in St. Helena.

—Tim Fish

## America's Largest Wine Wholesaler Faces FTC Suit

After a two-year investigation, the Federal Trade Commission filed a lawsuit in December against the largest wine and spirits distributor in the United States, Southern Glazer's, alleging that its pricing practices violate the 1936 Robinson-Patman Act. The suit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, with FTC commissioners voting 3-2 in favor of the action.

The complaint alleges that Southern has undermined competition by selling to small, independent businesses at prices "drastically higher than what Southern charges large chains." The suit

seeks an injunction prohibiting the alleged price discrimination to create a more level playing

field among retailers of various sizes.

The FTC began investigating anticompetitive practices at the wholesaler in early 2023 as part of a widescale inquiry into alcohol sales by distributors and retailers around the country. Commissioners felt that large companies had too much power over pricing and alcohol markets.

Robinson-Patman hasn't been the basis of an FTC suit in decades. The act was passed during the Great Depression to prevent companies from discriminating against small retailers by offering discounts to large chains. But in recent decades, volume discounts for large chains are not unusual. Southern Glazer's is the 10th-largest privately held company in the U.S., with around \$26 billion in revenue and 24,000 employees. It distributes over 7,000 alcohol brands in multiple states.

It's unclear if the suit will see a courtroom. The two Republican commissioners on the FTC voted against it, and the commission will soon

have a new Republican chair.

In a statement, Southern responded, "The RPA is a Depression-era federal antitrust law that has not been enforced in decades because of bipartisan concern that enforcement leads to higher prices for consumers. This suit was authorized by a 3-2 vote of the FTC commissioners along party lines, with dissents issued by Commissioner Holyoak and Commissioner Ferguson, whom President-elect Trump has selected to chair the FTC in his Administration.

"The FTC's lawsuit takes issue with the use of volume discounts that Southern Glazer's—and nearly every distributor of consumer products in the country—uses to lower customers' costs and enable consumers to pay lower prices for the everyday goods they need," the distributor added. "Southern Glazer's strongly disputes the FTC's allegations."

—Daniel Marsteller



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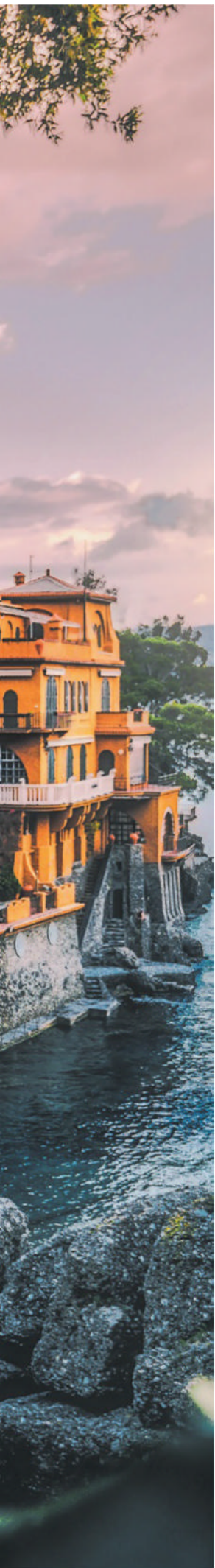
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# Trotter Wine Wows at Lagasse Auction

BY MITCH FRANK

It was an auction lot so good, it sold three times. Lot No. 5 at the Emeril Lagasse Foundation's *Carnivale du Vin* (Nov. 16) was "Chef Charlie Trotter's Legacy," starring a bottle of Château Margaux 1900 from Trotter's collection, donated by his widow, Rochelle. Trotter had said if he ever planned a last meal, that would be the wine. The lot also offered a private dinner for four couples at Emeril's in New Orleans, a *Wine Spectator* Grand Award winner, cooked by Trotter's longtime friend chef Lagasse.

Before the auctioneers could open bidding, Lagasse announced he had received a call from *Wine Spectator* editor and publisher Marvin R. Shanken offering to buy the lot for \$100,000 to support the foundation. The auction crowd erupted into applause.

Lagasse wasn't finished. "Marvin told me he would like to donate the lot back," Lagasse told the crowd, so that the foundation could auction it again and raise even more money.

And so the bidding began. Auctioneer DawnMarie Kotsonis whipped up the crowd. Within minutes, the bidders were narrowed to two, each repeatedly upping the price. By the time Kotsonis exclaimed, "Sold!" the top bid had risen to \$200,000. The winning bidders were David and Shelly Kim, visiting from Southern California—and they were donating the lot right back. With that additional act of charity, the runner-up bidder got the lot for \$175,000, raising a combined \$475,000.

"Charlie Trotter, Emeril Lagasse and the 20th anniversary of this wonderful charity is an unbelievable trifecta," said Shanken. "We at *Wine Spectator* cherish Emeril and the memory of Charlie and are very happy to support the event."

While the Trotter lot was the biggest draw of the night, *Carnivale du Vin*'s 20th live auction raised \$1.86 million in total. Combined with a



Charlie Trotter's widow, Rochelle, spoke to *Carnivale du Vin* auction goers, including founder Emeril Lagasse (white chef coat), about the rare wine donated in Trotter's name.

silent auction, a fund-a-need lot and other events over the weekend, the charity brought in more than \$3 million.

Lagasse and his wife, Alden, established the foundation in 2002. It's given a combined \$20 million in grants, primarily to youth programs focused on culinary, nutrition and arts education.

Trotter and Lagasse were longtime friends and culinary collaborators. Both achieved fame in the 1980s, when fine dining reached new heights in America, and put a special emphasis on wine, earning *Wine Spectator* Grand Awards at their restaurants. Trotter retired in 2012 to follow other pursuits. Tragically, he died of a stroke just a year later at age 54.

Rochelle attended the auction and spoke to the crowd as the lot was put up for bidding. "When Charles passed away, I said, 'I am keeping this [wine].' But my husband was a philanthropist. That was one of the things he connected with Emeril on. I realized I was ready to let this wine go. I reached out to Alden and said, 'I want to do something special.'"

## BURGUNDY'S HOSPICES DE BEAUNE AUCTION RAISES OVER \$15 MILLION



Zabou Breitman (left) and Eva Longoria encourage bidding.

Burgundy's biggest name in charity auctions had an impressive 2024, despite a challenging vintage. On Nov. 17, the 164th Hospices de Beaune charity wine auction raised a grand total of

\$15.2 million to support the Hospices Civils de Beaune hospital network. This is the fourth year the event has been organized by Sotheby's.

While the auction's total was down from 2023, that reflects a smaller volume of barrels sold. The 2024 sale total was more typical after two years of record totals—\$32 million in 2022 and \$27.4 million in 2023—that were due to large harvests in Burgundy and a high number of lots up for sale. The challenging 2024 vintage saw lower yields, and 305.5 fewer barrels were up for bidding compared with 2023.

The key number at the annual auction is the price per barrel. The average hammer price per barrel of just over \$33,000 was up slightly from last year. This year, over 700 participants from 32 countries bid on a total of 447.5 barrels: 321 barrels of red wine, 118.5 of white, seven barrels of eaux-de-vie and the signature Presidents' Barrel. Like last year, 51 cuvées were up for grabs, and the

whites again proved popular. After the Presidents' Barrel, the top lots were three barrels of Bâtard-Montrachet, Cuvée Dames de Flandres, which sold for over \$372,000 each—a record for the wine.

Mounir Saouma, a longtime supporter of the auction who makes wine in Burgundy and the Rhône, told *Wine Spectator* that this year, "it was a real auction" with genuine excitement—and surprise—throughout the bidding.

In Hospices tradition, the highlight of the auction was the Presidents' Barrel, a special barrel of Beaune *premier cru* Les Bressandes that sold for over \$377,000, with the bidding cheered on by actors Eva Longoria, Dominic West, Jean Reno and Zabou Breitman, who took the podium to lead the bidding. This year, proceeds from the barrel will support the Global Gift Foundation and Doctors Without Borders, which will use the funds for a new project combating dengue fever in Honduras.

—Kenny Martin



19



70

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# Château de Beaucastel's Winery Wonder

*Ancient design concepts underlie an architectural marvel of modern sustainability*

BY KRISTEN BIELER

Louis-Antoine Grégo had a singular directive when he was tapped to be lead architect for Château de Beaucastel's ambitious new project: Design the most sustainable winery in the world.

"We wanted to choose an architect who came with really radical ideas; who thinks in a new, revolutionary way," says Marc Perrin, member of the fifth generation of the Perrin family, owners of Château de Beaucastel since 1909.

In 2018 the Perrins held a contest and Grégo, of Studio Méditerranée (in partnership with Studio Mumbai, the Mumbai-based architecture firm founded by acclaimed Indian architect Bijoy Jain), was selected out of the 500 architects, representing 32 nationalities, who entered. Grégo moved to Châteauneuf and spent weeks practically living at Beaucastel: walking the vineyards covered in the famed *galets roulés*, feeling the powerful wind which dried the vines after a rain. He realized that solutions to sustainability—how to best cope with warming temperatures and increasing drought and how to become energy independent—were hiding in plain sight. "The *terroir* and ecosystem of Beaucastel could shape our architectural answers," says Grégo.

The result, unveiled at the end of last year after nearly four years of construction, may seem underwhelming from afar. Sitting like a fortress amidst the vineyards and enclosed by earthen walls, the collection of terra-cotta-colored buildings forgoes flash and grandeur in favor of being "rooted in its landscape," Grégo describes. The new buildings blend seamlessly with the refurbished original maison and cellar built by Pierre de Beaucastel in the 16th century. Upon closer inspection, the reimagined architecture is no less than extraordinary—a



▲ The fifth and sixth generations of the Perrin family in Beaucastel's historic barrel room cellar, built in the 17th century. With its stacked barrels and large wooden vats, it's one of the most recognizable cellars in the world.

pioneering achievement that borrows methods from ancient times.

Beaucastel harmonizes with the terrain because it is, literally, the terrain. The buildings were constructed with rammed earth, compacted raw dirt made on-site from excavation material that would be considered waste at most construction sites. By mixing the various layers of earth—pebbles on top, iron-rich clay beneath, limestone stones—in an array of combinations with water and then pounding them together with force, Grégo and his team created bricks and walls that can bear weight and last for centuries. "The Romans used this method, and some of those structures did well with time—let's hope for the best," he says, smiling.

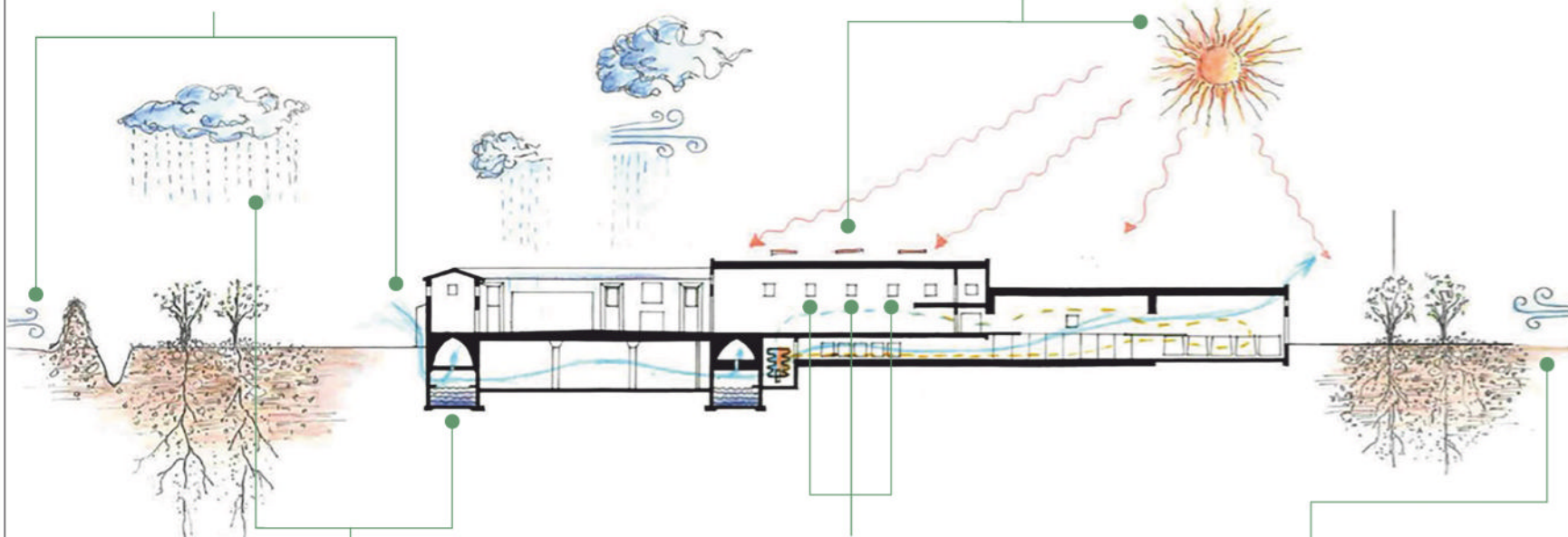
While cement production contributes an estimated 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions, rammed earth is a very low-carbon, low-waste alternative. "It's an ancient material that reduces the environmental impact of construction and has been used by man for thousands of years," Grégo explains. The aesthetic of the new winery reflects this philosophy: "It looks like it emerges from the earth and afterward can return to the earth."

To mitigate the warming climate and lack of rain increasingly plaguing the region, Grégo turned to a fifth-century Persian architectural technique. By building wind towers ("badgir" literally translates as "wind catcher") on the north side of the winery, it's possible to harness the notorious mistral wind which blows relentlessly across this stretch of



The region's powerful mistral wind provides the facility's air conditioning.

Rooftop solar panels supply all energy.



Rainwater is collected, filtered and stored in large underground cisterns 10 meters below ground—and then used for cleaning and watering the gardens.

Chimneys based on ancient Persian architecture funnel the mistral wind, which blows over the underground cisterns where the air is naturally cooled and circulates throughout the cellars and building.

The vineyard soils are also ideal for construction: Pebbles and sandstone cemented by silica on the top layer can be compressed into bricks.



▲ Walls are made from rammed earth—compressed soil extracted from the site. Mixed with water, the material is strong enough to build walls that can last for centuries, without the need for concrete.

◀ The new barrel room has the feel of a vaulted cathedral and connects to the historic cellar.

The red clay and sand beneath, left from the Miocene era, can be used to build load-bearing walls;



Limestone gravel can make natural concrete.

Southern Rhône. The ventilation slats open at night and then force the air underground, where it passes over a series of cisterns holding half a million gallons of naturally collected rainwater. Located 10 meters underground, they maintain a steady temperature of around 14° C. and effectively cool the air passing over them, thereby providing the entire facility's air conditioning needs.

Harvested rain, collected from the winery's roof, is also used for irrigating plants and cleaning the winery—critical in a region where water is increasingly scarce.

The project's code name—"Beaucastel 2050"—is a reference to "our ambition to build a winery that our grandchildren will be proud of," shares Marc Perrin. "Beaucastel is what it is today because of the right decisions made by the previous generations of Perrin, and in particular by our grandfather Jacques. He was a pioneer." (Jacques started farming organically in 1950 and then biodynamically in 1974, light-years before it was en vogue.) "We want to be as much of a visionary as he was."

To book a tour and tasting at the new winery, email [visits@familleperrin.com](mailto:visits@familleperrin.com). □





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## Bordeaux Excels

According to senior editor and Bordeaux taster James Molesworth, the 2022 vintage marks the warmest year since the torrid 2003, but much has changed since then, primarily in the vineyards. While the reds show the warmth of the year, they also maintain a sense of freshness and purity. This group here offers great value from this excellent vintage.

### CHÂTEAU SIRAN Margaux 2022 (94, \$40)

Fleshy; mulberry, blackberry puree, hibiscus, iris, black tea, sweet cedar

### CHÂTEAU DALEM Fronsac 2022 (92, \$29)

Plum, cassis, warm earth, sweet tobacco, violet, sanguine; saturated, focused

### CHÂTEAU DE LA HUSTE Fronsac 2022 (92, \$22)

Solidly built, muscular; dark currant, plum, charcoal, warm earth, dark tobacco, chalk

### CHÂTEAU DU TERTRE Margaux Les Hauts du Tertre 2022 (92, \$25)

Cherry, plum, red currant, iron, violet, hibiscus; sleek, lively

### CHÂTEAU HERVÉ-LAROQUE Fronsac 2022

(92, \$21) Fresh, savory; red and black currant preserves, singed cedar, tobacco

## West Coast

Here's a selection of delicious reds and whites from Washington and California that deliver plenty of character and flavor without breaking the bank.

### GORMAN Cabernet Sauvignon

Red Mountain Old Scratch 2022 (93, \$35) Rich, intense, broad-shouldered; blackberry, cherry, grilled herbs, green olive

### QUIVIRA Sauvignon Blanc Dry

Creek Valley 2022 (93, \$20) Fragrant, expressive; lemongrass, lemon verbena, sweetgrass, Meyer lemon, yuzu, apple

### DRY CREEK Sauvignon Blanc

Dry Creek Valley 2023 (92, \$25) Meyer lemon, Sumo orange, ginger, lemon balm, lemon thyme, lemon curd, sea salt; sleek

### L'ECOLE NO. 41 Cabernet

Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2021 (92, \$32) Black cherry, dark plum, licorice, coffee bean; structured, expressive

### HUSCH Sauvignon Blanc

Mendocino 2023 (90, \$18) Lemon-lime, lemongrass, lemon balm, yuzu; vibrant, intense

### CLINE Mourvèdre Contra Costa

County Ancient Vines 2022 (88, \$16) Zesty; fresh pepper, dried cherry, smoked meat

### ACCOLADE Chardonnay

California Dolly 2023 (87, \$15) Ripe peach, Crenshaw melon, dried mango, candied ginger, spices; plump, charming

## On the Rhône

These bottlings from the Rhône Valley are sure to please, offering a mix of benchmark producers alongside a rising star, Guillaume Gonnet. The pair of succulent whites from Pélaquié feature a range of expressive flavors.

### FERRATON PÈRE & FILS Crozes-Hermitage

Calendes 2022 (91, \$28) Glossy, high-toned; blackberry, cherry, licorice, lavender, anise

### GUILLAUME GONNET Lirac Le Virtuose 2023

(91, \$26) Violet, licorice root, açai berry, boysenberry, mineral, apple wood smoke; perfumed

### ALAIN VOGÉ Côtes du Rhône Les Peyrouses

2022 (90, \$25) Fresh, tangy; violet, black plum, black pepper, baking spices, cast iron, leather

### BROTTE Cairanne Domaine Grosset 2023 (90,

\$20) Cherry, licorice, graphite, lavender, violet, singed *garrigue*, smoky sandalwood

### DOMAINE PÉLAQUIÉ Côtes du Rhône White NV

(90, \$17) Luscious, balanced; peach, apricot, citrus pith, tangerine peel, chalky mineral, herbs

### DOMAINE PÉLAQUIÉ Côtes du Rhône-Villages

White Laudun 2022 (90, \$17) Melon, white blossoms, salt, mineral, green almond; pretty, lively

### SIMIAN Côtes du Rhône Les Clefs du Caladas

2022 (90, \$22) Red currant, plum, smoked meat, peppery herbs, rooibos red tea; smoky, sultry

## Worlds Apart

This selection spans both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, yet all of these reds and whites caught our attention for their distinctive personalities and great prices.

### DE MARTINO Carmenère Maipo

Valley Legado Reserva 2023 (91, \$20) Lush, fresh; cherry, raspberry, dried rose petal, loam, peppery herbs, mineral

### ALTOS LAS HORMIGAS Malbec

Uco Valley Reserve 2022 (90, \$25) Juicy strawberry, plum, thyme, mineral; energetic, savory

### BODEGAS CARO Malbec-

Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza Amancaya 2022 (90, \$26) Fresh, airy; floral, raspberry, blueberry, dried lavender, graphite, mocha

### CANTINA ANDRIANO Pinot

Bianco Alto Adige Finado 2023 (90, \$22) Honeycrisp apple, honeysuckle, pink grapefruit pith, blanched almond; bright, zesty

### DE WETSHOF Chardonnay

Robertson Bon Vallon 2023 (90, \$25) Fresh, svelte; yellow apple, pear, blood orange granite, slivered almond, salty mineral

### D'ANGELO Basilicata Sacravite

2023 (89, \$16) Fresh, plump, chewy; cherry, plum, wild herbs, iron, fresh earth



**GLENELLY** Estate Reserve Stellenbosch 2017 (90, \$25) **SMART BUY** Savory, chewy, lively; plum, baked currant, game, iron, smoke, mocha, tobacco

—Bruce Sanderson

## SPECTATOR SELECTIONS

### HIGHLY RECOMMENDED



**98 ROAGNA** Barbaresco Albesani 2019 \$200 ITALY

There's fluidity and viscosity to the texture in this red, setting the stage for its

macerated cherry, strawberry, rose hip, hay and eucalyptus flavors. This has an underlying mineral element too, which works in tandem with the vibrant acidity and refined tannins.

### COLLECTIBLE



**95 DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE** Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau 2021 \$129 FRANCE

Offers an alluring

perfume of red currant and dried cherry that's followed by earth tones of warm chestnut, wet leaves, brown bread and pepper, all built upon a plank of iron. Elegant in spite of its weight.

### SMART BUY



**92 BROWNE** Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Heritage 2022 \$20 WASHINGTON

Generous and handsomely sculpted, with expressive black cherry, mocha espresso and toasty spice flavors that gather richness and texture on the finish.

### BEST VALUE



**90 WENTE** Chardonnay Central Coast Morning Fog 2023 \$18 CALIFORNIA

Vibrant and expressive, offering nutmeg-scented pear, Fuji apple and peach

flavors that are delicate and precise but not shy on concentration and generosity, with sleek, precise acidity.

### IN THIS ISSUE'S BUYING GUIDE

You'll find **75 classic wines** and **350 outstanding wines** from among reviews of more than **475 new releases**. Tasting notes and scores for those wines, along with **hundreds of additional wines** reviewed since our last issue, can be found at [WineSpectator.com](https://www.winespectator.com) using the Wine Ratings search, a members-only service.



# Simple Slogans Over Solid Science

**V**ivek Murthy could have chosen a lot of ways to spend his final weeks as U.S. Surgeon General. Six in 10 Americans suffer from a chronic disease such as type 2 diabetes or Alzheimer's or heart disease. Mental health issues have been rising. A form of avian flu killed an elderly man in Louisiana in January.

But Murthy chose to focus his final health advisory on alcohol, calling for beverages to carry warnings stating that alcohol is a cancer risk. He also called for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to revisit the alcohol consumption recommendations in the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

It's a curious move, because Murthy's advisory was largely symbolic; only Congress can mandate warning labels. What's more, Murthy undercut his own medical colleagues in the government. Two weeks earlier, the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) had issued a report by 14 experts in public health; as part of HHS's review for the dietary guidelines, the panel and its staff conducted a deep dive into the current science on alcohol's impact on health and found with "moderate certainty" that people who drink in moderation have lower all-cause mortality than those who don't drink.

Murthy chose to ignore that in favor of a simplistic message: He focuses on alcohol as a cancer risk and ignores any health benefits. If there is one trademark of the growing neoprohibitionist campaign, it is that simplistic slogans sell; nuanced science doesn't. Murthy decided one of his last acts should be to join the chorus.

A lesson public health authorities should have learned in recent years is that black-and-white health pronouncements are a bad idea. They make people believe the answers are simple. When it comes to health, they almost never are.

The NASEM report is not simple. It notes that research on alcohol and health is complex because studies are limited to looking at correlation rather than causation. Researchers often have to rely on people self-reporting how much they drink. They found, with moderate certainty, "that compared with never consuming alcohol, moderate alcohol consumption is associated with lower all-cause mortality."

These findings reflect what the majority of peer-reviewed re-



*The outgoing surgeon general has chosen to focus his final advisory on the hazards of even moderate alcohol consumption.*

search has found in the past two decades. Moderate alcohol consumption—no more than two drinks per day—has been linked to lower rates of cardiovascular disease. It has also been linked to higher rates of certain cancers. Yes, the evidence suggests that alcohol is one of several risks for cancer, along with diet, genetics, exercise and tobacco use. But because cardiovascular diseases remain the number one cause of death in the U.S. (702,880 Americans died of heart disease and 165,393 died of stroke in 2022, compared to 608,371 deaths from all cancers), moderate consumption is linked to a lower rate of mortality.

Murthy's report is not interested in this nuanced picture. His advisory trumpets the cancer risks without giving the whole health story. Never mind any possible health benefits for the heart. Never mind that for thousands of years, alcohol has fostered community by bringing people together for food and conversation. (Murthy has noted in a past advisory that millions suffer from chronic loneliness and isolation.)

The surgeon general's advisory was not the only pushback to the NASEM report. While the NASEM review is customary for the guidelines process, for the first time a second committee has been created under an HHS agency, called the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD). The six members of the committee are not cardiologists or medical researchers, but substance abuse experts, many of whom have made their careers looking into alcoholism and how governments can reduce harmful drinking. Several work for organizations funded partially by advocates for temperance. When their report came out, the message was unnuanced and unsurprising: "The risk of dying from alcohol use begins at low levels."

For decades, medical experts have tried to get across a complex message: Alcohol in moderation, and particularly if paired with food, is low risk. Heavy and binge drinking are not healthy.

But nuance is hard. We want simple answers. Neoprohibitionists have a very simple one—no level of alcohol consumption is safe. Long term, I think they will regret their stance. History has shown that overly simplistic health pronouncements don't age well. But for the time being, buckle up. The chorus is going to get loud.

Senior editor Mitch Frank has been with Wine Spectator since 2005.



# Sonoma County Past and Future

**A**fter covering 36 grape harvests in Sonoma County, I've been thinking a lot about Gravenstein apples.

That's not the non sequitur it may sound like. Grapes and Gravensteins share a long history in Sonoma and both have been vital agricultural crops to the county over the years, their fortunes rising and receding along the way. Times aren't so good for either these days.

You've heard, no doubt, that wine consumption has been decreasing in the United States since 2021. Last year, sales volume dipped 2.8% to 319.2 million 9-liter cases, a more than 9-million-case decline, according to *Impact Databank*, a sibling publication to *Wine Spectator*.

In California, this has led to a glut of unsold grapes after the 2024 harvest. In some cases, grapes were dropped on the ground or left to rot on the vine. Sonoma growers struggled to sell even Chardonnay, one of county's claims to wine fame. It's a situation that was inconceivable just a few years ago. Except for a downturn during the 2008 recession, California wine sales had been growing steadily since the early 1990s. Even the pandemic brought sales as consumers stocked up and hunkered down at home.

I moved to Sonoma County in 1989, just as the California wine boom was gaining momentum. Except for Santa Rosa, which had a population of 82,000 back then, the county was Midwest rural in kind. I remember the Gravenstein trees were in bloom those first few weeks, white flowers with shades of pink. They were a remarkable sight set against the vividly green hills of West County, as we call the area around Sebastopol, which remains the county's apple capital.

Gravensteins are a true heirloom apple and one of the oldest varieties still cultivated, dating to 1669 and reportedly brought to Sonoma County by Russian fur trappers who established a settlement along the Pacific coast in the early 1800s. Wine grapes came in the 1830s when Spanish Franciscan monks planted grapes for sacramental wine at Mission San Francisco Solano, near what is now Sonoma Plaza.

Ironically, apples replaced wine grapes as one of the county's



*Today, apple trees are fading from the landscape, while there are 62,000 acres of grapes. But that too might be changing.*

most important crops after Prohibition started in 1920. Many vineyards were ripped out and replaced with apple orchards. Gravenstein's heyday was in the 1940s and '50s but it remained a regional apple. The sweet/tart and spicy flavor is appealing for eating and applesauce, but it fades in long-term storage and the skin bruises easily, so the variety is not ideal for shipping.

By the late 1980s, Sonoma's apple industry was on the wane, and soon vineyards started replacing orchards. The county's agriculture was coming full circle. That process accelerated in the past 25 years. Growers and wine-makers realized that apple trees and vineyards thrive in the same Sonoma *terroir*—soil, seasons and atmosphere. Farmers who struggled to survive by growing apples realized there was a lot more money in wine grapes.

Today, apple trees are fading from the Sonoma landscape. In the 1940s, Sonoma County had about 15,000 acres of apples; now only about 2,000 remain, and only 633 acres of those are Gravensteins. By comparison,

there are 62,000 acres of grapevines in the ground.

But that too might be changing. Grape broker Glenn Proctor of Ciatti Company estimates that between 30,000 and 40,000 acres of vines have been removed in the past year, much of it in Central Valley regions like Lodi. "I think we're going to continue to see more acres removed," Proctor told me.

Sonoma won't be immune to the loss of acreage but it will fare better than other winegrowing regions in the Golden State, I'm convinced. Chardonnay and Pinot Noir remain two of the most-popular California wines and Sonoma is among the best places in the world to grow those grapes. Sonoma also offers a rare combination—great quality at a good value. Napa can't offer that.

When I wrote a column five years ago that reflected on my three decades of living and working in Sonoma, I said, "I still think of it as the county I first knew." That's not quite true anymore. And yet, outside of growing cities like Santa Rosa, Petaluma and Healdsburg, the county isn't all that different now. Maybe I'm getting more nostalgic as I get older, or maybe I worry about what's on the horizon.

*Senior editor Tim Fish has been with Wine Spectator since 2001.*





CAYMUS  
VINEYARDS  
Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon



When a simple gathering  
becomes a night to remember.





# Best of the Best

*Our editors profile the world's greatest wine regions and guide you to the wines and wineries that are leading the way*

**O**f the myriad growing regions and wine varieties beloved by our readers and covered in-depth by our editors each year, a select few stand out for track records of excellence over many years, benchmark wines that express *terroir*, and forward thinking in the vineyards and cellars that sets global standards for sustainability for future generations, among other achievements.

For this cover package, we have selected eight of these superlative wine categories, some Old World, some New, to profile, and in addition to providing overviews of their histories and modern progress, assembled lists of their top-performing bottlings from our editors' most recent blind tastings. In all, nearly 400 wines, representing California Cabernet, California Chardonnay, California Pinot Noir, Bordeaux, Burgundy, the Rhône Valley, Piedmont and Tuscany, are highlighted. We know you'll find some personal favorites already among them, but hope you'll also discover some places, wineries and wines new to your palate from our "Best of the Best."



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PHOTOGRAPH BY  
JEFF HARRIS

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Nigel and Shae Kinsman of Kinsman Eades make a lineup of small-production Cabernets, focusing on older-vine sites.



# CALIFORNIA CABERNET

*Napa Valley is the epicenter of showpiece reds reflecting growing viticultural insight*

BY JAMES MOLESWORTH

**T**he next time someone tells you Napa Cabernets are all oaky, overripe, high-alcohol wines, you might want to tell them they're 20 years behind the curve.

Napa Valley, which dominates the high end of California Cabernet Sauvignon production, has moved on from the 1990s period of stylistic excess that resulted in that reputation. From vintage variability, to a cadre of young winemakers that are increasingly powering a steady shift in both farming practices and winemaking styles, the category isn't at all what it was.

Young vineyards (25 years or younger) now proliferate through the valley, a result of a massive replanting brought on by the scourge of phylloxera in the 1980s. While Bordeaux can boast vineyards with generations-old vines, Napa nearly wiped its slate clean and began anew. Though replanting is expensive and production takes a hit, the chance to reboot quickly and with a more forward-looking approach has proven to be an advantage. Napa vineyards are now better able to handle the extreme heat and drought events that have become increasingly frequent. The replanting period gave growers and vintners a chance to reassess everything about

their vineyards, from row orientation, rootstock, clonal selection, irrigation, vineyard inputs and more. This shift is now paying dividends. What Napa Cabernet is now is hands down one of the wine world's elite categories—markedly different in profile from Bordeaux but its equal standard-bearer for the king of red wine grapes.

Since the end of the 1970s, Napa vintners have always aimed for showpiece cellars and the latest technology. With that baseline cemented, more attention is now being paid to vineyards. Holistic farming practices are increasingly the norm. A desire to nurse the vineyards along, so that they maintain their health into old age, is taking hold. Old vines, 25 years or more, are better-suited to handle weather extremes thanks to their deeper root systems. High quality fruit and finer tannins are also a result. The top wines in the valley today are proof of the approach, led by the MacDonald bottling (see chart). It's a rarity in that it includes



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MATT MORRIS



fruit from 70-year-old vines. VHR's (Vine Hill Ranch) qualitative surge is another result of the post-1980s replanting. Schrader and its portfolio of To-Kalon bottlings is a case study in *terroir*.

And that *terroir* isn't large, but it is varied. Napa's narrow, 30-mile-long stretch is a varied quilt of individual vineyards. Its southern end is cool, with AVAs such as Coombsville and Oak Knoll. It gains warmth as you move up the valley through the filet mignon of Oakville and Rutherford and farther to St. Helena and Calistoga. There's a range of soils, from the volcanic Vaca range on the eastern flank to more sedimentary soils of the western Mayacamas. Benchland vineyards create runnels

### EDITOR'S TIP

Vintage now matters in Napa. From the precocious 2019 to the vivid and sleek 2021 and *terroir*-driven 2018. You'll also want to make cellar space for the inbound 2023s.

between the two mountain ranges and the ensuing alluvial fans that spread along the valley floor. Different elevations and exposure abound. The result is a seemingly endless stream of single-vineyard bottlings often made in just a few hundred cases each. Thus, your best tactic is to approach Napa Valley more as a region taking a Burgundian approach to Cabernet, rather than mirroring the vast expanse of Bordeaux.

Prices are typically high, with low triple digits the norm, and the chase for the best wines can be difficult. The good news is there are many, many wines made from both family- and corporate-owned estates worth adding to your cellar.

## BEST OF CALIFORNIA CABERNET

*WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.*

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
99	MACDONALD Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville 2021	\$225	96	COLGIN IX Estate Napa Valley 2021	\$750
98	KINSMAN EADES Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Käännös 2021	\$295	96	DALLA VALLE Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville 2021	\$275
98	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley RBS Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard 2021	\$525	96	DIAMOND CREEK Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Volcanic Hill 2021	\$500
98	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Heritage Clone To Kalon Vineyard 2021	\$525	96	DOMINUS ESTATE Napa Valley 2021	\$329
98	VHR Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville 2021	\$275	96	DVO Napa Valley 2021	\$275
97	ABREU Las Posadas Howell Mountain 2019	\$675	96	FAVIA Cabernet Sauvignon Coombsville 2021	\$250
97	ACCENDO Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2021	\$395	96	FUTO Oakville 2021	\$550
97	DALLA VALLE Maya Napa Valley 2021	\$500	96	GRACE FAMILY Cabernet Sauvignon St. Helena Cornelius Grove 2021	\$350
97	KINSMAN EADES Cabernet Sauvignon Diamond Mountain District Rhadamanthus 2021	\$295	96	HEITZ Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Martha's Vineyard 2018	\$350
97	LOKOYA Cabernet Sauvignon Spring Mountain District 2021	\$550	96	PAUL HOBBS Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard 2021	\$500
97	MEMENTO MORI Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beckstoffer Dr. Crane Vineyard 2021	\$395	96	KEPLINGER Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Vine Hill Ranch Vineyard 2021	\$225
97	MEMENTO MORI Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Vine Hill Ranch Vineyard 2021	\$350	96	KINSMAN EADES Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Kodō 2021	\$295
97	SCARECROW Cabernet Sauvignon Rutherford 2021	\$600	96	KINSMAN EADES Cabernet Sauvignon Yountville Anjea 2021	\$295
97	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard 2021	\$525	96	LOKOYA Cabernet Sauvignon Diamond Mountain District 2021	\$550
97	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard MMXXI 2021	\$1,295 (1.5L)	96	LOKOYA Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain 2021	\$550
97	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley CCS Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard 2021	\$525	96	LOKOYA Cabernet Sauvignon Mount Veeder 2021	\$550
97	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley LPV Beckstoffer Las Piedras Vineyard 2021	\$525	96	MEMENTO MORI Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beckstoffer Las Piedras Vineyard 2021	\$350
97	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Monastery Block To Kalon Vineyard 2021	\$525	96	OUTPOST Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain True Vineyard 2021	\$200
97	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Stags Leap District WH Wappo Hill Vineyard 2021	\$525	96	RIVERS-MARIE Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville M-Bar Ranch 2021	\$165
97	SPOTTSWOODE Cabernet Sauvignon St. Helena 2021	\$285	96	RIVERS-MARIE Cabernet Sauvignon St. Helena Panek Vineyard 2021	\$135
97	STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Stags Leap District Cask 23 2021	\$375	96	SALVESTRIN Cabernet Sauvignon St. Helena Dr. Crane Vineyard 2021	\$95
97	STEWART Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Nomad Beckstoffer Dr. Crane Vineyard 2021	\$240	96	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Colesworthy Beckstoffer Las Piedras Vineyard 2021	\$1,295 (1.5L)
97	STEWART Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Nomad Beckstoffer Las Piedras Vineyard 2021	\$240	96	SCHRADER CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Rutherford GIII Beckstoffer Georges III Vineyard 2021	\$525
96	ANNULUS Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Vine Hill Ranch Vineyard 2021	\$250	96	SEAVEY Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2018	\$240
96	DAVID ARTHUR Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Elevation 1147 2021	\$300	96	STAG'S LEAP WINE CELLARS Cabernet Sauvignon Stags Leap District S.L.V. 2021	\$250
96	COLGIN Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Tychson Hill 2021	\$750	96	STEWART Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Nomad Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard 2021	\$240
96	COLGIN Cariad Napa Valley 2021	\$750	96	TO KALON VINEYARD COMPANY Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville H.W.C 2021	\$250
			96	TO KALON VINEYARD COMPANY Elizas's Oakville 2021	\$225
			96	PHILIP TOGNI Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2021	\$195



# CALIFORNIA CHARDONNAY

*A golden age for the state's premier white is defined by expressive, cellarworthy wines*

BY MARYANN WOROBIEC

Chardonnay has been an important part of the California wine scene especially since the 1970s, when plantings of the grape took off. According to the most recent California Grape Acreage Report (2023) put out by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, there are more than 88,000 acres planted in the Golden State, or 19% of the total wine grape acreage, second only to Cabernet Sauvignon.

Today California Chardonnay represents one of the most consistent sources for high quality, expressive, *terroir*-driven and ageable wines. But the various fashions of Chardonnay and the path this category has been on can create confusion among consumers. The Chardonnay styles of the 1990s and the cheap Chardonnays on supermarket shelves are no longer representative of the best the state has to offer. One of the most common refrains I hear from vintners is that wine lovers tell them, “I don’t like Chardonnay, but I like yours.”

Since the 1970s, California vintners have learned about where

the grape does well and how to farm and vinify it to get the best results. By the 1990s, California Chardonnays were known, at best, for fruit-forward, concentrated styles including tropical fruit flavors, and bold, rich wines with lavish oak and alcohol percentages that regularly topped 14%. At worst, they were overoaked, high-alcohol concoctions with notes of butter, toasted marshmallow and spice that overwhelmed the fruit within. A backlash against the grape was called the ABC movement, “Anything But Chardonnay.”

## EDITOR'S TIP

The best Chardonnays from the Golden State age beautifully. Consider purchasing a handful of your favorite wines and cellar them to revisit periodically as they evolve, with more savory notes and additional expressions of vintage variations.

By the 2000s and 2010s, a shift occurred, with more California producers reassessing their approaches and moving toward fresher, more restrained styles, largely driven by a broader interest in *terroir*

97

Kistler winery overlooks the acclaimed Vine Hill Vineyard, among the producer's portfolio of sought-after Chardonnays.





expression, sustainability and finesse in winemaking.

Today California Chardonnay encompasses a significant diversity of styles, ranging from the full-bodied, rich wines that have long been associated with the state to purer, more energetic versions that emphasize clarity and site. But here's what is remarkable; even the bolder Chardonnays today typically show more brightness and juicy qualities, as they evolved to reflect their own takes on current trends.

Winemakers openly discuss doing less in the cellar to allow the fruit and *terroir* to shine through more transparently. They emphasize the importance of precision, subtlety and avoiding overintervention—often reducing oak influence (including less oak use, larger oak containers and lower new oak percentages) and focusing on the intrinsic characteristics of the vineyard sites. Chardonnay has been known as “the winemaker’s grape” for how much it can transmit the winemaking choices, but these days, less is definitely more.

The move toward fresher styles means certain cool-climate regions stand out, such as Sonoma Coast, Santa Barbara County and pockets along the Central Coast. Winemakers are increasingly turning to specific, high quality vineyard sites that reflect the diversity of California’s varied *terroirs*. Regional blends are also stronger than ever, as winemakers tap into what makes each corner of the Golden State special. There is also more attention to clones—especially heritage clones—that have been propagated for freshness and intensity.

With winemakers paying careful attention to vineyard management, precise cellar work and a focus on the purity of the fruit, California Chardonnay is a compelling category now in a golden age.



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HdV winemaker  
Guillaume Boudet  
makes the winery's  
Comandante bottling  
from old-vine Wente  
clones in Hyde Vineyard.

## BEST OF CALIFORNIA CHARDONNAY

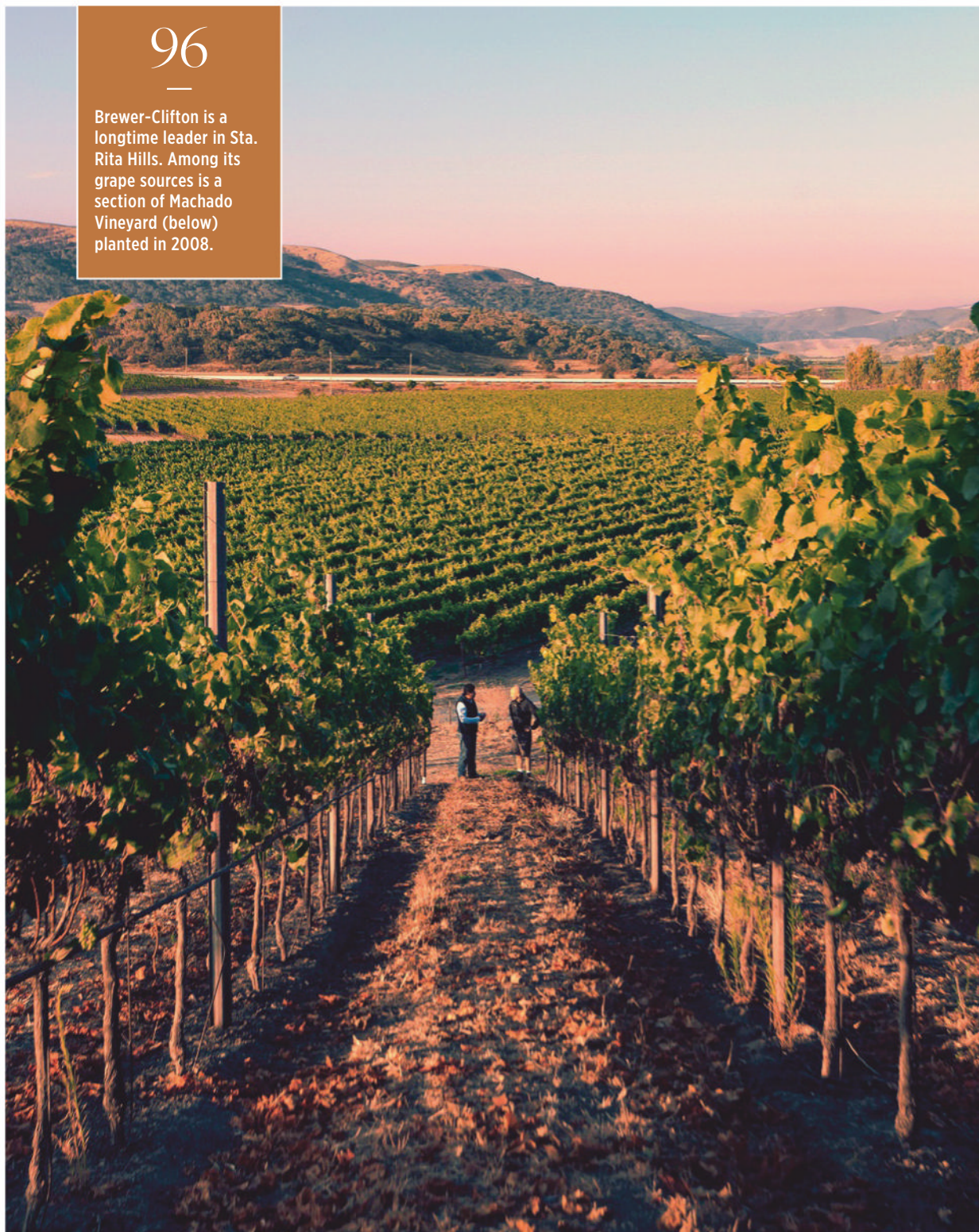
*WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.*

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
97	AUBERT Chardonnay Carneros Larry Hyde & Sons 2021	\$95	95	AUBERT Chardonnay Sonoma Coast Powder House 2021	\$110
97	AUBERT Chardonnay Sonoma Coast Lauren 2022	\$150	95	FLOWERS Chardonnay Sonoma Coast Camp Meeting Ridge 2022	\$90
97	AUBERT Chardonnay Sonoma Coast Park Avenue 2022	\$110	95	HdV Chardonnay Napa Valley Hyde Vineyard 2021	\$85
97	AUBERT Chardonnay Sonoma Coast Powder House 2022	\$110	95	PAUL HOBBS Chardonnay Sonoma Mountain Richard Dinner Vineyard 2022	\$95
97	FERREN Chardonnay Sonoma CoastFrei Road Vineyard 2021	\$90	95	KISTLER Chardonnay Sonoma Mountain McCrea Vineyard Athearn Estate 2021	\$105
97	HdV Chardonnay Napa Valley Comandante Hyde Vineyard 2021	\$175	95	KISTLER Chardonnay Sonoma Valley Cuvée Cathleen Kistler Vineyard 2021	\$150
97	KISTLER Chardonnay Russian River Valley Laguna Ridge Vineyard 2021	\$225 (1.5L)	95	PETER MICHAEL Chardonnay Knights Valley Ma Belle-Fille 2022	\$130
97	KISTLER Chardonnay Russian River Valley Vine Hill Vineyard 2021	\$105	95	PETER MICHAEL Chardonnay Knights Valley Mon Plaisir 2022	\$115
96	AUBERT Chardonnay Napa Sugar Shack 2021	\$110	95	RAMEY Chardonnay Russian River Valley Rochioli Vineyard 2021	\$85
96	AUBERT Chardonnay Russian River Valley Eastside 2021	\$95	95	RAMEY Chardonnay Russian River Valley Westside Farms Estate 2021	\$85
96	AUBERT Chardonnay Sonoma Coast CIX 2022	\$125	95	ROCHIOLI Chardonnay Russian River Valley Rachael's Vineyard 2022	\$84
96	AUBERT Chardonnay Sonoma Coast UV-SL Vineyard 2022	\$100	95	THREE STICKS Chardonnay Sonoma Coast Gap's Crown Vineyard 2022	\$70
96	KISTLER Chardonnay Carneros Hyde Vineyard 2021	\$105	95	WAYFARER Chardonnay Fort Ross-Seaview Wayfarer Vineyard Cuvée Cleo 2022	\$175
96	KISTLER Chardonnay Sonoma Valley Durell Vineyard 2021	\$105			
96	PETER MICHAEL Chardonnay Knights Valley La Carrière 2022	\$115			
96	RAMEY Chardonnay Napa Valley Carneros Hyde Vineyard 2021	\$85			
95	AUBERT Chardonnay Sonoma Coast CIX 2021	\$115			



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Brewer-Clifton is a longtime leader in Sta. Rita Hills. Among its grape sources is a section of Machado Vineyard (below) planted in 2008.



# CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIR

*With quality rivaling Burgundy premiers crus, these versatile reds are setting new benchmarks*

BY JAMES MOLESWORTH

**O**f all categories in wine, none seem to be on as ascendant a trajectory as California Pinot Noir.

The varietal is grown successfully from the reaches of the Northern California coast down through Santa Barbara. Inland sites, both mountain and valley, also provide compelling wines.

The vineyard base features both old vines, which serve as an example of how important healthy old vineyards are to quality, and newly developed sites that exploit the best of modern viticultural techniques to result in great wines nearly right out of the gate.

While Cabernet Sauvignon still commands the marketplace spotlight, Pinot Noir has nearly caught up. The best wines are consistently at Burgundy's *premier cru* level at a fraction of the price. A small handful of bottlings now flirt with *grand cru* quality and as producers hone their craft and the young-vine vineyards settle in, it seems inevitable that quality will rise even further and become even more consistent. Adding to the scenario is a range of styles, all driven primarily by *terroir* rather than winemaker or market influence.

In Southern California, Santa Barbara has cemented itself as a world-class wine region, focused primarily on Pinot Noir and its Burgundian sibling Chardonnay. Here, the wines display a vibrant, taut feel in terms of structure and abundant minerality, while offering alluring red fruit, red tea and incense aspects. Sta. Rita Hills has been the source of the top wines, which bristle with tensile energy and pinpoint fruit. The area's early pioneers helped draw the map, which is now being fully exploited by the likes of a new generation of producers, including Domaine de la Côte, Brewer-Clifton and Racines.

In Northern California, Sonoma is the clear lead region, while its smaller nested AVAs

add pixelation to the map. Carneros and its broad, rich, dark-fruited style provide contrast to the punchy pomegranate and hibiscus profile of Russian River Valley bottlings. Along the western coast the wines are marked by an ocean breeze-fed minerality that pierces a beautifully pure red cherry, raspberry and incense character. Of



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**EDITOR'S TIP**

Focus on top vineyards. Building a cellar that features multiple bottlings of the same vineyard from different producers will yield years of fun compare-and-contrast imbibing.

Bien Nacido, Silver Eagle, Hirsch and Hyde are a good starting point.

note is the area around the towns of Freestone and Occidental, now ground zero for a wave of wines underscoring the qualitative surge. The winemaking talent working here is impressive: Thomas Rivers Brown, Mark Aubert, Steve and Catherine Kistler, Matt Courtney, Paul Hobbs, Jeff Mangahas, Jason Kesner and Bibiana González among them.

Recent vintages have been strong; 2018 featured wines of density and structure; 2019 flowed with exuberant fruit; 2021 stands as the current benchmark; and 2023 looks to be compelling. Even the in-between years turned out some excellent wines, as the cooler-than-Napa weather in Sonoma and the early ripening Pinot Noir (versus Cabernet Sauvignon) allowed producers to potentially escape the difficulties of 2020

(wildfires) and 2022 (excessive heat).

At this point, the only benchmark California's Pinot Noir producers have to set for themselves is their wines' ageability, which means proving en masse that their wines develop in bottle over time, more than just simply enduring. Wine is a long game, and right now California Pinot Noir producers are playing it well.



95

Winemaker Matt Courtney (left) of Arista and Ferren and Arista assistant winemaker Ray Lyons sort grapes for Arista's UV bottling.

## BEST OF CALIFORNIA PINOT NOIR

*WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.*

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
97	<b>OCCIDENTAL</b> Pinot Noir West Sonoma Coast Running Fence Vineyard Cuvée Catherine 2021	\$125	95	<b>FERREN</b> Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2021	\$70
96	<b>AUBERT</b> Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast UV-SL Vineyard 2022	\$100	95	<b>FERREN</b> Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Frei Road Vineyard 2021	\$90
96	<b>BREWER-CLIFTON</b> Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills Machado 2022	\$85	95	<b>HANZELL</b> Pinot Noir Moon Mountain District 2021	\$98
96	<b>CALERA</b> Pinot Noir Mount Harlan Ryan Vineyard 2021	\$95	95	<b>PAUL HOBBS</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Cuvée Agustina Katherine Lindsay Estate 2021	\$150
96	<b>DOMAINE DE LA CÔTE</b> Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills La Côte 2022	\$155	95	<b>KANZLER</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Estate Reserve 2021	\$88
96	<b>FERREN</b> Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Silver Eagle Vineyard 2021	\$90	95	<b>KISTLER</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Laguna Ridge Vineyard 2021	\$110
96	<b>KISTLER</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Cuvée Natalie Silver Belt Vineyard 2021	\$110	95	<b>MARTINELLI</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Moonshine Ranch Vineyard 2022	\$85
96	<b>OCCIDENTAL</b> Pinot Noir West Sonoma Coast Bodega Headlands Vineyard Cuvée Elizabeth 2021	\$125	95	<b>MARTINELLI</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Sky Ridge Vineyard 2022	\$85
96	<b>OCCIDENTAL</b> Pinot Noir West Sonoma Coast Bodega Ridge Vineyard 2021	\$125	95	<b>MARTINELLI</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Zio Tony Ranch Vineyard 2022	\$85
96	<b>OCCIDENTAL</b> Pinot Noir West Sonoma Coast SWK Vineyard 2021	\$125	95	<b>RACINES</b> Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills La Rinconada Vineyard 2021	\$100
95	<b>ARISTA</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Mononi Vineyard 2021	\$90	95	<b>RIVERS-MARIE</b> Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Summa Old Vines 2022	\$90
95	<b>ARISTA</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley UV Vineyard 2021	\$115	95	<b>WILLIAMS SELYEM</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Calegari Vineyard 2022	\$78
95	<b>AUBERT</b> Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast UV Vineyard 2022	\$100	95	<b>WILLIAMS SELYEM</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Eastside Road Neighbors 2022	\$72
95	<b>BREWER-CLIFTON</b> Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills 459 2022	\$75	95	<b>WILLIAMS SELYEM</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Foss Vineyard 2022	\$78
95	<b>CALERA</b> Pinot Noir Mount Harlan de Villiers Vineyard 2021	\$95	95	<b>WILLIAMS SELYEM</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Lewis MacGregor Estate Vineyard 2022	\$125
95	<b>CALERA</b> Pinot Noir Mount Harlan Mills Vineyard 2021	\$95	95	<b>WILLIAMS SELYEM</b> Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Westside Road Neighbors 2022	\$90
95	<b>CALERA</b> Pinot Noir Mount Harlan Reed Vineyard 2021	\$95			
95	<b>CATTLEYA</b> Pinot Noir West Sonoma Coast The Goddess 2022	\$125			
95	<b>DOMAINE DE LA CÔTE</b> Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills Bloom's Field 2022	\$105			
95	<b>DOMAINE DE LA CÔTE</b> Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills Memorious 2022	\$95			



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# BORDEAUX

*Year over year, France's famed region holds its crown*

BY JAMES MOLESWORTH



94

Director Jean-Charles Cazes oversees the Pauillac estate of Château Lynch Bages, which completed a new winery in 2020.

The combination of great producers and great *terroir* always rises to the top, in both strong vintages and weak ones. No combination exemplifies that axiom better than Bordeaux's top gun in the 2021 vintage. The past editorial year saw the 2021s enter the marketplace, and for the first time since the 2013 vintage, no wines from France's most prominent wine region achieved a classic rating of 95 points or higher.

The 2021 vintage experienced one of the coolest and wettest growing seasons in the past two decades. The number of growing degree days (a measure of heat accumulation) was also extremely low for the same period. No single AOC stood out among the most heterogeneous set of wines for Bordeaux since 2000. The top-scoring reds from 2021 offer finesse, depth and balance, but with a slightly rigid feel to their more moderate structures and fruit cores. They are liberally flecked with savory, wet earth, tea and other nuances that add some allure, as well as hark back to the wines of the 1970s. I recommend drinking them in their first two decades.

While the number of top wines is reduced, there are still bottlings that merit attention. Châteaux Léoville Las Cases, Lynch Bages, Pichon Baron and Pichon-Lalande led the way on the Left Bank, while Château Pavie in St.-Emilion was the lone leader from the Right Bank.

In the end, the 2021 vintage proves how much gravitas Bordeaux has, as even when its releases are dominated by a weak vintage, the wines still need to be included in any discussion of the best wines in the world.

## EDITOR'S TIP

If you have a strong affection for a particular estate, you should support them year in and year out. Having the lighter-bodied years in your cellar will give you something to drink in the nearer term while waiting for the grander vintages to mature.

## BEST OF 2021 BORDEAUX

*WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.*

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
94	CHÂTEAU LÉOVILLE LAS CASES St.-Julien 2021	\$216	93	CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC St.-Emilion 2021	\$527
94	CHÂTEAU LYNCH BAGES Pauillac 2021	\$123	93	CHÂTEAU COS-D'ESTOURNEL St.-Estèphe 2021	\$232
94	CHÂTEAU PAVIE St.-Emilion 2021	\$306	93	CHÂTEAU LA FLEUR-PÉTRUS Pomerol 2021	\$235
94	CHÂTEAU PICHON BARON Pauillac 2021	\$278	93	CHÂTEAU HOSANNA Pomerol 2021	\$140
94	CHÂTEAU PICHON LONGUEVILLE LALANDE Pauillac 2021	\$182	93	CHÂTEAU LÉOVILLE BARTON St.-Julien 2021	\$77
93	CHÂTEAU BELLEVUE-MONDOTTE St.-Emilion 2021	\$138	93	CHÂTEAU MONBOUSQUET St.-Emilion 2021	\$56
93	CHÂTEAU CALON-SÉGUR St.-Estèphe 2021	\$118	93	CHÂTEAU SMITH-HAUT-LAFITTE Pessac-Léognan 2021	\$120
			93	CHÂTEAU TROTANOY Pomerol 2021	\$361





97

Pierre-Yves Colin-Morey and Caroline Morey are stars of the Côte de Beaune. Their range includes *grands crus*, *premiers crus* and village wines.

# BURGUNDY

*Innovation joins with centuries of history to keep the region's reds and whites on the cutting edge*

BY BRUCE SANDERSON

**T**he Burgundy region, in central France, can trace a history stretching back two millennia. For several centuries during the Middle Ages, Burgundy's grape varieties were defined, but more importantly, its vineyards planted and identified based on the unique characteristics and differences from one plot to the next.

Burgundy's essence is centered on the notion of *terroir*, the geologic, environmental and human factors that result in a specific vineyard's expression. In Burgundy, the development of viticulture and winemaking by the Cistercian monks for centuries eventually resulted in a classification of its sites, ingrained in the region's appellation system created nearly 100 years ago.

At the top of the quality pyramid, the very best vineyards are *grands crus*, where the vineyard name is the appellation (e.g., Chambertin, Montrachet, Musigny). The next tier in the hierarchy are the *premiers crus*, where the vineyard site is attached to the name of the village, for example Chambolle-Musigny Les Charmes. Wines named after a specific village comprise the next level. The most common denominator is regional appellations like Bourgogne, or Bourgogne-Hautes Côtes de Nuits.

Burgundy's layers of limestone and clay created by ancient marine sediments make it ideal for

the Pinot Noir and Chardonnay grapes that can express the minute differences from one site to the next.

And yet, despite Burgundy's long history, more changes have occurred in the past 40 years than in the previous centuries. Changing climate, a younger, more open generation of growers and merchants, increasing vineyard prices, technology, global demand and the shifting nature of how we buy Burgundy have all had an impact. At the same time, the quality of the wines has improved, and today the reds and whites of Burgundy are better than ever.

Much of the improvement in quality may be attributed to warmer growing seasons in which the grapes are becoming fully ripe. Hand in hand with these climatic changes has been a greater focus on farming, including conversion to organic and biodynamic methods, but specifically the understanding of more extreme weather conditions such as heat, drought and frost, conditions that growers have experienced since the torrid 2003 vintage.

A trend over the past two decades in winemaking has been the inclusion of stems in the vinification of red Burgundy. When green, the stems contribute bitter, astringent components, however when fully ripe and lignified, the stems lower the alcohol level slightly, adding freshness and complex floral and spicy aromas.

As the wines have improved, so has the global thirst for these silky reds and minerally whites. Multiple ownership of vineyards results in tiny quantities, anywhere from half a barrel (the Burgundy *pièce* is 228 liters) to three or four barrels, or 12 to 100 cases of wine for the world.

These economics of supply and demand have driven the prices of Burgundy and the cost of vineyards to exorbitant levels, particularly the top wines from certain producers. Domaines such as Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, Armand

## EDITOR'S TIP

Burgundy's harvests are often small due to challenging weather. The 2024 yield is minuscule, so now is the time to stock up on wines from 2022 and 2023, vintages which were above average in volume.



Rousseau, Leroy, Comtes Lafon, Domaine Leflaive and Ramonet are highly sought after and sell for thousands of dollars at auction.

Though prices for red and white Burgundy have risen at all levels of the hierarchy, the regional and village appellations have bene-

fited from the warmer vintages and areas in the north like Chablis and southern subregion of Mâconnais now field consistently ripe and authentic high quality Burgundies in a more affordable range.

Recent vintages to look for are 2022, 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017.

## BEST OF BURGUNDY

*WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.*

### REDS

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
98	LOUIS LATOUR Romanée St.-Vivant Les Quatre Journaux 2022	\$1,250	95	PIERRE DAMOY Chambertin 2019	\$2,000
97	PIERRE DAMOY Chambertin-Clos de Bèze 2019	\$2,000	95	ESPRIT LEFLAIVE Corton Les Grandes Lolières 2020	\$1,156
97	DOMAINE FAIVELEY Chambertin-Clos de Bèze 2022	\$895	95	DOMAINE FAIVELEY Clos de Vougeot 2022	\$495
97	DOMAINE FAIVELEY Corton Clos des Cortons Faiveley 2022	\$485	95	DOMAINE FAIVELEY Latricières-Chambertin 2022	\$562
97	DOMAINE FAIVELEY Echézeaux En Orveaux 2022	\$495	95	DOMAINE FAIVELEY Mazis-Chambertin 2022	\$618
97	JEAN GRIVOT Vosne-Romanée Les Beaux Monts 2021	\$445	95	JEAN GRIVOT Clos de Vougeot 2021	\$600
97	LOUIS LATOUR Corton Château Corton Grancey 2022	\$240	95	ROBERT GROFFIER Chambolle-Musigny Les Hauts-Doix 2021	\$550
97	LOUIS LATOUR Echézeaux 2022	\$550	95	LOUIS LATOUR Clos Vougeot 2022	\$500
97	LUCIEN LE MOINE Bonnes Mares 2021	\$950	95	LOUIS LATOUR Corton Clos de la Vigne au Saint 2022	\$210
96	ALBERT BICHOT Corton Clos des Maréchaudes Domaine du Pavillon 2022	\$373	95	LUCIEN LE MOINE Gevrey-Chambertin Les Champeaux 2021	\$263
96	PIERRE DAMOY Chapelle-Chambertin 2019	\$1,500	95	LUCIEN LE MOINE Grands Echézeaux 2021	\$386
96	PIERRE GELIN Chambertin-Clos de Bèze 2021	\$500	95	LUCIEN LE MOINE Pommard Les Epenots 2021	\$196
96	ROBERT GROFFIER Bonnes Mares 2021	\$1,800	95	MARCHAND-TAWSE Clos St.-Denis 2020	\$249
96	ROBERT GROFFIER Chambertin-Clos de Bèze 2021	\$1,615	95	MARCHAND-TAWSE Mazis-Chambertin Famille Tawse 2020	\$299
96	ROBERT GROFFIER Chambolle-Musigny Les Amoureuses 2021	\$1,800	95	XAVIER MONNOT Beaune Les Cent-Vignes 2022	\$110
96	LOUIS LATOUR Chambertin Cuvée Héritiers Latour 2022	\$800	95	DOMAINE DE LA POUSSE D'OR Corton Le Clos du Roi 2020	\$200
96	LOUIS LATOUR Corton Clos du Roi 2022	\$210	95	DOMAINE DE LA POUSSE D'OR Volnay Clos de la Bousse d'Or 2019	\$170
96	LOUIS LATOUR Corton-Perrières 2022	\$225	95	JACQUES PRIEUR Chambertin 2021	\$1,345
96	LUCIEN LE MOINE Clos de la Roche 2021	\$600	95	MAISON ROCHE DE BELLENE Chapelle-Chambertin 2021	\$525
96	LUCIEN LE MOINE Clos de Vougeot 2021	\$625	95	TAUPENOT-MERME Charmes-Chambertin 2020	\$457
96	LUCIEN LE MOINE Gevrey-Chambertin Les Cazetiers 2021	\$386	95	AURÉLIEN VERDET Vosne-Romanée Les Beaux Monts 2020	\$350
96	ARMAND ROUSSEAU Gevrey-Chambertin Clos St.-Jacques 2020	\$1,140	95	DOMAINE DE LA VOUGERAIE Charmes-Chambertin Les Mazoyères 2021	\$475
95	ALBERT BICHOT Clos de Vougeot Domaine du Clos Frantin 2022	\$673	95	DOMAINE DE LA VOUGERAIE Clos de Vougeot 2021	\$450
95	ALBERT BICHOT Echézeaux Domaine du Clos Frantin 2022	\$722			

### WHITES

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
98	JEAN-CLAUDE RAMONET Montrachet 2020	\$3,500	95	PIERRE-YVES COLIN-MOREY Chassagne-Montrachet Les Chenevottes 2020	\$215
97	PIERRE-YVES COLIN-MOREY Bâtard-Montrachet 2020	\$1,373	95	PHILIPPE COLIN Chevalier-Montrachet 2021	\$800
97	JEAN-CLAUDE RAMONET Bâtard-Montrachet 2020	\$1,300	95	DOMAINE FAIVELEY Corton-Charlemagne 2022	\$550
97	JEAN-CLAUDE RAMONET Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet 2020	\$1,200	95	WILLIAM FÈVRE Chablis Les Clos Domaine 2021	\$250
96	PIERRE-YVES COLIN-MOREY Chassagne-Montrachet Cailleret 2020	\$292	95	LOUIS LATOUR Montrachet 2022	\$1,290
96	PIERRE-YVES COLIN-MOREY Corton-Charlemagne 2020	\$450	95	LOUIS LATOUR Puligny-Montrachet Les Referts 2022	\$240
96	PHILIPPE COLIN Chevalier-Montrachet 2022	\$975	95	VINCENT LATOUR Meursault Perrières 2022	\$220
96	DOMAINE LEFLAIVE Bâtard-Montrachet 2021	\$1,863	95	DOMAINE LEFLAIVE Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet 2021	\$1,680
96	DOMAINE LEFLAIVE Chevalier-Montrachet 2021	\$2,197	95	DOMAINE LEFLAIVE Puligny-Montrachet Les Combettes 2021	\$633
96	DOMAINE LEFLAIVE Puligny-Montrachet Clavoillon 2022	\$520	95	DOMAINE LEFLAIVE Puligny-Montrachet Les Folatières 2022	\$688
96	LUCIEN LE MOINE Chassagne-Montrachet Cailleret 2021	\$287	95	DOMAINE LEFLAIVE Puligny-Montrachet Les Pucelles 2021	\$853
96	DOMAINE DE LA POUSSE D'OR Puligny-Montrachet Le Cailleret 2019	\$200	95	LUCIEN LE MOINE Chassagne-Montrachet Les Grandes Ruchottes 2021	\$253
95	BOUCHARD PÈRE & FILS Montrachet Domaine 2021	\$1,500	95	LUCIEN LE MOINE Meursault Charmes 2021	\$349
95	DOMAINE CLOS DE LA CHAPELLE Corton-Charlemagne Cuvée Exceptionnelle 2021	\$345	95	LUCIEN LE MOINE Meursault Genevrières 2021	\$407
95	PIERRE-YVES COLIN-MOREY Chassagne-Montrachet Les Ancegnières 2020	\$149	95	PIERRE MEURGEY Corton-Charlemagne 2022	\$541



# RHÔNE VALLEY

*Whether from the North or the South, distinctive, collectible cuvées abound*

BY KRISTEN BIELER

Climb up the steep, vine-covered hillside of Hermitage in the Northern Rhône—the source of arguably the world’s finest expressions of Syrah—and you’ll find La Chapelle, the tiny chapel built by Gaspard de Stérinberg, who lived there as a hermit after returning from the Crusades in 1224. Many centuries earlier, Greeks and then Romans produced wine from these granite slopes.

In Côte-Rôtie, just 30 miles north, long before the Guigal family revitalized winemaking on these sharply inclined schist vineyards, Romans recognized that these soils yielded superior wine; their stone walls still stand in some places. Like Hermitage, it feels eternal.

A handful of producers own most of the lauded vineyards in Hermitage: Jean-Louis Chave—the 16th generation to lead his family’s domaine—Michel Chapoutier, Paul Jaboulet Aîné and Delas Frères are the major names. Just as collectible as their richly styled, soulful reds are their ethereal Hermitage whites, based on Marsanne and Roussanne. They, too, have incredible aging potential despite relatively low acidity levels—that’s the magic of this *terroir* and its

old vines. The Hermitage blanc style of Chave and Chapoutier—complex, golden and unctuous offset by a kick of bitterness—may not be as hip today as say, a racy Puligny-Montrachet, but they remain some of the finest white wines on the planet.

Côte-Rôtie’s modern rise to fame is more recent—50 years ago its wines were considered humbler, more rustic. Today the appellation’s perfumed, elegant reds—crafted with Syrah often cofermented with a small amount of Viognier—are some of the most sought-after wines in the world. At the northernmost tip of the Northern Rhône, Côte-Rôtie is often compared to Burgundy for its elegance and refined texture, though its hallmark is a sanguine smoked bacon note. New, young producers make wine here alongside regional stalwarts like E. Guigal, Domaine Jamet, Jean-Michel Gerin and Rostaing, making it one of the Rhône’s more dynamic regions. Just south of Côte-Rôtie is the white wine appellation of Condrieu, where many world-class whites are made with 100% Viognier.

The Rhône is best understood as a tale of two valleys, distinctly different regions with their own winemaking traditions and grape varieties, united by the winding Rhône river which flows from the Alps to the Mediterranean. In the warmer, sunnier Southern Rhône, Châteauneuf-du-Pape is king. Taking its name from a time in the early 1300s when the papal residency moved from Rome to nearby Avignon, the region has long been revered for its Grenache-based red blends. Blending is the art form here and winemakers use 13 grape varieties to craft plush, generous reds—and a small number of outstanding whites.

The hot, dry years which have become the new norm can push Grenache to soaring levels of ripeness and alcohol, but miraculously,

97

Pascal, Valentin and Vincent Maurel (from left) lead the family team at Châteauneuf-du-Pape-based Clos St.-Jean, founded over 100 years ago.





the old vines have grown accustomed to warm temperatures. Vignerons are also adapting in meaningful ways, which means that the wines today show greater balance and energy than ever. Consider the current 2022 vintage, one of the hottest and driest growing seasons on record, yet the wines show incredible freshness and drinkability.

Established icons such as Château de Beaucastel, Clos des Papes and Domaine de la Vieille Julienne are joined by new names such as Rotem & Mounir Saouma and Isabel Ferrando. There's a range of styles, but the best show polished finesse alongside an authentic, soulful character. And yes, they deliver loads of lush pleasure—

### EDITOR'S TIP

Collectors should keep an eye out for top vintages such as 2020, 2019, 2016, 2015 and 2010.

what the world rightly expects from a bottle of Châteauneuf.

In recent decades, the nearby Gigondas appellation has proven its rightful place in the same league, led by pioneers like Louis Barruol of Château de St.-Cosme and Julien Brechet at Domaine des Bosquets.

Prestige can be corruptive in famous wine regions; egos and prices can soar. Yet the Rhône remains closely connected to its roots; its vignerons are farmers, most still with mud on their shoes. Compared with other elite wine places, like Burgundy or Napa, the Rhône's collectible cuvées offer fantastic value.

## BEST OF THE RHÔNE

*WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.*

### REDS

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
97	CLOS ST.-JEAN Châteauneuf-du-Pape Deus Ex Machina 2022	\$139	95	M. CHAPOUTIER Côte-Rôtie La Mordorée 2021	\$225
97	E. GUIGAL Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2020	\$720	95	M. CHAPOUTIER Ermitage Le Méal 2021	\$335
96	DOMAINE DES BOSQUETS Gigondas Le Plateau... 2022	\$88	95	M. CHAPOUTIER Ermitage Le Pavillon 2021	\$520
96	M. CHAPOUTIER Ermitage L'Ermitage 2021	\$575	95	LE CLOS DU CAILLOU Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Réserve 2022	\$225
96	JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE Hermitage 2021	\$375	95	EMMANUEL DARNAUD Hermitage 2022	\$190
96	CLOS DES PAPES Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$100	95	DELAS Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2022	\$266
96	JEAN-MICHEL GERIN Côte-Rôtie Les Grandes Places 2022	\$228	95	DELAS Hermitage Les Bessards 2022	\$266
96	E. GUIGAL Côte-Rôtie Château d'Ampuis 2020	\$210	95	DELAS Hermitage Les Grandes Vignes Ligne de Crête 2022	\$266
96	E. GUIGAL Côte-Rôtie La Mouline 2020	\$720	95	FERRATON PÈRE & FILS Ermitage Les Dionnières 2022	\$120
96	E. GUIGAL Côte-Rôtie La Turquie 2020	\$720	95	JEAN-MICHEL GERIN Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2022	\$285
96	ROTEM & MOUNIR SAOUMA Châteauneuf-du-Pape Arioso 2020	\$271	95	DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$125
96	CHÂTEAU DE ST.-COSME Gigondas Hominis Fides 2022	\$160	95	VINCENT PARIS Cornas La Geynale 2022	\$90
96	CHÂTEAU DE ST.-COSME Gigondas Le Claux 2022	\$160	95	ROGER SABON & FILS Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Secret des Sabon 2022	\$236
96	CHÂTEAU DE ST.-COSME Gigondas Le Poste 2022	\$75	95	M. SORREL Hermitage 2022	\$240
96	DOMAINE DE LA VIEILLE JULIENNE Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve 2021	\$299	95	DOMAINE DE LA VIEILLE JULIENNE Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Hauts-lieux 2021	\$109
95	BOSQUET DES PAPES Châteauneuf-du-Pape A La Gloire de Mon Grand-Père 2022	\$90	95	LES VINS DE VIENNE Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Les Grandes Places 2022	\$216
95	BOSQUET DES PAPES Châteauneuf-du-Pape Chante Le Merle Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$80	95	LE VIEUX DONJON Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$65
95	DOMAINE DES BOSQUETS Gigondas La Colline... 2022	\$88	95	DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau 2021	\$129
95	DOMAINE DES BOSQUETS Gigondas Le Regard Loin... 2022	\$306			
95	M. CHAPOUTIER Châteauneuf-du-Pape Barbe Rac 2021	\$130			

### WHITES

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
97	JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE Hermitage White 2021	\$375	95	JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE SÉLECTION Hermitage White Blanche 2020	\$87
96	CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL Roussanne Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$173	95	LIONEL FAURY Condrieu Le Mornieux 2022	\$64
96	M. CHAPOUTIER Ermitage White L'Ermitage 2021	\$800	95	FERRATON PÈRE & FILS Ermitage White Le Reverdy 2022	\$165
96	CLOS DES PAPES Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$83	95	JEAN-MICHEL GERIN Condrieu Les Eguets 2022	\$84
96	FAMILLE ISABEL FERRANDO Châteauneuf-du-Pape White St.-Prefert Vieilles Clairettes 2022	\$422	95	DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Prestige 2023	\$177
96	E. GUIGAL Ermitage White Ex Voto 2020	\$350	95	CHÂTEAU LA NERTHE Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Clos de Beauvenir 2023	\$155
96	ROTEM & MOUNIR SAOUMA Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Magis 2021	\$156	95	ANDRÉ PERRET Condrieu Clos Chanson 2022	\$139
95	DOMAINE DE BEAURENARD Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Boisenard 2022	\$110	95	GEORGES VERNAY Condrieu Coteau de Vernon 2021	\$150
95	M. CHAPOUTIER Ermitage White de l'Orée 2021	\$345	95	GEORGES VERNAY Condrieu Les Chaillées de l'Enfer 2022	\$130
95	M. CHAPOUTIER Ermitage White Le Méal 2021	\$430	95	LES VINS DE VIENNE Condrieu Lieu-Dit Jean Raude 2023	\$120
			95	LES VINS DE VIENNE Condrieu Lieu-Dit Poncin 2023	\$120



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98

The Sori San Lorenzo vineyard is the source of a prestige Barbaresco from Gaja, which also offers top Barolos. Led by Angelo Gaja, the winery helped bring Piedmont onto the world stage.



# PIEDMONT

*The Nebbiolo wines of Barolo and Barbaresco can grace either cellar or table*

BY BRUCE SANDERSON

**B**arolo and Barbaresco are the top wines from this region in northwest Italy, both made with the Nebbiolo grape. However, with 5,350 acres under vine, Barolo is roughly three times the size of neighboring Barbaresco.

In what was a poor area historically, wine production was under the purview of the nobility, particularly in the early stages of making a dry red in the mid-19th century. Then, in the post-WWII years, the Piedmont countryside lost its youthful workforce to industrial jobs in Alba or Turin.

But the ancient seabeds of Barolo and Barbaresco, with soils comprising sandstone, limestone, marl and clay, are ideally suited to Nebbiolo. The climate is influenced both by the nearby Alps and the Ligurian Sea, and combined with recent innovations in winemaking and viticulture over the past three to four decades, both regions today make high quality reds.

Compared with Tuscany, which boasts large estates under single ownership, Barolo and Barbaresco share similar characteristics with Burgundy: Small, family-owned estates share ownership of its vineyards and produce vineyard-designated wines. These vineyards, known as *Menzione Geografica Aggiuntiva* (MGA), were en-

shrined in the denomination regulations in Barolo with the 2010 vintage and Barbaresco with the 2007 vintage.

Barolo consists of 11 different communes in the zone; the most famous are Barolo, Castiglione

## EDITOR'S TIP

The back-to-back 2021 and 2020 harvests offer different personalities: 2021 is classic, structured and built for aging; 2020 is open, expressive and charming.



Falletto, La Morra, Monforte d'Alba and Serralunga d'Alba. The elevations are higher in Barolo and the soils more complex, ranging from the Diano sandstones of La Morra, Barolo and Castiglione Falletto to the dense marls of Monforte and Serralunga. The vineyards of Barolo are also farther from the Tanaro River and overall the area is a bit drier and cooler than Barbaresco.

Renowned for ferocious tannins that took years or even decades to subside, Nebbiolo often macerated on the skins for months and spent years in large, old casks of Slavonian oak. In the 1980s and 1990s, a group of young producers dubbed the "Barolo Boys" shook up the region by experimenting with shorter fermentations and aging regimes, often in small, new oak barrels, to craft more approachable wines.

Today, the producers of the more modern styles of Barolo have evolved and embraced the best of both worlds. Standouts like Paolo Scavino, Aldo Conterno and Vietti make some of Barolo's top wines, alongside traditional growers such as Giuseppe Mascarello, Giuseppe Rinaldi and Roagna who advocate aging in large oak casks.

Barbaresco was born when Domizio Cavazza, director of Alba's first enology school, formed a wine co-operative in 1894. Rejected by neighboring Barolo, he began bottling wines and labeling them

after the village. The DOCG covers 1,800 acres in four communes, with most of the vineyards in Barbaresco, Neive and Treiso. Nearly 75% of its acreage is devoted to Nebbiolo. The region shares a similar geology with La Morra in Barolo, a mix of marl and sand. Though the hilltop village of Barbaresco is slightly higher than the valley town of Barolo, overall, Barbaresco is lower in elevation than its neighbor.

The soils are rich and the climate more humid and warmer than Barolo, thus the grapes ripen about a week earlier. The wines of Barbaresco are fluid and elegant, requiring less time in wood and overall aging before release.

Though it closed in the 1920s, Cavazza's co-op was revived in 1958 and today, the Produttori del Barbaresco is one of the region's best sources of Barbaresco, particularly its single-vineyard *riservas*, making wines in the traditional style. Much of Barbaresco's success globally is due to Angelo Gaja, whose wines represented a contemporary style combining fruit and power. In the past decade, Gaja's Barbarescos have gained greater purity and elegance.

Bruno Giacosa, Marchesi di Grésy, Roagna and Bruno Rocca are other fine producers of Barbaresco. Look for the current 2021s for finesse and longevity; 2019 and 2016 are excellent earlier harvests.

## BEST OF PIEDMONT

*WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.*

### BAROLO

SCORE	WINE	PRICE
98	ROAGNA Barolo Pira Vecchie Viti 2018	\$375
98	PAOLO SCAVINO Barolo Riserva 2016	\$420
98	VIETTI Barolo Villero Riserva 2016	\$645
97	ALDO CONTERNO Barolo Cicala 2019	\$250
97	ALDO CONTERNO Barolo Granbussia Riserva 2015	\$1,000
97	ALDO CONTERNO Barolo Romirasco 2020	\$400
97	ALDO CONTERNO Barolo Romirasco 2019	\$400
97	GIUSEPPE MASCARELLO & FIGLIO Barolo Monprivato 2019	\$300
97	GIUSEPPE RINALDI Barolo Bussia 2019	\$399
97	ROAGNA Barolo Pira 2018	\$175
97	ROCCHES COSTAMAGNA Barolo Rocche dell'Annunziata Bricco Francesco Riserva 2016	\$95
97	PAOLO SCAVINO Barolo Bric del Fiasc 2020	\$136
96	CERETTO Barolo Bricco Rocche 2019	\$290

SCORE	WINE	PRICE
96	QUINTO CHIONETTI & FIGLIO Barolo Bussia Vigna Pianpolvere 2020	\$164
96	DOMENICO CLERICO Barolo Ginestra Ciabot Mentin 2020	\$156
96	ELVIO COGNO Barolo Ravera Bricco Pernice 2019	\$150
96	ALDO CONTERNO Barolo Colonnello 2019	\$250
96	GAJA Barolo Sperss 2020	\$595
96	ELIO GRASSO Barolo Ginestra Casa Maté 2019	\$125
96	MIRAFIORE Barolo Lazzarito 2019	\$150
96	ODDERO Barolo Villero 2020	\$125
96	PIRA CHIARA BOSCHIS Barolo Cannubi 2020	\$216
96	GIUSEPPE RINALDI Barolo Brunate 2020	\$399
96	GIUSEPPE RINALDI Barolo Brunate 2019	\$399
96	LUCIANO SANDRONE Barolo Vite Talin 2018	\$783
96	G.D. VAJRA Barolo Bricco delle Viole 2020	\$100
96	G.D. VAJRA Barolo Coste di Rose 2020	\$80

### BARBARESCO

SCORE	WINE	PRICE
99	ROAGNA Barbaresco Cichet Pajé 2016	\$1,500
98	GAJA Barbaresco Sori San Lorenzo 2021	\$1,056
98	ROAGNA Barbaresco Albesani 2019	\$200
98	ROAGNA Barbaresco Asili Vecchie Viti 2019	\$412
98	ROAGNA Barbaresco Cichet Pajé 2015	\$1,350
98	ROAGNA Barbaresco Pajé Vecchie Viti 2019	\$420
97	GAJA Barbaresco Sori Tildin 2021	\$960
97	ROAGNA Barbaresco Gallina 2019	\$200
97	ROAGNA Barbaresco Montefico Vecchie Viti 2018	\$375
97	ROAGNA Barbaresco Pajé Vecchie Viti 2018	\$375

SCORE	WINE	PRICE
97	BRUNO ROCCA Barbaresco Currà 2021	\$138
96	PRODUTTORI DEL BARBARESCO Barbaresco Asili Riserva 2019	\$90
96	FALLETTO DI BRUNO GIACOSA Barbaresco Rabaja' 2020	\$320
96	GAJA Barbaresco Sori Tildin 2020	\$960
96	MARCHESI DI GRÉSY Barbaresco Camp Gros Martinenga Riserva 2018	\$135
96	MARCHESI DI GRÉSY Barbaresco Gaiun Martinenga 2018	\$100
96	PAITIN Barbaresco Albesani 2021	\$65
96	ROAGNA Barbaresco Montefico Vecchie Viti 2019	\$412
96	ROAGNA Barbaresco Pajé 2019	\$200
96	SOTTIMANO Barbaresco Fausoni 2021	\$108





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**ARIZONA**



# TUSCANY

## *The ascent of Brunellos di Montalcino, Chiantis and super Tuscans*

BY BRUCE SANDERSON

**T**hough wine has a storied past in Tuscany, the modern excitement began in the 1960s, specifically in Chianti Classico. That's when innovative producers stepped outside the local regulations to focus on quality, essentially creating a new category of wines and spurring a renaissance of viticulture and winemaking.

Visionaries such as Piero Antinori, Enzo Morgante, Sergio Manetti of Monteverte and Paolo Panerai of Castellare di Castellina decided either to rely solely on the local Sangiovese grape or look to Bordeaux, boosting Sangiovese with that region's stalwarts, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. The subsequent wines were dubbed "super Tuscans" and quickly rose to become

some of the best wines of the world.

Sangiovese, planted widely in Italy but most at home in Tuscany, is the workhorse variety. It thrives in the poor, limestone, schist, clay and sandy soils of Tuscany, particularly at elevations from 850 to 2,000 feet. However, from the Italian Renaissance to post-WWII, Sangiovese was grown for quantity, not quality, in Italy.

As a result, many of the new super Tuscans relied on Bordeaux varieties, blended with Sangiovese for a uniquely Tuscan interpretation. The American palate, familiar with Cabernet from Napa and blends from Bordeaux, quickly became fans of these new reds.

Along with the new Tuscan reds came a renewed dedication to viticulture and improving the quality of Sangiovese. Decades of clonal research and experimentation with rootstocks, planting density and vine training raised the level of quality. The wines Tuscany lovers enjoy today benefit from the past half century of vision, commitment and hard work on the part of Tuscan producers.

The evolution of viticulture continues today, with warmer vintages giving riper grapes, especially impacting the tannins of Sangiovese, which can be astringent if not perfectly mature. Producers are decreasing planting density and adapting vine training as

greater knowledge and technology become available. One of the most significant changes is planting at higher elevations to retain freshness and retard ripening in the torrid Tuscan summers.

In the cellars, as the Sangiovese and other grapes deliver more fruit and softer tannins in recent vintages, the focus has been on greater precision. That means less new oak, either with *barriques* or the increasing use of larger oak *tonneaux* and casks, plus the use of concrete vats, for both fermentation and aging, to preserve fruit and freshness.

Brunello di Montalcino is a Tuscan red that has captured the hearts of wine lovers in the United States. Made from 100% Sangiovese, it is more powerful and full-bodied than Chianti Classico, with less acidity. Though a handful of wineries date to the 19th century, including the iconic Biondi-Santi and Argiano estates, the major growth of wine production in Montalcino has occurred since 1990: When the DOC was created in 1966 there were about 10 labels; today there are more than 200.

In addition to Biondi-Santi and Argiano, Podere Salicutti (under new ownership since 2016), Le Chiuse (formerly part of the Biondi-Santi production), Canalicchio di Sopra, Casanova di Neri, Valdicava and Banfi are important estates.

Historic Chianti Classico, home of the original super Tuscans, recently created the top-tier category of Gran Selezione. Antinori, Fontodi,

98

Podere Salicutti's Piaggione vineyard bottling is among the producer's several Brunellos di Montalcino that regularly earn outstanding scores.



### EDITOR'S TIP

The 2021 vintage is the best in a generation. Don't miss out on the opportunity to buy your favorite wines.



Castellare di Castellina and Isole e Olena field outstanding examples from the former group, while Barone Ricasoli, Rocca di Montegrossi, Ipsus (part of the Mazzei family holdings), Castello di Monsanto and Volpaia all produce compelling reds under the Chianti Classico denomination.

Perhaps the biggest success story in Tuscany is Bolgheri, a region that has emerged in the past 40 years and whose reds are based not on Sangiovese but on Bordeaux varieties. Tenuta San Guido's Sassicaia was the red that created the Bolgheri juggernaut, followed by Ornellaia and Masseto, Grattamacco, Le Macchiole, Antinori's Guado al Tasso and Ca' Marcanda (founded by Angelo Gaja).

The 2021 vintage in Tuscany is sensational, with more approachable wines from 2020 and the structured reds from 2019 also successful.



98

Tenuta San Guido in Bolgheri introduced one of the early super Tuscans with its Cabernet Sauvignon-based Sassicaia.

## BEST OF TUSCANY

*WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.*

### BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
98	ARGIANO Brunello di Montalcino Vigna del Suolo 2019	\$285	96	CASANOVA DI NERI Brunello di Montalcino Giovanni Neri 2019	\$260
98	PODERE SALICUTTI Brunello di Montalcino Piaggione 2019	\$126	96	CASANOVA DI NERI Brunello di Montalcino Tenuta Nuova 2019	\$170
97	LE CHIUSE Brunello di Montalcino 2019	\$113	96	DONATELLA CINELLI COLOMBINI Brunello di Montalcino Prime Donne 2019	\$125
97	COL D'ORCIA Brunello di Montalcino Poggio al Vento Riserva 2016	\$160	96	LA FIORITA Brunello di Montalcino Fiore di NO 2019	\$130
97	LISINI Brunello di Montalcino 2019	\$95	96	PIEVE SANTA RESTITUTA Brunello di Montalcino Sugarille 2019	\$285
97	SIRO PACENTI Brunello di Montalcino Pelagrilli 2019	\$60	96	LE RAGNAIE Brunello di Montalcino Casanovina Montosoli 2019	\$215
97	CASTELLO ROMITORIO Brunello di Montalcino 2019	\$83	96	SAN GIORGIO Brunello di Montalcino Ugolforte Riserva 2018	\$150
97	VALDICAVA Brunello di Montalcino Vigna Montosoli 2019	\$376	96	LIVIO SASSETTI Brunello di Montalcino Mulino 2019	\$105
96	CANALICCHIO DI SOPRA Brunello di Montalcino La Casaccia 2019	\$249	96	VAL DI SUGA Brunello di Montalcino Poggio al Granchio 2019	\$85
96	CAPRILI Brunello di Montalcino 2019	\$65			

### OTHER TUSCAN REDS

SCORE	WINE	PRICE	SCORE	WINE	PRICE
99	MASSETO Toscana 2021	\$900	96	BARONE RICASOLI Chianti Classico Gaiole CeniPrimo Gran Selezione 2021	\$95
98	ANTINORI Toscana Solaia 2021	\$500	96	BARONE RICASOLI Chianti Classico Gaiole Roncicone Gran Selezione 2021	\$95
98	ORNELLAIA Bolgheri Superiore 2021	\$280	96	BARONE RICASOLI Toscana Casalferrò 2020	\$80
98	TENUTA SAN GUIDO Bolgheri-Sassicaia Sassicaia 2021	\$300	96	CARNASCIALE Toscana 2021	\$70
97	ANTINORI Bolgheri Superiore Guado al Tasso 2021	\$175	96	CASA EMMA Chianti Classico Gran Selezione 2020	\$57
97	ANTINORI Toscana Tignanello 2021	\$180	96	GRATTAMACCO Bolgheri Superiore 2021	\$145
97	BARONE RICASOLI Chianti Classico Gaiole Colledilà Gran Selezione 2021	\$95	96	IPSUS Chianti Classico Gran Selezione 2020	\$395
97	CA' MARCANDA Bolgheri Camarcanda 2021	\$268	96	ISOLE & OLENA Toscana Cepparello 2021	\$160
97	CARNASCIALE Toscana Il Caberlot 2020	\$295	96	LE MACCHIOLE Toscana Scio 2021	\$210
97	CASTELLARE DI CASTELLINA Toscana I Sodi di San Niccolò 2020	\$92	96	TENUTA MERAVIGLIA Bolgheri Vigna Pianali 2020	\$210
97	FONTODI Chianti Classico Panzano Vigna del Sorbo Gran Selezione 2021	\$138	96	CASTELLO DI MONSANTO Chianti Classico San Donato in Poggio Il Poggio Gran Selezione 2019	\$85
97	FONTODI Colli della Toscana Centrale Flaccianello 2021	\$225	96	TENUTA DI TRINORO Toscana 2021	\$420
97	LE MACCHIOLE Toscana Messorio 2021	\$350	96	TENUTA DI TRINORO Toscana Campo di Camagi 2021	\$110
97	FATTORIA LE PUPILLE Toscana Saffredi 2021	\$110	96	TENUTA DI TRINORO Toscana Campo di Tenaglia 2021	\$110
97	ROCCA DI MONTEGROSSI Chianti Classico Vigneto San Marcellino Gran Selezione 2019	\$80	96	VILLA A SESTA Chianti Classico Il Palei 2019	\$25
97	TENUTA DI TRINORO Toscana Palazzi 2021	\$240	96	CASTELLO DI VOLPAIA Toscana Balifico 2021	\$116
96	CASTELLO DI AMA Toscana L'Apparita 2021	\$350			



2022  
2020  
2018  
2016  
2015  
2010  
2009  
2005  
2000

**100 points**

Yves Beck

**100 points**

Jeb Dunnuck

Vert de Vin

The Wine Independent

Bettane & Desseauve

**100 points**

Jeb Dunnuck

**100 points**

The Wine Advocate

The Wine Independent

Le Figaro

**100 points**

Jeb Dunnuck

**100 points**

The Wine Advocate

The Wine Independent

Jeb Dunnuck

Yves Beck

**100 points**

The Wine Advocate

The Wine Independent

Jeb Dunnuck

Bettane & Desseauve

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*RHÔNE VALLEY REPORT*

# SUNNY SIDE UP





## The Rhône's hot, dry 2022 vintage yields many excellent wines with surprising freshness | BY KRISTEN BIELER

**F**or wine drinkers who have grown accustomed to the reliably warm, ripe vintages that define the modern era in the Rhône Valley, 2022 is a welcome return to business as usual. The outlier 2021 vintage, which was atypically cold and rainy, resulted in many dilute and underripe wines, making the high quality of 2022 a true restoration of form.

Some in the industry have championed the “classic profile” of 2021, celebrating it as a nostalgic nod to the past, when cooler years and leaner wines were the norm. But most producers, if they are being honest, acknowledge that a lack of concentration and ripeness was a problem for many of the year’s wines, particularly in the Northern Rhône. This is not to say

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SERGE CHAPUIS



Poised above the town of Tain-l'Hermitage along the banks of the Rhône, the famed hill of Hermitage produces a range of highly rated reds and whites, including some of this report's top bottlings.





Brothers Antoine (left) and Maxime Graillet maintain the winemaking style pioneered by their father, Alain, at the Crozes-Hermitage domaine he founded in 1985. Whole-cluster fermentation is a house hallmark, resulting in Syrahs of great freshness and tension.

that excellent wines weren't produced—in fact, many outstanding late-release 2021s are included in this report.

But 2022 is an undeniably better vintage than its predecessor, with some truly stunning wines. That doesn't mean, though, that it was easy. "The 2022s show real elegance and purity," says Hermitage vintner Jean-Louis Chave. "It's a very good vintage—but it was not a normal growing season."

Excessive heat and drought plagued growers throughout 2022 and pushed the harvest earlier than ever. For the first time, Chave began picking grapes in early August. Yet, he explains, the vines have adapted well to these conditions, yielding wines with an impressive balance of refreshment and richness. "Some people say we need to change the viticulture, but we do the same as always," Chave says. "What has changed is the need to come back from August vacation early."

The freshness of the vintage amazed many of the vintners I spoke with this year. "For such an extreme vintage—so warm, so dry—it was surprising to find the wines so balanced," says Caroline Frey, owner and winemaker at Paul Jaboulet Aîné and its new stand-alone brand for top Hermitage cuvées, Domaine de la Chapelle. "In the very warm vintage of 2003, you could taste the hot fruit and cooked quality of the wine, but not in 2022. It gives me hope in our changing climate, that even in hot, dry years we can still make balanced wines." (La Chapelle's 2022 red has yet to be released in the U.S. market, but the wine shows excellent promise in cellar tastings.)

**D**espite the record-breaking heat and drought of 2022, the wines don't exhibit the overripe fruit or high alcohol levels that might be expected. This is partly explained by the fact that summer heat can block maturation and slow ripening, which counterintuitively can result in more balanced wines. "With the 2022s, we see lower alcohol levels and more acidity than in 2020," says winemaker Jacques Grange of Northern Rhône-based Delas Frères. "They retain the freshness of 2021, but with more power, more expression."

According to Grange, one of the hallmarks of the vintage is more immediate drinking pleasure, meaning that the wines are more readily accessible than in previous years. He also sees a strong sense of place coming through in the 2022s. The two 2022 Delas Côte-Rôties reviewed for this report—the La Landonne (95 points, \$266) and Seigneur de Maugiron (94, \$125)—reveal the hillside's signature dark, sanguine power and mineral intensity. "It is classic Côte-Rôtie," he says. "We know where we are."

Just as the region's vines have adapted to the warmer climate, its winemakers have as well. To achieve savory balance and slightly lower alcohol, many vintners are increasing the proportion of whole-cluster fermentation—pressing the entire bunches of grapes rather than first removing the stems. At Domaine Marc Sorrel, Guillaume Sorrel maintains the traditional style of his father, but since his first solo vintage in 2019 he has boosted stem inclusion to nearly 100%. "Whole cluster gives a fresher style than the past," Sorrel says. His 2022 Hermitage (95, \$240) is a case in point. Sourced from the hill's most prized *lieux-dits* of Les Bessards, Les Greffieux and Les Plantiers and made without any new oak, the wine is particularly energetic and pure.

In nearby Crozes-Hermitage, which yields a lighter, earlier-drinking and more affordable expression of Syrah, stem inclusion defines the house style at Alain Graillet, which is one of the appellation's most famous names, founded in 1985. "Whole bunch is the signature of our estate," says Alain's son Antoine, who runs the domaine

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**"The 2022s show real elegance and purity. It's a very good vintage—but it was not a normal growing season."**

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— Jean-Louis Chave

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with his brother, Maxime. He admits that it began this way largely because "we could not afford a destemmer," but in recent years the practice has become an essential tool for retaining tension in their wines. "We include the stems in the tank even if they are green. We don't get green tannins even when we pick earlier."

Harsh, rugged tannins are a problem in some of the 2022 reds. While the modern style in Cornas has moved on from its historic reputation for rusticity (in other words, green, astringent tannins), leading vintners in the area still must use care not to overextract. Top examples this year include Vincent Paris, who owns plots of 90-year-old vines on Cornas' south-facing granite slope. His 2022



Geynale cuvée (95, \$90) is weighty and structured, but the tannins are ripe. Like all Cornas, the Geynale demands at least a few years in bottle before showing its prime.

Lionel Fraise, who took over at Domaine Alain Voge in 2018, is a master of the more polished, elegant Cornas style. His 2022 bottlings of Les Chailles (94, \$70) and Les Vieilles Vignes (94, \$95) each offer plenty of deep, silky fruit and impressive vividness within their amply structured frames. (Cornas' iconic Domaine Clape releases its wines later than others, so its 2022 wasn't available for review, yet the estate's 2021 vintage is worth seeking out.)

The white wines of the Northern Rhône are full-bodied and lush in 2022, with some showing a bit of heat from higher alcohol levels. Top *terroirs* and judicious winemaking yielded the best versions. For the more opulent side of Hermitage blanc, based on Roussanne and Marsanne, look for the Delas Domaine des Tourettes 2022 (94, \$120), Emmanuel Darnaud 2022 (94, \$190) and Tardieu-Laurent 2022 (94, \$75). Two of the stars in this style—Michel Chapoutier and Jean-Louis Chave—both release their wines a year behind, so look for their 2021 reds and whites while waiting for their 2022s.

For a more restrained, mineral-driven style, Domaine de la Chapelle's Le Chevalier de Sterimberg 2022 (94, \$175) is a distinctive example. Caroline Frey admits her approach is "controversial," by working in a reductive way in the cellar, inspired by Burgundy's Corton-Charlemagne. "The idea is to make something different, with real delicacy, salinity and mineral richness," she says.

The Viognier-based whites of Condrieu are a bit lower in acidity in 2022 than other years; they are broad, powerful wines. André Perret's famed whites always stand out for their lively purity and salty mineral notes, earning them 93 to 95 points this year, with prices in the \$100 to \$140 range. Georges Vernay's Les Chail-lées de l'Enfer 2022 (95, \$130) and Jean-Michel Gerin's Les Eguets 2022 (95, \$84) are two other Condrieu stars.

**I**n Châteauneuf-du-Pape, the 2022 vintage will be remembered for the violent August tornado and hail storm that tore through the appellation's most prized vineyard plateau, La Crau. Some producers suffered devastating losses, most notably Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe, which was unable to produce any



## Rating Northern Rhône Vintages

<b>2022</b>	<b>94</b>	Excessive heat and drought pushed harvest very early, yet the wines show real freshness, elegance and moderate alcohol, indicating vines have adapted to more extreme conditions. Outstanding for both reds and whites, this is an accessible vintage, with reds offering early drinkability; among whites, Condrieu is particularly voluptuous	<i>Drink or hold</i>
<b>2021</b>	<b>87</b>	Syrah suffered in this cold, rainy vintage. Volume is down due to frost and mildew, and many reds are lean, underripe and diluted. Exceptions include top hillside sites with granite <i>terroirs</i> , where some elegant wines were made. By contrast, whites are standouts, marked by high acidity and beautiful freshness supporting ripe fruit	<i>Drink or hold</i>
<b>2020</b>	<b>96</b>	One of the earliest harvests on record, with cooler nights allowing Syrah to ripen evenly and retain freshness. Despite record-setting heat and drought, the wines show classic elegance and finesse. Silky tannins mean early drinking pleasure, while good acidity and structure mean ageability. A truly great year for both reds and whites	<i>Drink or hold</i>
<b>2019</b>	<b>96</b>	Reduced crop due to windy conditions at flowering, hail in Crozes in June and a hot, dry growing season overall, but August rains helped alleviate maturity blockages and harvest was completed under ideal conditions. Reds are very concentrated and defined, with copious fruit; whites are more inconsistent	<i>Hold</i>
<b>2018</b>	<b>92</b>	Similar to the south, with an early season marred by wet weather, leading to severe mildew pressure through June. Summer was hot and dry but without heat spikes. Reds are caressing and forward; whites are showy and unctuous	<i>Drink or hold</i>
<b>2017</b>	<b>97</b>	The north enjoyed a long, warm and dry season with cool nights and well-timed rains near the end to help finish ripening; no serious weather issues as in the south. Reds are ripe and seductive; whites are juicy and well-detailed	<i>Hold</i>

Older vintages of exceptional quality: 2016, 2015, 2010, 2009, 2005, 2003, 1999, 1998, 1995, 1990, 1989, 1985, 1982, 1979, 1978, 1976, 1969, 1966, 1964, 1961, 1959

**Vintage ratings:** 95-100, classic; 90-94, outstanding; 85-89, very good; 80-84, good; 75-79, mediocre; 50-74, not recommended

**Drinkability:** "NYR" means most of the wines of the vintage are yet to be released; "drink" means most of the wines of the vintage are ready to drink; "hold" means most of the ageworthy wines have yet to fully mature; "past peak" means most of the wines are declining rather than improving.





One of Châteauneuf-du-Pape's leading estates, Domaine de la Vieille Julienne, is overseen by Jean-Paul Daumen (left) and his son, Antoine, who make highly rated versions showing power and purity from the region's sandy soils.

top cuvées from its 100-year-old vines. (Look for its stunning 2021 La Crau (95, \$129), which is now available on the market.)

The estate's second label, Télégamme, was able to produce a striking 93-point 2022 bottling, offering a delicious taste of the house DNA, which favors restraint and elegance over power. "We are almost always the first to harvest in Châteauneuf—we are looking for a lighter style," says Nicolas Brunier, who works with his sister Manon and cousin Edouard as part of the sixth generation, alongside his father and uncle.

Some growers believe that Grenache—the backbone of most Southern Rhône reds—is no longer best-suited for the warming climate. Instead, they are turning increasingly toward later-ripening, lower-alcohol varieties such as Counoise or Mourvèdre. But

not the Bruniers. "The personality of Télégamme depends on Grenache, this can't change. Grenache has adapted and can still make balanced wine. Counoise may be lower in alcohol, but is it better? What about complexity? Balance?" In addition to picking earlier, Brunier has increased the percentage of whole cluster, while employing a 35-day skin maceration to soften the tannins, since fine tannins are a signature of Télégamme.

While Le Crau may be Châteauneuf's most famous site—a plateau where gnarled old vines are surrounded by large, rounded light stones known as *galets roulés*, long treasured for boosting ripeness—many growers now want to slow ripening. Today, the appellation's sandy soils, comprising some of the area's coolest sites, are increasingly prized, yielding elegant wines with supple tannins.

"Sandy soils make singular wine," explains Domaine de la Vieille Julienne proprietor Jean-Paul Daumen, who runs the estate his family has owned since 1905 with his son, Antoine, and produces some of the finest expressions of Châteauneuf-du-Pape. "Deep

sandy soils on north-facing terraces, with some limestone and clay—this makes the freshness," he says, even in hot, powerful years such as 2022. "It's difficult to explain how a warmer climate can add to freshness. The 2022s show very well the character of La Vieille Julienne." Daumen also prefers to highlight fruit purity by eschewing the use of new oak and by destemming his grapes.

Although the 2022s are not available yet for official review, I tasted them recently with Daumen in his cellar. In the meantime, La Vieille Julienne's 2021 reds are some of the top wines of that vintage, a testament to the fact that great *terroir* overdelivers in difficult years. "The 2021s are more like Pinot Noir than Grenache in some ways," he says. "The location of the vineyard and the old vines are fundamental in a context of a challenging year like 2021."

## Rating Southern Rhône Vintages

2022	95	A ripe, powerful vintage with some gorgeous wines. As in the north, the heat and drought were extreme, but a late August rain saved the vines (though not without turning into a violent tornado and hail storm that devastated Le Crau). Reds are lush, richly styled, silky and balanced; whites show concentration matched by freshness	Drink or hold
2021	88	Not as disastrous as the north, yet growers in the south suffered from frosts that reduced yields. Grenache was particularly fragile, and mildew pressure further reduced volumes. Quality is mixed, with many wines lacking concentration and others finding success in a fresher, lower-alcohol style; whites are energetic, vibrant and balanced	Drink or hold
2020	93	A mild winter followed by a hot, dry summer with slightly cooler nights led to wines with good freshness and balance. Ideal harvest conditions resulted in a stress-free vintage with solid yields. With generous, supple fruit profiles and accessible tannins, the wines stand out for their immediate drinkability, though quality is more heterogeneous	Drink or hold
2019	94	A wet winter set the table for the region's vineyards to get through the hot, dry growing season, with Grenache and Mourvèdre excelling as harvest lingered into early October. Reds are rich, ripe and expressive, with refined textures. A gorgeous vintage that just lacks the spine to be among the truly elite years	Drink or hold
2018	92	Growing season marred by spring rains that led to severe mildew pressure, which severely hampered Grenache yields. Summer was hot and dry, with nights not as cool as usual, but there were no heat spikes. Reds are supple and velvety, low in acid, offering flattering, forward fruit	Drink or hold
2017	92	A difficult flowering resulted in drastically reduced yields on Grenache. Crop ripened quickly in hot, dry conditions, leading to inconsistent quality. Best spots were cooler and later-ripening, with Syrah and Mourvèdre playing key roles	Drink or hold

Older vintages of exceptional quality: 2016, 2015, 2010, 2009, 2007, 2005, 2003, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1998, 1995, 1990, 1989, 1981, 1979, 1978, 1970, 1967, 1966, 1961

**Vintage ratings:** 95-100, classic; 90-94, outstanding; 85-89, very good; 80-84, good; 75-79, mediocre; 50-74, not recommended

**Drinkability:** "NYR" means most of the wines of the vintage are yet to be released; "drink" means most of the wines of the vintage are ready to drink; "hold" means most of the ageworthy wines have yet to fully mature; "past peak" means most of the wines are declining rather than improving.



A lesser-known cuvée that should be on the radar of every Châteauneuf fan is the Chante Le Merle Vieilles Vignes (95, \$80) from Bosquet des Papes, which is run by fifth-generation vintner Nicolas Boiron and his wife, Jeanne-Claire, whose daughters Anna and Eva recently joined them. In some ways, Bosquet des Papes is an old-school domaine, working with very old vines (more than 90 years old for the Vieilles Vignes); fermenting in cement, without destemming; and aging in old *foudres*. But the Boirons' nuanced approach means the wines show real energy, even in hot years. "We are very traditional, but we know how to do things at the right time," Boiron says. "You have to guard the freshness." Across his range, the wines show real authenticity and texture. "There is more structure in 2022, more like 2019."

This structure was a problem for some vintners in 2022, just as it was in the Northern Rhône. Because of the drought, berries were small, which means a higher proportion of skin to juice. Judicious extraction was the key to avoiding bitter, grippy tannins and achieving silky wines.

One of the masters of this refined, modern style is Isabel Ferrando. Since her first vintage in 2003, Ferrando has been striving for ever-greater finesse and energy. "I don't know if it's because I'm getting older, but I need more clarity in my wines," she says. "My



Domaine Marc Sorrel proprietor Guillaume Sorrel and his wife, Julie, sourced three of Hermitage's top *lieux-dits* for their classic-scoring 2022 red, a savory version showing energy and elegance.

taste is toward reduction." (Reductive winemaking seeks to limit oxygen exposure during the vinification process to preserve vibrancy.) "It's a different interpretation of Châteauneuf *terroir*."

Ferrando's daughter Guillemette joined her in 2020—the same year the estate transitioned from Domaine St.-Préfert to Famille

Isabel Ferrando—and she takes a bit of credit for her mother's evolution. "We respect tradition but embrace a modern perspective. The 2022 is an example of this adaptation toward elegance—you can feel the greater tension even in warm years," Guillemette explains, adding that the new cellar uses only large oak *foudres* and amphorae for reds and glass globes and *foudres* for whites. Ferrando's 2022 Châteauneuf St.-Préfert (94, \$108) is seductive and mouthfilling yet also shows impressive brightness. The affordably priced 2022 Côtes du Rhône Clos Beatus Ille (92, \$38), which is aged only in concrete, offers a lot of opulent pleasure with focus and structure.

The 2022 vintage was also a terrific year for Châteauneuf-du-Pape's white wines. While the magnificent red from Clos des Papes (96, \$140) is rightly celebrated, Paul-Vincent Avril's white Châteauneuf is equally high-scoring at 96 points (\$83). Having just completed his 38th vintage, Avril continues to be one of the few producers who makes just one white and one red, with no special cuvées or single-vineyard bottlings.

Produced from all six permitted white varieties, the Clos des Papes blanc clocks in at nearly 15% alcohol, but does not feel hot. "It was an elegant vintage with more red fruit in the reds and great energy in the whites," says Avril, who uses no new oak. "The alcohol level is not important if you have total maturity." The wine delivers plenty of ripe fruit and creamy richness, alongside an inner luminescence that bodes well for a long life in the cellar.

Clairette is an increasingly prized white grape in the south, contributing to the balance and savory verve of many whites, including one of my favorite 2022s: Domaine de Beurenard's Boisrenard blanc (95, \$110). Though







Fifth-generation vintner Nicolas Boiron (right) works alongside his daughters, Eva (left) and Anna, at their historic Châteauneuf estate, Bosquet des Papes, relying on traditional techniques to craft wines of exceptional quality.

plump and concentrated, the wine hums with salty, flinty mineral notes—a hallmark of late-ripening Clairette. Victor Coulon, who runs the winery with his brother, Antonin, and father and uncle, Daniel and Frédéric, champions many of these long-dismissed older varieties and is working to bring them back with two vine nurseries in his vineyards. “The old guys, they always tell us, ‘You young guys are all about the varieties that we pulled out. We wanted the Syrah for color and concentration—you want to plant all the ones we couldn’t ripen back then.’ Exactly.”

Clairette is the backbone of the 2023 blanc from Le Vieux Donjon (93, \$65), one of the few other domaines to make a single white and red. Run by the brother-and-sister team of François Michel (in the vineyard) and Claire Fabre (in the winery), the estate increased the percentage of Clairette this year to 70% of the blend—with more being planted in the vineyard. “When you say Châteauneuf-du-Pape, people expect power,” says Fabre. “But they also want freshness. It can be hard to find that perfect balance.” She is picking earlier and co-fermenting everything, regardless of different pick times, while using only concrete and very old oak. The same precision exists in the reds, which show fine tannins and depth. “I liked the tannins in 2022—they are present but not aggressive,” Michel says. “For me, the vintage is in between 2019 and 2020 in style.”

Elsewhere in the south, the 2022 vintage marked a strong year

for Gigondas, where higher-altitude vineyards and the cooling influence of the majestic Dentelles de Montmirail play a critical role. At Château de St.-Cosme, Louis Barruol’s three top cuvées earn 96 points apiece—Hominis Fides (\$160), Le Claux (\$160) and Le Poste (\$75)—all of them showing an exceptional balance of power, textural complexity and refinement. “We never get the sunrise, just the sunset, because of the mountains,” Barruol says. “Gigondas is more forest than vines—this also keeps temperatures low.”

On my recent visit to the region, Barruol and I tasted the 2022 Le Claux in his cellar. Beyond the sheer quality of this Grenache-led blend, which is sourced from a vineyard planted in 1880, Barruol was once again taken aback by the vintage. “I am again surprised by how good this is. Serious and finessed—so surprising after a hot summer. We relearn our job every vintage.”

At Domaine des Bosquets, Julien Bréchet believes that Grenache grown on sand can “have the same grace and silkiness of Pinot Noir” and pushes his wines in that direction. His Le Lieu Dit 2022 (94, \$88) sees a long maceration that provides “concentration without being heavy.” He has been crafting his La Colline cuvée since 2013 from a high-elevation rocky limestone plot planted in 1975, and it has the feel of a mountain wine. The 2022 rates 95 points (\$88). His 2022 Le Plateau (96, \$88) is the year’s standout.

Based mostly on Mourvèdre grown in a steep, high-elevation site, this solidly packed, savory red shows the grape’s telltale meatiness woven with savory herbs and red fruit. “You want Mourvèdre to have character and soul, but you must be careful not to extract too much,” Bréchet says. “2022 was a great vintage for Mourvèdre. In Gigondas, you can always get body, you must find the elegance.”

For a racier style, look to Domaine Santa Duc, where sixth-generation Benjamin Gras has taken over his family’s Gigondas estate and grown the family’s holdings in coveted Châteauneuf sites as well. With experience at Domaine de la Romanée-Conti and Vega Sicilia under his belt, Gras pursues his own vision back home in his biodynamically

farmed vineyards. “I want to make fresher wines,” he says. “People say you try to make Burgundy-style wine. I’m not trying to make Burgundy wine in the Rhône, just red wine with greater balance and lightness—and still feel the *terroir*.”

Looking ahead, the 2023 vintage brings the long-awaited creation of the Gigondas blanc AOC. (Before this, white wines from the appellation could only be labeled as Côtes du Rhône.) Based on 70% Clairette, they are already poised to be among the great whites of the Southern Rhône, adding to the array of excellent wines available from this dynamic region.

Senior editor Kristen Bieler is Wine Spectator’s lead taster on the wines of the Rhône Valley.

**“2022 was an elegant vintage with more red fruit in the reds and great energy in the whites.”**

— Paul-Vincent Avril



## Kristen Bieler's Recommended Wines From the Rhône Valley

More than 600 wines were reviewed for this report. An alphabetical list begins on page 62. WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.

### TOP WINES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE	WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE</b> Hermitage White 2021	97	\$375	<b>DOMAINE DES BOSQUETS</b> Gigondas Le Regard Loin... 2022	95	\$306
<b>CLOS ST.-JEAN</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Deus Ex Machina 2022	97	\$139	<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Barbe Rac 2021	95	\$130
<b>E. GUIGAL</b> Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2020	97	\$720	<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> Ermitage Le Méal 2021	95	\$335
<b>DOMAINE DES BOSQUETS</b> Gigondas Le Plateau... 2022	96	\$88	<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> Ermitage Le Pavillon 2021	95	\$520
<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> Ermitage L'Ermite 2021	96	\$575	<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> Ermitage White de l'Orée 2021	95	\$345
<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> Ermitage White L'Ermite 2021	96	\$800	<b>M. CHAPOUTIER</b> Ermitage White Le Méal 2021	95	\$430
<b>JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE</b> Hermitage 2021	96	\$375	<b>JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE SÉLECTION</b> Hermitage White Blanche 2020	95	\$87
<b>CLOS DES PAPES</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	96	\$140	<b>LE CLOS DU CAILLOU</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Réserve 2022	95	\$225
<b>CLOS DES PAPES</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	96	\$83	<b>EMMANUEL DARNAUD</b> Hermitage 2022	95	\$190
<b>FAMILLE ISABEL FERRANDO</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape White St.-Prefert Vieilles Clairettes 2022	96	\$422	<b>DELAS</b> Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2022	95	\$266
<b>JEAN-MICHEL GERIN</b> Côte-Rôtie Les Grandes Places 2022	96	\$228	<b>DELAS</b> Hermitage Les Bessards 2022	95	\$266
<b>E. GUIGAL</b> Côte-Rôtie Château d'Ampuis 2020	96	\$210	<b>LIONEL FAURY</b> Condrieu Le Mornieux 2022	95	\$64
<b>E. GUIGAL</b> Côte-Rôtie La Mouline 2020	96	\$720	<b>FERRATON PÈRE &amp; FILS</b> Ermitage Les Dionnières 2022	95	\$120
<b>E. GUIGAL</b> Côte-Rôtie La Turquie 2020	96	\$720	<b>JEAN-MICHEL GERIN</b> Condrieu Les Eguets 2022	95	\$84
<b>ROTEM &amp; MOUNIR SAOUMA</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Arioso 2020	96	\$271	<b>JEAN-MICHEL GERIN</b> Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2022	95	\$285
<b>ROTEM &amp; MOUNIR SAOUMA</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Magis 2021	96	\$156	<b>DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2022	95	\$125
<b>CHÂTEAU DE ST.-COSME</b> Gigondas Hominis Fides 2022	96	\$160	<b>CHÂTEAU LA NERTHE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Clos de Beauvenir 2023	95	\$155
<b>CHÂTEAU DE ST.-COSME</b> Gigondas Le Claux 2022	96	\$160	<b>VINCENT PARIS</b> Cornas La Geynale 2022	95	\$90
<b>CHÂTEAU DE ST.-COSME</b> Gigondas Le Poste 2022	96	\$75	<b>ANDRÉ PERRET</b> Condrieu Clos Chanson 2022	95	\$139
<b>DOMAINE DE LA VIEILLE JULIENNE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve 2021	96	\$299	<b>M. SORREL</b> Hermitage 2022	95	\$240
<b>DOMAINE DE BEAURENARD</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Boisrenard 2022	95	\$110	<b>GEORGES VERNAY</b> Condrieu Les Chaillées de l'Enfer 2022	95	\$130
<b>BOSQUET DES PAPES</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape A La Gloire de Mon Grand-Père 2022	95	\$90	<b>DOMAINE DE LA VIEILLE JULIENNE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Hauts-lieux 2021	95	\$109
<b>BOSQUET DES PAPES</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape Chante Le Merle Vieilles Vignes 2022	95	\$80	<b>LES VINS DE VIENNE</b> Condrieu Lieu-Dit Poncin 2023	95	\$120
<b>DOMAINE DES BOSQUETS</b> Gigondas La Colline... 2022	95	\$88	<b>LES VINS DE VIENNE</b> Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Les Grandes Places 2022	95	\$216
			<b>LE VIEUX DONJON</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	95	\$65
			<b>DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE</b> Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau 2021	95	\$129

### TOP VALUES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE	WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>DOMAINE COURBIS</b> St.-Joseph White 2023	93	\$27	<b>VINCENT PARIS SÉLECTION</b> Syrah Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes 2022	90	\$21
<b>DOMAINE DE MOURCHON</b> Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Grande Réserve 2022	92	\$26	<b>ST.-COSME</b> Côtes du Rhône 2023	90	\$21
<b>DOMAINE LA BOUÏSSIERE</b> Côtes du Rhône 2021	91	\$28	<b>CHÂTEAU UNANG</b> Ventoux 2021	90	\$19
<b>DOMAINE DE MOURCHON</b> Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Tradition 2022	91	\$18	<b>FRANÇOIS VILLARD</b> Marsanne-Roussanne Collines Rhodaniennes Les Contours de Mairlant 2022	90	\$24
<b>CHÂTEAU PÉGAU</b> Côtes du Rhône White Cuvée Lône 2023	91	\$24	<b>ALAIN VOGÉ</b> Côtes du Rhône Les Peyrouses 2022	90	\$25
<b>BROTTE</b> Cairanne Domaine Grosset 2023	90	\$20	<b>LES ALEXANDRINS</b> Viognier Vin de France Maison 2022	89	\$20
<b>DOMAINE BRUSSET</b> Cairanne Les Travers 2022	90	\$22	<b>BROTTE</b> Côtes du Rhône-Villages Laudun Château de Bord 2023	89	\$19
<b>JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE SÉLECTION</b> Côtes du Rhône Mon Coeur 2022	90	\$27	<b>JEAN-LUC COLOMBO</b> Côtes du Rhône Les Abeilles 2022	89	\$16
<b>DOMAINE DE CRISTIA</b> Côtes du Rhône Vieilles Vignes 2022	90	\$20	<b>FAMILLE COULON</b> Vin de France White Le Petit Renard 2023	89	\$22
<b>GUILLAUME GONNET</b> Côtes du Rhône Le Rêveur 2023	90	\$15	<b>DELAS</b> Côtes du Rhône St.-Esprit 2022	89	\$16
<b>GUILLAUME GONNET</b> Lirac Le Virtuose 2021	90	\$22	<b>GUILLAUME GONNET</b> Côtes du Rhône White Le Rêveur 2023	89	\$15
<b>STÉPHANE OGIER</b> Côtes du Rhône Le Temps Est Venu 2022	90	\$23	<b>TARDIEU-LAURENT</b> Côtes du Rhône Les Becs Fins 2023	89	\$15



# SYRAH SYNERGY

*Jaboulet's La Chapelle and Penfolds Grange come together in an unorthodox new cuvée* | BY KRISTEN BIELER

It's likely that no wine collector saw it coming: the arrival of an unconventional new Syrah that blends Jaboulet's La Chapelle, from the famed Hermitage hill in France's Northern Rhône, with Penfolds Grange, Australia's most prized red. These two Syrahs—among the world's most sought-after expressions of the grape—have been brought together in equal parts in the debut 2021 cuvée, which is simply labeled La Chapelle Grange.

The project seems to fly in the face of the most sacred quality we ascribe to fine wine: a singular expression of origin and a unique stamp of *terroir*. Skeptical collectors will question the merits of such an experiment: Doesn't this mash-up blot out the nuances of what makes each wine so special, resulting in a homogenized red that may be delicious but could be from anywhere?

"We think of it like we have created a new *terroir*," says Caroline Frey, owner and winemaker at Paul Jaboulet Aîné, the legendary Hermitage estate her family acquired in 2006. "Two different places, two different cultures. We want to tell a new story of a wine coming together from opposite parts of the world that are also connected."

Unlike other dual-country blends—such as a few of Penfolds' Wine of the World cuvées, which are blends of Californian and Australian wine—this project explores an authentic spiritual and historical connection. In 1832, vine cuttings from Hermitage—Syrah's homeland—were brought to Sydney and distributed throughout Australia, forming the foundation of the country's Shiraz vineyards. Because South Australia was never afflicted with phylloxera, the insect that devastated most European wine regions in the late 1800s, Barossa Valley is home to the world's oldest pre-phylloxera, ungrafted Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Mourvèdre and Grenache vines—an irony that blurs the line between what it means to be Old World and New World.

"This wine represents a return to the hill of Hermitage, a return to the origins of Syrah," says Penfolds winemaker Peter Gago. "It's Syrah and Shiraz reunited." Gago, a longtime collector of La Chapelle, claims responsibility for the "crazy idea" to create the blend and gives Frey credit for going along with the collaboration, which has been in the works for years. "It wasn't too cerebral, how it all came together. There is a simplicity to it. We wanted to create from scratch a unique *grand cru* from a hundred years of history."

Early on, Gago and Frey decided the blend would be 50-50 and that they wanted to marry the wines as soon as possible. When La Chapelle finishes fermenting, it travels in barrel to South Australia, where Penfolds Grange has already been in barrel for six months. Gago's team then combines them and puts them back in barrels for 12 months before bottling, at around 55% new French oak.



Caroline Frey, owner of Jaboulet and Domaine de la Chapelle, has partnered with Peter Gago of Penfolds on a new cuvée that blends their two most iconic Syrahs. The pair stands at the grape's spiritual home in the Northern Rhône: the 13th-century chapel at the top of the Hermitage hill.

At the end of 2024, I had the opportunity to taste the soon-to-be-released first vintage with Frey in the Rhône. My expectation beforehand was that the Grange would overwhelm the La Chapelle. After all, it's a famously powerful, richly concentrated red, its hallmark style influenced by completing fermentation in new, mainly American oak followed by 20 months of barrel maturation. Grange has been made the same way since its 1951 creation by Penfolds' first winemaker, Max Schubert.

By contrast, La Chapelle is a cool-climate Syrah from granite soils aged in mostly older French oak barrels and concrete eggs. This imbalance would be particularly pronounced with the 2021 vintage, I assumed, which was uncharacteristically lean and cool in the Northern Rhône. Surprisingly, the 2021 bottling is not overtaken by Grange but displays a balance of the two styles. With a lot of minerality, acidity and savory character, it shows restraint alongside its suave, stylish power. This has surprised Frey as well.



"I have been so impressed by how La Chapelle resists the power of the Grange," she says. "In this wine, you see the strength in La Chapelle and the elegance in Grange." The unexpected development for Gago was "how quickly and how well the wines interlocked and dovetailed together to create something different—everything is maturing in unison." Even on its release, I also found it difficult to identify individual elements. "It's a continuum of flavor—not Australian or French," Gago says. "It's the essence of Syrah, just dressed differently." For her part, Frey explains that the collaboration has broadened her perception of wine's geographic limitations. "Peter gave me this impression that there is no frontier," she says. "It's so interesting to have this larger, more open view of the world of wine and *terroir*."

In truth, Frey has never felt overly bound by convention. Although she operates in very traditional regions—her family's other estates include Château Corton C in Burgundy and Château La Lagune in Bordeaux—she makes bold changes to achieve the style she is seeking, even when it's controversial. When she took the reins at Jaboulet in 2006 at age 27, she slashed production volumes, switched to organic farming and changed the barrel-aging regime, all in pursuit of greater freshness and

elegance. Some disapproved of the resulting style departure, and she was accused of bringing a Bordelais mentality to the Rhône.

"We did things differently, which was perceived as Bordeaux enology when we arrived, but I was 100% sure it was the right direction," she says. "For example, we made a lot of changes to eliminate any trace of *brettanomyces*. If you want real identity from a special *terroir*, it is sad to mask it." The Frey family also has plans to construct an impressive, modern-style winery designed by Danish architect Bjarke Ingels at the base of the Hermitage hill.

Given the tiny volumes of her Hermitage vineyards, there is only so much wine she can commit to La Chapelle Grange, and this scarcity is reflected in its \$2,500 price tag. "It's Burgundy volume and Burgundy price," admits Gago. Although the wine will only be produced in top years, the 2022 and 2023 are already in bottle awaiting release in the future. While collectors will note this price is higher than either wine on its own, there will undoubtedly be curiosity and demand for such an offering. For those who manage to score a bottle, it will be tempting to tease out the signature of each wine. But perhaps it's more interesting to experience it as a meditation on Syrah, an insight into the grape's origin story and its journey to greatness across the globe.



Jaboulet was founded in 1834 in Hermitage, where wine has been made for over two millennia. With Côte Rôtie, Hermitage is one of the noblest expressions of Syrah.

*There's no special cuvée name à la Opus One. "La Chapelle and Grange are iconic enough," says Penfolds' Peter Gago.*

Grange began in 1951 as an experimental cuvée and has evolved to become one of the most prized wines from the Southern Hemisphere.





# Alphabetical Guide to Rhône Valley Wines

More than 600 wines were reviewed for this report. An in-depth analysis begins on page 52.  
WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>LES ALEXANDRINS</b>		
Condrieu La Caille Domaine 2021	\$99	89
Hermitage White Maison 2022	\$93	93
St.-Joseph Les Ponts Domaine 2020	\$55	93
St.-Joseph Maison 2022	\$37	92
Syrah Vin de France Maison 2022	\$17	88
Viognier Vin de France Maison 2022	\$20	89
<b>PIERRE AMADIEU</b>		
Cairanne Les Hautes Rives 2022	\$39	90
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Paillousse 2022	\$60	92
Côtes du Rhône Grande Réserve 2022	\$25	90
Côtes du Rhône White Roulepiere 2023	\$20	89
Gigondas Domaine Grand Romane 2022	\$45	93
Gigondas Le Pas de l'Aigle 2021	\$55	93
Gigondas Romane Machotte 2022	\$40	91
Gigondas White Domaine Grand Romane 2023	\$45	91
Gigondas White Romane Machotte 2023	\$40	92
Vacqueyras La Grangelière 2022	\$35	91
Vinsobres Les Piallats 2022	\$30	90
Viognier-Clairette Méditerranée 2023	\$19	88
<b>CHÂTEAU D'AQUÉRIA</b>		
Tavel 2023	\$24	90
<b>DOMAINE DE L'ARNESQUE</b>		
Cairanne 2019	\$23	90
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Plan de Dieu 2019	\$19	88
<b>PAUL AVRIL</b>		
Vin de France White Le Petit Vin d'Avril NV	\$25	87

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>JEAN BARNIER</b>		
Côtes du Rhône Domaine Fontaine du Clos 2022	\$23	89
Côtes du Rhône White Domaine Fontaine du Clos 2023	\$24	89
Vacqueyras Domaine Fontaine du Clos Reflets de l'Âme 2022	\$35	90
Vacqueyras White Domaine Fontaine du Clos Reflets de l'Âme 2023	\$37	89
<b>DOMAINE LA BARROCHE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$70	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2021	\$67	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Fiancée 2022	\$135	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Pure 2021	\$189	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Pure 2021	\$183	94
<b>LOUIS &amp; CHERRY BARRUOL</b>		
Brut Nature Méditerranée Rouanne Comté de Grignan 2021	\$30	89
<b>CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2022	\$121	94
Roussanne Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$173	96
<b>DOMAINE DE BEAURENARD</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$74	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Boisrenard 2022	\$110	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Boisrenard 2021	\$110	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$67	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Boisrenard 2022	\$110	95

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
Côtes du Rhône 2023	\$24	88
Rasteau 2022	\$35	90
Rasteau Les Argiles Bleues 2022	\$54	91
Rasteau Les Argiles Bleues 2021	\$54	90
<b>CLOS BELLANE</b>		
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Valréas 2022	\$21	89
Côtes du Rhône-Villages White Valréas 2022	\$27	90
<b>CHÂTEAU DE BERNE</b>		
Méditerranée Rosé Romance 2023	\$18	87
<b>ALAIN BOISSON</b>		
Cairanne Domaine Cros de Romet 2022	\$20	88
<b>BOSQUET DES PAPES</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$65	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape A La Gloire de Mon Grand-Père 2022	\$90	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Chante Le Merle Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$80	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$50	93
<b>DOMAINE DES BOSQUETS</b>		
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Seguret Réserve 2022	\$31	90
Gigondas La Colline... 2022	\$88	95
Gigondas La Colline... 2021	\$88	93
Gigondas Le Bout du Monde... 2021	\$NA	93
Gigondas Le Lieu Dit... 2022	\$88	94
Gigondas Le Lieu Dit... 2021	\$88	93
Gigondas Le Plateau... 2022	\$88	96
Gigondas Le Plateau... 2021	\$88	91
Gigondas Le Regard Loin... 2022	\$306	95



WINE	PRICE	SCORE
Gigondas Les Roches... 2022	\$88	94
Gigondas Les Routes... 2022	\$88	93
Gigondas Réserve 2022	\$54	93
Gigondas Rosé 2023	\$39	90

#### GRAEME & JULIE BOTT

Collines Rhodaniennes K?maka Terroir de Seyssuel 2022	\$103	93
Condrieu 2023	\$109	93
Condrieu Lieu-Dit L'Aleau 2023	\$162	93
Cornas 2022	\$109	93
Côte-Rôtie 2022	\$153	94
Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Semons 2020	\$239	94
Crozes-Hermitage 2022	\$57	91
Crozes-Hermitage White 2023	\$57	92
St.-Joseph 2022	\$67	93
St.-Joseph White 2023	\$70	93
Syrah Collines Rhodaniennes First Flight 2022	\$43	91
Viognier Vin de France First Flight 2023	\$43	91

#### DOMAINE LA BOUÏSSIERE

Côtes du Rhône 2021	\$28	91
Côtes du Rhône White 2021	\$45	90
Gigondas 2022	\$45	94

#### DOMAINE LA BOUTINIÈRE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$51	91
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau Grande Réserve Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$73	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$59	92

#### BOUTINOT

Cairanne La Côte Sauvage 2021	\$35	88
Cairanne White Argiles Blanches 2023	\$35	90
Côtes du Rhône Rosé Les Cerisiers 2023	\$20	88
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Les Coteaux 2022	\$22	90
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Les Coteaux Schisteux 2021	\$30	89

#### BROTTE

Cairanne Domaine Grosset 2023 Barville 2023	\$45	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Hauts de Barville 2023	\$35	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Secret Barville 2023	\$60	93
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Laudun Chateau de Bord 2022	\$18	89
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Laudun Chateau de Bord 2023	\$19	89
Roussanne Châteauneuf-du-Pape Domaine Barville 2023	\$55	93

#### ANDRÉ BRUNEL

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$50	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2021	\$50	91
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Cailloux 2022	\$70	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Les Cailloux 2023	\$70	94

#### LUCIEN & ANDRÉ BRUNEL

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Cailloux 2022	\$70	94
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#### DOMAINE BRUSSET

Cairanne Les Travers 2022	\$22	90
Côtes du Rhône Laurent B. 2022	\$18	88
Gigondas Tradition Le Grand Montmirail 2022	\$34	91
Ventoux Les Boudalles 2022	\$15	88

#### BERNARD BURGAUD

Côte-Rôtie 2022	\$90	92
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#### CLOS DU CALVAIRE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2021	\$48	90
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#### CHÂTEAU LA CANORGUE

Lubéron 2022	\$23	90
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#### CHANTE CIGALE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$60	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Serine 2020	\$120	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Pi 2022	\$95	92

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$80	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$60	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Extrait 2023	\$85	93

#### CHAPELLE ST.-THÉODORIC

Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Guigasse 2021	\$80	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Grand Pin 2021	\$85	93

#### DOMAINE DE LA CHAPELLE

Hermitage White Le Chevalier de Sterimberg 2022	\$175	94
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#### M. CHAPOUTIER

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Barbe Rac 2021	\$130	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Croix de Bois 2021	\$125	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Bernardine 2021	\$63	91
Côte-Rôtie La Mordorée 2021	\$225	95
Côte-Rôtie Neve 2021	\$245	94
Crozes-Hermitage Les Meysonniers 2021	\$45	90
Crozes-Hermitage Les Varonniers 2021	\$90	92
Crozes-Hermitage Petite Ruche 2021	\$40	89
Crozes-Hermitage White Les Meysonniers 2021	\$46	91
Ermitage L'Ermite 2021	\$575	96
Ermitage Le Méal 2021	\$335	95
Ermitage Le Pavillon 2021	\$520	95
Ermitage Les Greffieux 2021	\$235	94
Ermitage White de l'Orée 2021	\$345	95
Ermitage White L'Ermite 2021	\$800	96
Ermitage White Le Méal 2021	\$430	95
Hermitage Monier de la Sizeranne 2021	\$170	93
Hermitage White Chante-Alouette 2021	\$135	93
Lubéron La Ciboise 2021	\$17	86
St.-Joseph Deschants 2021	\$NA	89
St.-Joseph Le Clos 2021	\$200	94
St.-Joseph Les Granilites 2021	\$60	92
St.-Joseph Les Granits 2021	\$135	92
St.-Joseph White Les Granilites 2021	\$55	92
St.-Joseph White Les Granits 2021	\$100	94
St.-Péray Hongrie 2021	\$67	91

#### DOMAINE CHARVIN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2021	\$66	93
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#### FAMILLE CHAUDIERE

Grenache Méditerranée Le Paradou 2022	\$12	85
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#### JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE SÉLECTION

Côtes du Rhône Mon Coeur 2022	\$27	90
Crozes-Hermitage Silène 2022	\$34	92
Crozes-Hermitage White Sybèle 2022	\$34	92
Hermitage Farconnet 2020	\$87	94
Hermitage White Blanche 2020	\$87	95
St.-Joseph Offerus 2022	\$41	92
St.-Joseph Offerus 2021	\$41	90
St.-Joseph White Circa 2022	\$41	93

#### JEAN-LOUIS CHAVE

Hermitage 2021	\$375	96
Hermitage White 2021	\$375	97
St.-Joseph 2021	\$125	90

#### CHÊNE BLEU

Vaucluse Héloïse 2016	\$105	93
Vaucluse Rêve de Scipion 2019	\$65	92
Vaucluse Rosé Le Rosé 2023	\$42	89
Vaucluse White Aliot 2019	\$65	93
Vaucluse White Aliot 2018	\$65	93
Ventoux Abélard 2016	\$105	93

#### DOMAINE BILLON CHRISTOPHE

Côte-Rôtie Côte Rozier 2020	\$120	93
Côte-Rôtie La Brocard 2020	\$130	92
Côte-Rôtie La Viallière 2020	\$110	91
Côte-Rôtie Les Elotins 2020	\$85	93

#### A. CLAPE

Cornas 2021	\$225	94
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WINE	PRICE	SCORE
Cornas Renaissance 2021	\$166	92

#### CLOS DE L'ORATOIRE DES PAPES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2021	\$76	91
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Choregies 2020	\$150	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$71	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Les Choregies 2022	\$150	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Les Choregies 2021	\$150	91

#### CLOS DES PAPES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$140	96
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$83	96

#### LE CLOS DU CAILLOU

Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Réserve 2022	\$225	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Quartz 2022	\$112	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Safres 2022	\$75	93
Côtes du Rhône La Réserve 2022	\$58	91
Côtes du Rhône Les Quartz 2022	\$43	91

#### CLOS DU MONT-OLIVET

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$55	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$60	92

#### CLOS ST.-JEAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$68	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Deus Ex Machina 2022	\$139	97

#### DOMAINE DU COLOMBIER

Crozes-Hermitage 2022	\$40	91
Crozes-Hermitage White 2022	\$40	90

#### JEAN-LUC COLOMBO

Côtes du Rhône Les Abeilles 2022	\$16	89
Côtes du Rhône White Les Abeilles 2022	\$19	89
Méditerranée Rosé Cape Bleue 2023	\$19	87

#### LAURENT COMBIER

Crozes-Hermitage 2022	\$39	91
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#### FAMILLE COULON

Vin de France Le Petit Renard 2022	\$24	88
Vin de France Le Petit Renard 2021	\$24	88
Vin de France Rosé Le Petit Renard 2023	\$22	87
Vin de France White Le Petit Renard 2023	\$22	89
Vin de France White Le Petit Renard 2022	\$22	89

#### DOMAINE COURBIS

St.-Joseph 2023	\$27	91
St.-Joseph Les Royes 2022	\$38	90
St.-Joseph White 2023	\$27	93

#### PIERRE & JÉRÔME COURSODON

St.-Joseph L'Olivai 2022	\$65	94
St.-Joseph Le Paradis St.-Pierre 2022	\$93	93
St.-Joseph Silice 2022	\$45	92
St.-Joseph White Silice 2023	\$48	92
Vin de France White Etincelle 2023	\$30	89

#### DOMAINE DE CRISTIA

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$56	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Renaissance 2022	\$89	94
Côtes du Rhône Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$20	90

#### DOMAINE DAMBRUN

Vaucluse White Cuvée Guy Savoy 2021	\$35	89
Ventoux 2017	\$38	90
Ventoux L'Échappée de Patrick Chêne 2019	\$30	88

#### EMMANUEL DARNAUD

Crozes-Hermitage Au Fil du Temps 2022	\$60	93
Crozes-Hermitage Les Trois Chênes 2022	\$45	92
Hermitage 2022	\$190	95
Hermitage 2021	\$200	94
Hermitage White 2022	\$190	94
St.-Joseph La Dardouille 2022	\$62	92





Pierre Amadieu

WINE PRICE SCORE

#### DELAS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Haute Pierre 2021	\$17	92
Condrieu Clos Boucher 2022	\$105	94
Condrieu La Galopine 2022	\$67	94
Cornas Chante-Perdrix 2022	\$70	93
Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2022	\$266	95
Côte-Rôtie Seigneur de Maugiron 2022	\$125	94
Côtes du Rhône St.-Esprit 2022	\$16	89
Côtes du Rhône White St.-Esprit 2023	\$58	88
Crozes-Hermitage Domaine des Grands Chemins 2022	\$49	92
Crozes-Hermitage Le Clos 2022	\$90	94
Crozes-Hermitage Les Launes 2022	\$29	91
Crozes-Hermitage White Les Launes 2023	\$34	92
Gigondas Les Reinages 2022	\$41	92
Hermitage Domaine des Tourettes 2022	\$115	94
Hermitage Les Bessards 2022	\$266	95
Hermitage Les Grandes Vignes Ligne de Crête 2022	\$266	95
Hermitage White Domaine des Tourettes 2022	\$120	94
St.-Joseph François de Tournon 2022	\$46	92
St.-Joseph Les Challeys 2022	\$30	91
St.-Joseph Ste.-Épine 2022	\$45	94
St.-Joseph White Les Challeys 2023	\$NA	93
Vacqueyras Domaine des Genêts 2022	\$NA	90

#### DOMAINE LE PRIEURÉ DES PAPES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2021	\$71	92
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#### BENJAMIN & DAVID DUCLAUX

Condrieu Les Caillets 2023	\$90	93
Côte-Rôtie La Chana 2022	\$90	92
Côte-Rôtie La Germinie 2022	\$100	94
Côte-Rôtie Maison Rouge 2022	\$140	94

WINE PRICE SCORE

#### DUMIEN-SERRETTE

Cornas Henri 2022	\$78	94
Cornas Patou 2022	\$56	93

#### ERIC & JOËL DURAND

St.-Joseph Lautaret 2022	\$55	93
St.-Joseph Les Coteaux 2022	\$45	92

#### CHÂTEAU L'ERMITE D'AUZAN

Costières de Nîmes 2022	\$20	89
Costières de Nîmes Ste.-Cécile 2021	\$25	89
Costières de Nîmes White 2023	\$20	88

#### LIONEL FAURY

Condrieu Le Mornieux 2022	\$64	95
St.-Joseph La Gloriette Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$55	93
St.-Joseph Les Ribaudes 2022	\$38	93
St.-Joseph White Les Ribaudes 2022	\$38	92
Syrah Collines Rhodaniennes Les Hautes Ribaudes 2023	\$28	89

#### DOMAINE DE FERRAND

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2021	\$59	93
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#### FAMILLE ISABEL FERRANDO

Châteauneuf-du-Pape St.-Prefert 2022	\$108	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White St.-Prefert 2023	\$108	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White St.-Prefert Vieilles Clairettes 2022	\$422	96
Côtes du Rhône Clos Beatus Ille 2022	\$38	92

#### FERRATON PÈRE & FILS

Cornas Les Grands Mûriers 2021	\$82	91
Côte-Rôtie L'Églantine 2022	\$106	93
Crozes-Ermitage Le Grand Courtail 2021	\$74	92
Crozes-Hermitage Calendes 2022	\$28	91
Crozes-Hermitage La Matinière 2022	\$32	91
Crozes-Hermitage La Matinière 2021	\$34	89
Ermitage Le Méal 2022	\$165	94
Ermitage Le Méal 2021	\$150	93
Ermitage Les Dionnières 2022	\$120	95

WINE PRICE SCORE

Ermitage Les Dionnières 2021	\$140	92
Ermitage White Le Reverdy 2022	\$165	95
Hermitage Les Miaux 2022	\$96	94
Hermitage White Les Miaux 2022	\$96	93

#### FIGUIÈRE

Méditerranée Rosé 2023	\$18	88
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#### CHÂTEAU DES FINES ROCHES

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2020	\$48	92
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#### DOMAINE DE FONDRÈCHE

Ventoux 2022	\$24	89
Ventoux White 2023	\$23	90

#### DOMAINE FONT DE MICHELLE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Etienne Gonnet 2020	\$102	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve 2022	\$52	93

#### PIERRE DE FONTVAL

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$43	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$44	91

#### MICHEL GASSIER

Costières de Nîmes Fleur de Syrah 2021	\$19	89
Costières de Nîmes Nostre Pais 2021	\$25	88
Costières de Nîmes Nostre Pais 2020	\$28	87
Côtes du Rhône 2022	\$19	89

#### JEAN-MICHEL GERIN

Condrieu La Loye 2022	\$74	92
Condrieu Les Eguets 2022	\$84	95
Côte-Rôtie Champin Le Seigneur 2021	\$100	92
Côte-Rôtie Côte-Bodin 2022	\$228	94
Côte-Rôtie Côte-Bodin 2021	\$240	93
Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2022	\$285	95
Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2021	\$400	94
Côte-Rôtie La Viallière 2022	\$145	93
Côte-Rôtie La Viallière 2021	\$150	92
Côte-Rôtie Les Grandes Places 2022	\$228	96
Côte-Rôtie Les Grandes Places 2021	\$240	94
St.-Joseph 2021	\$60	89

COURTESY OF PIERRE AMADIEU



WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>GUILLAUME GONNET</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Bel Ami 2023	\$43	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Bel Ami 2021	\$40	91
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Belle Amie 2023	\$47	92
Côtes du Rhône Le Rêveur 2023	\$15	90
Côtes du Rhône White Le Rêveur 2023	\$15	89
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Le Hardi 2023	\$20	89
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Le Hardi 2022	\$18	89
Gigondas Le Mentor 2022	\$35	91
Lirac Le Virtuose 2023	\$26	91
Lirac Le Virtuose 2021	\$22	90
<b>BERNARD GRIPA</b>		
St.-Joseph 2021	\$90	92
St.-Joseph Le Berceau 2021	\$90	93
St.-Péray Les Figuiers 2021	\$60	93
<b>E. GUIGAL</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2019	\$56	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2021	\$45	91
Condrieu 2023	\$85	93
Côte-Rôtie Brune et Blonde 2021	\$105	92
Côte-Rôtie Château d'Ampuis 2020	\$210	96
Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2020	\$720	97
Côte-Rôtie La Mouline 2020	\$720	96
Côte-Rôtie La Turquie 2020	\$720	96
Côtes du Rhône 2021	\$21	89
Côtes du Rhône Rosé 2023	\$21	89
Côtes du Rhône White 2023	\$20	89
Crozes-Hermitage 2021	\$36	91
Ermitage White Ex Voto 2020	\$350	96
St.-Joseph Lieu-Dit 2021	\$95	91
St.-Joseph Vignes de l'Hospice 2021	\$155	91
St.-Joseph White 2022	\$42	92
St.-Joseph White Lieu-Dit 2022	\$95	93
Tavel 2023	\$25	89
<b>MAS DES INFIRMIÈRES</b>		
Lubéron Red Source 2021	\$30	89
Lubéron Rosé Source 2023	\$30	88
Lubéron White Source 2023	\$30	89
<b>PAUL JABOULET AÎNÉ</b>		
Condrieu Les Grands Amandiers 2022	\$140	91
Cornas Les Grandes Terrasses 2022	\$70	93
Crozes-Hermitage White Domaine de Roure 2021	\$85	92
Crozes-Hermitage White Domaine Mule Blanche 2022	\$50	92
Crozes-Hermitage White Les Jalets 2023	\$36	90
Hermitage La Maison Bleue 2021	\$170	93
St.-Joseph La Croix des Vignes 2021	\$100	91
<b>DOMAINE JAMET</b>		
Côte-Rôtie 2021	\$185	93
<b>DOMAINE DE LA JANASSE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$70	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Chaupin 2022	\$100	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$125	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$68	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Prestige 2023	\$177	95
Côtes du Rhône Réserve 2022	\$22	89
Côtes du Rhône White 2023	\$24	89
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Terre d'Argile 2022	\$30	90
Viognier Principauté d'Orange 2023	\$28	90
<b>DOMAINE JAUME</b>		
Vinsobres Altitude 420 2022	\$25	89
Vinsobres Clos des Échalas 2020	\$65	91
Vinsobres Référence 2020	\$30	90
<b>LA FÊTE</b>		
Blanc de Blancs Méditerranée La Fête du Blanc 2022	\$25	89

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>FAMILLE LANÇON</b>		
Gigondas Bellecoste 2022	\$48	93
<b>DOMAINE MABY</b>		
Lirac Bel Canto 2021	\$47	91
Lirac La Fermade 2022	\$25	88
Lirac Nessun Dorma 2021	\$35	88
Lirac Rosé La Fermade 2023	\$19	87
Tavel La Forcadrière 2023	\$20	90
Tavel Prima Donna 2023	\$24	89
<b>DOMAINE DE MARCOUX</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$80	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$80	94
Lirac La Lorentine 2022	\$34	89
<b>MARRENON</b>		
Lubéron Grand 2022	\$25	90
Lubéron White Grand 2023	\$25	89
Ventoux Orca Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$30	90
<b>MIRAVAL</b>		
Rosé Méditerranée Studio 2023	\$17	87
White Méditerranée Studio 2023	\$17	88
<b>CHÂTEAU MONT-REDON</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Le Plateau Blanc 2021	\$128	93
<b>DOMAINE DE LA MORDORÉE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Reine des Bois 2022	\$156	94
<b>PIERRE-HENRI MOREL</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$50	92
<b>DOMAINE DE MOURCHON</b>		
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Grande Réserve 2022	\$26	92
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Grande Réserve 2021	\$25	90
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Tradition 2022	\$18	91
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Tradition 2021	\$20	89
Grenache Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Family 2022	\$40	92
Grenache Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Family 2021	\$41	90
Syrah Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Family 2021	\$40	91

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>CHÂTEAU DE NALYS</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2021	\$137	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Stes.-Pierres de Nalys 2021	\$76	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2022	\$140	93
<b>CHÂTEAU LA NERTHE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée des Cadettes 2022	\$180	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Clavelles 2021	\$295	91
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$82	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Clos de Beauvenir 2023	\$155	95
Côtes du Rhône Rosé Les Cassagnes 2023	\$20	88
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Les Cassagnes 2021	\$27	89
Tavel Prieuré de Montézargues 2023	\$25	91
<b>REMI NIERO</b>		
Condrieu Chérytage 2022	\$150	93
Condrieu Coeur de Roncharde 2022	\$115	93
Condrieu Les Ravines 2022	\$100	92
Condrieu Vernon 2022	\$130	91
Côte-Rôtie 400 Les de la Viallière 2019	\$500	92
Côte-Rôtie Eminence 2022	\$125	90
Côte-Rôtie Vires de Serine 2021	\$225	90
Crozes-Hermitage Vie Magne 2022	\$600	92
St.-Joseph Bois Prieur 2022	\$70	92
Syrah Collines Rhodaniennes Les Agathes 2022	\$35	90
<b>DOMAINE DE L'OBRIEU</b>		
Côtes du Rhône White Les Frangines 2022	\$15	88
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Visan Les Antonins 2021	\$22	89
Vacqueyras 2020	\$28	90
<b>OGIER</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape l'Ame 2022	\$46	92
Côtes du Rhône Artésis 2023	\$13	89
Côtes du Rhône White Artésis 2023	\$13	89
Gigondas Les Dentellis 2022	\$40	92







Domaine de la Vieille Julienne

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>STÉPHANE OGIER</b>		
Côte-Rôtie Mon Village 2021	\$127	91
Côtes du Rhône Le Temps Est Venu 2022	\$23	90
St.-Joseph Le Passage 2021	\$61	90
<b>DOMAINE LES PALLIÈRES</b>		
Vin de France Rosé Au Petit Bonheurs 2022	\$29	89
<b>DOMAINE DE PANISSE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Mas 2022	\$60	92
Côtes du Rhône Le Mazet 2022	\$25	89
<b>VINCENT PARIS SÉLECTION</b>		
Crozes-Hermitage 2022	\$32	91
Syrah Vin de Pays des Collines Rhodaniennes 2022	\$21	90
<b>VINCENT PARIS</b>		
Cornas Granit 30 2022	\$50	92
Cornas Granit 60 Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$75	94
Cornas La Geynale 2022	\$90	95
<b>CHÂTEAU PÉGAU</b>		
Côtes du Rhône Cuvée Maclura 2021	\$24	86
Côtes du Rhône White Cuvée Lône 2023	\$24	91
Vin de France Plan Pégau NV	\$26	90
<b>DOMAINE DU PÉGAÛ</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée da Capo 2020	\$550	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Laurence 2019	\$135	90
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Réserve 2021	\$115	91

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>DOMAINE PÉLAQUIÉ</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Cuvée a Tempo 2022	\$275	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Cuvée Réserve 2023	\$86	93
<b>ANDRÉ PERRET</b>		
Condrieu 2022	\$98	93
Condrieu Chery 2022	\$139	93
Condrieu Clos Chanson 2022	\$139	95
St.-Joseph 2021	\$51	91
St.-Joseph White 2022	\$69	94
<b>FAMILLE PERRIN</b>		
Côtes du Rhône Réserve 2021	\$15	87
Côtes du Rhône White Réserve 2023	\$15	88
Côtes du Rhône-Villages 2021	\$16	88
Gigondas Domaine du Clos des Tourelles 2020	\$61	91
Gigondas La Gille 2021	\$42	90
Vinsobres Les Cornuds 2020	\$20	90
<b>DOMAINE DE PIAUGIER</b>		
Côtes du Rhône La Grange de Piaugier 2021	\$18	88
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Sablet 2021	\$60	90
Côtes du Rhône-Villages White Sablet 2022	\$26	90
Gigondas 2020	\$35	92

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>MICHEL POINARD</b>		
Crozes-Hermitage 2022	\$32	90
Crozes-Hermitage 2020	\$30	91
<b>OLIVIER RAVOIRE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Caparaçon 2022	\$46	91
Gigondas Armatura 2022	\$33	90
Vacqueyras Pavois 2022	\$26	91
<b>RHONÉA</b>		
Beaumes-de-Venise Bel Air 2020	\$38	90
Beaumes-de-Venise La Beaume 2020	\$38	91
Beaumes-de-Venise Trias 2020	\$38	90
Beaumes-de-Venise Vieilles Vignes Confidence 2021	\$23	90
Rasteau Les Hauts du Village 2022	\$25	88
Rasteau Prestige 2022	\$25	88
Rasteau Tradition 2022	\$23	89
<b>DOMAINE DU ROUCAS DE ST. PIERRE</b>		
Gigondas 2021	\$44	91
Gigondas 2020	\$40	91
<b>ROGER SABON &amp; FILS</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Secret des Sabon 2022	\$236	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Olivets 2022	\$48	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Prestige 2022	\$82	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve 2022	\$58	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Renaissance 2023	\$55	93
Lirac 2023	\$27	89
<b>AIMÉ SABON</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape St.-Antonin 2022	\$70	93
Côtes du Rhône St.-Antonin 2022	\$20	90
Côtes du Rhône-Villages St.-Antonin Plan de Dieu 2022	\$26	90
Principauté d'Orange White St.-Antonin 2023	\$22	90
<b>DOMAINE SANTA DUC</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Habemus Papam 2022	\$71	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau Ouest 2022	\$170	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Pied de Baud 2022	\$104	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Saintes Vierges 2022	\$104	92
Gigondas Aux Lieux-Dits 2022	\$57	92
Gigondas Clos des Hospices 2022	\$104	93
Gigondas Les Hautes Garrigues 2022	\$104	94
<b>ROTEM &amp; MOUNIR SAOUMA</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Arioso 2020	\$271	96
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Omnia 2021	\$133	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Magis 2021	\$156	96
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Inopia 2021	\$46	90
Côtes du Rhône-Villages White Inopia 2021	\$46	92
<b>SIMIAN</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Clefs du Caladas 2022	\$55	92
Côtes du Rhône Les Clefs du Caladas 2022	\$22	90
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Massif d'Uchaux Les Clef du Caladas 2022	\$27	90
<b>DOMAINE DE LA SOLITUDE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$55	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Barberini 2022	\$85	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Secrète Réserve 2021	\$200	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$60	92
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Barberini 2023	\$86	93
<b>JEAN-MICHEL SORREL</b>		
Hermitage Le Vignon Vieilles Vignes Lot 7 2020	\$90	93



WINE	PRICE	SCORE
<b>M. SORREL</b>		
Crozes-Hermitage 2022	\$82	91
Hermitage 2022	\$240	95
<b>DOMAINE LA SOUMADE</b>		
Rasteau 2021	\$20	88
<b>ST.-COSME</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2021	\$70	92
Condrieu 2022	\$100	94
Côte-Rôtie 2022	\$100	93
Côtes du Rhône 2023	\$21	90
Crozes-Hermitage 2022	\$43	92
Grenache-Pinot Noir Vin de France Micro-Cosme 2024	\$16	89
Sauvignon-Viognier Vin de France Micro-Cosme 2023	\$17	88
Sauvignon-Viognier Vin de France Micro-Cosme 2022	\$17	88
St.-Joseph 2022	\$48	94
<b>CHÂTEAU DE ST.-COSME</b>		
Côtes du Rhône White Hominis Fides 2022	\$75	93
Côtes du Rhône White Le Poste 2022	\$75	94
Gigondas 2022	\$65	94
Gigondas Hominis Fides 2022	\$160	96
Gigondas Le Claux 2022	\$160	96
Gigondas Le Poste 2022	\$75	96
Principauté d'Orange White Le Deux Albion 2023	\$25	90
<b>SYLVAIN GAUTHIER</b>		
St.-Joseph Domaine des Pierres Seches 2022	\$45	92
St.-Joseph Domaine des Pierres Seches 2021	\$45	90
St.-Joseph Domaine des Pierres Seches 1930 2021	\$100	91
St.-Joseph Domaine des Pierres Seches Revirand 2021	\$63	90
St.-Joseph White Domaine des Pierres Seches 2022	\$45	93
St.-Joseph White Domaine des Pierres Seches 2021	\$45	92
<b>TARDIEU-LAURENT</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Spéciale 2022	\$70	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Galets d'Or 2022	\$50	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Vieilles Vignes 2023	\$55	93
Cornas 2022	\$59	91
Côte-Rôtie Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$85	94
Côtes du Rhône Les Becs Fins 2023	\$15	89
Côtes du Rhône White Les Becs Fins 2023	\$15	89
Crozes-Hermitage White Vieilles Vignes 2023	\$35	92
Gigondas Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$40	92
Hermitage 2022	\$90	93
Hermitage White 2022	\$75	94
Rasteau Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$25	91
St.-Joseph Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$40	93
St.-Joseph White Vieilles Vignes 2023	\$40	93
Tavel Vieilles Vignes 2023	\$20	89
Vacqueyras Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$35	91
<b>DOMAINE DE TRIENNES</b>		
Méditerranée Rosé 2023	\$25	87
Viognier Méditerranée St.-Fleur 2021	\$25	88
<b>CHÂTEAU DU TRIGNON</b>		
Côtes du Rhône 2021	\$16	87
<b>CHÂTEAU UNANG</b>		
Ventoux 2021	\$19	90
Ventoux La Croix 2021	\$34	91
Ventoux La Source 2021	\$26	90
<b>CHÂTEAU DE VAUDIEU</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$59	93



WINE	PRICE	SCORE
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Clos du Belvédère 2023	\$99	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Le Picardan... 2023	\$99	93
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Les Clairette de Gabriel 2023	\$99	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Les Vieilles Roussanne 2023	\$99	94
<b>STÉPHANE VEDEAU</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Ferme du Mont Vendange 2022	\$89	92
Côte-Rôtie J. Boutin Bonnevaux 2021	\$87	89
Crozes-Hermitage J. Boutin Les Hauts Granites 2021	\$37	89
Hermitage J. Boutin Arena Mica 2022	\$85	93
<b>GEORGES VERNAY</b>		
Condrieu Coteau de Vernon 2021	\$150	95
Condrieu Les Chaillées de l'Enfer 2022	\$130	95
Condrieu Les Terrasses de l'Empire 2023	\$69	93
Côte-Rôtie Blonde du Seigneur 2022	\$120	93
Côte-Rôtie Maison Rouge 2021	\$150	93
<b>CHÂTEAU LA VERRERIE</b>		
Méditerranée White Hautes Collines 2022	\$24	89
Viognier Méditerranée White Hautes Collines 2022	\$24	87
<b>VERSET A&amp;E</b>		
Cornas 2021	\$60	92
Cornas Signature 2021	\$90	92
<b>VIDAL-FLEURY</b>		
Gigondas 2018	\$40	88
<b>DOMAINE DE LA VIEILLE JULIENNE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Hauts-lieux 2021	\$109	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Trois Sources 2021	\$79	94
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve 2021	\$299	96
<b>LES VINS DE VIENNE</b>		
Collines Rhodaniennes Sotanum 2022	\$90	93
Collines Rhodaniennes White Taburnum 2022	\$90	93
Condrieu 2023	\$81	93
Condrieu La Chambée 2023	\$50	93
Condrieu Lieu-Dit Jean Raude 2023	\$120	95
Condrieu Lieu-Dit Poncin 2023	\$120	95
Côte-Rôtie Les Essartailles 2022	\$96	93
Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Le Combard 2022	\$132	94
Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Le Plomb 2022	\$132	94
Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Les Grandes Places 2022	\$216	95
Crozes-Hermitage 2023	\$36	91
Crozes-Hermitage White 2023	\$40	91
Crozes-Hermitage White Lieu-Dit Bedad 2023	\$59	92

WINE	PRICE	SCORE
Marsanne Collines Rhodaniennes 2023	\$32	89
St.-Joseph 2023	\$41	92
St.-Joseph L'Arzelle 2022	\$56	93
St.-Joseph White L'Élouède 2023	\$54	92
St.-Péray 2023	\$35	90
St.-Péray Les Bialères 2023	\$46	92
St.-Péray Lieu-Dit Les Faures 2022	\$58	92
Vin de France White Reméage 2022	\$21	88
Viognier Collines Rhodaniennes 2023	\$30	91
<b>LE VIEUX DONJON</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022	\$65	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023	\$65	93
<b>DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau 2021	\$129	95
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Piedlong	\$79	94
Famille Brunier 2021		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape Télégramme 2022	\$64	93
<b>LES VIGNERONS D'ESTEZARGUES</b>		
Côtes du Rhône-Villages Signargues	\$15	86
Domaine La Montagnette 2022		
<b>LES VIGNERONS DE TAVEL</b>		
Tavel Acantalis 2023	\$22	89
Tavel Cuvée Royale 2023	\$24	90
Tavel Domaine de Chantepierre 2023	\$23	89
Tavel Domaine du Vieil Aven 2023	\$23	89
Tavel Domaines des Carteresses 2023	\$23	89
Tavel Le Chant du Soleil 2023	\$22	90
Tavel Les Lys 2023	\$22	88
Tavel Trésor des Sables 2023	\$24	90
<b>VIGNOBLES MAYARD</b>		
Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau de Ma Mère 2020	\$66	92
<b>FRANÇOIS VILLARD</b>		
Condrieu Les Terrasses du Palat 2022	\$75	93
Marsanne-Roussanne Collines Rhodaniennes Les Contours de Mairlant 2022	\$24	90
St.-Joseph Poivre et Sol 2021	\$42	90
St.-Péray Version 2022	\$41	93
Syrah Collines Rhodaniennes L'Appel des Sereines 2021	\$20	88
Viognier Collines Rhodaniennes Les Contours de Deponcins 2022	\$35	91
<b>ALAIN VOGÉ</b>		
Brut St.-Péray Les Bulles d'Alain NV	\$50	90
Cornas Les Chailles 2022	\$70	94
Cornas Les Vieilles Fontaines 2020	\$136	94
Cornas Les Vieilles Vignes 2022	\$95	94
Côtes du Rhône Les Peyrouses 2022	\$25	90
St.-Péray Fleur de Crussol 2022	\$70	93



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—**Danny Meyer**

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# WASHINGTON'S WONDERS

The 2021 and 2022 vintages deliver delicious reds  
and whites from a range of *terroirs*

By **TIM FISH**



Draft horses plow the tightly spaced rows of vines in Horsepower's Walla Walla vineyards, which produced this report's top wine.

Washington's Columbia Valley is a vast winegrowing region encompassing many diverse *terroirs*, making the state second only to California as the largest wine producer in the United States. While the climate is cool and wet in Seattle, it's different east of the Cascades, where Columbia Valley lies. There the conditions are sunny and dry, the land made bountiful by the waters of the mighty Columbia River.

Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Merlot are consistently among

the leading grape varieties, although an array of wines—from Cabernet Franc to Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling—thrive as well. The 2021 and 2022 reds are now on the market, and while the growing seasons were remarkably dissimilar, each produced a number of outstanding wines.

That's my takeaway after reviewing nearly 350 wines in blind tastings at our Napa office since my previous report ("Washington Abides," March 31, 2024). A year ago, I gave the 2021 vintage a

ANDREA JOHNSON



preliminary rating of 90–93 points on *Wine Spectator*'s 100-point scale, and after tasting more than 150 2021s since then, I can now rate it 93 points overall. In addition, I have reviewed about 125 2022s so far, and based on these tastings I give the vintage a preliminary score of 89–92 points, just a notch below its predecessor.

The 2021 vintage was stellar for vigneron Christophe Baron and his many labels, yielding this report's top-scoring wine: the Horsepower Grenache Walla Walla Valley Sur Echelas Vineyard 2021 (97 points, \$133), a red that shows verve and personality yet is agile on its feet. The Horsepower Syrah Walla Walla Valley Sur Echelas Vineyard 2021 (96, \$133) is a bold and compelling wine, with huckleberry, black olive and wild game accents, while Baron's richly detailed Cayuse Syrah Walla Walla Valley Bionic Frog 2021 (96, \$130) delivers vibrant blackberry and huckleberry flavors.

Matt Reynvaan also had an excellent year, particularly with his Reynvaan Syrah Walla Walla Valley Stonessence (96, \$115). This polished and impeccably structured red builds richness and tension, showing river stone, savory meat and tapenade tones.

Former NFL player Sidney Rice continues to prove that Dossier Wine Collective is not a vanity project. With his partner, Tim Lenihan, and winemaker, Billo Naravane, Rice released the impressive Dossier Syrah Columbia Valley 2022 (95, \$80), a vivacious yet refined red. Not to be outdone, former New England Patriots quarterback Drew Bledsoe and his winemaking partner, Josh McDaniels, check in with the Doubleback Estate Reserve Walla Walla Valley 2021 (95, \$188), a Bordeaux-style blend that's expressive



Despite concerns about overripeness in 2021, K Vintners' Charles Smith is impressed by the freshness of the year's reds.

and handsomely structured.

Two veteran Washington wineries show they still have what it takes with their latest bottlings. Having released its first wine with the 1978 vintage, Leonetti Cellar has been run by second-generation winemaker Chris Figgins since 2001. His own top-rated Bordeaux-style blend, the Leonetti Reserve Walla Walla Valley 2021 (95, \$160), is dark and brooding yet rich in structure and polish. Another family estate with origins that date to 1978, Quilceda Creek, is also managed by the second generation—in this case winemaker Paul Golitzin, whose has guided the winery for more than 30 years. The Quilceda Creek Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2021 (95, \$250) is supple and beautifully proportioned, with blackberry, cherry and mocha flavors.

There's also a strong case to be made that Washington is America's best winegrowing region for value, whether you drink red or white wine. Among reds, look for Barnard Griffin's Merlot Columbia Valley 2022 (90, \$17), which is svelte and elegantly structured; Chateau Ste. Michelle's Syrah Columbia Valley 2021 (88, \$15), a juicy, easygoing crowd-pleaser; and Kirkland Signature's Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2022 (88, \$9), a perky red that shows appealing notes of black cherry, espresso and bittersweet chocolate.

As for whites, two of the best buys on the market right now are the plump, creamy and generous Mercer Chardonnay Horse Heaven Hills Mercer Bros. 2023 (88, \$22), offering notes of pear, tropical fruit and cinnamon, and the off-dry and succulent Pacific Rim Riesling Columbia Valley 2023 (88, \$11), with peach and cantaloupe flavors.



A leader among the state's Cabernet producers, Doubleback turned out a classic-rated version in 2021.



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*“The 2021s are definitely fruit-forward, and we can enjoy them now, but you can tell the potential for aging is enormous. It’s a great vintage.”*

—CHRISTOPHE BARON

The 2021 and 2022 growing seasons offer a study in contrast. 2021 was the hottest season on record, equaling or surpassing the sweltering 2015 vintage. The heat culminated at the end of June, when a record-shattering heat dome descended on the Pacific Northwest. Areas of the Columbia Valley sweltered through four days of temperatures as high as 118° F.

Veraison was weeks away, so the grapes were still green and firm. Cabernet, however, was in a crucial period of development at that point, and up to 30% of the crop was lost. That loss, combined with a hard freeze in January that damaged vines, caused historically low yields at harvest.

“The last 10 days of June were above 100° F. in Walla Walla, and that’s quite early to see those temperatures,” explains Sleight of

Hand winemaker Trey Busch about 2021. “We typically don’t see those until after the Fourth of July. I’ve never been done with harvest so early.”

Washington winemakers are now accustomed to hot vintages, having recently seen three of them in a row—in 2013, 2014 and 2015. “We took everything we learned in those vintages and put it to work in ‘21,” Busch says. “Hot vintages are really tough for us because the acids fall out fairly quickly, and we definitely want to try to capture those.”

The biggest concern with the 2021s was the possibility of over-ripeness and hard tannins. That’s because the cluster weights were lower than usual and the grapes were small and thick-skinned. Maintaining thicker leaf canopies later in the season and doing shorter extended macerations in the cellar to balance extraction are just two methods winemakers rely on.

“The 2021s are showing really great freshness, balance and focus,” says winemaker Charles Smith of K Vintners. “There’s just a sense of lightness to them as well, which I find to be really fascinating. The wines are full-flavored, but literally with no weight.”

Baron agrees: “They definitely have a lot of good concentration, a lot of beautifully ripe tannins, great attack, great mouthfeel and



Former NFL star Sidney Rice (right) and his partner Tim Lenihan of Dossier Wine Collective scored big in 2022 with a highly rated Syrah loaded with expressive flavors.





Despite variable conditions during the 2021 and 2022 growing seasons, Trey Busch of Sleight of Hand made a range of outstanding reds from both vintages.

great density. But they are very appealing right now. They are definitely fruit-forward, and we can enjoy them now, but you can tell the potential for aging is enormous. It's a great vintage. I just wish we had more of it."

There was a Jekyll and Hyde quality to the 2022 growing season, with an unusually cool first half of the season that was followed by a hot late summer and early fall. The year started with a cold, wet winter, including a freeze in January. Then a freak blizzard struck Columbia Valley in mid-April, with temperatures going down to

26° F. in some areas. These conditions stalled budbreak for two to three weeks, as cool weather continued through bloom. Normal summer weather finally arrived in late June, and by October temperatures were running 5° F. above average, allowing the season to catch up and harvest to begin.

Smith calls the 2022s "very savory, very fresh and long on the palate." Busch thinks the wines have a more generous texture than the 2021s. "They are a little more approachable already," he says. "I think it's a very consumer-friendly vintage." Baron concurs: "The

'22s will be more approachable in their youth than the '21s. They just have a softer mouthfeel and are very pleasing. Drink your '22s before your '21s."

Unlike the short crop in 2021, the 2022 season was bountiful—so bountiful that growers and winemakers were caught by surprise. This oversupply should benefit consumers, says winemaker Chris Gorman. "There's a lot of very expensive wine in our less expensive wines in '22, if that makes sense. When Red Mountain Cabernet comes in at 30% more than expected, I don't feel I can make an extra 1,000 cases of The Bully or Evil Twin. So it has to go into the \$30 wines, The Devil You Know and Old Scratch. Everything's just going to be better."

Senior editor Tim Fish is Wine Spectator's lead taster on the wines of Washington.

### Rating Washington Merlot, Cabernet and Syrah Vintages

2022	89-92	An unusually cool first half of the season led to a hot late summer and fall; reds are full-bodied and generous	NYR
2021	93	Hottest growing season on record produced reds of power and density	Drink or hold
2020	90	A hot summer led to ripe, full-bodied reds; late-summer wildfires caused concern	Drink or hold
2019	94	Ideal growing season, except for an early October frost; reds are generous and polished	Drink or hold
2018	93	Cool autumn weather salvaged an otherwise hot year, making for full-bodied yet well-balanced wines	Drink or hold
2017	90	A cool, wet spring led to a hot summer, but moderate weather near harvest helped build expression	Drink or hold
2016	91	A warm spring gave way to a moderate summer, promising balanced but structured wines	Drink or hold

A score range indicates preliminary analysis based on barrel samples and/or a limited sampling; many wines of the vintage not yet reviewed.  
**Vintage ratings:** 95-100, classic; 90-94, outstanding; 85-89, very good; 80-84, good; 75-79, mediocre; 50-74, not recommended **Drinkability:** "NYR" means most of the wines of the vintage are yet to be released; "drink" means most of the wines of the vintage are ready to drink; "hold" means most of the ageworthy wines have yet to fully mature.

RYAN MARSHALL



## Tim Fish's Recommended Wines From Washington

Nearly 350 wines were reviewed for this report. A free alphabetical list is available at [WineSpectator.com/WashingtonAlpha033125](https://www.winespectator.com/WashingtonAlpha033125).  
WineSpectator.com members can access complete reviews for all wines tasted using the online Wine Ratings search.

### TOP WINES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>HORSEPOWER</b> Grenache Walla Walla Valley Sur Echolas Vineyard 2021 Showing verve and personality, this red jumps from the glass yet is agile on its feet, with dynamic raspberry and black cherry flavors.	97	\$133
<b>CAYUSE</b> Syrah Walla Walla Valley Bionic Frog 2021 Stoked with personality, this offers vibrant blackberry and huckleberry flavors accented by crushed stone, truffle, wild game and black olive.	96	\$130
<b>REYNVAAN</b> Syrah Walla Walla Valley Stonessence 2021 Impeccably structured and polished, featuring deep blackberry and raspberry flavors that building richness and tension.	96	\$115
<b>DOSSIER</b> Syrah Columbia Valley 2022 This vivacious yet refined red is loaded with personality, delivering expressive flavors of blueberry, black olive, stone and savory meat.	95	\$80
<b>DOUBLEBACK</b> Estate Reserve Walla Walla Valley 2021 Handsomely styled, showing flavors of black cherry and dark plum laced with mineral and spice notes. Cabernet Sauvignon blend.	95	\$188
<b>LEONETTI</b> Reserve Walla Walla Valley 2021 Dark and brooding yet rich in structure and polished, with deep flavors of blackberry, mocha espresso and clove. Cabernet Sauvignon blend.	95	\$160
<b>PASSING TIME</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain 2022 Structured and detailed, with blackberry and cherry notes highlighted by mocha espresso and toasty spices as this builds richness.	95	\$110
<b>QUILCEDA CREEK</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2021 Polished and well-proportioned, with flavors of blackberry and cherry that take on accents of bitter mocha and bell pepper.	95	\$250
<b>ABEJA</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley Skysill 2020 Polish meets structure in this red, with silky black cherry flavors accented by espresso, bittersweet mocha and dark spice notes.	94	\$225
<b>BETZ</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Heart of the Hill 2021 Dynamic and detailed, showing flavors of black cherry and blackberry that take on fresh violet, roasted sage and stony mineral accents.	94	\$135
<b>DELILLE</b> Doyenne Columbia Valley 2021 Sleek and seductive yet structured, with rich flavors of raspberry and cherry laced with espresso, smoked pepper and <i>garrigue</i> . Syrah blend.	94	\$50
<b>GRAMERCY CELLARS</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2019 A handsome red, structured and compelling, with blackberry, tarragon and dusky spice flavors that build tension and richness.	94	\$60
<b>JANUIK</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Quintessence Vineyard 2021 Broad-shouldered and slightly brooding, with flavors of blackberry, bittersweet chocolate, clove and dusky spices.	94	\$50
<b>K</b> Grenache Walla Walla Valley The Boy Powerline Vineyard 2021 Combining finesse with structure and simmering richness, this serves up raspberry and red currant flavors, finishing with refined tannins.	94	\$50
<b>LA RATA</b> Walla Walla Valley 2021 This distinctive version is refined yet exotic, with lilting aromas opening to multilayered raspberry and strawberry flavors. Grenache blend.	94	\$80
<b>MARK RYAN</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Dead Horse 2021 Deeply structured and generous, with black cherry and red currant notes that show orange peel and espresso hints as this builds richness.	94	\$70

### TOP WINES (continued)

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>PURSUED BY BEAR</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley Twin Bear 2020 Well-tailored and expressive, featuring vibrant flavors of blackberry and cherry that pick up details of tobacco, spices and black olive.	94	\$80
<b>THE WALLS</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Curiositas 2022 Broad-shouldered and deeply structured, featuring a vibrant core of tannins and acidity framed by black currant, licorice and black olive.	94	\$80
<b>AVENNIA</b> Justine Yakima Valley 2022 Svelte and expressive, showing cherry and raspberry flavors accented by licorice and grilled meat, with refined tannins. Grenache blend.	93	\$45
<b>BAER</b> Ursa Royal Slope 2020 A precise red, offering both structure and polish, with red currant and blackberry flavors laced with mint and espresso. Merlot blend.	93	\$40
<b>GORMAN</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Old Scratch 2022 A red with richness and stamina, jammed with intensity and flavor, this offers blackberry, cherry, grilled herb and green olive notes.	93	\$35
<b>SLEIGHT OF HAND</b> Grenache Yakima Valley The Sorceress Reserve 2022 Plush in texture yet zesty and multilayered, with raspberry, smoky meat, licorice and cracked pepper flavors that zip along the finish.	93	\$55

### TOP VALUES

WINE	SCORE	PRICE
<b>BROWNE</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Heritage 2022 Generous, with black cherry, mocha espresso and toasty spice flavors.	92	\$20
<b>CHARLES &amp; CHARLES</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2021 Plush and zesty, this is lively with black cherry, mocha and spices.	91	\$15
<b>CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE-DR. LOOSEN</b> Riesling Columbia Valley Eroica 2022 Succulent and refreshing, offering nectarine, apricot and honeysuckle.	90	\$20
<b>BARNARD GRIFFIN</b> Merlot Columbia Valley 2022 Svelte, with expressive red currant, fresh cherry and savory spices.	90	\$17
<b>BOARD TRACK RACER</b> Speed Racer Columbia Valley 2022 Snappy and sleekly built. Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.	89	\$15
<b>DELILLE</b> Sauvignon Blanc Columbia Valley Métier 2023 Vibrant and refreshing, showing sleek flavors of lemon and lime.	89	\$20
<b>NINE HATS</b> Riesling Columbia Valley 2022 Vibrant and floral, with delicate peach sorbet, lime and petrol accents.	89	\$15
<b>CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE</b> Syrah Columbia Valley 2021 Juicy and easygoing, evoking cherry, toasty cinnamon and pepper.	88	\$15
<b>KIRKLAND SIGNATURE</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2022 A perky red, with black cherry, espresso and bittersweet chocolate.	88	\$9
<b>L'ECOLE NO. 41</b> Sémillon Columbia Valley 2023 Crisp, with melon, fig and beeswax. Sémillon and Sauvignon Blanc.	88	\$18
<b>MERCER</b> Chardonnay Horse Heaven Hills Mercer Bros. 2023 Plump and creamy, with flavors of pear, tropical fruit and cinnamon.	88	\$22
<b>WINES OF SUBSTANCE</b> Cabernet Sauvignon Washington Cs Substance 2021 Appealing for its flavors of blackberry, dark mocha and toasty spices.	88	\$17



## CATCHING UP WITH CHRIS GORMAN

Chris Gorman never tasted wine until he was 22, but after graduating with a marketing degree from Western Washington University in Bellingham in 1991, he soon found himself working for a small wine distributor in Seattle. Gorman wanted to be a rock star guitarist with his college band, Crawdaddy, and band members took whatever jobs they could find to support their music. At the distributor, Gorman found his passion for wine, and in 2002 he founded Gorman Winery, which produces some of Washington's most distinctive Bordeaux- and Rhône-style blends. But Gorman never gave up on his rock dreams—today there are 50 guitars on display in his winery and he plays them frequently. Senior editor Tim Fish recently sat down with Gorman to talk about his life and career.

**WINE SPECTATOR:** What did you do before making wine?

**CHRIS GORMAN:** I was in a semi-popular band in college when the grunge movement happened in Seattle. Basically, Nirvana put us out of business because we weren't as good as them. We weren't grungy enough. We were too happy.

**WS:** What first led you to winemaking?

**CG:** I joined the wine industry in '91 after I graduated. In my first job, I was a warehouse guy for a small Italian distributor in Seattle. I was 22 and I'd never had a glass of wine at that point. I was just bit by the wine bug. I sold wine for 13 years before I started making it and I met a lot of winemakers doing that. I was very familiar with international wines and I knew the style I liked. But you know, things get out of hand. You think you know how to do it and you open up a winery and 23 years later, you're too big for your britches.

**WS:** What was your first job at a winery?

**CG:** The first real winery job that I ever had was my own winery, although I worked at wineries for free, doing punch-downs and other things for probably three years in western Washington. I paid my dues. I'm self-taught and learned a lot from other winemakers. I approach wine-making more like a chef than a scientist, for sure. I mean, I understand the chemistry of it and we have a lab, but I tell people that making wine is actually pretty easy. It's about knowing what you're going after and what kind of style you want to make.

**WS:** What was the first vintage of Gorman?

**CG:** Zachary's Ladder 2002 was my first wine, then in 2003 I did The Bully, The Evil Twin and Pixie. And then I released them all at once in what would have been 2005. That was my first true release.

**WS:** What makes Washington such a distinctive place for winegrowing?

**CG:** Columbia Valley is an amazing breadbasket for agriculture. We have some of the greatest produce in the world—between onions and pears and cherries, produce like Walla Walla onions that are sought after around the world. So why not grapes? Red Mountain has always called me. It's kind of the masculine side of Washington wine, and Boushey and Yakima Valley are more on the pretty side. It is almost tannin-free and it's just delicious and aromatic.

**WS:** You're starting to release your 2022 reds. What's the vintage like?

**CG:** That was a massive vintage for us. We were up almost 30% fruit, and that's not unusual for that vintage. So there are a lot of '22s being released now, and it might be one of the better vintages we've seen. There's going to be a lot of good wine, and Washington is going to deliver some amazing value. I mean, this is not a time to raise prices.





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# GRAND SPIRITS

The world's best restaurants for wine now have great spirits programs too

Spago offers guests a selection from its Bottled in Bond cart.

**W**ine lists of staggering depth and breadth are a given among *Wine Spectator* Grand Award winners, as are signature cuisines, luxurious dining rooms and attentive service. And in recent years, our judges have noticed the emergence of another alluring feature: These days, more and more of these restaurants have serious spirits programs, often with both thoughtful, inventive cocktails and superrare pours served neat.

We're shining a light on five exemplars that have all these qualities and also a particular spirit-category focus. That focus might be from geography—proximity to Mexico inspiring a serious agave program, for example—or perhaps kismet, as in the case of a singular Scotch program bolstered by the owners' brother's tenure as a priest in Scotland. Ultimately, the rule now is that lovers of great wine and food demand spirits at the same level.

JESSICA SAMPLE



# ELEVEN MADISON PARK

BY CASSIA SCHIFTER

**ELEVEN** Madison Park has award-winning cuisine and a Grand Award-winning wine list, but its spirits program has also been gaining attention. This is thanks in large part to beverage director Sebastian Tollius, who has been working at the restaurant since 2019.

Two years after Tollius' arrival, chef and owner Daniel Humm surprised many restaurant-goers by announcing that they would be shifting to an entirely plant-based menu. Tollius reimagined their cocktail list with innovative plant-based techniques and ingredients. Their seasonally changing cocktail menu features unpredictable combinations and unique flavors, but the growth of the spirits list itself is also worthy of recognition. "Cocktails are the biggest seller for us," Tollius admits. "But I think there's been a shift in the mentality of how people are enjoying spirits nowadays."

The list is broad, and part of what sets it apart is the attention paid to less obvious spirits; you'll find Macallan M (\$1,824 per pour), of course, but it's not often you see cachaca outside Brazilian-focused restaurants. Tollius says that over the past few years their rum and agave spirits choices in particular have been expanded, not least because of his own passion for them. "Rum is a great product to lean on just because it's

so *terroir* driven, just like agave spirits. It's really about a time and place."

Rum was a part of Tollius' life growing up: "My father drank rum at home, so I always remember it being something that we saw a lot of." After coming to the United States 10 years ago, he realized that a lot of the rums he grew up with in Latin America weren't available here. He serves different origins and styles, including a heavy Jamaican-style rum and a lighter one from Barbados.

He is especially excited by independent bottlers of rum, who source interesting aged offerings from across the Caribbean: Blackadder (Fiji 11 Year 2001 and Panama 12 Year 2000,

each \$65 per pour) and Holmes Cay (Barbados Premier Cru 14 year 2009, \$54 per pour; Belize Single Cask 16 year 2006, \$35 per pour; Guyana Single Cask Uitvlugt 2003, \$38 per pour).

"I think rum is such a cool category to talk about, because it's got such a worldwide *terroir* presence," Tollius says. "You're really getting sugarcane that grows in these specific stages and climates and regions, and then distilling that and aging that in those specific regions, too. When we're talking about whiskey and Scotch, yes, there is some *terroir* within each distillery, but you're also talking about similar climates."

Tollius is also hopeful for a resurgence of spirits like Cognac and Armagnac as any-time drinks. "I think it's definitely something that people should be enjoying more of, and it doesn't necessarily just have to fall within that piece of, 'This is a digestif.'"

They've doubled down on their beverage program with their swanky new upstairs bar, Clemente.



The serene bar at Eleven Madison Park

## A Change of Venue

At the intersection of food, cocktails, art and design is Clemente Bar, a collaboration between chef Daniel Humm and artist Francesco Clemente, featuring one-of-a-kind art (by Clemente and others) and thoughtful design in an

intimate space just upstairs from the Eleven Madison Park dining room.

The focus is on cocktails creatively crafted by Tollius, which are presented in nontraditional categories: Fresh, Carbonated, Clarified, Whipped, Bold and Zero Proof/Low Alcohol. Guests can enjoy drinks and bites à la carte in "the Lounge," or a five-course tasting menu with cocktail pairings (alcoholic and nonalcoholic pairings are offered) in "the Studio."

Tollius explains the experience: "Clemente Bar establishes a tone that inspires spontaneity and exploration, where every drink has its own story to share."



Doctor's Orders cocktail



Francesco Clemente's paintings anchor the room.



Beverage director Sebastian Tollius



# COMMANDER'S PALACE

BY JULIA LARSON

**IT** would be sacrilegious for Commander's Palace—a true New Orleans institution—to not have great drinks. The city boasts one of the most recognized cocktail scenes in the Western Hemisphere, from Ramos Gin Fizzes that float out of the glass to rum-soaked Hurricanes. Co-proprietors and cousins Ti Adelaide Martin and Lally Brennan grew up traveling with their culinary-minded parents, visiting places where “cocktails mattered,” according to Commander's chief “wine guy,” Dan Davis. “By the late '90s, nine out of 10 people traveling around the U.S. had never had a serious classic cocktail,” says Davis. “We've come a long way, and I'm proud of the fact that our restaurant was a leader of that effort. They identified what was missing.”

In fact, in 2007, the duo (who call themselves “the cocktail chicks”) published their own tome on tipples, *In the Land of Cocktails*, highlighting some of their family's favorite drinks, New Orleans staples and their own new concoctions.

An emphasis for Commander's is to not take itself too seriously, despite its decadent menu and world-class wine program. Case in point: 25-cent Martinis, poured out in shocking shades of fuchsia, cerulean and chartreuse, are a calling card at the restaurant's famous jazz brunch. (Limit is three per person, “Because that's enough!”) Martin



Who doesn't love a 25-cent Martini?



Owners Ti Adelaide Martin and Lally Brennan

and Brennan's Aunt Dottie kept hinting at bringing back the deal, first introduced during the Martini power-lunch era. “We saw an immediate increase in lunch business and in the celebratory feeling of our lunch service,” says Davis.

“We've always said a great meal starts with a great cocktail,” he continues. “After, we've got to have great wine, great conversation and then maybe at the end another great cocktail. If it's cold out, we're gonna finish with some Cognac.”

Flipping to the back page of the hefty 124-page wine list, guests can find yet more treasure: a well-curated selection of exclusive brandies and Cognacs. (“They're made from grapes,

so that's where they should be,” jokes Davis.) The bottles are primarily sourced from Davis' friend Nicolas Palazzi, a spirits importer whose family has grown grapes in Cognac for generations. “It's a labor of love; it's a tradition of fathers and grandfathers, mothers and grandmothers,” says Davis. “It's thankfully coming back to the forefront.”

Brandy and Cognac appear in many Crescent City cocktails, like the Brandy Crusta, Brandy Milk Punch, Vieux Carré and the original Sazerac, named after a prominent French brandy importer. But many of the brandies on Davis' list are worthy of sipping neat. These include eaux-de-vie made from quince and pear from southwestern France, and Pineau des Charentes (an aperitif of unfermented grape juice fortified with Cognac eau-de-vie). “We love popping them in the middle of a chef's tasting,” says Davis. “We always do something called a *coup du milieu*, a little cup in the middle—something to refresh the palate during the tasting other than wine. I love throwing a really intense brandy in that mix.”

## Dan Davis' Top Sippers

**For the Unacquainted:** Roger Groult 12 Year Reserve Pays d'Auge Calvados (\$25 per pour)

“Calvados is overlooked. But when you taste great Calvados, it has an amazingly intense, pure expression of apple that's just remarkable. This 12 Year Reserve is in a special sweet spot, so pretty and lingering.”

**The “Can't Miss”:** Maison Paul Beau Lignée de Samuel 60 Year Grande Champagne (\$115 per pour)

“This has an expressiveness that blows me away. It is almost ethereal, with an overt citrus tone. It captivates me every time I taste it.”



The collection of brandy reflects New Orleans' long history with that spirit.



# CANLIS

BY GREG WARNER

**THERE** are several remarkable aspects of Canlis, the 28-time Grand Award winner that has been a centerpiece of the Seattle food scene for over 70 years. These include the expansive wine cellar, an innovative and masterful tasting menu, and the jutting profile the restaurant cuts against the backdrop of Lake Union. Linger beneath these striking qualities, however, is an equally notable collection of rare and fine spirits, particularly Scotch. The introduction is a standard public-facing list, but inquisitive diners can reach into a storied, off-the-menu “family collection” of hard-to-find special bottles.

The base level of the program is a well-balanced bar menu of about 100 popular spirits and aperitifs. Twenty-eight of these bottles are Scotch, but other whiskies, plus gins and tequilas, are also well-represented. Popular single malts include Ardnamurchan Small Batch (\$25 per pour), Lagavulin 16 Year (\$34 per pour) and Balvenie 14 Year Caribbean Cask (\$20 per pour). True devotees may opt for more premium options such as Macallan 18 Year (\$75 per pour) or Samaroli Ledaig 1997 19 Year (\$120 per pour). While these selections are notable in their own

right, they are just the tip of the iceberg.

The program reaches its pinnacle with what’s not on the list—a collection of 300 “hidden” bottles, which any Scotch lover should ask about when visiting the restaurant. Many of these were acquired directly from producers through connections made with distilleries when Matt Canlis (brother of third-generation co-owners Brian and Mark Canlis) lived as a priest in Scotland.

These rare selections include Berry Bros. & Rudd Berrys’ Own 35 Year from Springbank Distillery, Gordon & MacPhail Macallan 40 Year and Connoisseurs Choice Ardbeg 1974. Some of these bottles are not even for sale, but shared without charge on special occasions. Brian explains, “They’re for the right people with the right interest. It’s not the kind of thing we want to sell—it’s the kind of thing that’s relational.”

Beyond Scotch, gin and mezcal in particular have been increasing in popularity. “We’re having fun reintroducing people to gin,” Brian says. “They think they don’t like it, but we bring them a drink they love and they can’t believe it’s gin.” Popular gin drinks include a milder Negroni and the T.D. Burns, a Martini containing oloroso Sherry and pimento oil.

For head bartender José Castillo, the greatest compliment is when guests put themselves in his hands. During COVID-19, he says, “Everybody learned how to make drinks, so now they want something different. It’s a moment of extreme joy when someone asks me to make them something.”



Canlis’ striking design is rooted in its midcentury origins.



Selection of rare Scotches

## A Priceless Whiskey

The staff and owners’ generosity is epitomized by Canlis’ collaboration with Seattle-based Westland Distillery, a blend of two single malts, including one aged in Garryana oak native to the Pacific Northwest. Co-owner Brian states that Westland “demonstrates a passion and care for single malt whiskey hard to find outside of Scotland and Japan.” The price for a dram served directly from the barrel? One must simply offer a toast stating how they hope to grow in the coming year.



José Castillo with a whiskey barrel in the cellar



# SPAGO

BY LARRY RUBIN

**SPAGO** has held onto pole position among restaurants in one of the world's flashiest cities since it opened in Los Angeles in 1982. Today, it remains the flagship of Wolfgang Puck's restaurant group, which includes more than 20 restaurants around the globe. Though Spago has iconic status, it has also adapted over time. Adam Fournier was brought on as bar director in 2022 to oversee a massive overhaul of the bar program. What's more, significant investment has been made to remodel the space. The ambition is to create a top-tier bar that, rather than acting as a staging area for guests en route to a table, offers a destination experience of its own.

The foundation of any ambitious spirits program is its bottles, and Spago's inventory is well-rounded and curated with personality. There are pages of great whiskies, especially from Scotland, Japan and the United States, but one is devoted to Bonded spirits, a historically and qualitatively important category that fascinates Fournier: "The Bottled in Bond section is a nerdy passion of mine. When I found a section in an older version of the spirits list I not only wanted to keep it but expand upon it." He realized a dream this year in selecting a single barrel

of Rittenhouse Bottled in Bond that Spago now uses as its house rye. According to Fournier, it's fabulous on its own but also put to good use in the house Old Fashioned, which features a split base of Spago's Rittenhouse and a private single barrel of cask-strength 8 Year Bourbon from Elijah Craig.

Also notable is Spago's expansion of its list to include other agave-based spirits, a move that Fournier says would have challenged guests' expectations 10 or 20 years ago but has proven popular. "I personally lean more into mezcal, as I find there to be a larger diversity of flavors due to the wider variety of agave varieties that can be utilized," he says.

He recommends bottlings from Del Maguey and Los Siete Misterios, especially for mixing,

and notes that Mal Bien and Neta produce some delicious sipping examples. These spirits are respectfully treated in cocktails like the Maenad, which is a many-layered marriage of the mezcal Negroni and the barrel-aged cocktail trend. Spago's bar team batches Los Siete Misterios mezcal, Byrrh, Aperol, and rhubarb-and-strawberry amaro and rests it for 60 days in amphora, which, thanks to gentle oxidation, incorporates and mellows it. It's then "thrown" to order tableside (a technique that chills, dilutes and aerates a cocktail by tossing it between cocktail tins, one of which contains ice). Tequila also gets the inventive cocktail treatment. The rose petal-garnished Lychee Rose cocktail is based on the luxurious Tequila Komos Reposado Rosa (a tequila aged in French oak red wine barrels, imparting a light rosé hue), which is shaken with lychee, elderflower and fresh lime.



Lychee Rose Cocktail



Bar director Adam Fournier aerates a cocktail.

## Ahead of the Curve

In addition to tequila and mezcal, Spago's list includes raicilla, an agave-based spirit that was recently promoted to Denominación de Origen, which covers the spirits production in the state of Jalisco. "Good raicilla is available in the States now," says Fournier. "Part of our job is to be trendsetters and find offerings that our guests might not have seen before." Raicilla is highlighted in the "And Beyond" section of the restaurant's latest cocktail list, which offers predictions about what the restaurant's bar may see become popular in the future.



Agave-based raicilla bottles

JESSICA SAMPLE (3)



# THE BARN AT BLACKBERRY FARM

BY KENNY MARTIN

**ANDY CHABOT**, senior vice president of food and beverage at the acclaimed resort in Walland, Tennessee, doesn't just spend his days serving wines from their Grand Award-winning cellar. A big part of the job is overseeing the veritable library of wine and spirits in reserve for the future: "One of the challenges here is maintaining and stewarding the collection."

That collection includes perhaps the greatest assortment of American whiskey on earth. That includes not only the leading lights of Kentucky and Tennessee—Pappy Van Winkle, for example—but also newer producers such as High West in Utah and Tuthilltown in New York. It's the happy result of being in the right place at the right time, during what Chabot calls a "heyday" in the early 2000s. "You could see the boom about to happen in American whiskey."

Then-proprietor Sam Beall, who died in a skiing accident in 2016, recognized whiskey's importance, even though wine was his real passion. He tasked Andrew Noye, then beverage manager, with building the program in the early days. "Sam really saw the future of how special it could be 20, 30, 40, 100 years from now," Chabot says.

Looking ahead, Chabot is excited about distillers he hasn't yet heard of. "Twenty years from now, there are going to be people out there with 25-year-old whiskey who just went into business five years ago. We don't necessarily know them all yet."

Beyond the precious bottles, what makes Blackberry Farm a great place to drink whiskey? Chabot praises his team of sommeliers and bar managers, who customize flights, lead classes and tastings, and add a personal touch to every pour. So while they do hold a significant reserve, they also serve whiskeys suited to individual guests' tastes. "You've got to have passionate people behind the program who want to share it and talk about it. Anyone can buy whiskey and put it in the cellar. But then you just become the curator of a whiskey museum."



Andy Chabot



Bringing the whiskey to the people

## American Whiskey Heaven

Thanks to early enthusiasm for American whiskey, Blackberry Farm's cellars hold bottles that are difficult or impossible to find anywhere else. Here are some highlights.

### Pappy Van Winkle Family Reserve 15 Year (\$220 per pour) and 23 year (\$400 per pour)

Long before Pappy became the world's most famous Bourbon, Blackberry Farm bought it by the barrel and made it the house pour. A sizable stock of the lineup remains. "We've known the family for a long time. When we were first buying the whiskeys, they were selling them—they weren't sure it was going to go," says Chabot. He's careful to keep the old Stitzel-Weller distillery bottles around for guests who will appreciate the chance to try a vanishing piece of Bourbon history: "You can still wow them."



Buffalo Trace Experimental Series

### Buffalo Trace Experimental Series (\$40 per pour)

Blackberry Farm has "a pretty full lineup" of the Experimental Series, including the Twice Barreled bottling from the inaugural 2006 release. Other highlights include the 2013 Hot Box Toasted Barrel and a vertical of 2014's Rye Bourbon series. Chabot loves the educational value of these bottles: "You can really taste the effects of different types of oak or a different mash bill."

### A. H. Hirsch Reserve 16 Year (\$500 per pour)

This legendary bottling was distilled in 1974 as a 400-barrel run at the original Michter's distillery in Schaefferstown, Pennsylvania. Chabot says he still has some of the Finest Reserve 20 Year, though you won't find it on the list.

## Other Notables

**Old Fitzgerald Bottled in Bond 17 Year (\$75 per pour) and 19 Year (\$105 per pour)**

**Rittenhouse 23 Year (\$150 per pour) and 25 Year (\$150 per pour)**

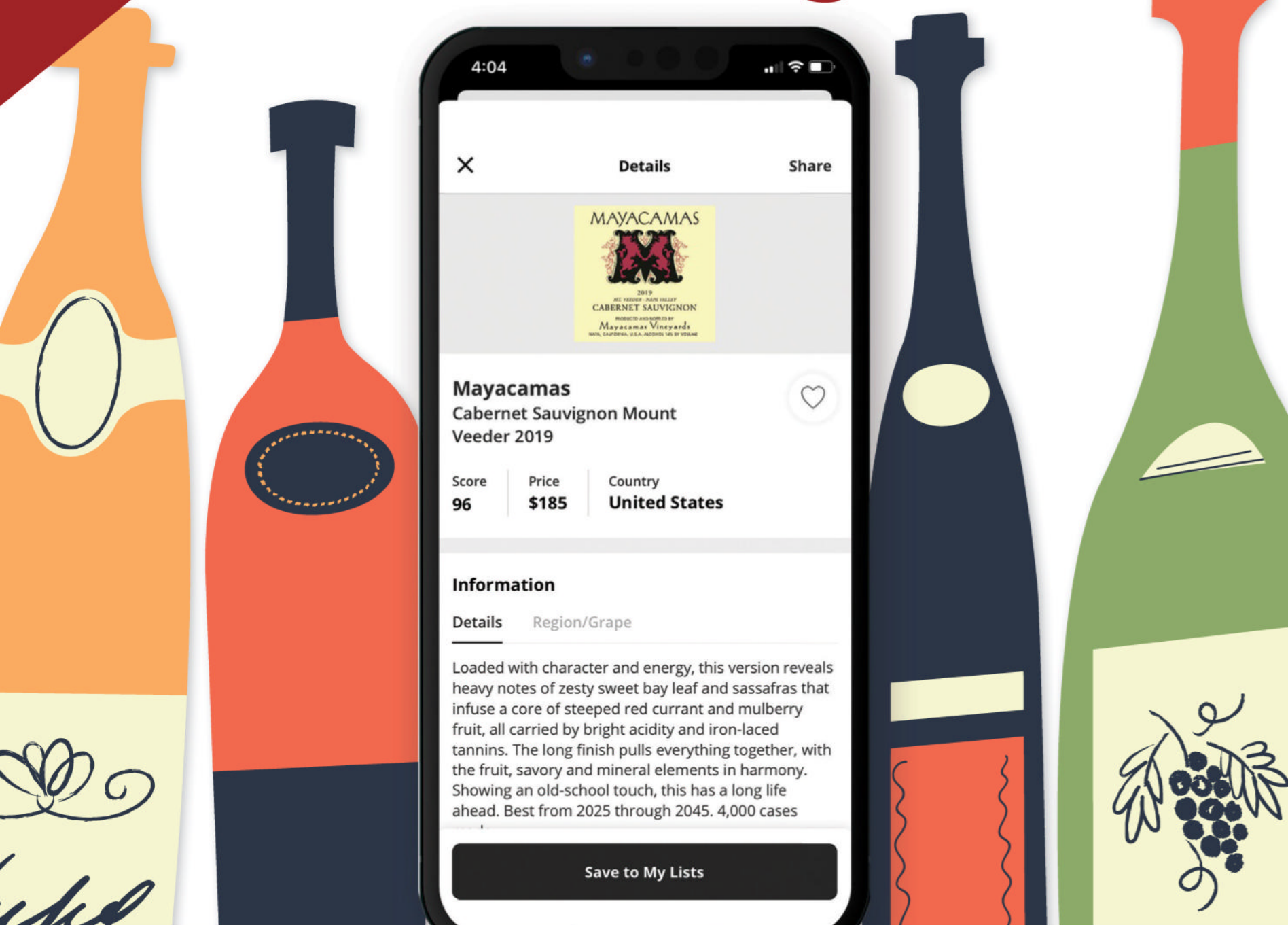
**Russel's Reserve 2003 (\$200 per pour)**

**Whistle Pig Vermont Oak Finish 15 Year (\$90 per pour)**



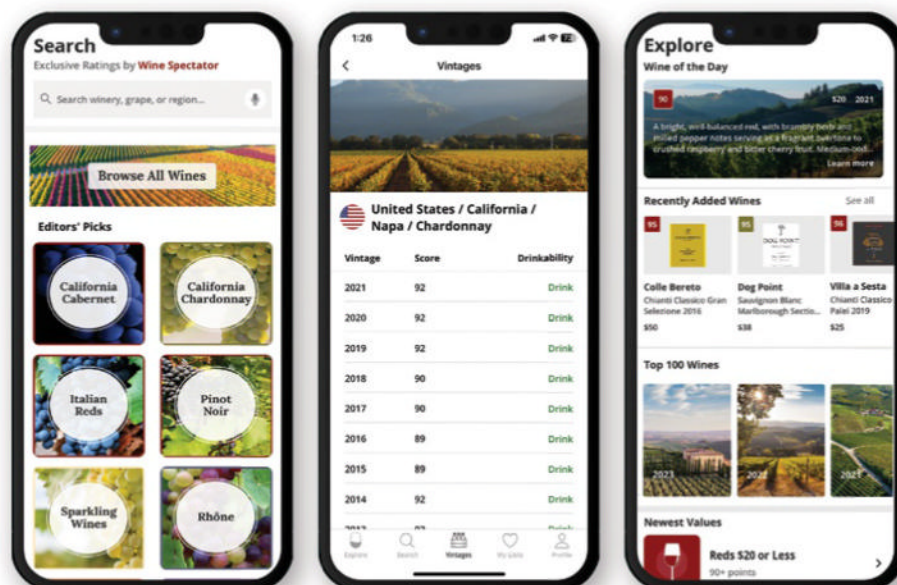
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# Wine Spectator Buying Guide



South Africa's David & Nadia focus on dry-farmed bush vines for their range of Chenin Blancs from the coastal Swartland region.

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## BY THE NUMBERS

The March 31 Buying Guide features **75 classic wines** and **350 outstanding wines** from among reviews of more than **475 new releases**. Members can access tasting notes and scores for those wines, along with **hundreds of additional wines** reviewed since our last issue, using the Wine Ratings search at [WineSpectator.com](https://www.winespectator.com).



# FONTBONNE

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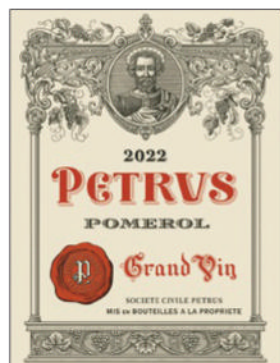
# SPECTATOR SELECTIONS

## Highly Recommended

The issue's most impressive wines. Includes top-scorers and wines that represent optimal purchases based on their combination of score, price and availability.



**98 Roagna Barbaresco Albesani 2019 \$200** ITALY There's fluidity and viscosity to the texture in this red, setting the stage for its macerated cherry, strawberry, rose hip, hay and eucalyptus flavors. This features an underlying mineral element too, which works in tandem with the vibrant acidity and firm, refined tannins. Long and complex. Best from 2028 through 2050. 352 cases made.—B.S.



**97 Pétrus Pomerol 2022 \$5,999** FRANCE There's a reserve to the very singular expression of plum, mulberry and boysenberry compote flavors that drive along without flinching in this version, which features a polished structure and a subtle tug of cold clay that provides a seamless, deftly inlaid grounding wire. But this is pretty much the fruit, the whole fruit and nothing but the fruit. Drink now through 2045.—J.M.



**96 Château Beau-Séjour Bécot St.-Emilion 2022 \$85** FRANCE This is very fresh, expressive and focused, with violet, iris and rosehip notes darting to the fore, while flavors of sleek raspberry and red currant preserves race along behind. Almost flattering, but there's a subtle chalky tension piercing the finish, which sails through. A dreamy wine. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2040. 6,250 cases made, 1,600 cases imported.—J.M.



**96 Château La Gaffelière St.-Emilion 2022 \$79** FRANCE This offers a pretty captivating display of boysenberry and blackberry puree flavors liberally infused with violet, iris and ink details, while a racy graphite spine provides remarkable length through the well-cut finish. There's some high gloss toast, but the fruit is in clear command. A real head-turner. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2042. 8,000 cases made, 300 cases imported.—J.M.



**96 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Clavoillon 2022 \$520** FRANCE Though delineated by its vibrant acidity, this white shows some weight, with a creamy texture enveloping flavors of vanilla, buttery croissant, lime blossoms and hazelnut. Lithe and persistent on the finish, where the notes of lime blossoms carry over, with accents of citronella and baking spices. Drink now through 2032. 2,310 cases made, 462 cases imported.—B.S.



**95 Château Giscours Margaux 2022 \$68** FRANCE Warmed cassis and plum notes form the core, while lilting lilac, violet and iris accents stream throughout. Offers a flash of black tea on the finish, along with a beguiling, cashmerelike mouthfeel. Judicious toast lets it all play out beautifully. A pitch-perfect example of the vintage profile. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2040. 15,000 cases made.—J.M.



**94 Château Siran Margaux 2022 \$40** FRANCE Hibiscus and iris accents are infused liberally throughout a core of mulberry and blackberry puree in this version. Black tea and sanguine hints add range on the fleshy finish, which ends with a lovely sweet cedar echo. Textbook for the AOC and the vintage. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2040. 7,000 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—J.M.

## Collectibles

Wines that will improve most from additional bottle age and that show the greatest potential to gain in value.



**99 Château Cheval Blanc St.-Emilion 2022 \$670** FRANCE Loganberry, boysenberry and blackberry compote notes give the core an almost outsized feel, but there's restraint and focus, as touches of warm loam, licorice root and smoldering tobacco keep this well-grounded. There's cut and drive too, even though this is dense and slow-moving, with alder smoke, Turkish coffee and bittersweet cocoa checking in. Then a lilting black tea and violet backdrop emerges at the very end, adding grace and sensuality. A marvelous expression of a distinctive vintage. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2028 through 2050. 6,845 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—J.M.



**98 Roagna Barbaresco Pajè Vecchie Viti 2019 \$420** ITALY Shows an extra dimension of viscosity and energy, with cherry, raspberry, pomegranate, mineral and licorice flavors. Verging on racy, offering lively acidity and dense yet refined tannins, this red is still on the reticent side, yet with all its components in the right place and superb potential. Best from 2027 through 2047. 285 cases made.—B.S.



# About the Buying Guide

This Buying Guide contains ratings of new releases from around the world. Complete tasting notes are provided for new releases scoring 85 or more points (on the *Wine Spectator* 100-point scale, explained below). Hundreds of additional reviews appear each month on our website, [www.winespectator.com](http://www.winespectator.com).

Each review carries the initials of the *Wine Spectator* editor who blind-tasted and scored the wine and wrote the review, based on the regional specializations indicated below.

<b>Bruce Sanderson</b>	<i>Burgundy, Piedmont, Tuscany</i>
<b>James Molesworth</b>	<i>California Cabernet Sauvignon and Pinot Noir, Bordeaux, Port</i>
<b>MaryAnn Worobiec</b>	<i>California Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc, Australia, New Zealand</i>
<b>Alison Napjus</b>	<i>Spain, Italy, Champagne, South Africa</i>
<b>Tim Fish</b>	<i>California Zinfandel and Merlot, Oregon, Washington, U.S. sparkling wines</i>
<b>Aaron Romano</b>	<i>Argentina, Chile</i>
<b>Kristen Bieler</b>	<i>Rhône Valley and other France, Germany, Austria</i>

## How We Do the Tastings

*Wine Spectator* editors taste more than 11,000 wines each year. Wines are tasted in our offices in New York and Napa, Calif. Tastings are also conducted on location in various European winegrowing regions.

All tastings are conducted in private, under controlled conditions. Wines are always tasted blind, in flights organized by varietal, appellation or region. Bottles are bagged and coded. Tasters are told only the general type of wine (varietal or region) and the vintage. Price is not taken into account. Each tasting begins with a wine previously rated, which is tasted non-blind as a reference point. Other already-rated wines are inserted into the blind tasting to ensure consistency. A typical tasting session consists of 20 to 30 wines, with a maximum of two sessions per day. We retaste many wines to confirm impressions, always in subsequent blind tastings.

Notes and ratings are entered directly into our database prior to the removal of the bags. Additional comments may be added to a note after the identity of the wine is revealed, but the score is never changed.

## Featured Wines: Spectator Selections, Labels and Photographs

Each issue, our editors choose wines with special qualities; called Spectator Selections, they are highlighted in the first pages of this Buying Guide, along with their labels. The categories are described below. In addition, selected reviews throughout the Buying Guide include a photograph of a winery principal, presenting these producers in a more personal way. All labels and images are chosen by *Wine Spectator* for editorial purposes only and do not represent any commercial transaction between *Wine Spectator* and the producers whose wines are featured.

**Highly Recommended:** The issue's most impressive wines. Includes top-scorers and wines that represent optimal purchases based on their combination of score, price and availability.

**Collectibles:** Wines that will improve most from additional bottle age and that show the greatest potential to gain in value.

**Smart Buys:** Wines that deliver fine character at affordable prices and that are broadly available.

**Best Values:** Wines with solid scores, modest prices and wide distribution.

## About Prices and Wines Tasted

Prices shown reflect the suggested retail price. When the suggested retail price is not available, we publish the prevailing wholesale price with a standard markup added. Actual retail prices may vary.

Wines are chosen for tasting from among those sent to our offices for review and those purchased at retail. Because we for the most part serve a U.S. audience, we prefer to review wines that are widely available there.

## About the 100-Point Scale

Ratings reflect how highly our editors regard each wine relative to other wines in its category and are based on potential quality—how good the wine will be when at its peak. The score summarizes a wine's overall quality; the tasting note describes the wine's style and character.

<b>95-100</b>	<i>Classic: a great wine</i>
<b>90-94</b>	<i>Outstanding: a wine of superior character and style</i>
<b>85-89</b>	<i>Very good: a wine with special qualities</i>
<b>80-84</b>	<i>Good: a solid, well-made wine</i>
<b>75-79</b>	<i>Mediocre: a drinkable wine that may have minor flaws</i>
<b>50-74</b>	<i>Not recommended</i>



**96 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$140 FRANCE** A richly styled, opulent Châteauneuf that offers a streamlined cascade of ripe cherry, licorice root and toasted chestnut. Mineral energy keeps this powering long distance, with a smoldering foundation of iron. Starts off silky in feel, with a caressing texture quickly firmed up by fine tannins that hold real power. Hints of wet soil and baking spices detail the long, winding finish. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Best from 2026 through 2042.—K.B.



**95 Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau 2021 \$129 FRANCE** This red offers an alluring perfume of red currant and dried cherry that's followed by earth tones of warm chestnut, wet leaves, brown bread and pepper, all built upon a plank of solid iron. There's a bloody, meaty edge to the palate, which is still tightly wound up by fine, persistent tannins. Incense smoke and mineral notes bounce along the lengthy finish. Elegant in spite of its weight and stature. Grenache, Mourvèdre, Syrah and Cinsault. Drink now through 2042. 1,636 cases imported.—K.B.

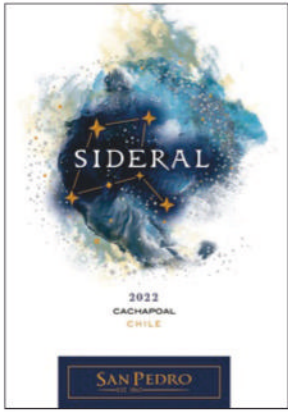
## Smart Buys

Wines that deliver fine character at affordable prices and that are broadly available.

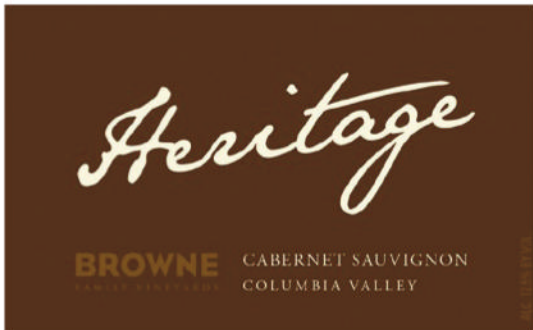


**94 Quivira Sauvignon Blanc Dry Creek Valley Fig Tree Vineyard 2022 \$32 CALIFORNIA** Complex and aromatic, with dried honeysuckle, lanolin and honeycomb notes that complement the core of mango, peach and citrus. There are plenty of spice, smoke and litsea oil details, along with hints of toasted green tea and fresh acidity on the finish. Drink now. 1,644 cases made.—M.W.





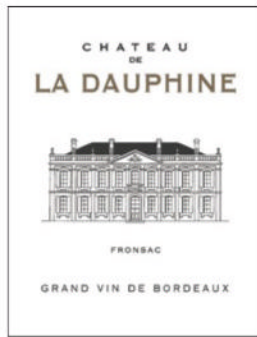
**93 Viña San Pedro Sideral Cachapoal Valley 2022 \$25 CHILE** An attractive version, with river stone and fresh floral details melding with red currant and raspberry flavors, all enlivened by fresh acidity. This unlocks additional layers of orange peel, rosemary and cassis and finishes with presence and length, adding subtle dark chocolate notes around refined tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Petit Verdot, Carmenère and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2032. 30,000 cases made, 2,500 cases imported.—A.R.



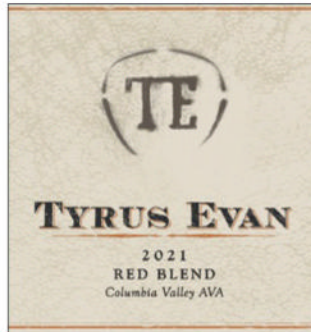
**92 Browne Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Heritage 2022 \$20 WASHINGTON** Generous and handsomely sculpted, with expressive black cherry, mocha espresso and toasty spice flavors that gather richness and texture on the finish. Drink now through 2032. 7,309 cases made.—T.F.



**92 Château d'Aiguilhe Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$25 FRANCE** Fresh and tightly focused, with a racy beam of red and black cherry fruit laced with violet and rose petal accents on the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2034. 18,045 cases made.—J.M.



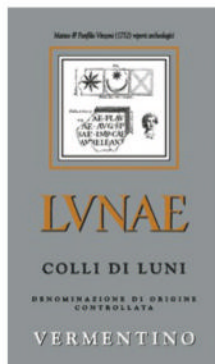
**92 Château de la Dauphine Fronsac 2022 \$25 FRANCE** Violet and iris notes dart out from a core of black currant and bitter cherry fruit flavors, while a swath of warm earth and tobacco moves in on the finish. A solid, *terroir*-driven style. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2036. 12,000 cases made, 3,000 cases imported.—J.M.



**92 Ken Wright Tyrus Evan Red Columbia Valley 2021 \$24 WASHINGTON** Sleek and full of tension, this red offers medium-bodied black cherry, espresso and dill accents as it builds toward fine-grained tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2031. 2,730 cases made.—T.F.



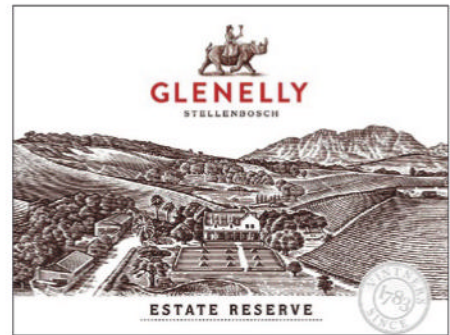
**91 Saracina Sauvignon Blanc Mendocino County 2023 \$24 CALIFORNIA** Opens with savory notes of toasted herbs and smoked sea salt, with a core of pomelo, lemon and pear flavors. Sleek and juicy, with a long, expressive finish, where a touch of green tea lingers. Drink now. 3,350 cases made.—M.W.



**90 Cantine Lunae Bosoni Vermentino Colli di Luni-Liguria Grey Label 2023 \$28 ITALY** Ripe aromas and flavors of apricot and jasmine are offset by savory grass and sage notes in this crisp white. Balanced, ending with a salty, mouthwatering impression. Drink now. 30,000 cases made, 2,400 cases imported.—B.S.



**90 d'Angelo Aglianico del Vulture 2022 \$20 ITALY** This balanced red offers juicy mulberry and cherry fruit, with wild sage and white pepper notes. Light, taut tannins and bright acidity provide sculpted definition, but this shows a subtle fleshiness and accessibility overall. Drink now through 2030. 7,000 cases made, 3,000 cases imported.—A.N.



**90 Glenelly Estate Reserve Stellenbosch 2017 \$25 SOUTH AFRICA** Savory hints of game, iron and smoke underscore the baked currant and plum fruit flavors in this chewy red. Lively and medium-bodied, with mocha and tobacco notes lingering on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2030. 10,213 cases made, 3,400 cases imported.—A.N.



**89 Domaine Pélaquié Côtes du Rhône 2022 \$14 FRANCE** Gentleness and ripeness are rendered in a lovely way in this version, which offers dusty earth and chalky mineral hints. Shows real depth, with black pepper, pretty lavender and simmering incense notes in the backdrop, anchored by a foundation of iron. Drink now through 2028. 10,000 cases made, 2,500 cases imported.—K.B.



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## Best Values

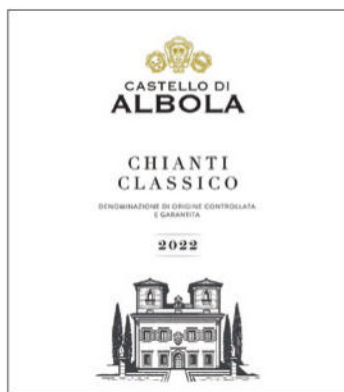
Wines with solid scores, modest prices and wide distribution.



**90 Guillaume Gonnet Cotes du Rhone Le Reveur 2023 \$15 FRANCE** This is an exuberant, full-bodied Cotes du Rhone, with warm black plum and melted black licorice spiked with juniper and black pepper. Offers juicy deliciousness, with no rough edges, on an open-knit frame. There's a burst of freshness and herbs on the bright finish. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now. 8,000 cases made, 4,000 cases imported.—K.B.



**90 Wente Chardonnay Central Coast Morning Fog 2023 \$18 CALIFORNIA** A vibrant and expressive white, with a mix of nutmeg-scented pear, Fuji apple and peach flavors that are delicate and precise but not shy on concentration and generosity. Sleek, precise acidity and hints of lemon meringue linger on the finish. Drink now. 155,000 cases made.—M.W.



**88 Castello di Albola Chianti Classico 2022 \$16 ITALY** An earthy reduction and black pepper greet the nose, with cherry, plum, tar and iron notes showing up on the palate. Taut and spicy, this lingers with a line of dusty tannins. Drink now through 2036. 30,000 cases made, 13,500 cases imported.—B.S.

## New Wines From Around the World

### CHILE

#### 95 Viña Montes Alpha M Apalta 2021 \$130

This medium-bodied red deftly balances finesse and flare, offering layers of tobacco, cedar and spices around a suave-textured core of chocolate-covered cherry and plum tart flavors. Generous acidity enlivens the midpalate and finish, revealing cigar box and crème de cassis details around silky and precise tannins. The finish harmoniously layers the core flavors and lingers effortlessly. Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot and Merlot. Drink now through 2035. 70 cases imported.—A.R.

#### 93 Concha y Toro Carmenère Peumo Terrunyo Peumo Vineyard 2022 \$55

Displays alluring aromas of dried lavender, cocoa nib and pink peppercorn that join a rich and generously textured core packed with black cherry and berry flavors. Plenty of fresh acidity knives through and lifts the core flavors as they linger, with spice details and well-integrated tannins. Drink now through 2035. 7,000 cases made, 500 cases imported.—A.R.

#### 93 Viña Montes Carmenère Apalta Wings 2021 \$67

A lush and slightly ripe style, but this red boasts a brambly, rosemary-accented array of blackberry and black cherry flavors, with cassis, peppercorn and baking spice details emerging as this moves. Finishes with smooth tannins and chocolaty accents. Drink now through 2031. 300 cases imported.—A.R.

#### 93 Viña San Pedro Sideral Cachapoal Valley 2022 \$25

See Smart Buys, page 89.

#### 91 De Martino Carmenère Maipo Valley Legado Reserva 2023 \$20

A medium-bodied red, with dried rose petal, loam and peppery herb accents to the lush cherry and raspberry core. A nice thread of minerality runs through and lingers on the fresh finish. Drink now through 2033. 4,500 cases made, 800 cases imported.—A.R.

#### 91 VIK Milla Cala Millahue 2022 \$49

A potent red, with a spicy, floral cast to its ripe blackberry, fig and olive notes, all on a silky frame. Additional savory, spice and dark chocolate layers weave in on the finish around integrated tannins, with a hint of cedar. Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère, Syrah and Merlot. Drink now through 2034. 20,000 cases made, 2,500 cases imported.—A.R.

#### 89 Viña Casa Silva Cabernet Sauvignon Colchagua Valley Doña Dominga Gran Reserva 2023 \$30

A quaffable and elegant red that leads with spicy, floral, pine and mint aromas, offering a juicy berry center and refined tannins before finishing with traces of the opening notes. Drink now. 20,000 cases made, 8,000 cases imported.—A.R.

#### 89 Viña Casa Silva Carmenère Colchagua Valley Doña Dominga Gran Reserva 2023 \$30

Youthful and pleasing, this red wins with its creamy, smooth texture, with pepper-inflected plum and berry flavors at the core. Drink now. 20,000 cases made, 8,000 cases imported.—A.R.

#### 89 Los Maquis Cabernet Franc Colchagua Valley Revela 2022 \$23

This is tightly wound but also elegant and pure, with dried lavender and wet stone details to the well-structured core of cherry and plum. Finishes with firming, mineral-tinged tannins. Needs time to develop, but there's promise. Best from 2026 through 2035. 4,000 cases imported.—A.R.

#### 88 De Martino Cabernet Sauvignon Maipo Valley Legado Reserva 2023 \$20

This youthful, sprightly and quaffable red features a juicy core of strawberry and pomegranate, with wild herb details. A slightly toasty note rounds out the smooth finish. Drink now. 5,500 cases made, 1,800 cases imported.—A.R.

## FRANCE

### Bordeaux / Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux

#### 93 Domaine de l'A Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$50

Expressive flavors of black cherry and blackberry puree are the dominant element in this red, while sweet tobacco and a kiss of iris chime through the sleek finish. A suave-feeling wine. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2035. 2,800 cases made.—J.M.

#### 93 Clos Puy Arnaud Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$36

Sleek and polished, with alluring notes of blackberry puree and warmed cassis that glide through, while fine-grained tannins, a buried chalky spine and a gilding of sweet tobacco add range and length. Shows a mouthwatering floral echo at the end. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2038. 3,416 cases made, 50 cases imported.—J.M.

#### 93 Château La Croix Lartigue Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$35

This is refined and focused in feel, with lovely flavors of blackberry and black cherry preserves that offer inner freshness. Savory and violet notes give lift, while a chalky spine adds tension and cut. Shows persistence on the finish. Cabernet Franc and Merlot. Best from 2026 through 2035. 330 cases made, 30 cases imported.—J.M.

#### 93 Château Montlandrie Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$28

Well-built, with reserved notes of black cherry reduction and cassis carried by the refined structure as subtle accents of chalk, black tea and smoldering tobacco infuse the background. Sneakily long, with a pretty floral echo. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2036. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 2,800 cases made.—J.M.

#### 92 Château d'Aiguilhe Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$25

See Smart Buys, page 89.

#### 92 Château Joanin Bécot Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$35

A fresh, direct style, with light sanguine and cedar accents gently framing a core of red currant and bitter cherry coulis flavors. The sleek finish makes this approachable now. Delicious. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2033. 5,830 cases made, 1,500 cases imported.—J.M.

#### 92 Château de Laussac Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux Cuvée Sacha 2022 \$30

Red and black cherry fruit feels both plump and fresh, while dashes of sweet tobacco, warm earth and apple wood help fuel the finish. Sneakily long. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2035. 241 cases made.—J.M.

#### 91 Château d'Aiguilhe Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux Seigneurs 2022 \$20

Fresh and floral, with breezy raspberry and cherry preserves gilded with rose and hibiscus accents. There's a subtle iron twang on the finish. Lovely. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2034. 3,710 cases made.—J.M.

#### 91 Château de Laussac Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$20

Offers red currant and cherry paste notes that are succulent in feel, while elements of cedar, sanguine and potpourri infuse the fresh finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2034. 1,460 cases made.—J.M.

#### 89 Château Alcée Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$23

Fresh and pure, with a pretty beam of red currant and black cherry coulis racing through, flecked with tobacco, dried violet and black tea notes. Best from 2026 through 2034. 3,200 cases made.—J.M.

#### 88 Château Reynon Cadillac Côtes de Bordeaux 2022 \$18

Fresh and direct, with a plum sauce note flecked with tobacco and worn cedar hints. There's a lightly rustic backdrop on the finish. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2027. 3,900 cases made.—J.M.



## FRANCE

## Bordeaux / Fronsac

**93 Château Moulin Haut-Laroque Fronsac 2022 \$35** A nicely buried chalky spine lets fleshy-edged notes of black currant and black cherry lead the way. Light alder, chestnut and savory accents underscore the finish and lend an old-school hint. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec. Best from 2026 through 2035. 4,000 cases made, 500 cases imported.—J.M.

**93 Château La Vieille Cure Fronsac 2022 \$35** This is fleshy and seductive in feel, with gently mulled black currant and blackberry fruit holding sway over savory, smoldering charcoal, just-tilled humus and worn cedar notes on the finish. Shows range and character. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2035. 9,000 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château Dalem Fronsac 2022 \$29** A nicely saturated core of plum and cassis flavors is well-supported by warm earth and sweet tobacco notes. Shows violet and sanguine flashes through the focused, steady finish. Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2035. 5,000 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—J.M.

**92 Château de la Dauphine Fronsac 2022 \$25** See Smart Buys, page 89.

**92 Château Hervé-Laroque Fronsac 2022 \$21** This shows the fresh, sleek feel of the vintage, with a core of red and black currant preserves flanked by singed cedar, tobacco and savory notes. There's a chalky underpinning on the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2035. 2,000 cases made, 500 cases imported.—J.M.

**92 Château de la Huste Fronsac 2022 \$22** This is solidly built, with a muscular core of dark currant and plum reduction framed by charcoal, warm earth and dark

tobacco notes. Well-grounded through the finish, with a stable, chalky spine. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Malbec. Best from 2026 through 2033. 6,000 cases made, 3,000 cases imported.—J.M.

**91 Château Fontenil Fronsac 2022 \$40** Fresh and expressive, with cherry and red currant coulis notes entwined with light, chalky minerality and dried violet accents. Feels steady. Best from 2026 through 2033. 2,000 cases made.—J.M.

**90 Château La Vieille Cure Fronsac La Sacristie de la Vieille Cure 2022 \$28** Shows a pretty floral hint, with violet and rose petal accents gilding a core of red currant and bitter plum fruit. The taut but refined structure stretches out the finish. Drink now through 2030. 2,000 cases made.—J.M.

## FRANCE

## Bordeaux / Margaux

**97 Château Palmer Margaux 2022 \$397** Expressive and well-delineated, with singed iris, ink and alder accents leading off, followed by dark currant, blackberry and black cherry paste flavors that are both lush and racy in feel. Warm paving stone and dark tobacco gird the finish, which has ample structure for the cellar. Shows the floral lift and showy fruit of the vintage married to a growl of real *terroir*. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Best from 2027 through 2050. 8,000 cases made.—J.M.



THOMAS DUROUX  
Technical Director

**96 Château Malescot-St.-Exupéry Margaux 2022 \$69** A flat-out stunner, with waves of blackberry, black currant and plum that tumble through like crumpled velvet, while the vintage's telltale iris and violet gilding weaves throughout. There's a long tug of warm humus and a deftly inlaid alder smoke accent as well. Seriously long, with the fruit providing a steady grip. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Best from 2027 through 2042. 8,364 cases made.—J.M.

**96 Château Rauzan-Ségla Margaux 2022 \$114** This is dreamy, with juicy mulberry and blackberry puree flavors that stream through, carried by a vivid mix of iris, violet and anise, along with a long, well-embedded iron note. As this airs in the glass, it gains a caressing feel and greater depth, ending with a long echo of warm earth. Beautifully done. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Best from 2026 through 2042.—J.M.

**95 Château Cantenac-Brown Margaux 2022 \$59** Another beautifully rendered expression of the vintage, this marries lush boysenberry and blackberry fruit with fresh violet and iris notes, then stitches it all up gently with warm earth on the stylish, lengthy finish. It's hard to lay off already, but cellaring is warranted. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Best from 2026 through 2038. 9,000 cases made.—J.M.

**95 Château Giscours Margaux 2022 \$68** See Highly Recommended, page 87.

**94 Château Marquis d'Alesme Becker Margaux 2022 \$55** Broad and velvety in feel, offering a steady wave of blackberry and black cherry reduction supported by a light graphite spine. Infused through the finish with warm earth, violet and dark tobacco notes. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2038. 4,000 cases made.—J.M.

# Welcome to Washington Wine Country

Washington State Wine Commission/Andrea Johnson Photography

Washington wine is the Pacific Northwest in every bottle. We invite you to discover our world-class wine region, defined by unrivaled natural beauty, endless adventure and a generous spirit of collaboration



A *Wine Spectator* Top 100 wine of 2024, Evil Twin is a deeply structured, savory masterpiece that's focused and elevated in style. Rapidly gaining cult status, this magnificent wine cements Gorman Winery's place among the world's finest producers. A must try.



[gormanwinery.com](http://gormanwinery.com)



Founded in 1999 in a friend's garage, Mark Ryan Winery has grown to become the 14th largest winery in Washington by producing highly sought-after, limited-quantity wines with Old World structure and New World fruit.



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The Horse Heaven Hills founders showcase 50+ years of viticultural expertise at their Prosser and Walla Walla tasting rooms with elegant, world-class red and white wines certified "Sustainable WA."



[mercervine.com](http://mercervine.com)



Rocky Pond Estate Winery, located in Washington's Rocky Reach AVA, features sustainably farmed wines of distinction curated by Elizabeth Keyser and her all-female winemaking team. It's all about the experiences...



[rockypondwinery.com](http://rockypondwinery.com)



**94 Château Dauzac Margaux 2022 \$75** Fresh, pure and driven, with lilac, violet and iris notes streaming through in unison, plus red and black cherry and blackberry puree. There's a late, mineral echo on the lengthy, minimal-oak finish. Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now through 2038. 8,000 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—J.M.

**94 Château Kirwan Margaux 2022 \$60** This is flush with blackberry and mulberry reduction flavors, in-laid with violet, iris and ink notes. The inky edge adds a sense of tension through the finish, with snippets of iron, rose hip and black tea mixed in through the long, focused finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2026 through 2040. 7,500 cases made, 700 cases imported.—J.M.

**94 Château Siran Margaux 2022 \$40** See Highly Recommended, page 87.

**94 Château Marquis de Terme Margaux 2022 \$51** Lush in its fruit, with waves of dark currant and blackberry reduction, this also shows form thanks to alder, tobacco and savory accents providing cut, while rose hip and dried violet notes add lift. Offers a long, smoldering finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Best from 2026 through 2040. 10,000 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Château du Tertre Margaux 2022 \$45** Offers a gush of boysenberry and mulberry puree, along with notes of violet, anise and black tea. A subtle sanguine thread stitches the finish gently, letting the fruit spill through with a flourish. Built for the near term, too. Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2035. 4,400 cases made, 850 cases imported.—J.M.

**92 Château Dauzac Margaux Aurore de Dauzac 2022 \$40** Pure and graceful, this delivers a long, seductive flow of iris, hibiscus and violet notes that pull along a core of gently mulled black cherry and blackberry fruit before letting it all end with a pretty curl of black tea. Delicious and fully approachable already. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2035. 9,500 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—J.M.

**92 Château Desmirail Margaux 2022 \$50** Dense and velvety in feel, this lets nearly exotic mulberry, açai and boysenberry reduction notes unfurl slowly, laced liberally with singed black tea, alder and iris details along the way, plus a late echo of warm earth. Likely burning the candle at both ends, so drink up now for its hedonism. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2034. 7,583 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château Labégorce Margaux 2022 \$35** This is suave, with alder smoke-infused blackberry and black cherry compote flavors carried by a note of warm humus and backed by echoing violet and iris notes on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2026 through 2036. 15,000 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château Mongravey Margaux 2022 \$50** Juicy and open in feel, with a vibrant display of dark plum and boysenberry preserves that are harnessed just right by streaks of alder and warm humus. A late hibiscus note and minimal toast add freshness. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2036. 6,000 cases made, 1,500 cases imported.—J.M.

**92 Château Siran Margaux S de Siran 2022 \$25** Fresh and juicy, with lightly singed tobacco and cedar accents flanking a core of accessible black cherry and bitter plum compote flavors. A hint of scorched earth adds pleasant rusticity on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2035.—J.M.



ÉDOUARD MIALHE  
Owner

**92 Château du Tertre Margaux Les Hauts du Tertre 2022 \$25** Lively, with violet and hibiscus accents tossed in with cherry, plum, red currant and sleek iron notes. Shows a late tug of earth, but this is primarily floral-infused fruit, with an unadorned feel. Lovely. Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot and Merlot. Drink now through 2032. 3,500 cases made, 500 cases imported.—J.M.

**91 Château Kirwan Margaux Charmes de Kirwan 2022 \$30** Stylish and approachable, offering the vintage profile to a T, with a silky texture, alluring black cherry and blackberry compote flavors, and lilting violet and incense notes. Merlot and Carmenère. Drink now through 2033. 4,000 cases made, 250 cases imported.—J.M.

## FRANCE Bordeaux / Pomerol

**97 Pétrus Pomerol 2022 \$5,999** See Highly Recommended, page 87.

**97 Château Trotanoy Pomerol 2022 \$413** There's some bass thumping in the form of black currant and blackberry reduction notes coiled tightly within a cast iron frame. Sweet tobacco, alder and chestnut accents create a seductive backdrop on the finish, which is redolent of smoldering earth. Seriously structured and for the long haul. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2028 through 2045. 860 cases made, 96 cases imported.—J.M.

**96 Château La Fleur-Pétrus Pomerol 2022 \$289** This is nicely loaded, with warmed raspberry compote, boysenberry pâte de fruit and damson plum coulis notes in the mix, along with streaks of tobacco leaf, chestnut leaf and graphite. The long finish shows a great underlying tug of warm earth. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2027 through 2042. 2,500 cases made, 226 cases imported.—J.M.

**96 Château Petit-Village Pomerol 2022 \$137** A bit exotic, with a flash of black truffle amid the notes of violet, ink, blackberry compote and warmed plum sauce. A long spine of cast iron gives this definition and serious length, with tobacco, chestnut and anise hints filtering through for added range. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2040.—J.M.

**95 Château Feytit-Clinet Pomerol 2022 \$68** This sports a ripe, velvety profile, offering dark currant, blackberry and black cherry compote notes that roll through steadily, with background support from warm humus, sweet tobacco and licorice root accents. Chestnut and alder streaks on the finish lend contrast and cut while keeping ample fruit to spare. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2038. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 1,000 cases made, 100 cases imported.—J.M.

**95 Château Hosanna Pomerol 2022 \$198** This really delivers on the mouthfeel, with a wonderfully polished and creamy profile to its plum, black cherry and blackberry compote flavors. In-laid seamlessly with sweet tobacco and singed anise, this glides beautifully through the long finish. As the fruit drips, there's a late echo of warm earth. A beauty. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2040. 870 cases made.—J.M.

**95 Château Nénin Pomerol 2022 \$71** There's a high-gloss toast that has yet to be fully absorbed, resulting in a cloak of dried anise, warm vanilla and violet over a core of steeped plum, açai berry and mulberry fruit. Fruitcake, graphite and apple wood frame the finish, which shows length and cut. There's polish and energy—this just needs time to fully knit. Ambitious and impressive. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2027 through 2040.—J.M.

**94 Château Le Bon Pasteur Pomerol 2022 \$75** Ripe and succulent in feel, with blackberry and boysenberry reduction notes sparkling with dried anise, iris and black tea accents. The finish shows smoldering charcoal and earth details, while the fruit keeps the upper hand. Rock solid. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2038. 1,300 cases made, 325 cases imported.—J.M.

**94 Clos du Clocher Pomerol 2022 \$70** This is in a dark, toasty style, with a plush edge to its core of black currant and blackberry compote flavors. Offers a buried graphite spine and a long finish, with echoes of alder, bay leaf and warm earth that emerge alongside the fruit. For the hedonist crowd. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2040. 1,600 cases made.—J.M.

**94 Château La Grave à Pomerol Pomerol 2022 \$45** Fleshy and forward at first glance, but with good underlying energy, this lets raspberry and boysenberry pâte de fruit notes lead the way, while black tea, singed anise and subtle minerality chime underneath. Winds up with sneaky length in the end. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2038. 1,900 cases made, 40 cases imported.—J.M.

**93 Château Bourgneuf Pomerol 2022 \$70** Alluring dark plum and warmed blackberry puree flavors cruise through this red, in-laid with dried anise, iris and warm earth accents. There's a flicker of smoldering savory on the finish. A stylish version. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2040. 1,700 cases made, 150 cases imported.—J.M.



FRÉDÉRIQUE VAYRON  
Co-owner & Winemaker

**93 Château La Clémence Pomerol 2022 \$50** Flavors of blackberry and black currant preserves show a steady underlying juiciness but stay reserved in feel overall, while smoldering charcoal, bay leaf and tobacco notes fill in the background. Sneakily long, with a finishing kick of dark fruit. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2038. 527 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Le Clos du Beau-Père Pomerol 2022 \$55** A savory note sparkles amid the core of gently mulled blackberry and black currant fruit, while freshly plowed humus, black tea and singed alder add range through the finish. Nicely done. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2038. 1,500 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Château Latour à Pomerol Pomerol 2022 \$120** Warmed black cherry compote and melted licorice notes meld nicely with the singed bay leaf and alder hints throughout. A savory, peppery edge emerges on the finish, lending some rusticity. Well-built for cellaring. Best from 2026 through 2036. 1,800 cases made, 257 cases imported.—J.M.

**93 Château La Violette Pomerol 2022 \$331** A warm, caressing style, showing notes of dark currant and blackberry preserves flecked with dried anise, singed alder and black tea, followed by a smoldering finish. For the hedonist crowd. Drink now through 2038.—J.M.

**92 Château L'Église Clinet Pomerol La Petite Eglise 2022 \$58** Succulent boysenberry and plum sauce notes stream through, flanked by licorice and singed apple wood on the finish. Delicious and approachable now. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2032. 450 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château Mazeyres Pomerol 2022 \$40** Mulled red and black currant fruit moves through slowly, pulling licorice root, black tea and singed savory notes along with it. A subtle sanguine twang at the very end gives this nice lift. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2038. 3,225 cases made, 300 cases imported.—J.M.

**92 Château Rouget Pomerol 2022 \$52** Juicy and fresh in feel, with blackberry and black cherry paste notes enlivened by black tea, alder and warm earth streaks. A bay leaf echo chimes in on the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2038. 3,300 cases made, 660 cases imported.—J.M.



## FRANCE

## Bordeaux / St.-Emilion

**99 Château Cheval Blanc St.-Emilion 2022 \$670** See Collectibles, page 87.

**96 Château Beau-Séjour Bécot St.-Emilion 2022 \$85** See Highly Recommended, page 87.

**96 Château Canon St.-Emilion 2022 \$175** This offers some fairly compelling fruit, with raspberry and red currant puree flavors that stream through with focus and precision, backed by red tea, hibiscus, violet and savory notes. The long, pinpoint finish is very refined, as minimal toast lets the fruit just cruise. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2040. 6,700 cases made, 800 cases imported.—J.M.

**96 Clos Fourtet St.-Emilion 2022 \$150** This is alluring, with a core of gently mulled blackberry and boysenberry fruit that shows a smoldering edge, with black tea, licorice, apple wood and tobacco details. There's underlying tension too, with a tug of chalk buried deeply on the very long and well-structured finish. For the cellar. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2042. 3,800 cases made.—J.M.

**96 Château La Gaffelière St.-Emilion 2022 \$79** See Highly Recommended, page 87.

**96 La Mondotte St.-Emilion 2022 \$192** Rich and layered, with steeped blackberry and black currant at the core, while singed alder, black tea and warm earth hints fill in throughout. The long, beguiling finish reveals a subtle chalky underpinning as a violet note chimes lengthily. A very poised wine. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2042. 1,320 cases made.—J.M.

**95 Château Canon-La Gaffelière St.-Emilion 2022 \$89** Starts with tender raspberry coulis, rooibos tea and savory notes, then slowly builds tension and cut as it moves along, with a long, chalky thread running underneath. A lithe, lacy wine that has the grace of a gentle breeze. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2038. 7,600 cases made.—J.M.

**95 Château Pavie Macquin St.-Emilion 2022 \$94** Gorgeously aromatic, showing notes of violet, plum sauce, açai berry puree and boysenberry preserves that are carried by the very polished structure. A subtle chalky thread curls through on the finish as the fruit lingers beautifully. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2027 through 2040. 4,400 cases made.—J.M.

**95 Château Valandraud St.-Emilion 2022 \$160** Alluring singed alder and black tea accents lead the way, followed by a dense core of steeped blackberry and black currant fruit. A swath of licorice root, warm earth and tobacco coats the finish, with the fruit keeping pace. Lengthy and velvety in feel, this is almost approachable now. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2040. 3,300 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Château Cadet-Bon St.-Emilion 2022 \$43** Warm and enticing in feel, with crushed plum and raspberry notes liberally laced with dried anise, hibiscus, sanguine and red tea details. This shows good underlying energy and freshness through the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2037. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 1,805 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Château Dassault St.-Emilion 2022 \$69** This shows the lush, warm fruit profile of the vintage, with blackberry and boysenberry notes gliding atop the subtle, graphite-tinged structure, along with black tea, ink and singed alder accents. Will have fans for sure. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2036. 6,000 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Château La Dominique St.-Emilion 2022 \$54** Youthfully plump and juicy in feel, with a ball of cherry and blackberry compote wrapped in black licorice and carried by a tug of warm earth on the finish, showing a nice savory hint throughout. Understated overall, with

sneaky length and focus on the finish. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2038. 4,500 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Château Fonroque St.-Emilion 2022 \$50** This is reserved in feel, but with good juicy energy underneath the plush blackberry and boysenberry compote flavors. Iris, ink and sweet tobacco notes chime through, with a flicker of black tea. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2038. 4,800 cases made.—J.M.

**93 L'If St.-Emilion 2022 \$172** Shows enticing freshness, with boysenberry and blackberry confiture flavors and aromas laced with violet and iris hints and caressed by anise and black tea on the alluring finish. A subtle, chalky minerality deftly underpins the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2036. 830 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Clos de l'Oratoire St.-Emilion 2022 \$42** A stylish red, with crushed plum and blackberry fruit that shows a plush edge, while black tea, sweet tobacco and plowed earth hints line the understated but persistent finish. Nicely done. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2035. 6,150 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château Destieux St.-Emilion 2022 \$36** A bit of a show-off, with warmed cassis and plum sauce notes holding sway with melted licorice, fruitcake and black tea accents. Velvety and caressing, but there's enough underlying tension for spine and focus. This crowd-pleaser offers a not-shy dose of mocha on the finish. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2034. 1,786 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château Faugères St.-Emilion 2022 \$44** An engaging red, with expressive notes of raspberry and red currant preserves carrying a sparkle of anise and rose hip that adds a lingering freshness to the sleek finish. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2036. 11,450 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château de Ferrand St.-Emilion 2022 \$45** A fan-friendly version, with a warm gush of boysenberry and blackberry puree notes lined with black tea, singed anise and dried violet. Silky in feel through the toasty finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2036. 10,000 cases made, 800 cases imported.—J.M.

**92 Château Fleur Cardinale St.-Emilion 2022 \$51** This offers a lovely mouthfeel, with a velvety edge to its mix of blackberry and black cherry compote notes that drive along, with graphite, sweet tobacco and black tea accents. Fruit and savory elements echo together through the lengthy finish. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2036. 7,100 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château La Grâce Dieu St.-Emilion 2022 \$39** This captures the ripe, sleek edge of the vintage nicely, with a vivid core of boysenberry and blackberry fruit liberally laced with singed cedar, apple wood and dried anise, plus a flash of red tea. A late tug of warm earth gives the finish an old-school accent. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2036. 1,000 cases imported.—J.M.

**92 Château Laroze St.-Emilion 2022 \$33** Shows the warmth of the vintage, with a plum sauce- and blackberry reduction-filled core leading the way, all wrapped in black licorice and Black Forest cake notes. Flashes of violet and apple wood enliven the finish just enough. For the hedonist crowd. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2036. 8,125 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château de Pressac St.-Emilion 2022 \$45** A lushly fruited red, with notes of dark plum and boysenberry preserves, this glides along with grace and focus as black tea, dried anise and violet details fill in throughout. Shows subtle energy through the finish. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère and Malbec. Best from 2026 through 2037. 10,200 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—J.M.



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**92 Château Le Prieuré St.-Emilion 2022 \$58** Ripe and caressing in feel, with boysenberry and blackberry fruit that's vivid and enticing. There's a frankly toasty apple wood note, but violet and anise provide range, and the fruit has the drive to soak it all up through the savory-edged finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2026 through 2036. 2,416 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Château Sansonnet St.-Emilion 2022 \$48** This is supple and enticing in feel, with a mix of red and black currant fruit that shows nice underlying energy as notes of cedar, singed mesquite and iron play out through the lightly toasty finish. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2036. 1,300 cases made.—J.M.

**91 Château Corbin St.-Emilion 2022 \$39** This version is lush in feel without being heavy, offering warmed cassis and plum sauce notes inlaid gently with violet, anise and sanguine threads. The toasty finish has enough grace to let the fruit take the lead. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2035. 6,625 cases made, 387 cases imported.—J.M.

**91 Château Fombrauge St.-Emilion 2022 \$33** A polished, direct style, with a mix of blackberry and cherry compote notes leading the way, along with light red licorice, sweet toast and black tea hints. A subtle tug of earth keeps this just honest enough on the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2035. 26,417 cases made.—J.M.

**91 Saintayme St.-Emilion 2022 \$22** Seductive notes of crushed plum and boysenberry puree take the lead, with the silky structure, kisses of toast and anise, and fresh violet detail all enhancing the background. Drink now through 2035. 5,600 cases made.—J.M.

**90 Clos Fourtet St.-Emilion La Closerie de Fourtet 2022 \$37** This delivers a pure, unadorned stream of dark cherry, cassis and violet notes, with a subtle whiff of black tea through the silky, lightly toasty finish. Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2033. 1,600 cases made.—J.M.

**90 Château Grand Corbin St.-Emilion 2022 \$35** A flash of mesquite leads off, followed by cherry and dark plum pâte de fruit flavors, all zipped up with worn cedar and savory notes through the finish. Warm earth echoes through the finish. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2034. 10,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—J.M.

**89 Château Teyssier St.-Emilion 2022 \$25** Blackberry, cassis and plum compote notes give this immediate appeal, while singed anise and apple wood accents lend framing and grip to the finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2031. 20,000 cases made, 5,000 cases imported.—J.M.

## FRANCE

### Burgundy

**96 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Clavoillon 2022 \$520** See Highly Recommended, page 87.

**95 Vincent Latour Meursault Perrières 2022 \$220** You can smell the stone dust in this racy white, along with notes of lemon oil and white flowers. Intense and oily, with a chalky feel as this winds down on the superb aftertaste of lemon, herbs, baking spices and mineral. Best from 2026 through 2038. 100 cases made, 70 cases imported.—B.S.

**95 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Les Folatières 2022 \$688** A laserlike backbone drives this racy white, along with flavors of lime blossoms, lemon, vanilla and smoky mineral. Clean and incisive, with fine intensity on the long aftertaste of citrus, mineral and baking spices. Drink now through 2032. 375 cases made, 75 cases imported.—B.S.

**94 Vincent Latour Meursault Les Grands Charons 2022 \$132** This is taut and stony in character, with peach, lemon pie and baking spice flavors embedded in the dense structure. Long and balanced, with the lemon and baking spice notes echoing on the lingering, well-defined aftertaste. Needs time to unravel. Best from 2027 through 2035. 442 cases made, 309 cases imported.—B.S.

**94 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Les Combettes 2022 \$875** Ripe and fleshy, this white features lemon, lime, green apple, honeysuckle and stone flavors. Turns more focused on the finish, where the acidity converges with a note of lemon. Ends with a long, spicy aftertaste. Best from 2026 through 2033. 315 cases made, 63 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 William Fèvre Chablis Les Preuses Domaine 2021 \$210** Lemon, apple, lanolin and flint aromas and flavors highlight this focused, saline white. A beam of bracing acidity cuts through, while the finish is long and salty. Drink now through 2033. 50 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 Domaine Leflaive Puligny-Montrachet Les Pucelles 2022 \$1,200** Ethereal notes of white flowers, lemon and apple grace this charming, fluid white. Picks up a stony mineral element as it plays out effortlessly on the long aftertaste, showing terrific harmony. Drink now through 2030. 985 cases made, 197 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 Thierry & Pascale Matrot Puligny-Montrachet Les Chalumeaux 2022 \$95** Peach, lemon, pastry and toasty oak flavors highlight this earnest white. The vivid acidity takes over, focusing the citrus- and spice-filled finish, with fine length. Balanced, if a touch on the oaky side. Drink now through 2030. 100 cases imported.—B.S.

## FRANCE

### Northern Rhône / Condrieu

**95 Lionel Fauray Condrieu Le Mornieux 2022 \$64** Simmering with power and energy, this distinctive wine leads with its savory side. Bitter green herb, chive, smoke and salty, yeasty notes give way to verbenia oil, green plum and melon, all atop a foundation of crushed flint. Concentrated and long, with almond cream, toast and smoke hovering on the finish, which stretches on and on. Drink now through 2030. 76 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Georges Vernay Condrieu Coteau de Vernon 2021 \$150** Powerful, concentrated and savory, with a juicy core of crunchy nectarine and star fruit overtaken by yeasty saltiness and a deeply inlaid mineral spine. Fennel and herbs echo on the long finish, lifted by racy, succulent acidity. A mouthwatering cuvée. Drink now through 2029. 312 cases made, 12 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Georges Vernay Condrieu Les Chaillées de l'Enfer 2022 \$130** A ripe, savory wine packed into a compact frame, with a zesty profile to the white peach, creamed yellow apple and candied flower petal notes. Vibrant, with good energy and subtle white tea tannins giving shape, this is etched in bitter quinine. Finishes with smoke, singed herbs and acacia streaked in salt. Drink now through 2032. 500 cases made, 15 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Les Vins de Vienne Condrieu Lieu-Dit Jean Raude 2023 \$120** A graceful, refined version, with a gentle-edged core of plum and heather filled out with crushed stone minerality and chamomile tea. Shows impressive harmony and integration already but is built to age. Honey cream and green herb notes linger on the persistent, well-meshed finish. Drink now through 2032. 90 cases made, 40 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Les Vins de Vienne Condrieu Lieu-Dit Poncin 2023 \$120** Alluring and complex on the nose, with apple, lemon zest, white flower and almond cream notes. There's a lot of power and range to the broad palate, grounded by a salty mineral layer. Still tightly coiled, this will benefit from time to stretch out. Acacia honey and light brioche mark the long, winding finish. Drink now through 2032. 110 cases made, 40 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Benjamin & David Duclaux Condrieu Les Caillets 2023 \$90** Modern-styled and full, with a zesty edge to the green fig and apple, plus a flattering brush of oak toast and baking spices. A quinine note adds bitterness and balance. Succulent acidity powers the salty finish, which is clean and long. Drink now through 2028. 540 cases made, 90 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 André Perret Condrieu Chery 2022 \$139** Offers vivid pleasure, with impressive brightness to the silky, salty core of pear, green plum and fig, honeyed at the edges. Chamomile, celery and cool stone minerality add nice contrast. Shows warmth and richness but stays fresh. Drink now through 2029. 65 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Georges Vernay Condrieu Les Terrasses de l'Empire 2023 \$69** A lush, broad version, with creamed peach and apricot racing alongside heather, bitter almond and green herbs. A salty mineral vein keeps the energy high, with flickers of salted butter and smoke at the end, which shows bitter contrast. Drink now through 2028. 625 cases made, 15 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Les Vins de Vienne Condrieu 2023 \$81** Offers a seductive nose of pear, melon and honeysuckle edged in chamomile and honey. Clean and dry on the palate, which is rich and creamy in feel, with real mineral depth and savory acidity. A salted buttercream note is nicely woven into the backdrop. Well-done. Drink now through 2029. 1,050 cases made, 350 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Les Vins de Vienne Condrieu La Chambée 2023 \$50** Stylish, juicy and densely packed, with a pure beam of melon, star fruit and green plum woven with toasty acacia and smoky flint accents. Offers raw almond and piecrust notes on the finish, which shows good cut and concentration. Drink now through 2030. 500 cases made, 500 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Northern Rhône / Côte-Rôtie

**96 Jean-Michel Gerin Côte-Rôtie Les Grandes Places 2022 \$228** Attractively smoky and earthy, with notes of bay leaf, singed herbs and smoldering tobacco layered atop black cherry paste and cassis reduction. Mouth-coating and salty on the palate, with a sanguine thread running from start to full-bodied finish. Texturally stunning, with chewiness and sweet, warm soil adding intrigue to the substantial finish, which goes on and on. The tannins are already assuming a gentle edge, which makes this approachable now, but patience will be rewarded. Drink now through 2042. 580 cases made, 25 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 M. Chapoutier Côte-Rôtie La Mordorée 2021 \$225** Concentrated and deep, with impressive power for the vintage and simmering energy behind its notes of steeped red currant and bitter cherry. Apple wood smoke, bacon fat, singed herbs and tar cruise alongside, with seamless integration, all supported by finely structured, supple-leaning tannins and bolts of graphite. A serious, well-hewn red. Best from 2026 through 2045. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Jean-Michel Gerin Côte-Rôtie La Landonne 2022 \$285** A blockbuster in scale, with a meaty, dense center of dark plum, black pepper and singed anise. Chewy and compact on the palate, with tapenade and violet highlights giving way to a powerful foundation of iron and crushed graphite. Tugs of earth and iodine give an old-school charm on the generous, energetic finish. Best from 2027 through 2042. 130 cases made, 6 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Les Vins de Vienne Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Les Grandes Places 2022 \$216** Offers up waves of ripe black fruit and violet, driven by sanguine lashings of cast iron and grilled herbs. Oak is well-integrated in the backdrop. Tight-grained tannins maintain a firm hold through the formidable finish. Needs time to relax in the cellar. A sleek and concentrated version, with immediate appeal and the promise of a long life ahead. Best from 2026 through 2045. 70 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.



**94 M. Chapoutier Côte-Rôtie Neve 2021 \$245** An elegant, savory red, with a cool vintage signature of white pepper and a pronounced herbal thread. Singed bacon fat and smokiness hovers around plum and graphite. Shows impressive textural complexity and balance, with finely polished tannins and a lovely lavender smoke note that plays out through the refined finish. Drink now through 2040. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Jean-Michel Gerin Côte-Rôtie Côte-Bodin 2022 \$228** There's real concentration to the dried blackberry fruit leather, amply brushed with sweet oak polish that will integrate with time. Cigar box, juniper and sweet tobacco leaf notes chime in through the salty, dense finish, which shows solid grip. Hints of olive paste and iodine add an old-school feel to the chewy finish as this stretches way out. Best from 2026 through 2040. 200 cases made, 6 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Tardieu-Laurent Côte-Rôtie Vieilles Vignes 2022 \$85** A dark, brooding red that unspools layers of black licorice and blackberry coulis flecked with singed spices. Sleek, with savory acidity, this shows an appealing juiciness that is quickly grounded by a racy edge and powerful pillar of iron. Best from 2026 through 2042. 350 cases made, 25 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Les Vins de Vienne Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Le Combard 2022 \$132** Waves of dark plum and toasted anise are girded by chalky mineral notes and a bedrock of solid iron in this formidable version. Black tea and peppercorn add detail through the dense, compact frame. Tannins hold firm through the solidly built finish. This serious red promises a long life ahead. Best from 2026 through 2042. 170 cases made, 30 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Les Vins de Vienne Côte-Rôtie Lieu-Dit Le Plomb 2022 \$132** A big, broad, smoldering red, with iron-rich minerality locking up a clean, pure beam of fruitcake, fig and black cherry. Dense and brooding in feel, with tannins that are muscular yet ripe, matched with a firm layer of cast iron, singed graphite, bitter cherry pit and apple wood smoke. Tightly coiled, this needs time to unwind. Best from 2027 through 2042. 170 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Ferraton Père & Fils Côte-Rôtie L'Églantine 2022 \$106** There's a lot of attractive fruit in this cassis-driven version, which is modern and stylish, with silky tannins, green herb notes and savory energy. A solid spine of iron grounds this, giving focus and a serious framework. Best from 2026 through 2040. 160 cases made, 16 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Jean-Michel Gerin Côte-Rôtie La Viallière 2022 \$145** A chewy, dense version, with a savory profile to the notes of black cherry paste, olive tapenade and dried herbs. Flattering smoked cedar polish will integrate with time in bottle. Still a bit tightly wound, this has a long life ahead. Creamy and salty, with a hint of old-school earthiness, this delivers character and elegance, too. Robust and long. Best from 2026 through 2040. 584 cases made, 24 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 St.-Cosme Côte-Rôtie 2022 \$100** Alluring and streamlined, with a warm layer of damson plum and blue fruit notes fashioned around a firming spine of iron. No rough edges, but there's plenty of framework to go the distance in the cellar. Hints of warm earth, lavender and juniper detail the harmonious, clean finish. Best from 2026 through 2040. 370 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Georges Vernay Côte-Rôtie Blonde du Seigneur 2022 \$120** A fresh, mineral-driven Syrah, with beautiful purity and lift to the core of cherry and mulled blackberry. Tangy acidity keeps this mouthwatering from beginning to end, with a creamy bacon lard note adding richness alongside a sanguine detail. There's a subtle waft of smoked alder in the backdrop, but this is mostly about elegance, energy and salty minerality. Syrah and Viognier. Drink now through 2040. 625 cases made, 12 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Georges Vernay Côte-Rôtie Maison Rouge 2021 \$150** This shows good density and power, but freshness, too, with a saline streak of acidity racing through crunchy red currant. White pepper adds the freshness of the vintage and plays off some warm nutmeg and baking spice notes. Give the tightly coiled core time to unwind and integrate with the gentle sweet oak details. Drink now through 2042. 250 cases made, 7 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Les Vins de Vienne Côte-Rôtie Les Essartailles 2022 \$96** This leads with wild blackberry and crushed plum notes that show plenty of generosity but turns firm and focused on the palate, with graphite mineral underpinnings driving the length and structure. Tight-grained and pure, with good length and vibrancy. Offers a fluid, nearly glossy texture. Best from 2026 through 2040. 540 cases made, 150 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Northern Rhône / Hermitage / Red

**96 M. Chapoutier Ermitage L'Ermite 2021 \$575** A blockbuster of power and scale, particularly for the leaner vintage. Brushed with cedar polish and backed by serious mineral intensity, the ripe core of winery cherry and cassis shows real richness. A refreshing blast of herbs and mouthwatering acidity adds savory lift, while columns of iron form the solid backbone. Best from 2026 through 2042. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 M. Chapoutier Ermitage Le Méal 2021 \$335** A sultry red, with a pronounced sanguine, meaty character, this offers a well-seasoned and harmonious mix of earthy, leafy elements matched to supple plum and cherry leather, with eucalyptus and refreshing mint notes. Profoundly mineral, with meaty accents and incense smoke echoing on the long, salty and texturally beautiful finish. Best from 2026 through 2042. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 M. Chapoutier Ermitage Le Pavillon 2021 \$520** There's impressive intensity to this powerful red, particularly for the lighter vintage. A compact core of black licorice, plum and anise is layered atop smoldering tobacco and crushed graphite elements that hover in the backdrop. Piercing acidity keeps this fresh and vibrant despite its weight. A massive wine that stretches way out, with lavender and bitter tar details. Best from 2026 through 2045. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Ferraton Père & Fils Ermitage Les Dionnières 2022 \$120** A densely packed, powerful red, with smoldering graphite underscoring the black currant and black raspberry wafting alongside mesquite smoke. Anise and lavender add pretty high tones, but this is mostly about dark, simmering power. Give this a few years—at least—to unfurl. Best from 2027 through 2042. 135 cases made, 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 M. Sorrel Hermitage 2022 \$240** An elegant, savory, unadorned version that is dense and concentrated but never heavy. Shows the power and elegance of Syrah in Hermitage. Violet, cherry and smoked meat flavors are flecked with earth and brown bread notes, anchored with bolts of iron, and streaked with tar and salt on the persistent finish, held with muscular tannins. Oak sits in the backdrop, so the freshness and energy really come through. Best from 2027 through 2042. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 M. Chapoutier Ermitage Les Greffieux 2021 \$235** Elegant, salty and savory, with a core of red currant that shows a subtle meaty edge, plus cured sausage, herbs and licorice root. Shows impressive textural beauty, with its gentle leafiness and wet earth dimension adding character. Round in feel, with racy acidity powering the energy. The finish, edged in mineral and smoke notes, shows some length. Drink now through 2040. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Ferraton Père & Fils Ermitage Le Méal 2022 \$165** There's a seductive generosity to this robust red, with ripe black cherry and plum matched by savory undercurrents of smoke, grilled *garrigue* and a salty mineral vein. A solid foundation of iron keeps this muscular and grounded, with lavender perfume and a tug of tobacco playing out on the stylish, pure, smoky finish, which lingers. Best from 2026 through 2042. 160 cases made, 17 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Ferraton Père & Fils Hermitage Les Miaux 2022 \$96** Seductive cherry and raspberry coulis introduce this gorgeous red, with harmonious integration and a refined texture. Its red tea tannins are fine, giving an almost silky impression, despite the firmly structured frame. Streamlined and fragrant, this shows elegance and quiet power. Best from 2026 through 2040. 490 cases made, 44 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 M. Chapoutier Hermitage Monier de la Sizeranne 2021 \$170** An earthy, sanguine version, with notes of singed bacon fat and tobacco leaf and a tug of tar, all gliding alongside steeped cherry. Its red tea tannins have softened nicely, and there's a racy edge to the finish, with energy and savory herb details. Drink now through 2040. 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Paul Jaboulet Aîné Hermitage La Maison Bleue 2021 \$170** An elegant, beautifully perfumed style, with the high-toned, leaner character of the vintage. Snappy red licorice, cherry and apple wood smoke are dusted in white pepper. Tannins are well-polished, showing modest grip through the lengthy finish. It will be interesting to see this evolve with time in bottle. Drink now through 2040. 250 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Tardieu-Laurent Hermitage 2022 \$90** Sleek in feel, this alluring red features cherry, plum and licorice flecked with licorice snap, cola and herbs. Firms up on the palate, with fine-grained tannins providing an upright frame and chalky mineral notes adding depth. Singed sage and alder smoke grace the well-cut finish. Drink now through 2040. 400 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Northern Rhône / Hermitage / White

**96 M. Chapoutier Ermitage White L'Ermite 2021 \$800** Shows real depth and style, with flattering notes of toasty oak draping over a core of yellow apple and star fruit, all grounded by chalky mineral elements and finely beaded acidity. Firmly structured and well-built, this will go the distance in the cellar. Concentrated and long. Drink now through 2038. 5 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 M. Chapoutier Ermitage White de l'Orée 2021 \$345** Broad, complex and wonderfully rich, with a core of lemon oil and orchard fruit merging with a smoky mineral layer and earth detail. Salted butter graces the savory palate, while bitter grapefruit pith adds firm tautness and focus to the lengthy, energetic finish. Drink now through 2038. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 M. Chapoutier Ermitage White Le Méal 2021 \$430** A succulent, lush white, with a honeyed edge to its notes of Meyer lemon and white peach, streaked with saline and a brush of cedar polish. There's a racy edge to the finish, which shows precision and energy as well as density. Drink now through 2038. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Ferraton Père & Fils Ermitage White Le Reverdy 2022 \$165** Smoked honey and bitter herbs infuse a base of star fruit, melon and peach in this complex, concentrated white. Fresh celery and chamomile work with tangerine acidity to draw out the long, savory finish, marked by a saline streak and fresh mint. Still shows great energy and focus, with savory, piercing acidity and lime zest adding a bitter kick at the close. Marsanne and Roussanne. Drink now through 2036. 115 cases made, 10 cases imported.—K.B.



**94 Domaine de la Chapelle Hermitage White Le Chevalier de Sterimberg 2022 \$175** Weighty and ripe, with peach and apricot flecked with honeysuckle high tones and offset by bitter grapefruit pith and white tea tannins. Green herbs add a savory element to the ripe, warm palate, with the finish etched in firming mineral notes. A distinct style. Marsanne and Roussanne. Drink now through 2036. 75 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 M. Chapoutier Hermitage White Chante-Alouette 2021 \$135** Complex and aromatic, with apricot liqueur and peach merging with honeyed chamomile and warm hay. Bitter almond skin and dried green herbs balance the richness of the fruit well, and subtle notes of earthy evolution glide out on the long, balanced finish. Drink now through 2030. 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Ferraton Père & Fils Hermitage White Les Miaux 2022 \$96** Fleshy yellow plum and melon carry a honeyed edge in this rich white. Supple and mouthfilling, with plenty of juicy acidity to maintain balance. Lush and well-crafted, with chamomile, salted butter, herb and mineral notes drawing out the balanced finish. Drink now through 2036. 245 cases made, 16 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Northern Rhône / St.-Joseph / Red

**94 M. Chapoutier St.-Joseph Le Clos 2021 \$200** Densely packed and smoldering, with charred mesquite and tobacco leaf overlaying the rich core of mocha, black cherry, tapenade and lavender notes, all wrapped around a spine of cast iron. Bay leaf, white pepper and herbs play out on the long, chewy finish. Drink now through 2035. 5 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Lionel Faury St.-Joseph La Gloriette Vieilles Vignes 2022 \$55** Rich and concentrated, with tautness thanks to a foundation of graphite and drying black tea tannins wrapped around cassis puree, ganache and violet notes. Straight and firm, with an attractive core of black plum and wild berry. Oak is beautifully integrated on the pleasingly bitter finish. Still tightly coiled, this needs time to unfurl. Best from 2026 through 2032. 300 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Lionel Faury St.-Joseph Les Ribaudes 2022 \$38** Dark and inky, with a brooding core of black raspberry and cassis underscored by salt, iron and bread. Firmly structured, with sanguine notes of herbs, saucisson and smoke that show real power. The finish is held taut by muscular yet refined black tea tannins that need time to unwind. Drink now through 2032. 936 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Bernard Grippa St.-Joseph Le Berceau 2021 \$90** This version shows impressive concentration and complexity for the leaner vintage, with spicy, woody, sweet tobacco leaf undertones layered atop a gentle core of red fruit. Graceful in feel, with salty balsamic reduction notes lining the finish, plus a flattering edge of toasty cedar. Drink now through 2032. 400 cases made, 40 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Les Vins de Vienne St.-Joseph L'Arzelle 2022 \$56** This red's stream of black raspberry coulis is open and lush, with tangy acidity and finely crushed graphite firming up the palate. Large in structure and scale, offering black cherry leather, juniper, violet and thyme notes edged in salt and alder smoke. Meatiness moves in, and black tea tannins have begun to loosen their grip on the polished finish. Drink now through 2032. 830 cases made, 150 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 M. Chapoutier St.-Joseph Les Granits 2021 \$135** There's smoky, savory intrigue to this red, whose modest fruit (a hallmark of the leaner vintage) shows real presence, with black currant and plum paste flanked by black and white pepper, thyme, smoke and tar, with smoldering mesquite in the backdrop. Everything is etched in graphite. Drink now through 2035. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Pierre & Jérôme Coursodon St.-Joseph Silice 2022 \$45** An alluring version, offering black licorice and macerated plum notes filigreed with baking spices, mulberry and mesquite smoke on a round, broad palate. Beautifully aromatic, with lavender and dried herbs wafting through, plus a flattering, well-integrated brush of vanilla. Anchored by firming iron minerality on the focused finish. Drink now through 2032. 750 cases made, 150 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Delas St.-Joseph François de Tournon 2022 \$46** Stylish and polished, with dark berry and plum notes bolstered by black tea tannins and a taut line of mineral energy. Sweet cedar spice and mesquite elements reveal generous oak polish, which will integrate with time. The finish is succulent, with vibrant acidity. Offers ripe fruit, but there's still a lot of graphite minerality simmering underneath. Best from 2026 through 2032. 1,500 cases made, 100 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Sylvain Gauthier St.-Joseph Domaine des Pierres Seches 2022 \$45** This is fluid and medium-bodied, with a core of plum sauce flecked with black pepper, mulberry and dusty earth. Showing well now, with graphite energy and softened tannins. Sultry incense smoke plays out on the well-meshed finish, with red tea tannins. Drink now through 2030. 834 cases made, 150 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Les Vins de Vienne St.-Joseph 2023 \$41** This expressive and ripe display of black raspberry, violet and warm earth hums with mineral, fennel seed and herbal energy. Tangy acidity powers through the medium-bodied frame, and a salty, smoked meat note hovers over the harmonious finish. Drink now through 2032. 3,000 cases made, 800 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Northern Rhône / St.-Joseph / White

**94 M. Chapoutier St.-Joseph White Les Granits 2021 \$100** Shows good concentration and depth in a savory, smoky profile. A flinty mineral layer supports notes of green pear and melon, all amply flecked with herbs and driven by oyster shell-laced acidity. Glossy in feel, with the subtlest hint of brioche and real substance to the finish. Drink now through 2030. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 André Perret St.-Joseph White 2022 \$69** Warm pear, apple and kumquat notes are amply spiced and seductive, showing inner density alongside attractive fruit on a round, creamy and waxy palate. Savory, smoky flint, green herbs and salted butter grace the plush, expansive finish, which lands with impressive precision—and hints of green almond and dried tangerine. Solid. Marsanne and Roussanne. Drink now through 2032. 12 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine Courbis St.-Joseph White 2023 \$27** Apricot, Asian pear and fragrant peach mark this plush white, which delivers layers of warm fruit backed by bitter mineral notes and cleansing acidity. Hints of salted butter and toasty cedar show on the fluid, mouth-coating finish, with a dried citrus pith detail. Marsanne and Roussanne. Drink now through 2028. 900 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Sylvain Gauthier St.-Joseph White Domaine des Pierres Seches 2022 \$45** Warm, stylish and expressive, with honeysuckle and ripe nectarine revealing a flattering, toasty edge, built upon a solid mineral foundation. Smoky, with a savory kick of herbs on the finish, which is held together by a subtle tug of white tea tannins, offering a nice offset to the creaminess. Drink now through 2028. 417 cases made, 150 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 M. Chapoutier St.-Joseph White Les Granites 2021 \$55** Energetic yet sultry, with a pronounced earthy dimension—fresh chives, white pepper, crushed flint and saline streaks—overlaying an elegant core of

melon and verbena. Flattering toast notes add richness, while white tea tannins and succulent acidity keep pace through the salt-coated finish, filigreed with flinty mineral and smoke details. Drink now through 2028.—K.B.

**92 Pierre & Jérôme Coursodon St.-Joseph White Silice 2023 \$48** There's impressive fruit purity to this sleek white, with alluring notes of creamed peach and pear flecked with dried thyme and warm hay. Velvety and plump on the palate, with a well-integrated kiss of brioche. Salty mineral details run from start to streamlined finish. Drink now through 2028. 350 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Lionel Faury St.-Joseph White Les Ribaudes 2022 \$38** An alluring, rich version, offering a range of jasmine, apple, star fruit and green melon on a glossy-textured palate, spiked with bitter quinine notes for balance. Weighty but not heavy, with chamomile and dried hay details on the flinty finish, which is persistent and rich. Drink now through 2028. 70 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Northern Rhône / Other Red

**94 A. Clape Cornas 2021 \$225** An elegant expression of Cornas, with real complexity. High-toned cherry and olive tapenade are laced with sweet bay leaf, lavender and earth. Well-managed tannins support the supple core of red fruit. Shows a refined inner density that builds with time in glass for a long, drawn-out finish. Not powerful, but serious and characterful. Best from 2026 through 2040. 185 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Alain Voge Cornas Les Chailles 2022 \$70** This full-bodied version offers an attractive gush of fresh blackberry, boysenberry and fig that's amply coated in salt. Seductive, with polished tannins giving a silky impression until they firmly shore up the finish. Tangy acidity keeps this pumping along, with savory details emerging and inviting another sip. Drink now through 2035. 925 cases made, 140 cases imported.—K.B.



LIONEL FRAISSE  
Co-owner & Winemaker

**94 Alain Voge Cornas Les Vieilles Vignes 2022 \$95** Strappy plum and licorice-steeped cherry make a ripe impression in this vibrant, well-packed red. Energetic on the palate, with details of baking spices and violet. Fluid and harmonious on the palate, with fine tannins keeping pace, but it's the steely mineral wall that really firms this up, making for a solid finish. Best from 2026 through 2040. 1,075 cases made, 180 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Les Vins de Vienne Collines Rhodaniennes Sotanium 2022 \$90** This pretty, perfumed, inviting red is marked by lavender and violet overlaying black raspberry on a clean, well-packed palate. Offers plenty of ripeness and good focus, with wafts of sandalwood smoke and subtle warm earth. Gently sewn up with fine-grained black tea tannins and graphite bolts. Drink now through 2032. 1,800 cases made, 200 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 A. Clape Cornas Renaissance 2021 \$166** Perfumed cherry and spices are textured in this graceful version. Starts off glossy, but tannins take hold, giving a firm shape and focused finish. Black pepper, mocha and violet chime in, along with a sanguine thread of bacon fat and apple wood smoke. Alluring. Best from 2026 through 2040. 100 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Domaine du Colombier Crozes-Hermitage 2022 \$40** Sultry and attractive, offering a solid core of ripe plum and blackberry wrapped in mesquite smoke and sweet tapenade. Silky and yet edged in iron, with nice brightness and lift to the focused finish. Drink now through 2032. 5,000 cases made, 356 cases imported.—K.B.



**91 Ferraton Père & Fils Crozes-Hermitage Calendes 2022 \$28** Glossy and high-toned, with strappy licorice, blackberry and bright cherry notes detailed with lavender and anise accents, all backed by apple wood smoke and graphite through the stylish, medium-bodied finish. Tangy acidity gives this real lift through the chalky, mineral-edged finish, with tar and earth details. Drink now. 2,200 cases made, 900 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Ferraton Père & Fils Crozes-Hermitage La Matinière 2022 \$32** An alluring, salty version, with real meatiness and white pepper savoriness behind notes of wild forest berries and plum compote laced with sweet tobacco and singed bacon lard. Streamlined in feel, with velvety tannins gliding through and dried herbs on the smoldering finish. Mineral-rich and precise, with a racy character at the end. Drink now through 2032. 5,200 cases made, 270 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Les Vins de Vienne Crozes-Hermitage 2023 \$36** A juicy blast of blackberry coulis, plum and violet is minimally adorned in this fresh, pure version. Talc-fine tannins give this a gentle frame, with wafts of eucalyptus, sultry incense and apple wood smoke on the succulent, focused finish. Drink now through 2030. 2,500 cases made, 800 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Michel Poinard Crozes-Hermitage 2022 \$32** An earthy, supple version, with a polish of oak surrounding the core of black fruit and baking spices. Tobacco and salty mineral notes chime in, while sandalwood smoke hovers throughout. Medium-bodied, with succulent acidity and balance on the firm finish. Drink now through 2028. 1,800 cases made, 800 cases imported.—K.B.

**88 François Villard Syrah Collines Rhodaniennes L'Appel des Sereines 2021 \$20** A lean, smoky, crunchy red, with white pepper and an herbal thread woven through notes of red currant and smoked meat. The racy finish shows a waft of sandalwood smoke. Drink now. 10,000 cases made, 1,900 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Northern Rhône / Other White & Sparkling

**93 Les Vins de Vienne Collines Rhodaniennes White Taburnum 2022 \$90** There's real density to the ripe yet fresh profile of peach and melon, washed over with cool stone minerality. Refreshing notes of mint and savory green herbs add brightness to the zesty finish, which offers good length and subtle brioche warmth. Drink now through 2030. 830 cases made, 150 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Alain Vogé St.-Péray Fleur de Crussol 2022 \$70** A fluid, round version, with a honeyed edge to the earth, salt and green almond notes that sit atop a modest core of crunchy orchard fruit, sun tea and plum. Toast and buttercream add richness, with lemony acidity zinging through and cleaning up the finish. Salty and smoky, with savory power and finesse. Drink now. 500 cases made, 40 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Paul Jaboulet Aîné Crozes-Hermitage White Domaine Mule Blanche 2022 \$50** Expressive and alluring, with fragrant ginger and honeycomb notes infusing warm apple and juicy melon. On the palate, this is bone-dry and chiseled by steely acidity and white tea tannins. Spice and truffle elements course alongside toasted hazelnut and brioche on the finish. Distinctive and delicious. Drink now through 2028. 280 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Les Vins de Vienne St.-Péray Les Bialères 2023 \$46** Shows density and complexity, with fresh apricot and apple notes that are round and mouthfilling, underscored by smoke and flint accents. Green herbs, salted butter and honey course through, with a bit of a tannic grip on the succulent, substantial finish, which is reined in by chalky mineral and bitter quinine details. Drink now through 2028. 440 cases made, 100 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 M. Chapoutier Crozes-Hermitage White Les Meysonniers 2021 \$46** A round, stylish, honeyed white, offering attractive melon and beeswax on a salty, savory palate. Earth and toasted macadamia nut notes chime in, while bitter lime zest jolts the well-meshed finish. Shows lots of character. Well-done. Drink now through 2027. 500 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Les Vins de Vienne Crozes-Hermitage White 2023 \$40** Enticing and fresh, with a round, fleshy profile to the lemon curd and yellow apple notes on its creamy, juicy frame. Flickers of salted buttercream and toasted almond add richness, yet this stays vibrant through the long finish, lined with chalky mineral details. Drink now through 2027. 800 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Les Vins de Vienne Viognier Collines Rhodaniennes 2023 \$30** Alluring notes of apricot and elderflower are expressive but nicely restrained, with good freshness and mineral energy to the medium-weight palate. There's terrific purity to the silky, harmonious finish, with a dusting of salt. Drink now. 1,100 cases made, 600 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 François Villard Viognier Collines Rhodaniennes Les Contours de Deponcins 2022 \$35** A ripe, sultry version, with star fruit and melon rind offset by bitter herbs and pithy grapefruit acidity. A subtle brushing of vanilla rounds out the finish, marked by smoke and salt. Drink now through 2027. 1,500 cases made, 100 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Southern Rhône / Châteauneuf-du-Pape / Red

**96 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$140** See Collectibles, page 88.

**96 Domaine de la Vieille Julienne Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve 2021 \$299** A massive, complex and expressive wine that unleashes waves of chocolate-covered fig and lush cherry flavors, with dense layers of simmering mineral notes. There's fine chalkiness to the texture, and this holds together a lot of wine in a well-hewn frame. Apple wood smoke plays out on the long and winding finish, washed over with cool stone minerality. Powerful, with terrific tension. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Best from 2026 through 2040. 250 cases made, 60 cases imported.—K.B.

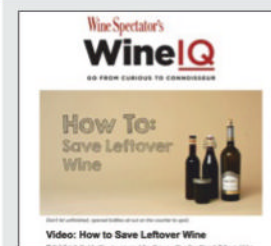
**95 Bosquet des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape A La Gloire de Mon Grand-Père 2022 \$90** A stunning, concentrated red, with a deep well of juicy cherry and raspberry coulis firmed up by crushed, chalky mineral energy and juniper and black licorice details. Smoky incense and freshness bring finesse despite the weight. The tannins are silky and pure. Oak sits nicely in the backdrop, allowing the purity of fruit and graphite power to shine. Best from 2026 through 2042.—K.B.

**95 Bosquet des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape Chante Le Merle Vieilles Vignes 2022 \$80** A seductive, smoky red, with real depth to its savory character. The dried strawberry leather and crunchy cherry fruit profile remains fresh and vibrant, studded with sanguine notes of smoked meat and dusty earth layered atop smoldering iron. The tannins are sculpted to a fine grain, bringing elegance to the texture. Delicious now, this has years ahead for those with the patience to cellar. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Best from 2026 through 2040.—K.B.

**95 M. Chapoutier Châteauneuf-du-Pape Barbe Rac 2021 \$130** A beautiful, harmonious red, salty and rich, with saucisson and grilled herbs infusing red currant and red brick dust on a round, mouthfilling palate. Warm mocha and lavender add to the complexity, with the stunning texture the star of the show. Offers leafy elegance and a refreshing kick of menthol on the finish. Excellent. Drink now through 2038. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

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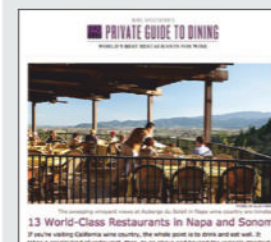


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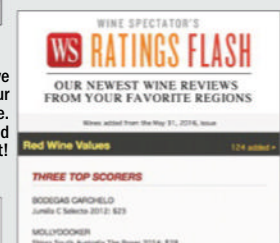
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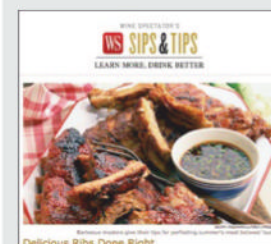
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**95 Domaine de la Vieille Julienne Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Hauts-lieux 2021 \$109** A seductive blockbuster that shows impressive concentration for the challenging vintage—and a lot of refreshment and balance. Silky in feel, with a subtle chewiness to notes of fig and fruitcake detailed with lavender oil and violet. The tannins are polished and pure as they guide the long, harmonious finish, which is still tightly coiled despite the late release. Delicious now but will only improve with time. Grenache, Mourvèdre, Cunoise and Cinsault. Drink now through 2038. 1,100 cases made, 225 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Le Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$65** An excellent example of classic Châteauneuf richness that shows good balance and energy. Juicy black raspberry, licorice and ganache are wrapped around a ballast of graphite shavings, while the refined structure reins in the warm, mouthcoating palate. Hints of grilled herbs, brown bread and lavender smoke detail the long, textured and mineral-rich finish. Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre and Cinsault. Best from 2026 through 2038. 5,000 cases made, 1,200 cases imported.—K.B.

**95 Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau 2021 \$129** See Collectibles, page 88.

**94 Domaine La Barroche Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$70** A plush, powerful red, with good vibrancy to the fresh cherry and licorice flavors streaming alongside singed graphite and lavender. The full-bodied, hedonistic palate is restrained by an ample spine of iron and fine-grained tannins that pack real punch from start to finish. Threads of apple wood smoke and warm spices weave throughout. Best from 2026 through 2038. 2,500 cases made, 500 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Domaine La Barroche Châteauneuf-du-Pape Fiancée 2022 \$135** A sleek version, with an opulent core of red licorice and cherry on a foundation of smoldering iron. Wafts of alder smoke join subtle fruitcake spice notes. There's good energy to the lush finish, with a bitter mineral vein pulsing through. Drink now through 2040. 150 cases made, 40 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Domaine La Barroche Châteauneuf-du-Pape Pure 2021 \$189** Offers ripeness and concentration for the lighter vintage. Starts broad and generous, then firms up quickly on the palate, with a dense core of black currant and smoke sewn up with finely structured tannins. Shows equal parts power and finesse. Drink now through 2040. 250 cases made, 40 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Lucien & André Brunel Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Cailloux 2022 \$70** Decidedly savory, with tugs of tar, dried sausage and warm soil surrounding plum, melted licorice and anise. Lifted and smooth, with gentle tannins paving the silky finish. Shows depth without heaviness, while sandalwood smoke drifts from beginning to end. Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah. Best from 2026 through 2038. 5,000 cases made, 630 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Famille Isabel Ferrando Châteauneuf-du-Pape St.-Prefert 2022 \$108** Supple and mouthfilling, with silky tannins upholding cherry, plum and pretty lavender notes. Grilled *garrigue* plays out on the finish, which shows sneaky length and elegance. Seductive in feel, with impressive energy, too, for a balanced, harmonious impression. Grenache, Cinsault, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2040. 2,500 cases made, 900 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Domaine Font de Michelle Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Etienne Gonnert 2020 \$102** A blockbuster in a showy, rich style, with bolts of iron grounding a lush stream of chocolate, cherry and blackberry. Mesquite and sandalwood smoke notes linger through the smooth finish, which is flecked with spices, herbs and salt. A long bolt of graphite adds to the well-built feel. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2040. 500 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Domaine de la Mordorée Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Reine des Bois 2022 \$156** Dark and brooding, with a floral perfume followed by a stream of black licorice, currant and mulberry edged in graphite. Alder smoke hovers throughout the rich, round palate, with softened tannins gently paving the way for the long, chalky-textured finish. Needs time in the cellar to harmonize all of its elements. Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah. Best from 2026 through 2038. 134 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Château La Nerthe Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée des Cadettes 2022 \$180** Ripe, expressive and concentrated, with plum pudding and baked fig supported by firming mineral notes and tight tannins. A warm dusting of Christmas spices adds to the opulence, yet the inner density shows the mineral energy to match the broad frame and richness. Mourvèdre, Grenache and Syrah. Best from 2026 through 2038. 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Domaine Santa Duc Châteauneuf-du-Pape Le Pied de Baud 2022 \$104** There's supple elegance and mineral-driven character to the crunchy red fruit and smoldering incense flavors on a fresh, balanced palate. Notes of smoked meat and cast iron make an impression toward the finish, with a waft of mesquite ash, sweet spices and gentle tannins. A more refined style of Châteauneuf. Grenache, Mourvèdre and Cinsault. Drink now through 2038. 373 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Domaine de la Vieille Julienne Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Trois Sources 2021 \$79** Black raspberry coulis is flanked by ganache and lavender in this chewy, densely packed red, which is full and rich, especially for the vintage, with impressive textural complexity and seamless integration. Long and balanced, with great freshness to the finish. Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault, Mourvèdre and Cunoise. Drink now through 2037. 2,200 cases made, 400 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe Châteauneuf-du-Pape Piedlong Famille Brunier 2021 \$79** An elegant, lighter style—partly a reflection of the vintage—with impressive energy and complexity. Rose petal, white pepper and incense smoke notes infuse red berry flavors, powered by a bright beam of acidity. Fine-grained tannins show polish and appeal through the refined, alluring finish, along with graphite etchings. Grenache and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2040. 290 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Bosquet des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$65** Rich, spiced and beautifully textured, with fine-grained tannins guiding a beam of warm cherry and spices, all built around a graphite mineral spine. Inner freshness and purity keep tension through the luminous finish. Singed *garrigue* and sandalwood smoke echo on and on. Drink now through 2040.—K.B.

**93 Brotte Châteauneuf-du-Pape Domaine Barville 2023 \$45** A showy and enticing red, with melted licorice draped over linzer torte, black pepper and rooibos tea. Suave, with black tea tannins holding a gentle but solid grip, while bolts of iron keep this grounded. Approachable now, this will only improve with time in bottle. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Best from 2026 through 2038. 1,200 cases made, 300 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Brotte Châteauneuf-du-Pape Secret Barville 2023 \$60** A stream of silky cherry, spices and toasted anise glides through in this stylish, ripe Châteauneuf. Glossy in feel, with a well-meshed kiss of vanilla, lavender and apple wood smoke seamlessly integrated. Keeps nice purity, lightness and energy in spite of its generosity and ripeness. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2040. 450 cases made, 150 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 André Brunel Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$50** A distinctive, mineral-driven style, with warm earth overlaying a core of mocha-dusted cherry and mulberry. Savory, with smoked meat, red tea, brown bread and cast iron. Turns supple on the palate, wafting with alder smoke; then, the finish lands dry and firm. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Best from 2026 through 2038. 2,000 cases made, 180 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 André Brunel Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Cailloux 2022 \$70** Earthy notes of tobacco and warm soil underscore red fruit in this glossy, supple red. A good example of a lighter-extraction style that shows real elegance rather than power. There are details of spices, savory herbs and lavender in the mix, with hints of tar and cool stone minerality on the finish. Drink now through 2038. 5,000 cases made, 630 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 M. Chapoutier Châteauneuf-du-Pape Croix de Bois 2021 \$125** A chewy, rich, savory red, with smoked sausage, wet soil and hoisin sauce merging with red fruit on a supple, well-proportioned frame. Not about power or ripe fruit but savory complexity and nuance. Mesquite smoke plays out on the long finish. Drink now through 2038. 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Clos de l'Oratoire des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Choregies 2020 \$150** Smooth, dark and velvety in feel, with a well-knit texture behind notes of smoked apple wood-laced fig, fruitcake and linzer torte. There's good harmony to the substantial, weighty finish, which is packed with iron and fruitcake. A showy, attractive style. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2038. 318 cases made, 42 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Clos du Mont-Olivet Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$55** An extroverted style, with sweet, ripe chocolate-covered cherry and kirsch on a plush, generous frame. Leafy notes add an earthy dimension, while ballasts of iron keep everything firmly anchored. Incense smoke threads through the lush, warm finish, with violet high tones. Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre, Cinsault, Cunoise, Vaccarèse, Terret, Picpoul and Muscardin. Drink now through 2035. 5,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine de Cristia Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$56** Velvety and seductive, with smoothly polished tannins holding up ripe red currant and cherry flavors edged in iron and baking spices. A bitter cherry pit note at the end contributes to the focused, dry finish, which stretches out. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Best from 2026 through 2040. 500 cases made, 125 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine Font de Michelle Châteauneuf-du-Pape Réserve 2022 \$52** Warm plum, cherry and melted licorice offer juicy pleasure and concentration. A bouncy style that turns serious on the palate, firmed up with iron and bitter mineral notes. Red tea and Christmas spices add detail, and the finish shows hints of tar and ash. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Best from 2026 through 2038. 3,000 cases made, 300 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine Santa Duc Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Crau Ouest 2022 \$170** There's sultry appeal to the perfumy mix of red currant, dried lavender and dusty earth. Licorice root and a pronounced herbal thread bring high tones, while iron minerality keeps everything grounded. Fine tannins pick up steam on the finish, with grilled rosemary and singed sandalwood. Racy acidity drives the energy. Drink now through 2030. 210 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine de la Solitude Châteauneuf-du-Pape Barberini 2022 \$85** A burly, broad-shouldered red, with a lot of stuffing. Modern in style, offering a generous lacquer of oak atop black plum and bitter cherry, all held together by muscular, black tea tannins. Still tightly wound, this will loosen up and integrate with a few years' time. Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah. Best from 2026 through 2038. 600 cases made, 100 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine du Vieux Télégraphe Châteauneuf-du-Pape Télégramme 2022 \$64** Distinctive in a very good way, this chooses savory elegance over power. A refreshing, mineral-driven style, with pepper, spice box and chestnut surrounding a core of red currant threaded with a stream of herbs. With warm earth on the seductively textured palate, this shows good energy and harmony through the vibrant finish, marked by iron and smoked meat. Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre and Cinsault. Drink now through 2032. 2,464 cases imported.—K.B.



**92 Brotte Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Hauts de Barville 2023 \$35** A winy, stylish version, with casis, steeped cherry, mulberry and lavender notes, all edged in warm iron. Full yet streamlined, this version is buoyed by fine acidity for precision on the finish, which is graced with notes of apple wood smoke. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2030. 9,500 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Guillaume Gonnet Châteauneuf-du-Pape Bel Ami 2023 \$43** Silky in feel, with a warm cascade of cherry, kirsch and black raspberry ganache. Stylish and sultry, with charred incense, violet perfume and a lot of dark graphite power. Gentle warmth from the oak spice is well-integrated in the backdrop. Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre and Cinsault. Best from 2026 through 2038. 4,500 cases made, 2,500 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Pierre-Henri Morel Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2022 \$50** Up-front and expressive notes of steeped cherry and lavender smoke are girded with cast iron and mesquite ash in this stylish red. A cured meat accent and a wisp of mesquite ash chime in, while iron-edged tannins hold firm on the full-bodied, balanced finish. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2035. 300 cases made, 216 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 M. Chapoutier Châteauneuf-du-Pape La Bernardine 2021 \$63** This shows some weight for the cooler vintage, with toasted aniseed and white pepper overlaying a solid core of red fruit. Notes of leather and tobacco leaf have moved in, with a hint of pleasing chewiness on the finish, which is salty and graphite-rich. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2030. 500 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Southern Rhône / Châteauneuf-du-Pape / White

**96 Château de Beaucastel Roussanne Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2022 \$173** This extraordinary white is just beginning to open up to reveal its expert mix of power and refinement, with measured opulence held in check by saline-streaked mineral notes. There's plenty of ripe yellow apple and pear to give the desired voluptuousness, with a simmering well of energy keeping tension from start to lengthy finish. Subtle oak toast and buttercream hints remain gracefully integrated in the backdrop. A few years in the cellar will allow this to really shine. Drink now through 2035.—K.B.

**96 Clos des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023 \$83** A truly stunning white, offering layers of complexity, this is supple and generous, with sun tea and dried herbs cruising alongside warm apple and quince. Round in feel, with flattering notes of macadamia and spices, but this stays fresh. Bitter chamomile and grapefruit pith elements add contrast to the full, salty finish. Drink now through 2035.—K.B.

**96 Famille Isabel Ferrando Châteauneuf-du-Pape White St.-Prefert Vieilles Clairettes 2022 \$422** Rich and deeply layered, with mirabelle plum, lemon oil and melon flavors underscored by fennel frond and heather on a seamless, salty frame. Concentrated and very pure, this shows gracefulness and tension despite the lushness. Not flashy, but sublime, contemplative and delicious all at the same time. Drink now through 2035. 80 cases made, 15 cases imported.—K.B.



ISABEL FERRANDO  
Owner & Winemaker

**95 Château La Nerthe Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Clos de Beauvenir 2023 \$155** A mouthfilling, decadent style, grounded by a serious mineral foundation. Honeysuckle, star fruit and creamed yellow apple

are flecked with green herbs and a flattering brush of toasty oak and almond richness. Still tightly wound, offering a lot of wine in a well-packed frame that will unfurl with time. Bitter, grapefruit pithy acidity shores up the finish, which shows real power. Roussanne and Grenache Blanc. Best from 2026 through 2035. 25 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Domaine La Barroche Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Pure 2021 \$183** A dense, smoky, savory white, with yellow plum, chamomile and dried flowers backed by toasted hazelnut and earthy leafiness. White mocha, heather and salted dried herbs chime in, while acacia and salted butter line the substantial palate. White tea tannins have real presence and dry up the substantial finish. Drink now through 2027. 150 cases made, 10 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Château de Beaucastel Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2022 \$121** An alluring, generous white, with a lot of pleasure to the honey-coated quince and apple notes, cut with pithy acidity and a chalky mineral layer. Density builds as this unwinds in the glass, with toasted almond, green herb and white blossom details adding complexity. Long, with impressive focus to the concentrated and full yet fresh finish. Roussanne, Grenache Blanc, Clairette and Bourboulenc. Drink now through 2030.—K.B.

**94 Domaine du Pégau Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Cuvée a Tempo 2022 \$275** This version balances power and freshness, featuring a compact core of aloe, melon and yellow apple intertwined with notes of warm cinnamon spice, smoke and acacia. A hint of shortbread is well-integrated on the silky, almost oily-textured palate, while a steely mineral framework holds everything together with finesse and a lot of seductive appeal. Gorgeous and distinctive. Grenache Blanc, Clairette and Roussanne. Drink now through 2032. 142 cases made, 25 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Château de Vaudieu Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Clos du Belvédère 2023 \$99** Offering depth and concentration, this showy wine features yellow apple, spiced pear and flattering toasty oak spice notes. Savory, mouthwatering acidity firms everything up, along with a lot of crushed stone and herbs. The oak is somewhat pronounced now, but this will integrate with time in bottle. Best from 2026 through 2030. 350 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Château de Vaudieu Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Les Clairettes de Gabriel 2023 \$99** A bold, suave version, humming with energy behind the rich plushness. There's a warm, honeyed edge to the melon and yellow apple flavors, flecked with chamomile and salt hints and a kiss of toasted brioche. Full and supple in feel, with zesty spice and dried ginger notes echoing on the long, saline finish. Drink now through 2030. 400 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**94 Château de Vaudieu Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Les Vieilles Roussanne 2023 \$99** This is an enticing white, with simmering, spicy power and dimension. Crisp tangerine acidity powers through the opulent palate, which is rich with apricot, tropical fruit and buttered brioche. Offers the density and complexity to hold up to the oak, while salty mineral notes add savory depth. Chamomile, sun tea and toasted almond detail the long finish. Drink now through 2030. 450 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Bosquet des Papes Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023 \$50** A refreshing, vibrant version, offering apple and crunchy nectarine notes, with the subtlest kiss of oak spice and toast. Bright fruit and mineral power is center stage, with fresh-cut green herbs and racy acidity powering the long, smoke-tinged finish. Clean and delicious. Drink now through 2028.—K.B.

**93 Brotte Roussanne Châteauneuf-du-Pape Domaine Barville 2023 \$55** Stylish and rich, with salty, savory power backing up yellow plum and melon. A jolt of zesty mineral, refreshing green almond and chopped

chive notes offsets the warm brushing of toasted brioche. Bitter quinine brings good balance and precision to the warm finish. Drink now through 2030. 160 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Chante Cigale Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Extrait 2023 \$85** A seductive, ripe gush of pear, star fruit and mango maintains energy and vividness thanks to a steely mineral layer and racy acidity. There's fine chalkiness to the texture, which shows good purity through the clean finish, where smoke wafts along. Heather and shortbread notes detail the harmonious, bitter-edged finish. Roussanne and Grenache Blanc. Drink now through 2028. 125 cases made, 20 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Famille Isabel Ferrando Châteauneuf-du-Pape White St.-Prefert 2023 \$108** Fragrant and bright, with notes of honeysuckle blossoms, lemon pulp and yellow apple driven by a succulent, mouthwatering acidity that cuts through. Salty, yeasty notes add savory richness to the supple palate, with well-integrated elements of acacia marking the firm, dry finish. There's good precision, freshness, focus and length. Clairette and Roussanne. Drink now through 2028. 700 cases made, 200 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Château La Nerthe Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023 \$82** An opulent, fleshy style, with a core of star fruit, Cavaillon melon and quince. Creamy in feel, with baking spice and macadamia nut accents, plus salted buttercream for added richness. Smoky mineral and dried thyme elements add savory depth. Offers juicy deliciousness and harmonious pleasure from start to finish. Roussanne, Grenache Blanc, Clairette and Bourboulenc. Drink now through 2030. 450 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine du Pégau Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Cuvée Réservee 2023 \$86** A distinctive version, with melon, aloe and mirabelle plum notes showing a flash of green herbs and verbenas. Mineral-driven and herbaceous, with floral notes adding nice freshness and fresh acidity coursing from beginning to end, while the savory landing is marked by gunflint. Silky in feel, with chamomile and smoke on the long, mouthwatering finish. Clairette, Grenache Blanc, Roussanne and Bourboulenc. Drink now through 2028. 416 cases made, 56 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine de la Solitude Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Barberini 2023 \$86** This simmers with mineral energy as ample crushed flint and stone notes support aloe and persimmon flavors. Subtle, toasty oak brings spice and chamomile elements and warmth to the finish, where there's a pleasing tautness, with chalky mineral details and nice restraint. A distinctive, refreshing style. Drink now through 2028. 160 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Château de Vaudieu Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023 \$59** A lush cascade of apricot, warm peach and persimmon is ripe, broad and refined, with a bitter mineral swath anchoring the plush palate. Fennel, macadamia nut and lemon cream add detail to the creamy palate, which shows balance and energy. Drink now through 2029. 1,700 cases made, 300 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Château de Vaudieu Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Le Picardan... 2023 \$99** This offers a stylish mix of warm spices, ripe orchard fruit and saline depth on a densely packed frame. A bit showy, with toasty acacia and juicy melon intertwined with bitter lime peel and verbenas for contrast on the streamlined, full finish. Drink now through 2028. 210 cases made, 50 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Le Vieux Donjon Châteauneuf-du-Pape White 2023 \$65** Alluring and expressive, this leads with a lush core of fruit and white tea, with dried flower and smoke accents. A deep well of chalky mineral simmers underneath, with a brushing of acacia. Refined in texture and structure, with good definition to the plush, full and savory finish. Clairette and Roussanne. Drink now through 2028. 300 cases made, 56 cases imported.—K.B.



**92 Guillaume Gonnet Châteauneuf-du-Pape White Belle Amie 2023 \$47** There's an alluring floral lift to this bright, perfumy white, which gives way to crunchy peach and green pear on a silky palate. Succulent acidity courses through, keeping this vibrant throughout, with balance between fleshiness and energy. Clairette and Roussanne. Drink now through 2030. 2,000 cases made, 250 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Southern Rhône / Côtes du Rhône

**92 Famille Isabel Ferrando Côtes du Rhône Clos Beatus Ille 2022 \$38** A rich, opulent version, with seductive charm to its notes of blackberry compote and plum puree, all layered with spice cake and licorice snap details. The finish maintains good focus thanks to mineral energy and juicy acidity. The tannins show real presence, keeping this solidly structured. Grenache, Cinsault and Syrah. Drink now through 2030. 2,000 cases made, 300 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Guillaume Gonnet Côtes du Rhône Le Rêveur 2023 \$15** See Best Values, page 90.

**90 Simian Côtes du Rhône Les Clefs du Caladas 2022 \$22** There's beautiful textural purity to this smoky, sultry red, with smoked meat and a peppery layer of herbs bringing energy and lift to notes of red currant and plum. Round in feel, showing good integration, with rooibos red tea tannins holding everything together. Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2028. 800 cases made, 250 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Alain Voge Côtes du Rhône Les Peyrouses 2022 \$25** There's good tension, balance and freshness to the notes of violet and black plum, powered by tangy acidity. Finely crushed mineral details add texture, while black pepper, baking spices, cast iron and leather bring complexity to the vivid palate. Apple wood and mesquite accents line the vivid finish. Drink now. 2,000 cases made, 500 cases imported.—K.B.

**89 Michel Gassier Côtes du Rhône 2022 \$19** A stylish red, with strappy red licorice and up-front cherry in a caressing style, polished with toasty sandalwood. Warm and supple, with juicy acidity cutting through. Graphite-edged tannins hold a firm grip. Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah. Drink now. 8,000 cases made, 3,200 cases imported.—K.B.

**89 Domaine Pélaquié Côtes du Rhône 2022 \$14** See Smart Buys, page 89.

## FRANCE

### Southern Rhône / Côtes du Rhône-Villages

**92 Domaine de Mourchon Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Grande Réserve 2022 \$26** Textural beauty stands out in this seductive red, with black licorice, plum and spice box notes held together with tannins that are nicely polished but boast a solid grip on the ripe, fleshy palate. Fresh, harmonious and long, with impressive density and sneaky length powered by smoldering beams of graphite. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2032. 1,300 cases made, 130 cases imported.—K.B.

**92 Domaine de Mourchon Grenache Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Family 2022 \$40** A deep, dark red, with pleasing chewiness to the notes of fig, fruitcake, mocha, warm earth and toasted anise. Sarsaparilla and a tug of tar add to the brooding, still tightly coiled core. Shows impressive richness and aromatic appeal, with finely polished tannins and graphite building in power toward the finale, with wafts of alder smoke. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2035. 200 cases made, 85 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Domaine de Mourchon Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Tradition 2022 \$18** This offers an attractive stream of black raspberry and lavender on a plush yet firm frame. Violet, warm brown bread and graphite shaving notes complete the package, with pleasing chewiness on the long, mineral-rich and drawn-out finish. Solid. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2032. 3,300 cases made, 90 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Domaine de Mourchon Syrah Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Family 2021 \$40** There's a lot of earth, smoked meat and iron in this dark, inky red. Shows power and concentration, with bitter chocolate and lavender high tones alongside tobacco, charred mesquite and austere graphite. The tannins keep a firm hold as this simmers through the brooding, sanguine finish. Drink now through 2036. 207 cases made, 65 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Domaine des Bosquets Côtes du Rhône-Villages Séguret Réserve 2022 \$31** A robust and chewy red, with steeped cherry, blackberry paste and dried lavender draped in melted licorice, with hardy tannins holding a firm grip. Salty, earthy and dense through the formidable finish, this is a lot of wine for a Côtes du Rhône. Drink now through 2028.—K.B.

**90 Simian Côtes du Rhône-Villages Massif d'Uchaux Les Clefs du Caladas 2022 \$27** Starts off lush, silky and seductive, with cassis and boysenberry flanked by incense, salty earth, toasted anise and juniper. Hefty and broad, with red tea tannins keeping this on the rails, plus a saline beam of acidity maintaining vibrancy at the close, which shows real grip. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2026. 330 cases made, 60 cases imported.—K.B.

**89 Clos Bellane Côtes du Rhône-Villages Valréas 2022 \$21** Offers up-front notes of cherry compote and melted black licorice, with a good amount of graphite power simmering underneath. Black pepper and apple wood smoke round out the plush palate, with tannins gaining a solid grip over the taut finish. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2026. 5,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—K.B.

**89 Brotte Côtes du Rhône-Villages Laudun Château de Bord 2023 \$19** Expressive and up-front, with sappy black raspberry coulis and licorice spilling across the juicy palate, where warm soil, grilled apple wood and black tea tannins add savory detail and structure, with graphite shavings firming up the finish. Drink now through 2027. 1,200 cases made, 100 cases imported.—K.B.

**89 Guillaume Gonnet Côtes du Rhône-Villages Le Hardi 2023 \$20** High-toned baked cherry and steeped plum flavors show details of warm nutmeg, cinnamon and mocha powder in this rich version. A candied violet note adds a nice perfume, and the palate is glossy in feel, backed up by a firming cast iron layer. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now. 8,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Southern Rhône / Gigondas

**96 Domaine des Bosquets Gigondas Le Plateau... 2022 \$88** A solid, serious, densely packed red, with a seductive floral perfume lift to the red fruit, sanguine smoked sausage and mesquite ash. Offers telltale Mourvèdre character, with meatiness and a salty, cast iron mineral foundation. Singed *garrigue*, baking spices, white pepper and a pronounced herbal freshness infuse the weighty palate, which is just beginning to unfurl. Stunning. Mourvèdre, Grenache, Syrah, Cinsault and Clairette. Best from 2026 through 2040.—K.B.

**94 Domaine des Bosquets Gigondas Le Lieu Dit... 2022 \$88** Grenache achieves the perfect balance of ripe fruit lusciousness alongside freshness and savory charm. There's real depth to the cherry and lico-

rice notes, edged in hot graphite and incense. Sandalwood smoke sits in the backdrop, and this shows tension through the long finish. Delicious. Drink now through 2038. 450 cases made, 35 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine des Bosquets Gigondas Les Routes... 2022 \$88** Dark, inky and mineral-led, with sanguine threads of cured meat and smoldering iron underscoring black fruit. The tannins show nice polish as they deftly hold together the richly styled palate, which turns chewy and earthy, marked by leather, toasty cedar, wet leaves and salty bacon fat on the long, herbal finish. Drink now through 2038. 215 cases made, 15 cases imported.—K.B.

**93 Domaine des Bosquets Gigondas Réserve 2022 \$54** Richly styled and concentrated, with a real sense of power to the licorice and cherry notes, all sewn up with firm red tea tannins and a smoldering layer of graphite. Offers density and poise through the finish, which stretches out. Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre and Cinsault. Drink now through 2035. 2,720 cases made, 400 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Guillaume Gonnet Gigondas Le Mentor 2022 \$35** Meaty and mineral-rich, offering a refined thread of herbs and smoke woven seamlessly throughout the flavors of cocoa powder-dusted cherry and strawberry leather. Shows good integration on a supple yet structured frame, with echoes of graphite and smoke. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2040. 25,000 cases made, 1,500 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Domaine du Roucas de St. Pierre Gigondas 2021 \$44** Sweet, round cassis and tobacco take on a smoky, meaty character in this supple red. Shows signs of evolution in a lovely way, with tapenade and warm earth flecked with juniper. The tannins are gentle as they guide the medium finish. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2028. 1,800 cases made, 600 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Domaine des Bosquets Gigondas Rosé 2023 \$39** A distinctive style of rosé, with warm, attractive earthiness complementing the pomegranate and salty mineral elements. Hay, green almond and acacia notes add depth and breadth to the round, inviting palate. The finish is focused and pure, with nicely rounded edges. Drink now. 350 cases made, 56 cases imported.—K.B.

## FRANCE

### Southern Rhône / Other

**94 Château de St.-Cosme Côtes du Rhône White Le Poste 2022 \$75** Pretty honeysuckle and warm hay notes introduce this savory, saline white, with a rich core of yellow apple and melon flecked with a kiss of buttercream. Shows inner density and deep minerality yet stays impressively light on its feet, with terrific energy through the harmonious, luscious finish, which persists. Excellent. Drink now through 2035. 3 cases imported.—K.B.

**91 Guillaume Gonnet Lirac Le Virtuose 2023 \$26** Extroverted and perfumy, with a burst of violet, licorice root, açai and boysenberry on a fleshy frame. A chalky, deftly inlaid mineral spine brings structure, and saline acidity keeps this vibrant. Apple wood smoke wafts out along the finish, but this is mostly about the up-front, seductive fruit purity. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2030. 6,000 cases made, 500 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Clos Bellane Côtes du Rhône-Villages White Valréas 2022 \$27** Plump and ripe on the palate, with weight and density behind its notes of yellow apple, verbena and star fruit. Quinine bitterness and a steely beam of acidity clean up the finish. Substantial and balanced, with an echo of salted butter and gunflint. Marsanne, Viognier and Roussanne. Drink now. 600 cases made, 150 cases imported.—K.B.



**90 Brotte Cairanne Domaine Grosset 2023 \$20** Bright notes of cherry and graphite share the stage with licorice, lavender and violet in this pretty, lifted version. On the palate, this is glossy and pure, with singed *garrigue* and smoky sandalwood echoing on the finessed finish. Well-done. Drink now through 2027. 1,200 cases made, 100 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Domaine Jaume Vinsobres Référence 2020 \$30** Black licorice and dark plum meld with notes of spices and bacon in this dark version, with a tug of tar and a kiss of vanilla. The salty, brooding finish is framed by graphite. Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2030. 3,500 cases made, 450 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Domaine Pélaquié Côtes du Rhône White NV \$17** This rich, luscious white oozes peach and apricot on a supple frame, all reined in by bitter citrus pith and tangerine peel. A firming swath of chalky mineral notes drives the balanced finish, with dried herb details. Savory and balanced, with a salty, racy edge. Very good. Drink now. 450 cases made, 100 cases imported.—K.B.

**90 Domaine Pélaquié Côtes du Rhône-Villages White Laudun 2022 \$17** Expressive, with a burst of white meadow blossoms and juicy melon cut with salt, mineral and bitter green almond notes. The palate is round, with some concentration and a flash of smoke, all driven by grapefruit pith acidity for a fresh, lively impression. Drink now. 450 cases made, 100 cases imported.—K.B.

**89 Michel Gassier Costières de Nîmes Fleur de Syrah 2021 \$19** A sanguine red, with smoked bacon and savory spices joining forces with red currant and cherry in a medium-bodied, supple frame. Offers aromatic intrigue, and mesquite smoke hangs over the finish. Syrah and Grenache. Drink now through 2028. 4,200 cases made, 850 cases imported.—K.B.

**89 Guillaume Gonnet Côtes du Rhône White Le Réveur 2023 \$15** Juicy and plump, with bouncy melon and peach notes on a creamy palate. Flecked with dried green herbs and powered by succulent acidity, this offers zesty lemon and crushed flint on the full finish, with a salted butter accent. Viognier, Grenache Blanc and Roussanne. Drink now. 6,000 cases made, 2,500 cases imported.—K.B.

**88 Alain Boisson Cairanne Domaine Cros de Romet 2022 \$20** Oozes sappy cherry paste and plum in a warm, rich style layered with notes of dusty earth and warm soil. Roasted apple wood and drying tannins move in, focusing the finish, which echoes with concentrated balsamic reduction, herb and mineral notes. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2027. 2,400 cases made, 224 cases imported.—K.B.

## ITALY Basilicata

**94 Grifalco della Lucania Aglianico del Vulture Superiore Damaschito 2021 \$43** There's a well-cut sense of poise to this structured red, with the frame of dense, fine-grained tannins and lively acidity woven with a fragrant range of cherry, plum, dried thyme, paprika and white pepper notes. A latent push of iron- and tar-laced minerality drives the lingering finish. Drink now through 2036. 500 cases made, 250 cases imported.—A.N.

**93 d'Angelo Aglianico del Vulture Tecum 2019 \$55** A fragrant and enticing overtone of mountain herbs, graphite, cocoa powder and woody spices leads the way for this muscular red, an aromatic thread winding through blackberry paste, dehydrated black cherry, leather and tarry mineral flavors. Fresh and tightly meshed, with dense tannins firming the finish. Best from 2027 through 2037. 500 cases made, 200 cases imported.—A.N.



ERMINIA D'ANGELO  
& ROCCO D'ANGELO  
Owners & Winemakers

**93 Grifalco della Lucania Aglianico del Vulture Superiore Daginestra 2021 \$43** A compact red, with muscular tannins enmeshed in a swathe of plush texture and flavors of baked plum, dehydrated cherry, leather and Earl Grey. Delicate spice and mineral notes play on the firm finish. Needs some short-term cellaring to shine. Best after 2027. 500 cases made, 250 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 Grifalco della Lucania Aglianico del Vulture Grifalco 2022 \$33** A harmonious red, with fluid grace and fine integration, this layers sinewy tannins with flavors of black cherry coulis and mulberry, plus accents of dried lavender and rosemary, graphite and ash. Long and creamy on the lingering, spiced finish. Drink now through 2035. 1,667 cases made, 800 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 d'Angelo Basilicata Canneto 2022 \$35** Fragrant and mineral-driven, with sandalwood, iron, marjoram and cocoa powder accents to the sun-dried cherry and cranberry fruit, mandarin orange peel and loamy earth flavors. Firm, with chalky-textured tannins on the fresh finish. Best from 2027 through 2032. 2,000 cases made, 600 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 d'Angelo Aglianico del Vulture 2022 \$20** See Smart Buys, page 89.

**90 Grifalco della Lucania Aglianico del Vulture Gricos 2022 \$28** A sanguine red, with iron and game accenting the cherry compote, dried thyme, *balsamico* and dark chocolate notes. Tightly meshed, with firm, plush tannins, but balanced overall. Drink now through 2030. 3,333 cases made, 2,200 cases imported.—A.N.

**89 d'Angelo Basilicata Sacravite 2023 \$16** Fresh, with plumped cherry and plum fruit accented by wild herbs, iron and fresh earth. Chewy. Drink now through 2028. 6,600 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—A.N.

**89 Cantine del Notaio Basilicata L'Atto 2022 \$20** A mouthwatering red, with compact integration of its roasted plum, vanilla, woody spice and grilled herb flavors. Shows dense tannins and a tarry undertow. Best after 2026. 12,500 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—A.N.

## ITALY Piedmont / Barbaresco

**99 Roagna Barbaresco Crichët Pajé 2016 \$1,500** The aromas are subdued, yet the flavors come alive, with steeped plum, cherry, coffee, tar, licorice and sweet spice notes. This washes across the palate like cashmere, leaving a refreshing aftertaste that lasts for minutes. Impressive. Like Escenzia to Tokaji, this is stripped down to the essence of the grape and its soil and geology. Drink now through 2045. 140 cases made.—B.S.

**98 Roagna Barbaresco Albesani 2019 \$200** See Highly Recommended, page 87.

**98 Roagna Barbaresco Asili Vecchie Viti 2019 \$412** Lithe and elegant yet spicy, its white pepper aligning with the vibrant backbone of acidity to define flavors of cherry, strawberry, currant, rose hip and mint. A mineral element emerges on the finish, with dense, refined tannins. Best from 2028 through 2047. 100 cases made.—B.S.

**98 Roagna Barbaresco Pajé Vecchie Viti 2019 \$420** See Collectibles, page 87.

**97 Roagna Barbaresco Gallina 2019 \$200** The aromas are still a little shy, hinting at cherry and rose, with a solid core of cherry, strawberry, rose, white pepper and stony mineral flavors. Yet it's the energy in this red that's compelling, exerting itself from beginning to end. Offers superb elegance and harmony on a linear frame. Best from 2027 through 2050. 369 cases made.—B.S.



ALFREDO ROAGNA  
& LUCA ROAGNA  
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**97 Bruno Rocca Barbaresco Currà 2021 \$138** An earthy undertone lifts the strawberry, cherry and floral flavors in this red. Marvelous harmony and structure prolong the finish, where mineral and savory elements linger. Finesse, purity and power converge in the best sense. Best from 2029 through 2049. 333 cases made, 32 cases imported.—B.S.

**96 Paitin Barbaresco Albesani 2021 \$65** Bright with cherry, raspberry, rose, white pepper and mineral flavors, this is both elegant and intense, with vibrant acidity and refined tannins driving it to a lengthy finish. Shows terrific balance and poise, combining elegance and power with purity. Best from 2029 through 2048.—B.S.

**96 Roagna Barbaresco Montefico Vecchie Viti 2019 \$412** There's plenty of flesh embracing the macerated cherry, strawberry, anise, iron and alpine herb aromas and flavors in this version. Firm, bordering on austere even, yet balanced and super long, with an aftertaste of fruit and mineral. Alluring from the get-go, this is accessible despite its firm structure. Best from 2026 through 2045. 102 cases made.—B.S.

**96 Roagna Barbaresco Pajé 2019 \$200** Ripe with cherry, raspberry, alpine herb, mineral and anise flavors, this red is both fluid and solidly built. The tannins are fine-grained, while the vivid acidity drives its long, complex aftertaste. Offers terrific persistence and expression. Best from 2027 through 2043. 491 cases made.—B.S.

**95 Cascina Luisin Barbaresco Rabajà-Bas 2019 \$75** This red is high-pitched, offering strawberry, kirsch, rose hip, eucalyptus and earth flavors. Turns sweeter and slightly more viscous midpalate and through the finish despite its firm, tightly wound character. Harmonious and detailed, with a white pepper accent chiming in on the lingering aftertaste. Best from 2028 through 2047.—B.S.

**95 Elvio Cogno Barbaresco Bordini 2021 \$67** A dense style, this red is saturated with pure cherry flavors, accented with notes of raspberry, rose, graphite and wild herba. Harmonious, despite its youthful tautness, this lingers with an aftertaste of fruit, savory and mineral notes. Best from 2029 through 2047. 830 cases made, 250 cases imported.—B.S.

**95 Massolino Barbaresco Albesani 2021 \$170** This powerful red boasts cherry, strawberry, rose, earth, tar and underbrush aromas and flavors. The savory notes emerge as this builds to a long, solidly built finish. Shows excellent harmony, texture and staying power, with a minty finish. Best from 2029 through 2048. 330 cases made, 100 cases imported.—B.S.

**95 Paitin Barbaresco Faset 2021 \$54** Exuding finesse, with expressive aromas and flavors of cherry, strawberry, currant, rose and mint, this red is complex, structured and long. Its dense foundation of tannins and lively acidity define the long, mineral-infused aftertaste. Best from 2028 through 2045. 250 cases made, 60 cases imported.—B.S.

**94 Marchesi di Grésy Barbaresco Gaiun Martinenga Riserva 2020 \$140** This is broad, with its cherry, plum, earth, menthol and spice flavors riding a wave of refined tannins. There's a little heat in the balance and a rigid finish, with fine dimension and a beam of fruit poking through in the end. Best from 2027 through 2043. 667 cases made.—B.S.

**94 Pelissero Barbaresco Tulin 2020 \$139** Cherry, raspberry, eucalyptus, tar and sweet spice flavors permeate this dense red. Supple in texture initially, the chalky tannins exert themselves on the long finish. Shows terrific balance and length overall. Best from 2027 through 2042. 1,200 cases made, 375 cases imported.—B.S.

**94 Sottimano Barbaresco Basarin 2021 \$108** This is pure and well-defined, featuring cherry, raspberry, earth, iron and wild herb flavors. Firms up with a line of dusty tannins, yet the fruit is persistent and this is balanced overall. Best from 2028 through 2046. 800 cases made, 270 cases imported.—B.S.



**94 La Spinetta Barbaresco Gallina Vürsù 2021 \$225** Starts with balsamic aromas of eucalyptus, juniper, sage and broom, giving way to flavors of cherry, black currant, pomegranate and earth. A muscular red, with beefy tannins and a long, savory finish. Best from 2027 through 2045. 500 cases made, 167 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 Marchesi di Grésy Barbaresco Camp Gros Martinenga Riserva 2020 \$140** Cherry and plum flavors lean to the earthy side in a good way, grounding this smooth red and giving more basso profundo. Eucalyptus, tar and spice accents add complexity on the finish. Best from 2026 through 2040. 667 cases made.—B.S.

**93 Moccagatta Barbaresco Bric Balin 2021 \$90** Vanilla and resin aromas complement the plum, cherry and tobacco flavors in this flamboyant red. Notes of clove and allspice chime in as the dense tannins swell on the compact finish. Best from 2028 through 2043. 1,300 cases made, 433 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 Pelissero Barbaresco Vanotu 2020 \$149** The vanilla, toast and resin aromas and flavors from new oak dominate any fruit at this stage, yet there are cherry and berry notes, and overall, this red is elegant. Feels balanced despite the emphasis on the oak. Best from 2027 through 2040. 1,200 cases made, 375 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 Sottimano Barbaresco Pajoré 2021 \$108** Cherry, raspberry, earth and mineral aromas and flavors highlight this solidly built Barbaresco. Taut and dense yet refined, with a linear profile and excellent length. Best from 2027 through 2043. 600 cases made, 200 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 La Spinetta Barbaresco Valeirano Vürsù 2021 \$225** This red reveals tension between its savory elements of eucalyptus, juniper and balsam and its raspberry and boysenberry fruit. There's also a tight-grained feel, compounded by a touch of new oak and accompanying spices. Shows fine balance and length. Best from 2027 through 2042. 550 cases made, 183 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 La Spinetta Barbaresco Vigneto Bordini 2021 \$81** Offering a mix of balsamic and savory aromas and flavors, this red reveals notes of eucalyptus, mint, juniper, black currant and raspberry. Sleek and firmly structured, with intense fruit and a mineral element prevailing in the end. Balanced, this just needs a few years to integrate. Best from 2028 through 2043. 1,083 cases made, 361 cases imported.—B.S.

**92 Produttori del Barbaresco Barbaresco 2020 \$58** Plum and cherry flavors are shaded by wild scrub and crisp tannins in this compact red. The balance is on the tannic side today, yet there's ample length, so give this a year or two to settle in. Best from 2026 through 2038. 36,000 cases made, 3,500 cases imported.—B.S.

## ITALY Piedmont / Barolo

**92 Marziano Abbona Barolo 2020 \$38** This is rich and fleshy, boasting cherry, raspberry, plum, earth and eucalyptus flavors. Dense tannins underly it all, putting a firm grip on the finish. In the end, the red fruit reemerges. Best from 2026 through 2042. 2,790 cases made, 800 cases imported.—B.S.

**92 Luigi Pira Barolo del Comune di Serralunga d'Alba 2020 \$52** A lean, tightly wound style, boasting cherry, strawberry and eucalyptus flavors, with a hint of tar. Its tannins are prominent for now, yet there's plenty of fruit and freshness in the background. Best from 2027 through 2043. 1,500 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—B.S.

**92 Prunotto Barolo 2020 \$60** Macerated cherry, strawberry and menthol flavors mark this supple red. Balanced and lively, with a light, chalky feel on the finish. In the end, this is savory. Best from 2026 through 2042. 1,950 cases imported.—B.S.

**92 Rocche Costamagna Barolo 2020 \$52** A ripe, almost beefy style, this red boasts cherry, plum, fruitcake and spice flavors allied to a dense profile. Feels balanced overall, with fine length, but needs time to absorb the tannins. Best from 2027 through 2042. 6,048 cases made, 2,419 cases imported.—B.S.

**92 Schiavenza Barolo Cerretta 2020 \$59** Rich and packed with tightly wound tannins, this red offers cherry, tamarind, tar and eucalyptus flavors. This is more about the savory character and structure, with a chewy finish, yet there's ample fruit. Best from 2028 through 2045. 292 cases made, 158 cases imported.—B.S.

**91 Coppo Barolo 2020 \$40** This red is lacy and elegant, exhibiting cherry, currant, earth, anise and wild herb flavors. Firms up on the finish, with a base of tannins keeping this grounded. Best from 2027 through 2040. 3,000 cases made, 1,200 cases imported.—B.S.

## ITALY Piedmont / Other

**92 Aldo Conterno Langhe Quartetto 2021 \$40** Dark in color and saturated with black cherry, blackberry, violet and sweet spice flavors, this red is fresh, complex and harmonious. The vibrant acidity is the driving factor, keeping this focused and extending the alluring aftertaste. Nebbiolo, Pinot Noir, Merlot and Syrah. Drink now through 2030. 595 cases made, 340 cases imported.—B.S.

**90 Azelia Barbera d'Alba Punta 2021 \$39** Lush and inviting, this red features plum, blackberry, black cherry and warm spice aromas and flavors. There's a macerated element to the fruit, and this lingers with an aftertaste of fruitcake and spices. Drink now through 2028. 500 cases made, 170 cases imported.—B.S.

**90 Cavallotto Freisa Langhe 2021 \$40** This rich red is full of black cherry, blackberry and violet flavors. Lively acidity and light, chalky tannins lend support, focusing the dusty finish. Drink now. 350 cases made, 120 cases imported.—B.S.

**90 Cigliuti Barbera d'Alba Campass 2022 \$39** Offers bright black cherry, blackberry, violet and earth flavors up front, with a modicum of dry tannins following through on the finish. Overall, this red maintains a sense of balance, with fine length. Drink now through 2029. 330 cases made, 110 cases imported.—B.S.

**90 Elvio Cogno Langhe Nascetta Del Comune di Novello Anas-cëtta 2023 \$28** Fresh and floral-scented, this white offers flavors of apple, pear and bitter almond, with tangy acidity and light tannins providing support. This harmonious version lingers, with an almond, apple and mineral aftertaste. Drink now through 2029. 850 cases made, 450 cases imported.—B.S.

**90 Marchesi di Grésy Sauvignon Langhe 2023 \$22** This white is lithe, even delicate, offering peach, gooseberry, chive and floral aromas and flavors. Guided by its juicy acidity, this is persistent and lingers on the mineral aftertaste. Drink now. 1,586 cases made, 650 cases imported.—B.S.

**90 Malvirà Roero Arneis S.S. Trinità 2022 \$25** Peach and almond flavors are accented with honey and lanolin in this rich, complex white. Underscored with bright acidity that drives the mouthwatering finish, where grapefruit peel and salty notes linger. Drink now through 2027. 710 cases made, 300 cases imported.—B.S.

## ITALY Tuscany / Chianti

**96 Ipsus Chianti Classico Gran Selezione 2020 \$395** A core of cherry and raspberry fruit is framed by vanilla and resin notes in this intense red. Floral, iron and tobacco accents add depth and complexity, while the supple texture eventually gives way to dense tannins on

the long aftertaste. Rides a line between power and elegance. The terrific length reveals its potential. Best from 2026 through 2042.—B.S.

**94 Pomona Chianti Classico Riserva 2020 \$45** Intense aromas of rose, cherry, strawberry, wild herbs and tar are the hallmarks of this alluring red. As seductive as this is up front, there's a dense swath of tannins and vibrant acidity keeping it structured, focused and long. Shows excellent harmony and aftertaste. Drink now through 2040. 300 cases made, 100 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 Castello di Bossi Chianti Classico Castelnovo Berardenga Gran Selezione 2020 \$40** Notable for its purity, this red boasts cherry, raspberry, floral and mineral aromas and flavors. Solidly built, with lively acidity and raspy tannins that grip the finish. Tobacco and iron notes grace the aftertaste. Best from 2026 through 2039. 1,600 cases made, 500 cases imported.—B.S.

**92 Carpineta Fontalpino Chianti Classico Fontalpino 2022 \$30** The aromas and flavors of plum, blackberry and cherry reveal depth in this version, shaded by notes of earth, mineral and Tuscan scrub. There's ample heat in the balance, yet fine acidity, too. Balanced and long. Drink now through 2036. 3,400 cases made, 400 cases imported.—B.S.

**92 Pomona Chianti Classico 2021 \$30** Aromas and flavors of violet, raspberry and cherry signal this juicy, elegant Chianti Classico. Its supple texture gives way to powdery tannins in the end, where earth, iron and tobacco notes emerge. Perfumed and complex. Drink now through 2035. 1,600 cases made, 500 cases imported.—B.S.

**89 Castello di Albola Chianti Classico Riserva 2021 \$22** Breadth and richness characterize this cherry-, plum- and iron-flavored red. Firms up by the lightly astringent finish, which displays loam and tobacco notes. Best from 2026 through 2039. 2,500 cases made, 750 cases imported.—B.S.

**89 Cecchi Chianti Classico Storia di Famiglia 2022 \$25** Flavors of cherry, earth and tobacco are expressive in this red, supported by a dense, solid structure. This red is also fleshy, with lively acidity driving its long finish. Sangiovese and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2026 through 2035. 16,500 cases imported.—B.S.

**89 Simone Santini Chianti Colli Senesi Tenuta Le Calcinai 2023 \$21** Tangy cherry, pomegranate and blood orange highlight this sleek, elegant red. Flashes of earth and mineral add detail on the lingering finish. Drink now through 2028. 1,600 cases made, 50 cases imported.—B.S.

**88 Castello di Albola Chianti Classico 2022 \$16** See Best Values, page 90.

**87 Carpineto Chianti Castaldo 2022 \$15** Cherry, iron and earth flavors mark this juicy red. Balanced and open, with hints of wild herbs on the moderate finish. Drink now. 4,300 cases made, 1,900 cases imported.—B.S.

## ITALY Tuscany / Other

**96 Castello di Ama Toscana L'Apparita 2021 \$350** Expressive and racy, this red features cherry, black currant, violet, green olive, cedar, stone and sweet spice aromas and flavors. Vibrant and firm, with savory elements of Tuscan scrub. Needs time to shed its tannins, but the length reveals its potential. Best from 2027 through 2045. 950 cases made, 100 cases imported.—B.S.

**93 Fontodi Syrah Colli della Toscana Centrale Case Via 2021 \$84** Aromas and flavors of blackberry, boysenberry, plum, ink, graphite and sweet spices are the hallmarks of this dense yet polished red. Viscous in texture, this is also firmly structured, concentrated and persistent on the fruit- and spice-filled aftertaste. Drink now through 2032. 400 cases made, 70 cases imported.—B.S.



**90 Ridolfi Rosso di Montalcino 2022 \$35** There's purity to the cherry, raspberry and floral aromas and flavors. Silky and elegant, this red builds gracefully to the long aftertaste. Drink now through 2029. 1,600 cases made, 450 cases imported.—B.S.

**90 Terenzuola Vermentino Toscana White Vigne Basse 2023 \$27** Intense yet elegant, offering floral, peach, lemon and wild herb aromas and flavors. Supple and harmonious, leaving a mouthwatering, salty impression on the tangy finish. Drink now through 2028. 3,300 cases made, 2,500 cases imported.—B.S.

**89 Chiacchiera Rosso di Montepulciano 2022 \$24** Cherry, strawberry and earth flavors, plus a hint of chocolate, all mark this dense and vibrant red. Builds in intensity, with a succulent finish. Sangiovese, Mammolo and Canaiolo. Drink now through 2028. 1,300 cases made, 780 cases imported.—B.S.

**89 Collemassari Montecucco Riserva 2020 \$25** This is rich, full of plum, blackberry and earth flavors, with hints of iron. Dense tannins provide structure, and this finishes moderately long. Sangiovese, Ciliegiole and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2029. 15,000 cases made, 1,250 cases imported.—B.S.

**88 Carpineto Rosso di Montepulciano 2022 \$16** This red is bright and bursts with black cherry and blackberry flavors. Fluid, this picks up a light feel of dusty tannins on the moderate finish. Drink now through 2028. 4,000 cases made, 1,800 cases imported.—B.S.

## ITALY

### Veneto / Soave

**93 Prà Soave Classico Colle Sant'Antonio 2019 \$70** Brightly golden in the glass, this offers rich notes of dried pineapple, guava, crushed almond, honeycomb, broom and mountain herbs, all married to well-cut acidity and a fragrant overtone of mineral petrol. Long and mouthwatering on the salty finish. Drink now through 2034. 250 cases made.—A.N.

**92 Gini Soave Classico Contrada Salvarenza Vecchie Vigne 2021 \$49** A racy white, with a salty underpinning, opening in the glass to reveal notes of baked pineapple, candied grapefruit peel, lemon thyme and macadamia nut as they expand on the palate and through the lively finish. Drink now through 2031. 800 cases made, 100 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 Leonildo Pieropan Soave Classico La Rocca 2022 \$55** Fragrant notes of lime blossoms and spices waft through the layers of creamed apple, melon, lemon curd and toasted hazelnut on display in this bright and expressive white. This light- to medium-bodied version offers a plush creaminess on the palate that's reined in nicely by well-honed acidity. Drink now through 2030. 4,166 cases made, 616 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Gini Soave Classico La Frosca 2021 \$37** Juicy pineapple, blood orange peel and green almond flavors are enmeshed with sleek acidity, a streak of salinity, and chamomile and beeswax accents in this lightly fleshy, light- to medium-bodied white. Good length. Drink now through 2030. 1,650 cases made, 150 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Prà Soave Classico Monte Grande 2022 \$40** A sleek, mineral white, with hints of petrol and stone underscoring a range of grainy pear, persimmon and peach skin flavors defined by Meyer lemon peel-infused acidity. Accents of honeysuckle and thyme play on the finish. Drink now through 2030. 1,083 cases made.—A.N.

**90 Bertani Soave Classico Cav. Giov. Batt. Bertani 2022 \$32** A crisp, elegant white, offering a subtle, chalky underpinning enmeshed with delicate flavors of Honeycrisp apple, Anjou pear, blanched almond and white blossoms. Creamy finish. Drink now. 3,000 cases made, 350 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Prà Soave Classico Staforte 2022 \$30** Juicy flavors of ripe pineapple and kiwifruit are enlivened by tangerine and blood orange citrus notes in this bright, light-bodied white. Hints of lemon wax, fleur de sel and blanched almond through the finish add complexity to this refreshing sipper. Drink now. 1,500 cases made.—A.N.

**88 Leonildo Pieropan Soave Classico 2023 \$20** Delicate herbs and grapefruit pith accent silky pear, clementine and blanched almond notes in this lithe white, framed by snappy acidity. Garganega and Trebbiano. Drink now. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 50,000 cases made, 6,664 cases imported.—A.N.

## ITALY

### Other

**94 Elena Walch Alto Adige Beyond the Clouds 2022 \$114** A graceful white, with a sleek, poised feel to the interplay of vivid acidity and concentrated flavors of golden apple, pineapple and tangerine fruit, baking spices, spun honey and hazelnut. Aromatic and enticing, with jasmine and lime blossom notes wafting through the wine and on the salty, mineral-laced finish. Drink now through 2037. 1,200 cases made.—A.N.

**91 Cantine Lunae Bosoni Vermentino Colli di Luni-Liguria Black Label 2023 \$44** There's density and a mineral streak in this white, along with kumquat, lemon, wild thyme and stone flavors. Subtle yet intense, with a long, mineral aftertaste. Drink now through 2029. 8,500 cases made, 750 cases imported.—B.S.

**91 Peter Zemmer Chardonnay Alto Adige Buchholz 2023 \$37** This round and creamy white is defined by a well-cut spine of acidity, offering a harmonious range of glazed apple and nectarine fruit, with hints of lemon curd, vanilla and hazelnut. Savory touches of mountain herbs and stone-tinged minerality show on the finish. Drink now through 2030. 500 cases made, 150 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Cantina Andriano Pinot Bianco Alto Adige Finado 2023 \$22** A refreshing, bright, light-bodied white, with focus and integration to the appealing mix of Honeycrisp apple, honeysuckle, pink grapefruit pith and blanched almond flavors. Ends with a zesty finish, with a tang of salinity. Drink now. 3,750 cases made, 575 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Les Crêtes Petite Arvine Valle d'Aosta 2023 \$30** Peach, apple and bitter citrus flavors work with the bright acidity to achieve personality and harmony in this juicy white, whose texture verges on oily. Finishes long. Drink now. 3,300 cases made, 600 cases imported.—B.S.

**90 Cantine Lunae Bosoni Vermentino Colli di Luni-Liguria Grey Label 2023 \$28** See Smart Buys, page 89.

## SOUTH AFRICA

### Cabernet Sauvignon & Blends

**94 Reyneke Cabernet Sauvignon Stellenbosch 2019 \$136** A dark, brooding red, with a firm structure supporting an appealing range of blackberry paste and cassis fruit. Black licorice, wild sage, charcoal and cocoa powder accents linger on the focused finish. Best from 2027 through 2039. 270 cases made, 5 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 Meerlust Rubicon Stellenbosch 2020 \$47** A fragrant red, with dried mint, bay leaf and cigar box notes wafting through the ripe black currant, hot stone and apple wood smoke. This is long and well-meshed, layering the creamy profile with sculpted tannins and balsamico acidity. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2035. 10,000 cases made, 1,538 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Delaire Graff Botmaskop Stellenbosch 2020 \$30** A sleek red, with creamy tannins defining dark, juicy boysenberry and black currant fruit that shows good length. Accents of cigar box spices, tobacco and graphite linger on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, Merlot and Malbec. Drink now through 2030. 3,500 cases made, 400 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Glenelly Estate Reserve Stellenbosch 2017 \$25** See Smart Buys, page 89.

**89 Cederberg Cabernet Sauvignon Cederberg 2019 \$29** Lightly chewy and fresh, this medium-bodied version offers cassis and baked black plum flavors accented by mocha, bay leaf and toast notes. Well-balanced. Drink now. 700 cases made, 300 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Meerlust Stellenbosch 2020 \$19** Light, creamy tannins frame flavors of ripe black raspberry, dried cranberry, smoke and forest floor in this lightly chewy, medium-bodied red. Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot and Petit Verdot. Drink now. 9,500 cases made, 1,558 cases imported.—A.N.





## SOUTH AFRICA

### Chenin Blanc

#### 94 Mullineux Chenin Blanc Swartland Schist Roundstone 2022 \$90

A lovely white that waltzes across your palate, building layers of baked apricot and melon fruit, citrus cream, heather, warm spice and biscuit flavors without missing a step. There's some pleasing, fleshy weight on the palate, buoyed nicely by bright acidity and salty minerality. Drink now through 2032. 215 cases made, 23 cases imported.—A.N.



ANDREA MULLINEUX  
Co-owner & Winemaker

**93 David & Nadia Chenin Blanc Swartland Skaliekop 2021 \$100** Mineral and mountain herb notes lace the nose of this vivid white. Racy acidity hones flavors of bergamot oil, blood orange peel, poached pear and salted almond, plus a touch of toasted brioche, as they expand on the lasting finish. Drink now through 2035. 8 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 David & Nadia Chenin Blanc Swartland Hoë-Steen 2021 \$100** Flavors of honeyed apple and blanched almond are lightly spiced, with cardamom and ginger accents, while a salty underpinning and well-cut acidity keep this creamy white fresh and focused. There's a nice interplay on the lingering finish, with brioche and tangy citrus peel notes. Drink now through 2031. 8 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 David & Nadia Chenin Blanc Swartland Plat'bos 2021 \$100** There's well-tailored structure to this harmonious white, with a bit of breadth to the creamed apple, tangy tangerine peel, heather, green almond and ginger biscuit notes. But this retains a limber feel and vibrancy, with a streak of salinity defining the mouthwatering finish. Drink now through 2031. 10 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 Mullineux Chenin Blanc Swartland Granite Eikelaan 2022 \$90** A vibrant, graceful white, this features nectarine and raspberry fruit flavors accented by notes of blood orange sorbet, salted green almond, chamomile and pickled ginger. Long and lightly chalky on the finish. Drink now through 2030. 405 cases made, 25 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 David & Nadia Chenin Blanc Swartland 2022 \$40** An elegant white, seamlessly knitting well-cut acidity and a lightly chalky texture with flavors of Gala apple, white raspberry, chamomile and grapefruit peel. There's an underlying streak of salinity that drives the lightly mouthwatering finish. Drink now through 2030. 75 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Reyneke Chenin Blanc Stellenbosch Bio-dynamic 2023 \$35** A bit reductive at first, leading with subtle smoke and toast notes but then opening nicely in the glass to reveal flavors of poached apricot and persimmon, ground ginger and orange curd set on the silky texture and driven by racy acidity. Salty finish. Drink now through 2030. 815 cases made, 50 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Great Heart Chenin Blanc Swartland 2021 \$27** Bright and balanced, with an overtone of white blossoms and lemon thyme to the nectarine, blood orange and green almond flavors. Drink now through 2028. 56 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Mullineux Chenin Blanc Swartland Kloof Street Old Vine 2022 \$23** Bright and expressive, with an appealing range of pineapple, kiwifruit, tangerine peel, Marcona almond and ginger biscuit flavors. Well-cut, with herb, spice and mineral notes on the zesty finish. Drink now through 2028. 4,750 cases made, 1,576 cases imported.—A.N.

**87 Ken Forrester Chenin Blanc Western Cape Petit 2023 \$15** Ripe and juicy pear, tangerine and passion fruit flavors are set on the palate of this lively, light-bodied white. Zesty finish. Drink now. 9,090 cases made, 500 cases imported.—A.N.

## SOUTH AFRICA

### Pinotage & Blends

**92 Beeslaar Pinotage Stellenbosch 2020 \$64** A well-tailored red, with good tension and definition from the bright acidity and taut, fine-grained tannins. This shows focus and integration, offering a lovely range of black raspberry coulis, blackberry paste, fragrant forest floor and loamy earth, licorice, violet, espresso and graphite notes. Long and plush on the mouthwatering finish. Drink now through 2035. 1,125 cases made, 175 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 David & Nadia Pinotage Swartland 2022 \$27** A mouthwatering red, sleek and well-knit, with light, taut tannins, plus hints of violet, blood orange peel and anise accenting a core of black plum and cherry fruit flavors. Drink now through 2032. 84 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Southern Right Pinotage Cape Coast 2022 \$35** A vibrant red, with a core of ripe mulberry, raspberry and boysenberry fruit flavors. Light, supple tannins and lively acidity provide fine definition for the medium-bodied frame, and notes of violet, thyme, anise and iron linger on the finish. Drink now through 2030. 3,075 cases made, 880 cases imported.—A.N.

**89 Kanonkop Pinotage Stellenbosch Kadette 2022 \$22** A well-balanced, medium-bodied red, with crushed black raspberry and boysenberry fruit flavors enmeshed with lightly chewy tannins, plus notes of wet stone, iron, and dried flowers and herbs. Drink now. 40,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Kanonkop Kadette Cape Blend Stellenbosch 2021 \$19** A brambly red, with wild herb, smoke and ground coffee notes accenting a creamy mix of crushed cherry and plum fruit, red licorice and milled pepper flavors. Chewy finish. Pinotage, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Drink now. 125,000 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Lievland Pinotage Paarl Bushvine 2022 \$19** A waft of tarry smoke underscores flavors of raspberry preserves, roasted plum and dried thyme in this light- to medium-bodied red, with lively acidity and light tannins. Drink now. 3,350 cases made, 750 cases imported.—A.N.

## SOUTH AFRICA

### Other

**96 Duncan Savage Stellenbosch 2021 \$57** There's a racy edge to this solid red, animating the focused core of black raspberry and damson plum fruit, mountain herbs, mineral and white pepper. Long and harmonious, with sculpted tannins providing fine definition as the profile expands nicely on the palate and through the lasting finish. Drink now through 2041. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 1,096 cases made, 75 cases imported.—A.N.

**94 Damascene Syrah Stellenbosch 2022 \$60** Raspberry linzer torte and plum compote flavors are warm and enticing, balanced nicely by a mineral, iron-laced underpinning and detailed notes of wild sage and white pepper. This well-balanced red is fresh and appealing, with fine tannins defining the persistent finish. Drink now through 2037. 550 cases made, 35 cases imported.—A.N.

**92 Capensis Chardonnay Stellenbosch Fijnbosch 2019 \$170** Fresh hay and honey notes are an aromatic entry point for this vibrant white, with a broad feel to the creamy layers of golden apple, hazelnut, pickled ginger and mineral. Long and mouthwatering on the well-cut finish. Drink now through 2032. 125 cases made.—A.N.

**92 Crystallum Pinot Noir Western Cape Peter Max 2021 \$40** A mineral red, medium-bodied and fresh, with macerated plum and raspberry fruit showing good length and integration with taut, silky-textured tannins. Accents of dried dill, anise hyssop, wet stone and paprika linger through the finish. Drink now through 2031. 100 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Capensis Chardonnay Stellenbosch Silene 2021 \$40** There's a pleasing juiciness to the Gala apple, tangerine and guava flavors, which are svelte and refreshing on the palate. Light- to medium-bodied and lightly spiced, with hints of talc, white blossoms and pink grapefruit pith on the finish. Drink now through 2030. 1,250 cases made, 577 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Damascene Cabernet Franc Stellenbosch 2022 \$60** Fragrant, with bay leaf and peach skin playing off ripe black and red raspberry fruit. Medium-bodied and fresh, integrating supple tannins and a zesty underpinning of mineral and milled pepper notes. Drink now through 2030. 249 cases made, 25 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Delaire Graff Chardonnay Banghoek 2022 \$43** A fresh, focused Chardonnay, with a flattering, toasty edge to flavors of creamed apple, tangerine, vanilla and smoke that gain momentum through the vibrant, spiced finish. Drink now through 2030. 2,300 cases made, 100 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 De Wetshof Chardonnay Robertson Bon Vallon 2023 \$25** Well-balanced and fresh, with a svelte feel to the layers of yellow apple and pear fruit, blood orange granita and slivered almond, plus a touch of salty mineral. Drink now through 2028. 4,000 cases made, 500 cases imported.—A.N.

## SPAIN

### Red

**94 Viñedos de Párganos Rioja El Puntido Gran Reserva 2012 \$120** There's a rich, saturated feel to the cassis and black cherry fruit in this integrated red, accented by fragrant mocha, mountain herb, tarry mineral and milled pepper notes. Framed by fine-grained, muscular tannins and lively orange peel acidity, this is focused and well-structured, with its creamy texture carrying the profile on the long, long finish. Drink now through 2036. 2,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—A.N.

**93 Marea Alicante Sylarion 2022 \$140** An elegant red, offering concentrated flavors of blackberry paste, crème de cassis, espresso crema, dried mint, ground anise and cracked pink peppercorn. Expands nicely on the palate, revealing additional layers of smoke and loamy earth trimmed nicely by the tang of plum skin-infused acidity and firm tannins, with a limber, well-knit feel. Long and fragrant on the finish. Drink now through 2037. 210 cases made, 105 cases imported.—A.N.

**93 Señorío de San Vicente Rioja 2020 \$80** There's a sense of poise to this harmonious red, with creamy tannins well-meshed with a lovely range of plum sauce, ripe black cherry, tea leaf, anise and white pepper. Fresh and focused, with a lingering finish. Drink now through 2035. 4,000 cases made, 750 cases imported.—A.N.

**93 Bodegas Sierra Cantabria Rioja Gran Reserva 2016 \$50** A lovely red, with weight and concentration to the creamed black cherry, plum skin, mineral, lavender and herb notes, plus fine, sculpted tannins. This also shows a sense of poise and fluid grace. Long and fragrant on the lightly spiced finish. Tempranillo and Graciano. Drink now through 2036. 3,500 cases made, 1,500 cases imported.—A.N.



MARCOS EGUREN & MIGUEL EGUREN  
Owners & Winemakers



**92 Bodegas Ramírez Rioja Ramírez de la Piscina Selección Reserva 2020 \$40** Up front there's a compact feel to this firm red but also a sense of balance and integration. Opens in the glass, revealing a fragrant overtone of dried flowers, eucalyptus, star anise and mocha, with flavors of plumped cherry and baked plum that linger on the finish. Best from 2026 through 2035. 1,000 cases made, 300 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 CVNE Rioja Viña Real Reserva 2019 \$37** Lively and light on its feet, but with good focus to the ripe red currant, black cherry, black tea and mineral notes. Fresh and chewy through the finish, which shows a sweet hint of sassafras root. Tempranillo, Garnacha, Mazuelo and Graciano. Best from 2026 through 2031. 15,000 cases made, 3,000 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Bodegas Valdemar Rioja Conde Valdemar Gran Reserva 2017 \$45** There's a sanguine edge to this lively red, which features flavors of plumped cherry and raspberry fruit accented by iron, grilled herbs, mandarin orange peel and smoke. Firm tannins are fine-grained and well-meshed as they emerge on the chewy finish. Tempranillo, Graciano, Maturana Tinta and Garnacha. Drink now through 2030. 7,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Bodegas Altanza Rioja Familia Reserva 2019 \$32** Sun-dried cherry and strawberry fruit is concentrated and juicy in this lively red, layered with light, limber tannins and accents of woody spices, dried marjoram, violet, smoke and mandarin orange peel. Silky finish. Drink now through 2030. 2,943 cases made, 195 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Bodega Matarromera Ribera del Duero Crianza 2020 \$35** This lively red shows lovely balance, offering a core of plum sauce and mulberry fruit, with an underpinning of mineral and spice notes. Hints of leather, cocoa powder and dried herbs add detail, and lightly chalky tannins emerge to firm the finish. Drink now through 2030. 75,000 cases made, 2,884 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Bodegas Altanza Rioja Crianza 2021 \$20** Fresh and balanced, with a core of ripe black cherry fruit trimmed by light, crisp tannins. Alluring accents of violet, mocha, sage and anise show through the fragrant finish. Drink now. 36,667 cases made, 4,500 cases imported.—A.N.

## SPAIN

### White & Sparkling

**92 Viñedos del Contino Rioja White San Gregorio 2021 \$54** A sleek, graceful white, with well-honed acidity defining a rich range of quince paste and dried apricot flavors. Offers vanilla, petrol and dried mint accents through the persistent, spiced finish. Drink now through 2031. 1,298 cases made, 400 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Quinta Couselo Albariño Rias Baixas Turonia 2023 \$33** Crackles with salinity and acidity, offering a vibrant frame for flavors of tangerine, passion fruit and pear. Well-knit and fluid on the palate, with appealing details of grapefruit peel, chamomile and ground ginger accenting the core of fruit and lingering through the finish. Drink now through 2028. 3,000 cases made, 900 cases imported.—A.N.

**91 Bodegas Vatan Verdejo Rueda Nisia Las Suertes Old Vines 2023 \$45** A well-honed white, crackling with salinity and acidity, this offers finely meshed layers of poached quince, preserved lemon, raw almond and thyme. Racy finish. Drink now through 2030. 2,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—A.N.

**90 Quinta Couselo Rias Baixas Rosal 2023 \$33** A core of nectarine and pear fruit is accented by notes of blood orange sorbet, honeysuckle and Marcona almond in this bright and juicy white, which is tangy on the mineral finish. Albariño, Caiño and Loureiro. Drink now through 2028. 7,000 cases made, 240 cases imported.—A.N.

**89 El Cep Brut Rosé Pinot Noir Cava Gelida Reserva 2021 \$24** A crisp, linear rosé, with a delicate mesh of white cherry, pink grapefruit zest, blood orange sorbet and white blossoms riding the fine, lively mousse. Drink now. 2,500 cases made, 750 cases imported.—A.N.

**89 Lagar de Fornelos Rias Baixas O'Rosal Pazo d Seoane 2023 \$27** A fresh, open-knit white, with well-cut acidity and a swathe of salinity defining flavors of crunchy pineapple and white peach fruit, cucumber and delicate herbs. Crisp finish. Albariño, Loureiro, Caiño and Treixadura. Drink now. 4,000 cases made, 500 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 El Cep Brut Cava Gelida Gran Reserva 2019 \$24** Crisp and mineral, offering a lacy mousse and a snappy mix of crunchy pear and white peach fruit, with accents of pickled ginger, lemon pith and white blossoms. Salty. Xarel-lo, Macabeo, Parellada and Chardonnay. Drink now. 10,000 cases made, 6,000 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 El Cep Brut Nature Blanc de Blancs Cava Gelida Gran Reserva 2019 \$24** A refreshing sparkler, featuring flavors of crunchy pear, pomelo, pickled ginger and blanched almond that are framed by crisp acidity and a fine, lively mousse. Xarel-lo, Macabeo, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Drink now. 4,000 cases made, 1,500 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Pazo Cilleiro Albariño Rias Baixas 2023 \$24** A juicy white, with green almond, fig, peach skin and pink grapefruit pith notes, plus light herb accents driven by lively acidity and a salty tang. Drink now. 13,000 cases made, 3,400 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Edetària Garnatxa Blanca Terra Alta Via Edetana 2023 \$21** This svelte and balanced white has just the right amount of flesh to carry its flavors of poached pear, Meyer lemon peel, almond skin and lanolin, ending with a fresh finish. Drink now. 3,750 cases made, 1,350 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Lagar de Fornelos Albariño Rias Baixas Lagar de Cervera 2023 \$27** A sleek, zesty white, with fresh herb, floral and citrus peel accents lacing the crunchy white peach, golden apple, mineral saline and stone notes. Drink now. 20,000 cases made, 3,500 cases imported.—A.N.

**88 Bodegas Terras Gauda Rias Baixas O Rosal 2023 \$24** A bright, light-bodied white, with a lightly fleshy and appealing profile of pineapple, blood orange, ginger biscuit and white blossom notes. Albariño, Caiño and Loureiro. Drink now. 3,712 cases imported.—A.N.

**87 Sierra Norte Verdejo-Macabeo Utiel-Requena Mariluna 2023 \$15** This light-bodied and lively white features snappy acidity and a tangy streak of salinity, offering notes of ripe green pear, lemon pith and fresh tarragon on the lightly chalky texture. Verdejo and Macabeo. Drink now. 30,000 cases made, 5,000 cases imported.—A.N.

## United States

## CALIFORNIA

### Cabernet Sauvignon & Blends

**95 Eisele Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2021 \$550** This is ripe, but with subtle refinement, as the gently mulled plum, currant and black cherry fruit glides along, with a structure that is both silky and loamy in feel. Hints of warm paving stone, alder and sweet tobacco check in, with a sanguine echo at the tail end of the finish. A seductive Cabernet. Best from 2026 through 2040. 1,180 cases made.—J.M.

**94 Joseph Phelps Insignia Napa Valley 2021 \$365** Singed alder and sweet tobacco lead off, backed by waves of lush warmed cassis and plum reduction. Notes of chestnut and warm earth help drive the finish. Burly

and muscular now, but the core of fruit shows inner purity. This will need some time. Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot, Malbec and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2028 through 2041. 16,600 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Eisele Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Altagracia 2021 \$150** A dark, smoldering style, with currant and fig paste flavors liberally laced with alder, walnut husk, loam and bittersweet cocoa, all while keeping a sense of polish along the edges. Best from 2026 through 2038. 1,470 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Louis M. Martini Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Cypress Ranch Vineyard 2021 \$125** Offers a broad, fleshy feel, with a big wave of warmed cassis, steeped plum and sweet tobacco rolling through, flanked by alder, menthol and espresso crema accents. Not shy with the toast on the finish; for fans of the style. Best from 2026 through 2038. 775 cases made.—J.M.

**93 Saint Helena Winery Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Sympa 2021 \$160** An enticing, juicy version, offering a vibrant mix of boysenberry, blackberry and black currant preserves laced with anise, briar and sweet tobacco notes. The finish pulses with fruit, making this hard to resist right now. Drink now through 2036. 550 cases made.—J.M.

## CALIFORNIA

### Chardonnay

**94 Aubert Chardonnay Russian River Valley Eastside 2022 \$100** Lush, complex and stylish, with notes of quince, grilled pineapple, peach preserves, lemon blossoms, toasted and salted hazelnut, marmalade, cardamom and preserved ginger, plus a fresh thread of acidity that weaves in and out. Drink now through 2034. 1,394 cases made.—M.W.

**94 Hartford Court Chardonnay Mendocino Ridge DuPratt Vineyard 2022 \$75** An impressive version, offering a firm and compact mix of peach, tangerine, mango and grilled Meyer lemon flavors, with details of salted butter-scotch, orange blossoms and white tea that expand on the finish, which is long, broad and fresh. Drink now. 101 cases made.—M.W.



DON HARTFORD & MACLEAN HARTFORD  
Co-owners

**93 Croix Chardonnay Russian River Valley Narrow Gauge 2022 \$50** Plump pear, apple custard and vanilla anglaise flavors are rich and bold, with notes of toasted brioche, marzipan and roasted almond, plus a touch of butterscotch on the long, lingering finish. Drink now through 2033. 375 cases made.—M.W.

**93 Lando Chardonnay Russian River Valley Halo Proprietary Blend 2022 \$55** Toasty and spicy up front, bringing warm notes of clove and nutmeg to complement the apple cobbler, grilled peach, lemon curd and poached pear. Hints of marmalade and toasted, salted hazelnut linger on the finish. A powerful wine, with elegant acidity. Drink now. 180 cases made.—M.W.

**93 Rhys Chardonnay Anderson Valley Bearwallow Vineyard 2022 \$97** This stylish white has a crisp, mouthwatering frame and intense flavors of apple, lemon and tangerine, with a hint of sea salt crunchiness and herbal accents of lemon verbena and green tea. Sleek and smooth on the long finish. Drink now. 297 cases made.—M.W.

**92 Lando Chardonnay Russian River Valley Heintz Vineyard 2022 \$55** A distinctive version, with a pretty floral overtone of orange blossoms and lemon balm, along with a mineral overtone of sea salt to the ripe melon, peach and pear flavors. Firm and fleshy, offering mouthwatering acidity that keeps the flavors fresh on the finish. Drink now. 72 cases made.—M.W.



**92 Rhys Chardonnay Anderson Valley 2022 \$50** A sleek and defined mix of white flowers, peach, apple and poached pear is fresh and elegant, with grace notes of ginger, plus a laser beam of focus on the long, expressive finish. Drink now. 448 cases made.—M.W.

**90 Horse & Plow Chardonnay Mendocino 2022 \$29** Firm and fresh, with peach, yellow apple and Asian pear flavors set on a frame bursting with acidity. Shows a toasted almond detail and a hint of salted butter on the finish. Drink now. 250 cases made.—M.W.

**90 La Crema Chardonnay Russian River Valley 2022 \$35** Peach cobbler, vanilla cream and mango flavors are generous and complemented by a note of salted butterscotch, with a thread of acidity on a juicy frame, plus lingering details of nutmeg and ginger. Drink now. 29,855 cases made.—M.W.

**90 Wente Chardonnay Central Coast Morning Fog 2023 \$18** See Best Values, page 90.

**87 Accolade Chardonnay California Dolly 2023 \$15** A charming version, with a plump mix of ripe peach, Crenshaw melon and dried mango flavors that are juicy and fresh, plus hints of candied ginger and spices that linger on the finish. Drink now. 40,000 cases made.—M.W.

**87 Franciscan Chardonnay California 2022 \$15** Peach, dried apricot and crisp apple flavors are focused and bring snappy acidity. There are hints of pineapple and lemon zest on the finish, along with a hint of green tea. Drink now. 24,000 cases made.—M.W.

**87 Husch Chardonnay Mendocino 2022 \$18** Balanced and appealing, with lemon, pear and apple flavors that mingle with buttery shortbread notes, plus a hint of toast. Shows spice and fresh floral accents, with firm acidity. Drink now. 10,000 cases made.—M.W.

## CALIFORNIA Sauvignon Blanc

**94 Quivira Sauvignon Blanc Dry Creek Valley Fig Tree Vineyard 2022 \$32** See Smart Buys, page 88.

**93 Quivira Sauvignon Blanc Dry Creek Valley 2022 \$20** Distinctive and fragrant, offering lemongrass, lemon verbena and sweetgrass notes that complement the Meyer lemon, yuzu and apple flavors at the core. Whiffs of honeysuckle, orange zest, litsea oil and candied ginger linger on the long, expressive finish. Drink now. 5,602 cases made.—M.W.



HUGH CHAPPELLE  
Winemaker

**92 Dry Creek Sauvignon Blanc Dry Creek Valley 2023 \$25** This offers a sleek, mouthwatering and crisp mix of Meyer lemon, Sumo orange, fresh ginger and lemon balm, with whiffs of lemon thyme, lemon curd and crunchy sea salt. Gains intensity on the finish, with plenty of momentum and style. Drink now. 18,950 cases made.—M.W.

**91 Saracina Sauvignon Blanc Mendocino County 2023 \$24** See Smart Buys, page 89.

**90 Beltane Ranch Sauvignon Blanc Sonoma Valley Drummond Block 2023 \$34** Pineapple, mango and peach flavors are plump and juicy, with notes of candied orange peel, orange blossoms and fresh ginger on a crisp, mouthwatering frame. Drink now. 450 cases made.—M.W.

**90 Husch Sauvignon Blanc Mendocino 2023 \$18** Vibrant and intense, offering a grassy mix of lemongrass, with notes of lemongrass, lemon balm and yuzu, all on a sleek frame. Mouthwatering finish. Drink now. 11,225 cases made.—M.W.

**90 Kokomo Sauvignon Blanc Dry Creek Valley Timber Crest Vineyard 2023 \$28** Appealing for its generosity, with vibrant flavors of lemon, lime and pomelo, plus ginger, white pepper and sea salt accents. Shows fresh herb and white flower notes, with a juicy and mouthwatering acidity that lingers on the finish. Drink now. 1,000 cases made.—M.W.

## CALIFORNIA Other

**93 Dehlinger Pinot Noir Russian River Valley High Plains 2021 \$80** An expressive version, with a pure and unadulterated beam of mulberry and cherry puree that streams through. The silky structure shows tensile strength as this sports a vibrant hibiscus edge through the streamlined finish. Lovely. Drink now through 2032. 200 cases made.—J.M.

**92 Tablas Creek Syrah Adelaida District 2022 \$55** Rather silky in feel, this opens with lavender and loam details. The Santa Rosa plum core is laden with baking spice accents, while a good amount of mineral acidity lends tension. Drink now through 2032. 630 cases made.—A.R.

**91 Clif Family Viognier Napa Valley 2023 \$42** A restrained version, where purity and elegance lead. Offers nectarine and lime aromas and flavors laced with marzipan and clove notes that linger on the slightly refreshing finish. Drink now through 2028. 690 cases made.—A.R.

**91 Tablas Creek Côtes de Tablas Blanc Adelaida District 2023 \$40** This is engaging for its spicy, floral and peach entry, with a thread of green tea running through the plush, textured core of Meyer lemon and peach. Balances elegance with a gentle push of acidity that lifts the flavors onto the finish. Viognier, Marsanne, Grenache Blanc, Roussanne and Clairette Blanche. Drink now through 2028. 1,300 cases made.—A.R.



NEIL COLLINS  
Winemaker

**90 Ridge Grenache Blanc Paso Robles 2023 \$35** Vivacious and floral, with expressive flavors of lime, nectarine and lemon blossoms framed with silky acidity. Drink now. 4,500 cases made.—T.F.

**88 Cline Mourvèdre Contra Costa County Ancient Vines 2022 \$16** Zesty and jammed with fresh pepper, plus accents of dried cherry and smoky meat as this moves toward snappy tannins. Drink now through 2030. 3,500 cases made.—T.F.

**88 Hahn GSM Appellation Series Arroyo Seco 2022 \$18** Supple and easygoing, with appealing flavors of cranberry, cherry, grilled herbs and smoked pepper. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2029. 2,400 cases made.—T.F.

## OREGON Pinot Noir

**94 Penner-Ash Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2022 \$60** Capturing the essence of Willamette Valley, this Pinot is elegantly structured and vibrant with acidity yet plush and polished. Flavors of raspberry and cherry are accented by orange peel, floral tea and spices as this glides along the vibrant finish. Drink now through 2032. 10,589 cases made.—T.F.

**94 Penner-Ash Pinot Noir Yamhill-Carlton Estate Vineyard 2022 \$80** Grabs you immediately with its supple texture as this opens to bright and elegant flavors of raspberry and cherry. Draws in orange peel, for-

est floor and cinnamon accents that sail toward polished tannins. Drink now through 2032. 1,179 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Björnson Pinot Noir Eola-Amity Hills Isabel 2022 \$62** Graceful yet multilayered, with tart and supple raspberry and cherry flavors accented with green tea, forest floor and dusky spices as this gathers tension toward refined tannins. Drink now through 2032. 325 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Elizabeth Chambers Pinot Noir Yamhill-Carlton Lazy River Vineyard 2022 \$55** Supple and richly structured, with handsome flavors of raspberry and cherry that take on cinnamon, rose petal and toasty spice accents as this glides on the velvety finish. Drink now through 2032. 150 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Nicolas-Jay Pinot Noir Eola-Amity Hills Temperance Hill 2022 \$100** An intensely structured version, with chiseled acidity and minerality framed by brooding flavors of raspberry and guava, all highlighted by forest floor, cardamom and other dusky spices that gather tension toward broad-shouldered tannins. Hands off for now. Drink now through 2032. 97 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Penner-Ash Pinot Noir Yamhill-Carlton Shea Vineyard 2022 \$90** Keenly structured and tightly focused but polished, with cherry and pomegranate flavors accented by forest floor and dusky spices as this builds tension toward fine-grained tannins. Drink now through 2033. 524 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Van Duzer Pinot Noir Van Duzer Corridor Elemental Reserve 2021 \$65** Richly layered and detailed, with lilting blackberry and blueberry flavors laced with mint, mocha and dark spices as this builds tension toward medium-bodied tannins. Drink now through 2032. 444 cases made.—T.F.

**92 Björnson Pinot Noir Eola-Amity Hills Reserve 2022 \$50** Tight with tension, this Pinot offers a lively backbone of acidity and tannins that's framed by blueberry, raspberry, forest floor and dusky spice flavors. Finishes with broad-shouldered tannins. Drink now through 2032. 640 cases made.—T.F.



PATTIE & MARK  
BJÖRNSON  
Owners & Winemakers

**91 Elizabeth Chambers Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2023 \$36** Refined and handsomely focused, with medium-bodied flavors of cherry and red plum that take on accents of dusky spices, rose petal and forest floor. Finishes with medium-grained tannins. Drink now through 2032. 823 cases made.—T.F.

**91 WillaKenzie Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2022 \$45** Sleek and elegantly structured, this red offers pretty accents of raspberry, rose petal and orange peel that end on a note of dusky spices. Drink now through 2032. 6,885 cases made.—T.F.

**90 Cardwell Hill Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2023 \$28** Bright and vivid, offering lively acidity framed by cherry, cranberry and cinnamon flavors that zip along the snappy finish. Drink now through 2032. 968 cases made.—T.F.

**90 Cardwell Hill Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Reserve 2021 \$40** Tart and snappy, this red features medium-bodied flavors of cranberry and cherry highlighted by orange peel and green tea. Drink now through 2031. 755 cases made.—T.F.

**89 Stoller Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2023 \$25** A snappy and vibrant Pinot, offering fresh cherry and pomegranate flavors accented by green tea as this zips along the bright finish. Drink now through 2032. 15,000 cases made.—T.F.



## WASHINGTON

**95 Passing Time Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain 2022 \$110** Impeccably structured and detailed, with expressive flavors of blackberry and cherry highlighted by mocha espresso and toasty spices as this builds richness toward polished tannins. Drink now through 2033. 325 cases made.—T.F.

**95 Quilceda Creek Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2021 \$250** Polished and well-proportioned, with medium-bodied flavors of blackberry and cherry that take on accents of bitter mocha and bell pepper before finishing with medium-grained tannins. Drink now through 2034. 5,460 cases made.—T.F.

**94 Betz Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Heart of the Hill 2021 \$135** Dynamic and detailed, showing expressive flavors of black cherry and blackberry that take on fresh violet, roasted sage and stony mineral accents as this gathers richness toward fine-grained tannins. Drink now through 2033. 275 cases made.—T.F.

**94 Canvasback Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Klipsun Vineyard 2021 \$76** Polished and handsomely built, this Cabernet serves up rich blackberry and cherry flavors accented by toasty mocha and savory herbs. Persists toward big but refined tannins. Best from 2026 through 2033. 240 cases made.—T.F.

**94 The Walls Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Curiositas 2022 \$80** Broad-shouldered and deeply structured, with a vibrant core of tannins and acidity framed by black currant, licorice and black olive flavors that gather tension and richness toward firm tannins. Needs time. Best from 2026 through 2033. 415 cases made.—T.F.

**94 The Walls Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley Bellamy 2022 \$80** Tightly structured at the core but offers a polished veneer that opens to rich blackberry, black olive and savory meat flavors as they build tension toward broad-shouldered tannins. Drink now through 2032. 390 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Abeja Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2021 \$68** Refined and attractively structured, with expressive black cherry and currant flavors laced with tobacco and cedar hints as this finishes with fine-grained tannins. Drink now through 2031. 4,216 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Bookwalter Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Foreshadow 2022 \$50** Vibrant and richly structured, with deep black cherry and cassis flavors that take on accents of cayenne and grilled anise, ending with broad-shouldered tannins. Drink now through 2032. 4,914 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Canvasback Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Grand Passage 2021 \$90** This version is dark and potent but retains a sense of refinement, with rich blackberry, licorice, clove and toasty spice flavors that gather tension toward broad-shouldered tannins. Best from 2026 through 2033. 640 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Canvasback Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Longwinds Vineyard 2021 \$76** Rather brawny yet retains a sense of style and focus, with concentrated currant, bitter chocolate and black olive flavors that persist toward firm tannins. Best from 2026 through 2033. 240 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Efeeste Cabernet Sauvignon White Bluffs Big Papa 2022 \$70** Well-sculpted and seductive in texture, this red shows expressive cherry flavors that are laced with mint and bramble. Finishes with polished tannins. Drink now through 2032. 1,180 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Fielding Hills Cabernet Sauvignon Wahluke Slope Riverbend Vineyard 2021 \$50** Precise and expressive, delivering rich black cherry and red currant flavors laced with coffee bean and licorice. Finishes with fine-grained tannins. Drink now through 2032. 425 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Gorman Cabernet Sauvignon Red Mountain Old Scratch 2022 \$35** A red with richness and stamina, this is jammed with intensity and flavor, offering blackberry, cherry, grilled herb and green olive flavors that build tension toward broad-shouldered tannins. Drink now through 2033. 2,200 cases made.—T.F.

**93 L'Ecole No. 41 Ferguson Vineyard Walla Walla Valley 2021 \$75** Polish meets deep structure in this red, which offers generous blackberry and cherry flavors framed by mocha espresso and toasty spices while building richness on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2033. 1,400 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Mark Ryan Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley The Dissident 2022 \$45** Polished yet brooding at the core, with potent blackberry and cherry pie flavors that are laced with cinnamon, licorice and spices, finishing with fine-grained tannins. Drink now through 2032. 4,353 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Mullan Road Cabernet Sauvignon Royal Slope 2021 \$48** Keenly structured and generous in texture, this red offers lilted flavors of black cherry, mocha and cinnamon spices that sail toward polished tannins. Drink now through 2031. 1,000 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Passing Time Columbia Valley 2022 \$65** Handsomely structured and richly detailed, this red offers black currant, licorice and black olive flavors that gather tension toward medium-grained tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2032. 545 cases made.—T.F.

**93 Sleight of Hand The Archimage Reserve Columbia Valley 2021 \$65** Expressive and finely detailed, with handsome flavors of cherry and blueberry accented with espresso and fresh anise as this builds richness toward refined tannins. Cabernet Franc and Merlot. Drink now through 2031. 700 cases made.—T.F.

**92 Avennia Gravura Columbia Valley 2022 \$45** Attractively structured, this red offers medium-bodied cherry and currant flavors that are laced with tobacco and dusky spices, finishing with fine-grained tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2032. 765 cases made.—T.F.

**92 Browne Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Heritage 2022 \$20** See Smart Buys, page 89.

**92 Echolands Rubrum Walla Walla Valley 2021 \$42** This version is precise and well-knit, featuring elegantly layered currant and black cherry flavors accented with cedar, forest floor and tobacco notes that linger toward refined tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2031. 892 cases made.—T.F.

**92 Gorman Zachary's Ladder Red Mountain 2022 \$40** Deeply structured yet polished, with expressive flavors of blackberry, licorice, black olive and savory herbs that build intensity toward medium-grained tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2032. 1,200 cases made.—T.F.

**92 L'Ecole No. 41 Apogee Pepper Bridge Vineyard Walla Walla Valley 2021 \$60** Tightly focused and sturdy of build, this offers black currant and tobacco notes, with an appealing mineral earthiness that builds tension toward broad-shouldered tannins. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2032. 1,400 cases made.—T.F.

**92 L'Ecole No. 41 Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2021 \$32** Appealingly structured and expressive, offering black cherry and dark plum flavors accented by licorice and coffee bean tones that finish with fine-grained tannins. Drink now through 2031. 7,000 cases made.—T.F.

**92 Spring Valley Uriah Walla Walla Valley 2021 \$60** Stylish and opulent, offering rich red currant and cherry flavors laced with toasty oak, with spice notes sail-

ing on the supple finish. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2031. 450 cases made.—T.F.

**92 Ken Wright Tyrus Evan Red Columbia Valley 2021 \$24** See Smart Buys, page 89.

**91 Abeja Merlot Columbia Valley 2022 \$55** A deft and elegant version, with medium-bodied cherry and currant flavors that take on tobacco and spice accents on the way to refined tannins. Drink now through 2032. 1,295 cases made.—T.F.



AMY ALVAREZ-WAMPLER  
Winemaker

**90 Chateau Ste. Michelle Cabernet Sauvignon Horse Heaven Hills Canoe Ridge Estate 2021 \$28** Sleek and approachable, this Cabernet features generous black cherry, mocha and toasty spice flavors that end on a polished accent. Drink now through 2030. 7,357 cases made.—T.F.

**90 Stanley Groovy Cabernet Sauvignon Washington A Cab Supreme 2022 \$40** Precise and taut, with pinpoint accents of currant, pencil lead and tobacco that build tension toward firm tannins. Hands off for now. Best from 2026 through 2032. 1,047 cases made.—T.F.

**89 Avennia Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Lydian 2022 \$25** This red is supple and sleek, with generous black cherry, vanilla and toasty spice flavors that linger on the finish. Drink now through 2030. 1,444 cases made.—T.F.

**88 Mercer Cabernet Sauvignon Horse Heaven Hills Mercer Bros. 2021 \$25** A straightforward and zesty version, with medium-bodied cherry and currant flavors accented by dried herbs and spices. Ends with medium-grained tannins. Drink now through 2030. 2,193 cases made.—T.F.

**87 Kirkland Signature Signature Series Columbia Valley 2022 \$17** Straightforward and unfussy, this features black cherry, mocha and toasty spice flavors. Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2027. 10,010 cases made.—T.F.

Vol. 49, No. 15

WINE SPECTATOR (ISSN 0193-497X) is published semi-monthly on the 15th and the last day of each month except bi-monthly in January and February and monthly in March, April, May, July, August and September for \$59.95 per year by M. Shanken Communications Inc.; 825 Eighth Ave., 33rd Floor, New York, NY 10019. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: send all address changes and subscription inquiries to Wine Spectator, P.O. Box 37367, Boone, IA 50037-0367 or call 1-800-752-7799 in U.S. and Canada, or visit [www.winespectator.com/address](http://www.winespectator.com/address). Outside the U.S. or Canada call (212) 684-4224 or fax (212) 481-0722. To order a new subscription write to the above address or call 1-800-752-7799 or visit [www.winespectator.com/subscribe](http://www.winespectator.com/subscribe).

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# Dolly Parton on Wine and What Gives Her Hope

BY KENNY MARTIN

**D**olly Parton belongs to a small group of celebrities who are on a first-name basis with fans. For over half a century, the singer and songwriter has helped define modern music, from the Grand Ole Opry (where she debuted at the age of 13) to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, which she joined in 2022. She's also become a formidable entrepreneur, philanthropist and cultural icon whose influence extends far beyond the world of music.

Now she's a vintner, too, launching Dolly Wines, a collaboration with Parton Family Cellars and Australia-based Accolade Wines. The company's first release, now widely available in the United States, is a California Chardonnay. More wines are planned for the U.S., U.K. and beyond.

Parton spoke with assistant editor Kenny Martin about getting into the business, why she loves drinking wine to celebrate special occasions, and more.

**Wine Spectator:** What made you get into the wine business?

**Dolly Parton:** We had home-made wine and moonshine and that kind of thing back home, but I'd never thought much about it, because I'm not known to be a big drinker.

When you think about wine, you think about friends, fun and family. We know how music brings people together. I thought, why not have a nice wine to go along with all the stuff that we have? Music, family, friends, celebrations—there are so many things to celebrate. I also have three hotels, and we serve cocktails and wine there. I thought, well, it'd be wonderful to have my own wine.

**WS:** Do you have any special wine memories?

**DP:** I have often kept Champagne bottles from special occasions—having a No. 1 album, first this, first that—and I sometimes put candles in them. We've always celebrated with bubbly. Our first wine is a Chardonnay, but eventually we'll have bubbles too. I have lots of bottles from special dinners to celebrate awards shows or hit albums or something else. A nice wine is always good for celebrations and good with nice food. So starting to make my own just seemed like a good thing to do.

I have to be honest, because I can't just tell lies to sell a lot of wine! I'm not much of a drinker. I never drink alone. I have a few nice bottles of wine and other things at my house for when friends come over. It's usually to accompany a nice dinner, or when someone has something special to celebrate. It's always nice to have some good wine around.

**WS:** How are you involved in the project?

**DP:** I always like to test everything that I'm involved with, and they do bring the wine for me to taste. But I try to leave those kinds of things to the experts, and they have lots of people, including a lot of young people, testing the wine and making sure it's good. If I'm going to sell it, you know it's going to be pretty good. And at least I'm going to tell you the truth about whatever it is.

**WS:** Who is this wine for?

**DP:** Anybody who likes to drink wine! It isn't necessarily for somebody so highfalutin who knows this and that and has a bottle that's 200 years old—though I'd like to sell it to them too, of course, if they'd like to try it! My wine is for the regular people out there who like to have a good time, people who love together, who get together with friends and family. It's for anyone who enjoys it. This is a really good wine, but it's an affordable wine. That's hopefully going to be the case with all the wines we release.

**WS:** What are you most proud of?

**DP:** I'm proud of everything I've done in my life. I'm proud of the awards. I'm proud that I've been able to make a living doing what I love to do.

One of the things I am proud of is the Imagination Library. We give books to children from the time they're born until they start school. Every month, they get a book in the mail with their name on it. Over the past 30 years, we have given out over 250 million books worldwide.

**WS:** What gives you hope?

**DP:** I still believe that there are so many wonderful people in this world. There are still so many wonderful things that we can enjoy. It is my hope that people open their eyes and their ears and their hearts to try to let some more sunshine in, some more light, so that we can enjoy the rest of our lives instead of being scared to death all the time that everything's going to hell in a handbasket.

I wish there was a better way, and I'm going to be out there the rest of my life trying to lift people up and spread as much light as I can. I wish more people would try to do the same thing.



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# Don Julio

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