



**WINE ENTHUSIAST**  
MAGAZINE

# BUYING GUIDE

## APRIL / 2012

An ancient press in Yad Hashmona, a *moshav* nestled in the Judean Hills near Jerusalem, speaks to the history of wine and oil making in the region.

### BUYING GUIDE

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## ISRAEL

### KOSHER FOR PASSOVER

**W**ith the approach of the Jewish holiday Passover, the demand for kosher wine significantly rises, as four cups of wine per person are ritually consumed during the holiday dinner, or *seuder*. Most shoppers purchase kosher wines reluctantly, believing that these wines can't compare to their usual nonkosher counterparts. Though kosher wines are haunted by a poor reputation, recent procedural and technological advances have increased the variety and quality in the category, prompting consumers to rethink their positions and opinions.

Generally speaking, kosher wine must be produced according to the Jewish dietary laws, avoiding specific forbidden foods and under strict rabbinical supervision. Commercially available wines must have the *hechsher* (seal of approval) of a rabbi, supervising agency or organization (such as the "OU" sign of the Orthodox Union). A kosher wine labeled *mevushal* has undergone an additional heating process, making it possible for non-Jews or non-observant Jews to touch the finished product while still preserving the wine's

kosher certification.

In the past, mevushal practices truly did result in boiled wine—hardly conducive to high quality. But flash-pasteurization—which involves exposing the wine to temperatures of 71–74° C for about 15–30 seconds while moving in a continuous flow—is far less damaging to the wine, maintaining more color and flavor than previous practices allowed.

This month's Buying Guide begins with Israeli wine reviews, which are not necessarily kosher, but the majority of those imported into the United States are. You will also find reviews from Alsace, Australia, Chile, Italy, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain and the U.S. And as always, be sure to check out our online database at [buyingguide.winemag.com](http://buyingguide.winemag.com), complete with a new kosher wine search function, for even more wonderful reviews from around the world.

*L'Chaim!*

—LAUREN BUZZEO

## ISRAEL

### CHARDONNAY

**89 Gamla 2010 The Reserve Chardonnay (Galilee).** Fresh and easy, this approachable Chard exhibits bright aromas of fresh red apple, light citrus and dainty yellow flowers. The palate is slightly richer and fuller-bodied, with lush flavors of wood-grilled apple skins and toasted brioche that transition into the baking-spice laden finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.

abv: 13%

Price: \$21

**89 Golan Heights Winery 2008 Yarden Katzrin Chardonnay (Galilee).** Ripe yellow peach, apple and a hint of honeydew fill the nose and mouth, along with a soft kiss of toasted oak and sweet spice. The medium weight mouth is balanced and full, leading into vibrant acidity that lifts the finish. A beautiful dried and spiced orange-peel flavor lingers on the finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$26

**88 Psagot 2010 Chardonnay (Judean Hills).** A powerful yellow floral character dominates the bouquet of this wine, with supporting aromas of peach pit, hard pear and delicate toast rounding it out. The palate is full and creamy, but lifted by citrus-driven acidity and a wood-spice finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$21

**87 Binyamina 2010 Reserve Unoaked Chardonnay (Judean Hills).** Pineapple, peach, ripe melon and sweet orange oil lead the way on this fresh, unoaked Chard. It's easy-drinking and clean with a medium-weight mouthfeel and a bright, mouthwatering finish. Drink now. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$20

**87 Golan Heights Winery 2009 Yarden Odem Vineyard Chardonnay (Galilee).** A lush and tropical-fruit driven Chard; ripe notes of papaya, mango and apricot flood the nose and mouth. It's rich and heavy in the mouth, but with good enough cut to keep things from being too sweet or cloying. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$19

**87 Segal's 2009 Special Reserve Chardonnay (Galilee).** Ripe and fruit-forward, this round Chard boasts intense aromas and flavors of tropical fruit, pear and orange oil along with a hint of yellow florals. Subtle toast and clove spice accents remains on the finish. Drink now. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$18

**82 Golan Heights Winery 2008 Yarden Chardonnay (Galilee).** The light bouquet offers faint notes of toasted red apple, while in the mouth this flabby wine exhibits notes of mealy flesh accented with soft spice. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$28

### OTHER WHITE WINES

**88 Carmel 2010 Kayoumi Vineyard Single Vineyard White Riesling (Galilee).** Light and easy but attractive, with aromas of green plum, lime, green apple and a hint of petrol. Lightweight but flavorful in the mouth, with lifting acidity to the ripe fruit flavors on the palate. Faint hints of orange rind and clove appear on the finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.

abv: 13%

Price: \$26

**88 Golan Heights Winery 2008 Yarden Viognier (Galilee).** Decadent notes of buttered brioche and baked apple add depth to the orange oil and floral bouquet of this wine. The mouthfeel is round

but balanced, and ripe notes of peach and melon unfold on the palate. A tasty ginger and clove spice develops on the finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.

abv: 15.5%

Price: \$18

**86 Flam 2010 Unoaked Blanc (Judean Hills).** A fresh and easy-drinking white made from Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay, the Blanc boasts scents of soft talcum powder, pink peony and orange blossom against a gooseberry and white strawberry fruit backbone. Zippy and prickly in the mouth with a mouthwatering, grassy finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.

abv: 12.5%

Price: \$30

**84 Golan Heights Winery 2010 Yarden Sauvignon Blanc (Galilee).** Lime pith, green plum and white clover aromas lead the nose of this Sauv Blanc, and the mouth offers similarly tart and tight flavors. The short finish favors white grapefruit accented by green grass. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$18

### SPARKLING WINE

**87 Golan Heights Winery 2005 Yarden Blanc de Blancs Brut (Galilee).** Delicate aromas of toasted egg bread, baked apple and orange rind dance in the bouquet, while the brisk and effervescent mouth shows more red apple-skin flavor alongside acidic notes of pineapple core and lime zest. Balanced and refreshing. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.

abv: 12%

Price: \$25

*Continued on Page 16*

## The Wine Enthusiast Buying Guide

The Buying Guide includes ratings and reviews of new-release and selected older beverage alcohol products evaluated by *Wine Enthusiast Magazine's* editors and other qualified tasters. Regular contributors to our Buying Guide include Tasting Director Lauren Buzzeo, Assistant Tasting Director Anna Lee C. Iijima, Executive Editor Susan Kostrzewa, Managing Editor Joe Czervinski, Contributing Editor Michael Schachner and Spirits Editor Kara Newman in New York, European Editor Roger Voss in Bordeaux, Italian Editor Monica Larner in Rome, California Editor Steve Heimoff in Oakland, Contributing Editor Paul Gregutt in Seattle and Contributing Editor Virginie Boone in Santa Rosa.

If a wine was evaluated by a single reviewer, that taster's initials appear following the note. When no initials appear following a wine review, the wine was evaluated by two or more reviewers and the score and tasting note reflect the input of all tasters. Unless otherwise stated, all Spirits Reviews are by Kara Newman and all beer reviews are by Lauren Buzzeo.

Each review contains a score, the full name of the product, its suggested national retail price, its abv as reported to us by the submitter and a tasting note. If price or alcohol content cannot be confirmed, NA (not available) will be printed. Prices are for 750-ml bottles unless otherwise indicated.

### TASTING METHODOLOGY AND GOALS

All tastings reported in the Buying Guide are performed blind unless otherwise noted. Typically, products are tasted in peer-group flights of from 5–8 samples. Price is not a factor in assigning scores. When possible, products considered flawed or uncustomary are retasted.

### ABOUT THE SCORES

Ratings reflect what our editors felt about a particular product. Beyond the rating, we encourage you to read the accompanying tasting note to learn about a product's special characteristics.

**Classic 98–100:** The pinnacle of quality.

**Superb 94–97:** A great achievement.

**Excellent 90–93:** Highly recommended.

**Very Good 87–89:** Often good value; well recommended.

**Good 83–86:** Suitable for everyday consumption; often good value.

**Acceptable 80–82:** Can be employed in casual, less-critical circumstances.

Products deemed Unacceptable (receiving a rating below 80 points) are not reviewed.

### SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

**Editors' Choice** products are those that offer excellent quality at a price above our Best Buy range, or a product at any price with unique qualities that merit special attention.

**Cellar Selections** are products deemed highly collectible and/or requiring time in a temperature-controlled wine cellar to reach their maximum potential. A Cellar Selection designation does not mean that a product must be stored to be enjoyed, but that cellaring will probably result in a more enjoyable bottle. In general, an optimum time for cellaring will be indicated.

**Best Buys** are products that offer a high level of quality in relation to price. There are no specific guidelines or formulae for determining Best Buys, but wines meriting this award are generally priced at \$15 or less.

### SUBMITTING PRODUCTS FOR REVIEW

Products should be submitted to the appropriate reviewing location as detailed in our FAQ, available online via [winemag.com/contactus](http://winemag.com/contactus). Inquiries should be addressed to the Tasting & Review Department at 914.345.9463 or email [tastings@wineenthusiast.net](mailto:tastings@wineenthusiast.net). **There is no charge for submitting products.** We make every effort to taste all products submitted for review, but there is no guarantee that all products submitted will be tasted, or that reviews will appear in the magazine. All samples must be accompanied by the appropriate submission forms, which may be downloaded from our Web site.

### LABELS

Labels are paid promotions. Producers and importers are given the opportunity to submit labels, which are reproduced and printed along with tasting notes and scores. For information on label purchases, contact Denise Valenza at 813.571.1122; fax 866.896.8786; or email [dvalenza@wineenthusiast.net](mailto:dvalenza@wineenthusiast.net).

Find all reviews on our fully searchable database at [buyingguide.winemag.com](http://buyingguide.winemag.com)



## 97 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2008 Cask 23 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley)

One sip is all it takes to fall in love with this 100% Cabernet, which hails from the winery's Stags Leap District vineyards. It's soft, lush and opulent in blackberry, cherry, blueberry, cassis, dark chocolate and smoky oak flavors. Although it was aged in 100% new French oak, the oak isn't at all heavy. Rather, it's perfect, adding just the right touch of smoke. Really fabulous, and the tannins define Stags Leap, so strong yet sweetly refined. If you can keep your hands off it, this is a wine to cellar for many years. —S.H.

abv: 14.5

Price: \$195



## 97 Taylor Fladgate 2009 Vargellas Vinha Velha Vintage Port

The legendary Vargellas Vinha Velha comes from the oldest vines of Quinta de Vargellas. This 2009 vintage is concentrated and impressive, its beautiful ripe fruits and dark chocolate backed by an immense structure. The gentler side of the wine comes through in its perfumed character. A wine that deserves many years of aging. Kobrand. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.

abv: 20.5%

Price: \$225

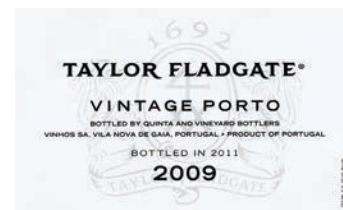


## 96 Jarvis 2006 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley)

You don't have to age this wine—Jarvis did it for you, holding it back more than five years before release, which is a very expensive proposition for a winery. It's a splendid Cabernet, with the tannins soft and velvety. The blackberry and black currant fruit flavors are as fresh and vibrant as the day the wine was bottled, an early indication of its ageability. This wonderful wine is so good, you can drink it now, but it will continue to evolve in the bottle for many years. —S.H.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$95



## 96 Taylor Fladgate 2009 Vintage Port

Fladgate's vintage Ports are always among the legendary wines. This hugely structured wine keeps the dense, perfumed tradition very much alive. Along with the power, it also has wonderful fruit, bursting out with blackberry jam. Even with all the fruitiness, it needs to age for decades. Kobrand. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.

abv: 20.5%

Price: \$99



## 95 Baldacci 2008 Brenda's Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Stags Leap District)

Huge, tremendous, authoritative and impressive for its sheer volume. It just explodes in blackberries, cassis, dark chocolate, leather, dried herb and smoky oak flavors, with a tangy minerality. The vineyard is in the Stags Leap tenderloin, and the wine combines an approachable drink-me-now quality with obvious ageworthiness through at least 2016. Only 180 cases were produced. —S.H.

abv: 15.2%

Price: \$105



## 95 Fonseca 2009 Vintage Port

A classic Fonseca, rich and powerful, with just an extra edge of weight from the vintage. It has a dry character, a tannic edge that gives great promise, but the open-hearted fruit is all there. A wonderfully intense wine for aging. Kobrand. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.

abv: 20.5%

Price: \$99

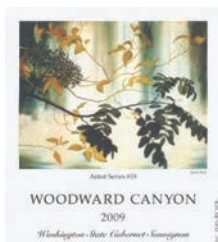


## 95 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2008 S.L.V. Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).

An awesome Cabernet, so elegant, powerful and refined. As softly attractive as it is, it has a reserve of power that should enable it to age effortlessly. Ripe, sweet tannins house exorbitant flavors of blackberries and cassis, accented with new oak. It makes for a full-bodied, showy 100% Cabernet, drinkable now and over the next 15 years. —S.H.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$125

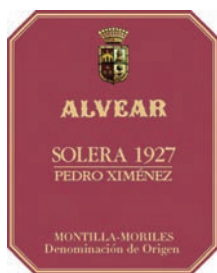


## 95 Woodward Canyon 2009 Artist Series #18 Cabernet Sauvignon (Washington).

Here the high alcohol does not obscure the layered fruits and overall complexity of this exceptional Cabernet. Thick, ripe and richly endowed, it keeps its black fruit, ripe tannins and liquorous barrel notes all in proportion, and pulls in top flight fruit from Champoux, Sagemoor, the estate vineyard and other select sites. Earth, cedar and tobacco notes highlight the extended finish. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

abv: 15.8%

Price: \$49

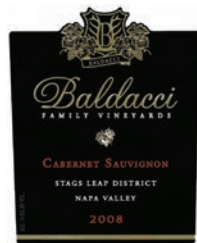


## 94 Alvear NV Solera 1927 Pedro Ximénez (Montilla-Moriles).

A rank well above most PX sweetsies, with lush but fresh aromas of raisin and spice that are distinctly not syrupy or heavy. Feels thick, but there's enough acidity to cut through the wine's weight. Flavors of caramel and chocolate are ideal, and the finish is smooth, not heavy, and has bounce in its step. A beautiful PX any way you cut it. Fine Estates From Spain. *Editors' Choice.* —M.S.

abv: 16%

Price: \$25/375 ml



## 94 Baldacci 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Stags Leap District).

Almost as perfect a Stags Leap Cabernet as you can find, showing lush, opulent and immediately appealing flavors. Blackberries, plums, cassis, dark chocolate and sweet oak combine in a spicy swirl. The tannins are fiercely soft, an oxymoron that suggests the wine's complexity. Yet those same tannins are astringent enough to warrant time in the cellar. Hold until 2014, at least. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$65



## 94 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2008 Fay Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).

So upfront in spectacularly ripe raspberry, cherry and mocha flavors, it's hard to keep from draining the bottle now. This shows the classic tannins of Stags Leap, soft and sweet but potent. Drink it now and enjoy for sheer opulence, but you might be missing out on something really special around 2016. —S.H.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$95



## 94 Summers 2007 Checkmate (Napa Valley).

This Cabernet Sauvignon-based blend is a best-of-barrels selection from Summers' various Cabs throughout Napa Valley. It's unquestionably a big wine, densely packed with blackberry, cherry and dark chocolate flavors. It's also very young. The tannins pack a real punch. New oak, to the tune of 100%, is apparent in the buttered toast richness. Don't drink it now, good as it is. Give it until 2014, and it will develop long beyond that. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.

abv: 14.2%

Price: \$100



## 94 Summers 2008 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Calistoga).

A gorgeous Cabernet, among the best Summers has ever released. Actually, their Reserve Cab tends to fly under the radar, and is a good buy for that reason, although they did raise the price considerably with this '08 bottling. The wine, which is 100% Cabernet, is showing beautifully now, with soft, rich tannins and luscious flavors of blackberries, black currants, dark chocolate and plenty of new oak. It will evolve in the bottle for many years. —S.H.

abv: 14.2%

Price: \$59



## 94 Tranche 2009 Slice of Pape Blanc (Columbia Valley).

Formerly labeled simply as a Roussanne-Viognier blend, this is now the companion wine to Tranche's Slice of Pape Red. Here is a wine with power, balance and concentration. It's a polished, focused, utterly seductive blend, dominated by the Roussanne, but with the Viognier contributing brightness and a floral top note. There's a riot of fruit flavors, from citrus to tangerine to Macintosh apple and spiced pear, with a slightly saline finish. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

abv: 14.2%

Price: \$30



## 93 Blair Fox 2010 Paradise Road Vineyard Viognier (Santa Barbara County).

A rich and flamboyant Viognier. One might even call it majestic. Somehow it combines fabulously ripe, opulent fruit, honey and spice flavors with a savory minerality, leading to a dry finish. A real achievement in California Viognier. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.

abv: 14.2%

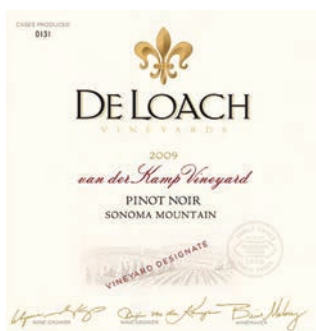
Price: \$29



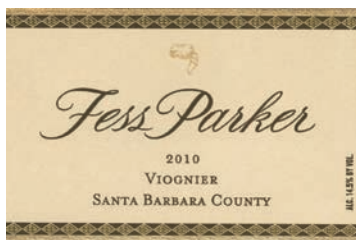
**93 Croft 2009 Vintage Port.** Based on the Roêda vineyard, this opulent, fruity wine is dense, beautifully ripe, a powerhouse of sweet fruit, figs and raisins, plum jelly and the roundest, most generous tannins. It's a wine that will show well in the next few years, but which should age magnificently. Kobrand. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$80



**93 De Loach 2009 O.F.S. Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** A very fine Pinot Noir, dry and elegantly constructed, but it needs a little time in the cellar. That's due to the tannins, which are thick and noticeable in the way they create an astringency through the finish. The flavors are exceptionally rich, suggesting cherries, raspberries and tobacco, with a welcome sweetness from toasty oak. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$40



**93 De Loach 2009 van der Kamp Vineyard Pinot Noir (Sonoma Mountain).** An interesting Pinot Noir, showing a bit of heat, but whose flavors are taut and complex. The usual cherries and cola you find in almost all California Pinot Noirs are grounded with meaty notes, like grilled hamburger, finished with a splash of tamari. Such are the tannins and acids that the wine should age gracefully for a good eight years, but you can drink it now. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$45



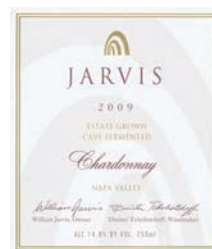
**93 Fess Parker 2010 Viognier (Santa Barbara County).** Tremendous honeyed richness in this Viognier, yet as sweet as it tastes, it finishes dry, a magical trick only a great wine can accomplish. Shows all the exotic tropical fruit, wildflower and spice flavors you could ask for in a California Viognier, and never loses its vitality. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$25



**93 J Vineyards & Winery 2001 Late Disgorged Vintage Brut (Russian River Valley).** A beautiful wine, fully resolved in age, showing a classy, smooth mouthfeel. The citrus, bread dough, vanilla and spice flavors are subtle but delicious, while the bubbles have softened, making the wine creamy. Made from Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, with a drop of Pinot Meunier, this delicious bubbly is made for drinking now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$90



**93 J Vineyards & Winery 2010 Strata Estate Grown Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** J Winery goes against the grain of the modern high alcohol, superripe style to produce this bone dry, steely, somewhat austere young Chardonnay. It hits with a smack of acidity and minerals, with an elegant complexity that may challenge those looking for big, fruity Chards. Give it a couple years in the cellar and see how it evolves. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$45



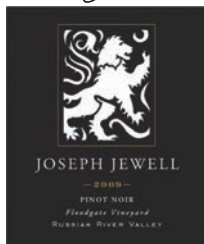
**93 Jarvis 2009 Estate Chardonnay (Napa Valley).** If this Chard had any more oak, the forests of France would be denuded. But the buttered toast and caramel work well, adding even greater richness to the huge pineapple, lemon custard and ginger-snap cookie flavors. Drink this extravagant Chardonnay over the next six years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$48



**93 Jarvis 2008 Estate Merlot (Napa Valley).** Credit this Merlot for sheer enjoyability. It defines Merlot as the soft, drink-me-now Bordeaux red wine, full-bodied yet instantly likeable. Made from 100% Merlot, it's extraordinarily rich in cherry fruit, while 100% new French oak adds a deft touch of buttered toast. The tannins are gentle, sweet and complex. This flashy, fleshy wine is great now, and will hold and evolve in the bottle for at least six years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$75



**93 José Maria da Fonseca 2008 Domini Plus (Douro).** A rich and smooth wine, its tannins already deliciously integrated into the juicy black fruits. The wine has a tarry character along with its blackberry acidity, sweetness and an extra roundness from the wood. Worth aging for 3–4 years. Palm Bay International. *Cellar Selection.* —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40



**93 Joseph Jewell 2009 Floodgate Vineyard Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** Shows all the hallmarks of an ageable Pinot Noir. The raspberry, cherry and cola flavors are very rich, but the structure is immaculate. Fine, firm tannins combine with zesty acidity to create a tightness in the mouth. As nice as this Pinot is, it will develop bottle nuances over the next six years. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$45



**93 Justin 2009 Savant (Paso Robles).** A delightful wine, one of Justin's best in quite some time. The blend is Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon, and fruit is the star, in the form of ripe, lush blackberries and currants. You'll also find complex notes of grilled meats, chocolate, herbs and spices, wrapped into a perfectly soft, delectable texture. Drink now–2015. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$45



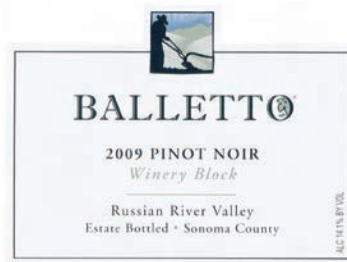
**93 Pamplin 2008 JRG Red Wine (Columbia Valley).** This Bordeaux-style red is blended from the Seven Hills, Klipsun, Canoe Ridge and Wal-lula vineyards. It shows a lovely structure, which takes its ripe blueberry, black cherry and cassis fruit and complements it with lush barrel flavors of coffee and dark chocolate. Fine-grained, dusty tannins smooth it along through an elegant, mouth-coating finish. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$30



**93 Pepper Bridge 2008 Seven Hills Vineyard Red Wine (Walla Walla Valley).** This Bordeaux-style blend, from a choice section of the Seven Hills Vineyard, is fragrant with a beguiling mix of fruits, flowers and fresh herbs. Cassis and pepper, Asian spices and a lingering, textural mouthfeel, make this a wine that disappears all too quickly from the bottle. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$55



**92 Aurielle 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Aurielle's Cabernets have been consistent over the years, offering lots of ripe, modern-style blackberry, blueberry, dark chocolate and oak flavors in a wine that's drinkable now. This '08 is quite stylish and elegant despite the power, with near-perfect tannins. You could age it, but it's really best enjoyed for flashy, youthful richness. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$90



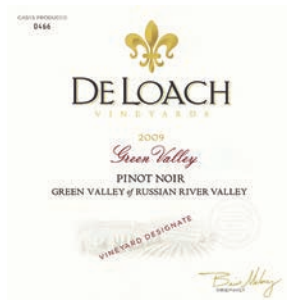
**92 Balletto 2009 Winery Block Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** Shows the ripe fruit of Balletto's Pinot Noirs, with bright, forward raspberries and cherries. But there's an appealing earthiness, something like wild mushrooms sautéed in olive oil. Oak adds the perfect touch of buttered toast. Drink now–2015. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$34



**92 Carlos Serres 2004 Onomástica Reserva (Rioja).** Dense up front, with earthy notes to go with aromas of cola, ripe berry, coconut, almond candy and toast. Features a well-oaked personality and full flavors of ripe black plum, blackberry, fine herbs and integrated spice. Long and lasting on the finish, like a good cigar. Mature, but with lots of life left; drink now through 2018. *Testa Wines Of The World.* —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40



**92 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Cold Creek Vineyard Chardonnay (Columbia Valley).** Smooth and spicy, matching bright, tight, sweet-tart lemony fruit to nicely integrated barrel notes of sandalwood and graham cracker. The sleek structure, balanced for cellaring as well as immediate enjoyment. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$25



**92 De Loach 2009 Pinot Noir (Green Valley).** Give this dry elegant Pinot 4–5 years in the cellar to soften and mellow. Right now, the tannins dominate, making it tough. Underneath are fascinatingly earthy flavors of cherries, cola, mushrooms and exotic spices. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$45



**92 Dry Creek Vineyard 2009 Estate DCV3 Sauvignon Blanc (Dry Creek Valley).** If there was any oak on this wine, and the winery doesn't say so, it doesn't show. What stars is pure fruit from the vineyard, the first ever planted to Sauvignon Blanc in Dry Creek Valley. The flavors are massive, of citrus and tropical fruits, melons, tangy minerals and exotic spices. Just gorgeous, it's one of the most complex and satisfying Sauvignon Blancs on the market. Production was a scant 252 cases. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$25



**92 Dry Creek Vineyard 2008 Old Vine Zinfandel (Dry Creek Valley).** Few Zins are this ripe and extravagant in flavor. It delivers an explosion of blackberry and cherry preserves, mint, olive tapenade, black pepper and sandalwood flavors, plus a bunch of other things too complex to list. A terrific example of the variety, at a fair price. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$28



**92 Fess Parker 2009 Syrah (Santa Barbara County).** Run, don't walk, to get this wine. It's wildly good for the price, offering powerful yet controlled black cherry, tea, bacon and black pepper flavors that are wrapped into smooth tannins. Production was 2,061 cases. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$22



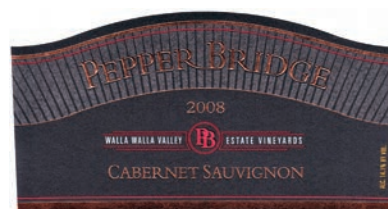
**92 J Vineyards & Winery 2010 Jewell Ranch Vineyard Estate Grown Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** Tastes a bit remote and hard now, with a steely minerality that accentuates the acidity, and even boosts the tannins. Underneath that are clean, vibrant pineapple, Meyer lemon, golden apricot and lime flavors. This is one of the rare California Chardonnays that should improve with some age. Hold for 3–4 years, maybe even longer. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$45



**92 Longboard 2008 Ledbetter Family Vineyard Syrah (Russian River Valley).** This is a big, gutsy Syrah. It's strong and astringent in tannins and potent in ripe, fruity blackberries and plums, with a spicy edge of smoked bacon. The overall balance testifies to a pedigreed address and superior grapegrowing. As savory as it is, it's not really ready for drinking. Hold for up to six years. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$33



**92 Marqués de Cáceres 2009 MC (Rioja).** Layered, stout and pure smelling, with aromas of cola, chocolate and modern, ripe berry fruit that roll out the welcome mat. Feels full and tannic, with toasty black fruit flavors accented by espresso and bitter chocolate. Finishes dark, with coffee and licorice flavors. Best from late 2012 through 2015. Vineyard Brands. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$33



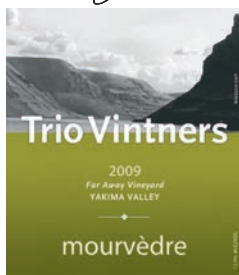
**92 Pepper Bridge 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** Sharp and tightly wound upon opening, this wine offers vivid fruit flavors of cranberry and pomegranate. Juicy and young, with the tart acidity and fruit density to cellar for a decade or more, it is infanticide to drink it so soon, but go ahead; it's delicious. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$55



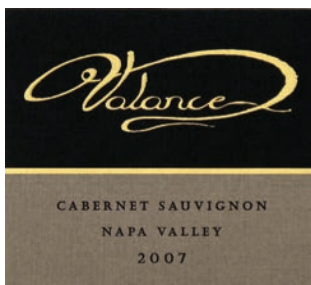
**92 Planeta 2010 Cometa (Sicilia).** Cometa is an irresistible white wine from the deep south of Italy. It speaks its own Sicilian language but with modern, international accents. Made from Fiano grapes, it opens with a beautiful golden color, and delivers rich aromas of stone fruit, vanilla cream and rose. The mouthfeel is exceedingly soft, creamy and long-lasting. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$43



**92 Planeta 2010 Passito di Noto.** Planeta was among the first to bring this delicious sweet wine to the United States and demonstrate that great Sicilian dessert wines hail from places besides Pantelleria. There's a light, buoyant quality that is enhanced by fragrant floral tones of jasmine, honeysuckle and peach blossom. There's no better pairing for sweet almond cookies. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$41/500 ml



**92 Trio 2009 Far Away Vineyard Mourvèdre (Yakima Valley).** Can Washington Mourvèdre really be this good? From the Far Away Vineyard (previously named for owner Art den Hoed) it sure can. Sappy and fresh, this lively wine features ripe red fruits, sharp acids and smooth tannins, with toasted walnuts and caramel streaking through the finish. It shows excellent concentration and length. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$26



**92 Valance 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Three things characterize this wine: exceptionally intense blackberry and currant flavors, thick, hard tannins and a bone dry finish. It's simply not drinkable now, although that won't stop lots of people from popping the cork. But do try to cellar it for at least six years. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$80



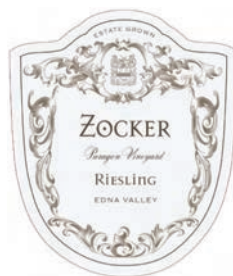
**92 Vermeil 2009 Luvisi 1908 Vineyard Zinfandel (Calistoga).** The wine, from this old vineyard, contains a good chunk of Petite Sirah, which adds body and tannins to the Zinfandel. It's a delicious wine, wonderfully drinkable, with deep, complex blackberry, cassis, dark chocolate, licorice, raisin, black pepper and sandalwood flavors that finish long and spicy. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.3% **Price:** \$38



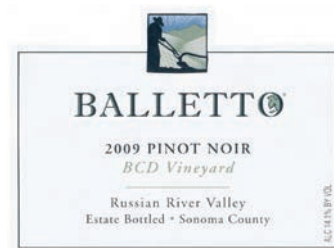
**92 Zaca Mesa 2008 Mesa Reserve Syrah (Santa Ynez Valley).** This bottling has been a real success for Zaca Mesa. It's a vibrantly fruity Syrah, packed with sweet cherries and blackberries, with a meaty, umami spiciness suggesting grilled bacon. Deliciously soft, it's best consumed over the next few years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$44



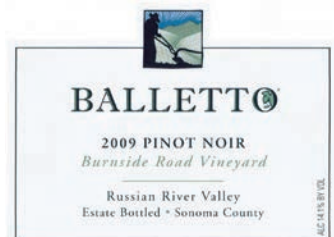
**92 Zisola 2008 Doppiozeta (Noto).** Under the guidance of Tuscany's Mazzei brothers, Doppiozeta is a New World wine from an Old World tradition. The blend is 60% Nero d'Avola with the balance comprised of Syrah and Cabernet Franc. It offers modern accents of chocolate fudge and spice behind territory-driven layers of small berry fruit, wild sage and toasted pistachio. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$60



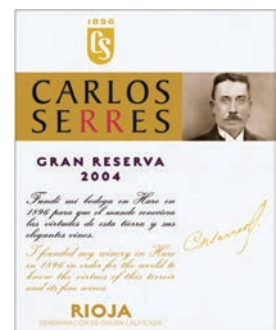
**92 Zocker 2009 Paragon Vineyard Riesling (Edna Valley).** One of the most satisfying Rieslings of the vintage. It's dry, crisp and exotic, with crisp flavors of citrus fruits, wildflowers and that famous diesel or lighter fluid taste that characterizes the best Rieslings. Really a superior wine that shows the brilliance of Edna Valley for unoaked white varieties, as well as the excellence of the Paragon Vineyard. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.4% **Price:** \$20



**91 Balletto 2009 BCD Vineyard Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** Give this wine a year or three in the cellar, unless you like your Pinots a little on the tough side. Tannins and earthiness currently dominate the polished raspberry and cherry flavors. If you do drink it now, decant for a few hours, but not overnight. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$34



**91 Balletto 2009 Burnside Road Vineyard Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** So delicious and easy to drink, it's complexities are almost unappreciated. Lush, ripe raspberry, cherry and cola flavors flatter the palate, finished with smoky toast and exotic spices. Extra points for crisp acidity and lovely tannins. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$40



**91 Carlos Serres 2004 Gran Reserva (Rioja).** Mellow on the nose, with red fruit aromas, freshness, hints of tobacco and marzipan. Feels flush in the mouth and lifted by fine acids, while it tastes of dried berry and plum, with dark spice accents. Shows a touch of espresso bitterness on a long finish. A keeper to drink now through 2017. Testa Wines Of The World. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$30

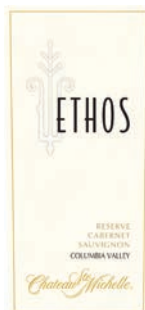




**91 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Cold Creek Vineyard Merlot (Columbia Valley).** Reserve caliber fruit—a throat-coating mix of blueberry, cherry and cassis—rolls into a rich, full throttle wash of barrel flavors. Toast, smoke, espresso and dark chocolate give the wine depth and gravitas. Ageworthy to be sure, but also enjoyable right now. **Editors' Choice.** —P.G.

abv: 15%

Price: \$28



**91 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Ethos Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** The luscious fruit mix starts with a suggestion of marmalade, then adds plum and cherry. It gains complexity with streaks of graphite, black olive and smoke, polished, lightly earthy tannins and plenty of power through the finish. An interesting, somewhat unusual style of Ethos. —P.G.

abv: 15%

Price: \$38



**91 De Loach 2009 Thornton Vineyard Pinot Noir (Sonoma Coast).** This fruit-forward Pinot offers a blast of cherries and raspberries. It's almost as sweet as jam, but it finishes dry, as the acidity and tannins that constitute its structure rush in. A lovely wine to drink now, right out of the bottle, and over the next few years. —S.H.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$45



**91 Duca di Salaparuta 2005 Duca Enrico (Sicilia).** This beautiful vintage of Duca Enrico shows riper fruit than the 2006, with its hint of green leaf. The fruit here is plush, rich and chewy, with long-lasting tones of blackberry pie, leather, spice and moist pipe tobacco. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$67



**91 Gloria Ferrer 2008 Estate Pinot Noir (Carneros).** What a great price for a Pinot Noir with this charm and integrity. It's a wonderful wine, dry and rich in raspberry, cherry and spice flavors. Feels svelte and silky in the mouth, just like you want Pinot to be. Might even gain a few notes with a year or two in the bottle. **Editors' Choice.** —S.H.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$22



**91 José Maria da Fonseca 2009 Domingos Touriga Nacional & Syrah (Setubal).** Named after winemaker Domingos Soares Franco, this is a serious, intense, wood-aged wine. Along with the new wood flavors, it has rich blackberry fruit and dry tannins. With its firm concentrated structure, this is one age-worthy wine. Palm Bay International. —R.V.

abv: 13.5%

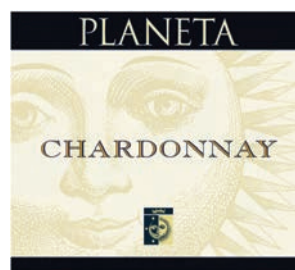
Price: \$15



**91 Planeta 2008 Burdese (Sicilia).** Burdese is Sicily's tip-of-the-hat to the great wines of Bordeaux. A blended red, the wine is elegant and firm, with dark concentration and earthy tones of leather and spice behind fresh berry and blackberry. Balance and length characterize the mouthfeel. Palm Bay International. —M.L.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$42



**91 Planeta 2009 Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Planeta's Chardonnay is one of the nicest expressions of this international grape variety made on Italian soil. From sunny Sicily, the wine recalls some of the characteristics of Chardonnay from California, with its creamy, rich mouthfeel and beautifully intense aromas of stone fruit, citrus, vanilla, yellow rose and exotic spice. Palm Bay International. —M.L.

abv: 13.5%

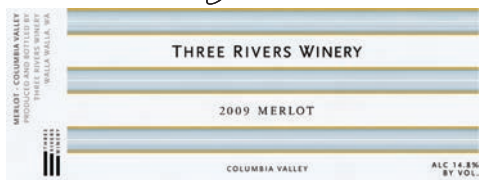
Price: \$43



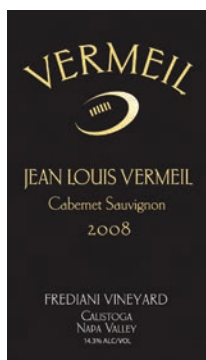
**91 Planeta 2008 Santa Cecilia Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Dark and brooding, Santa Cecilia opens with a medley of licorice, dark spice, blackberry, currant, almond and soft shadings of dusty minerals. The complexity is there and the mouthfeel is equally tight, tonic, firm and clean. Palm Bay International. —M.L.

abv: 13.8%

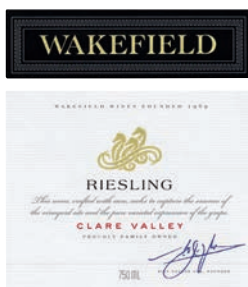
Price: \$40



**91 Three Rivers 2009 Merlot (Columbia Valley).** Another outstanding value from Three Rivers, this powerfully-built wine mixes ripe berry and plum fruit with polished, astringent tannins. It opens well, but really hits its stride on the back palate, with the balance and concentration to age. That said, it's drinking awfully well right now. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$19



**91 Vermeil 2008 Jean Louis Vermeil Frediani Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Calistoga).** There's no disrespect to say this Cabernet is fun to drink. It is, for the soft, charmingly interesting mouthfeel and rich, sweetly forward blackberry, cherry, chocolate, cassis, anise and oak flavors. Few Cabernets in the world get this ripe and exotic. Enjoy it now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$85



**91 Wakefield Estate 2011 Riesling (Clare Valley).** This is a classically styled Clare Riesling, from its hints of talcum powder, green apple and lime to its precise line and crisp finish. It's dry and undeniably tart and citrusy—perfect for aging 4–8 years. American Wine Distributors. *Editors' Choice.* —J.C.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$17



**90 Baldacci 2008 Four Sons Fraternity (Napa Valley).** Made from Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah, this red wine shows the full body, rich tannins and overall elegance of Baldacci's red wines. It's powerful in blackberry, plum, currant, bacon and black-pepper spice flavors, and the tannins are strong but ultrarefined. Drink now—2015. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$40



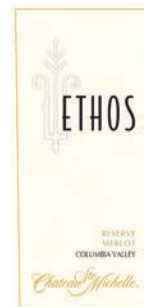
**90 Castillo De Feliciana 2009 Bolsa Negra Reserva Vino Rojo (Horse Heaven Hills).** Roughly half Malbec and half Cabernet, this is a lush, full-bodied, round and plummy red. It deftly mixes its tangy red fruit with pretty baking-spice accents, light herb and fresh loam. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$56



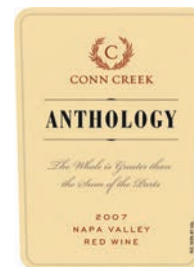
**90 Castillo De Feliciana 2009 Phinny Hill Vineyard Malbec (Horse Heaven Hills).** Hearty and rich, this ripe rendition of Malbec (with 10% Cabernet Sauvignon blended in) was given just the right percentage (one third) of new French oak. Black fruit is complemented by barrel flavors of licorice and vanilla, and the medium-grained tannins lend further authority and support to the finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$38



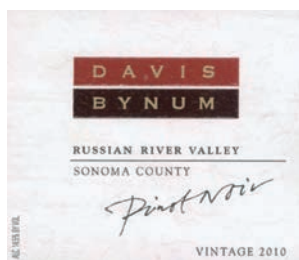
**90 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** This is a splendid rendition of Chateau Ste. Michelle's mainstay Cabernet, rich and round, with a sophisticated mix of grapes, including Malbec, Cab Franc, Petit Verdot and Syrah. Dark fruit flavors of black cherry and cassis create a lush center, and the wine is more evolved and smoother, with less obvious oak and barrel flavor, than the pricier Cabs from Ste. Michelle. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16



**90 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Ethos Reserve Merlot (Columbia Valley).** A chocolaty wine with very pretty red fruit, this smooth and lightly spicy vintage is particularly well made given the cool year. In the blend are small amounts of Cabernet and Syrah, but Merlot is the star here, with rich black-cherry flavors wrapped in mocha. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$31



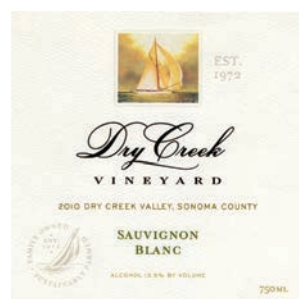
**90 Conn Creek 2007 Anthology (Napa Valley).** The 2007 Anthology as usual is a blend of the many vineyards Conn Creek accesses throughout Napa Valley. It's a very good wine, sumptuous in fruit and easily likeable for its soft texture and upfront berry and chocolate flavors. Still, there's something generic about it. Even though it's more expensive, it lacks the focus and interest of the winery's single-vineyard bottlings. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$55



**90 Davis Bynum 2010 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** A delicious Pinot Noir to drink now. Soft and savory, it shows appealing raspberry, cherry and spice flavors, accented with the vanilla and toast of oak. Defines Russian River Pinot Noir in its easiest form. —S.H.

abv: 14.5%

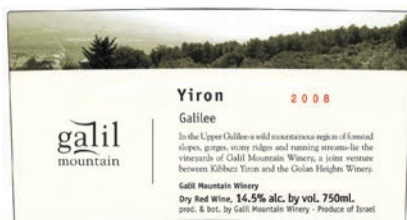
Price: \$35



**90 Dry Creek Vineyard 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Dry Creek Valley).** A solid Sauvignon Blanc, dry, crisp and rich, with lime, green apple, kiwi, green melon and sweet vanilla flavors. And then there's that tangy minerality that makes it so racy. There's no oak apparent anywhere, making the fruit star. What a great restaurant wine, and production was nearly 7,000 cases, making it relatively easy to find. **Editors' Choice.** —S.H.

abv: 13.5%

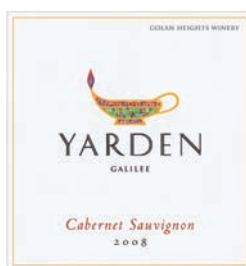
Price: \$16



**90 Galil Mountain 2008 Yiron (Galilee).** Attractive and layered with a blueberry and raspberry fruit core accented by notes of sweet spice, orange oil, ashy tobacco and a touch of dark purple florals. The gripping tannins are fine and balanced, with skin-driven fruit flavors dominating the palate and a fudgy chocolate and sweet spice note lingering on the finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. **Editors' Choice.** —L.B.

abv: 14.5%

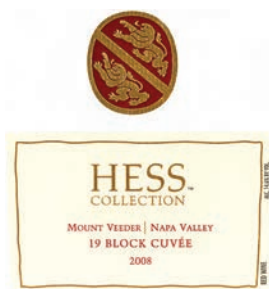
Price: \$22



**90 Golan Heights Winery 2008 Yarden Cabernet Sauvignon (Galilee).** Brambly blackberry and forest fruit aromas fill the bouquet, with secondary notes of licorice, bark and sweet spice lingering in the background. The medium-weight, structured mouth shows more skin-driven black-fruit flavors alongside gripping tannins and a solid finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$30



**90 Hess Collection 2008 19 Block Cuvée (Mount Veeder).** This is essentially a Bordeaux blend, based on Cabernet, but the winery put in some Syrah. It's very delicious and forward in blackberry, blueberry and chocolate flavors. The tannins are as soft and sweet as Napa gets, making the wine drinkable now. —S.H.

abv: 14.6%

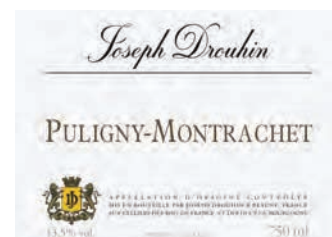
Price: \$36



**90 José Maria da Fonseca 2009 Domini (Douro).** An opulent feeling wine, with its rich, rounded fruits and sweet tannins. There is a juicy character here, lined with new wood polish. The wine has density, generous black plum juice and a hint of prunes. It is powerful and ageworthy. Palm Bay International. **Editors' Choice.** —R.V.

abv: 13%

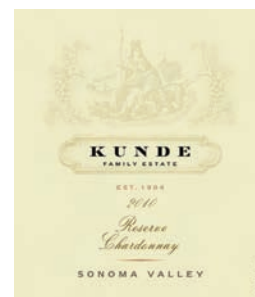
Price: \$16



**90 Joseph Drouhin 2009 Puligny-Montrachet.** Along with all the ripe fruit in the wine, there is a kernel of serious structure. That gives the wine minerality, textured acidity lying over the depth of white fruits. Toast adds extra complexity before a crisp aftertaste. Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. —R.V.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$60



**90 Kunde 2010 Reserve Chardonnay (Sonoma Valley).** Very opulent, almost too much so, with a flood of Key lime pie, pineapple jam, orange, butterscotch and buttered toast flavors that overwhelm in richness. The saving grace is a fine structure of acidity and minerals and a finish that strives to be dry. Drink now with shellfish, roast pork, or all alone as an apéritif. —S.H.

abv: 14.8%

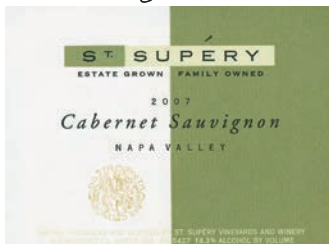
Price: \$30



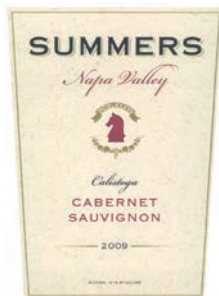
**90 Martin Ray 2010 Bald Mountain Vineyard Reserve Chardonnay (Santa Cruz Mountains).** Hits all the right notes, with ripe, flashy pineapple, lemon and lime jam fruit, buttered toast from oak and a stimulating minerality. Follows the American style closely, but with style and finesse. Drink now. —S.H.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$25



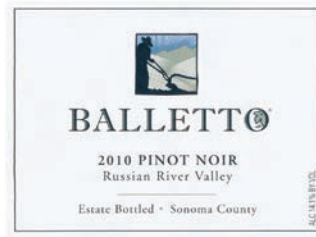
**90 St. Supéry 2007 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Good job by St. Supéry on this rich Cabernet, and kudos to them for holding back for four-plus years. Now mellow, it shows ripe blackberry and plum flavors, with a sweet coating of smoky oak. Delicious now and over the next several years. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$30



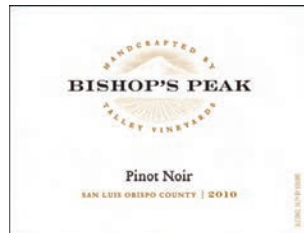
**90 Summers 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Calistoga).** Made in a dry, earthy style, this wine chooses elegance and structure over dazzling opulence. And that's just fine. It has a good core of blackberry and currant fruit, and the balance suggests some time in the cellar. Give it 3–4 years. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$26



**90 Tenuta Rapitalà 2008 Hugonis (Sicilia).** Hugonis is a 50–50 blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Nero d'Avola, with balanced fruit, spice, chocolate, leather and a modern, creamy endnote. This is an appealing wine that would pair beautifully with steak or pork chops. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$45



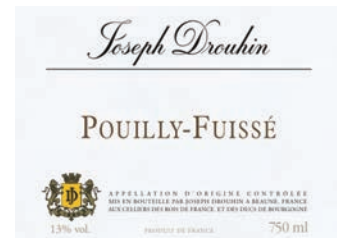
**89 Balletto 2010 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** This is an uncomplicated, delicious Pinot Noir. What you taste is what you get. It's all about flashy raspberry, strawberry and cherry jam, toasted oak and spice flavors, wrapped into Pinot's inimitably silky texture. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$28



**89 Bishop's Peak 2010 Pinot Noir (San Luis Obispo County).** Bishop's Peak, which is the second label of Talley, has been turning out some of the best Pinot Noirs at this price point in California. Their 2010 is elegant and delicious, with savory cherry, persimmon and spice flavors. Drink it now. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$20



**89 Dr. Konstantin Frank 2010 Semi Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Intensely floral, with scents of gardenia and tea roses, Dr. Frank's semidry Riesling is intense in peach and apricot flavors, but bristles with a tart apple-skin bite and nervy acidity. Long on the finish, with a lingering fruit-and-floral perfume. —A.I.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$15



**89 Joseph Drouhin 2009 Pouilly-Fuissé.** This rich wine still retains proper Pouilly-Fuissé minerality. It has apple as well as yellow fruit flavors, giving a steely edge and a firm texture. The wine has weight while also keeping a fine poise with the final acidity. Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$29



**89 Martin Ray 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Sonoma County).** It's really easy to drink this fine Cabernet. It's not an ager or anything like that, but it's rich, ripe in sweet blackberry, blueberry and cocoa flavors, and balanced in acidity and smooth tannins. It just feels fine in the mouth. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$20



**88 Ca' Momi 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Made in a softly appealing style to drink now, this 100% Cabernet is thankfully a huge improvement over the winery's previous releases. It's rich in blackberry and blueberry jam, dark chocolate and spice flavors, with a pretty overlay of oak. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$25



CRIANZA 2008

**88** **Viña Arnáiz 2008 Crianza (Ribera del Duero).** Solid on the nose, with pure berry aromas matched by oak-related vanilla. Fresh and medium in weight, with juicy acidity and mild tannins. Tastes of dried red fruits, blackberry, vanilla and tobacco. Fairly long and slightly elegant on the finish. Drink now through 2014. CIV/USA. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25



**87** **HandCraft 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (California).** A pretty good Cabernet, especially considering the price, which makes it ideal for everyday drinking. Dry and medium-bodied, it has pleasant blackberry, cherry, spice and oak flavors, with a long, clean finish. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$13



**87** **HandCraft 2010 Chardonnay (California).** Easy to like for its orange and pear soda, vanilla cream and buttered toast flavors that are heightened and brightened with acidity. Shows real richness and class for the price in a popularly appealing Chardonnay. **Editors' Choice.** —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$13



**87** **HandCraft 2010 Pinot Noir (California).** Light in body and silky in texture, this easy Pinot Noir offers plenty of varietal character. The raspberry and cherry flavors are spicy and sweet. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$13



**87** **Nicosia 2010 Fondo Filara Catarratto (Sicilia).** This fresh, Catarratto-based white wine opens with a bright, crystalline appearance and a thin, crisp mouthfeel. Aromas include lemon, grapefruit, dried grass and mango. Rolivia, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15



**87** **Nicosia 2009 Fondo Filara Rosso (Etna).** Fondo Filara offers an authentic taste of Etna winemaking at a reasonable low price. Delicate tones of wild berry, cassis and almond paste characterize the bouquet. The mouthfeel, on the other hand, shows power, length, tightness and firm structure. Rolivia, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$19



**86** **Nicosia 2010 Fondo Filara Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** A simple red wine, with cherry, cassis and prune. There's a touch of burnt almond on the close that is typical of this popular Sicilian grape variety. Rolivia, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

## SPIRITS

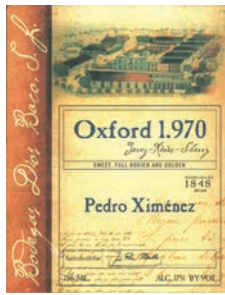


**97** **Aviation Gin (USA; House Spirits, Portland, OR).** With its clean, neutral profile, this graceful gin works well with just about anything, from Aviation cocktails (natch) to bone-dry Martinis. On the palate, look for bewitching hints of caraway, juniper, grapefruit and a dry, faintly spicy finish.  
**abv:** 42% **Price:** \$30

## BEST BUYS



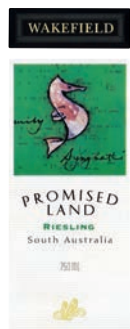
**93** **Quinta do Portal 2009 Colheita (Douro).** An elegant wine, its red fruits balanced with acidity and layers of wood aging. The style is serious, the ripe fruit restrained by the tannins. It will age well, giving an always structured, fine and stylish wine. M Imports, LLC. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

**BEST BUYS**


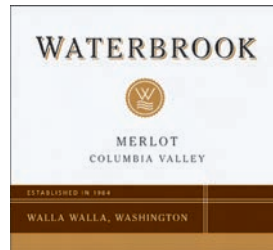
**91 Bodegas Dios Baco S.L. NV Oxford 1.970 Pedro Ximénez (Jerez).** Thick and potent on the nose, with aromas of prune, cola and fig. Feels dense and syrupy, with *dulce de leche*, cocoa and integrated citrus flavors. An unbridled winner with richness, length and raw value; how many \$15 wines rank this high? Not many. CIV/USA. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 17% **Price:** \$15/500 ml



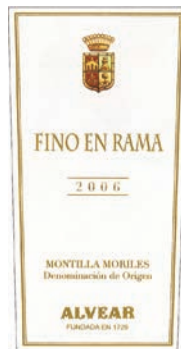
**89 Raiza 2006 Reserva Tempranillo (Rioja).** Traditional in style and approachable, with aromas of brick dust, dried berry, tobacco and leather. Feels lush and just concentrated enough, while the flavors of baked berry, sweet plum and earth work well together. Finishes round and solid. A very good value. Vicente Gandia PLA. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$14



**89 Wakefield Estate 2011 Promised Land Riesling (South Australia).** A bit softer and more approachable than many Australian Rieslings, but it still bears a familial resemblance to Wakefield's Clare Valley Riesling, with hints of crushed stone or chalk and tangerine-citrus notes. Drink now. American Wine Distributors. **Best Buy.** —J.C.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$12

**BEST BUYS**


**89 Waterbrook 2009 Merlot (Columbia Valley).** Quickly becoming one of Washington's best go-to Merlots, the latest from Waterbrook is pretty and smooth, richly endowed with ripe cherry and casis fruit, snappy acidity and a bright, clean finish. The lovely fruit is accented by hints of herb and dried leaves. **Best Buy.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.3% **Price:** \$12



**88 Alvear 2006 Fino en Rama (Montilla-Moriles).** Pure and intense up front, with dry, nutty core aromas and not too much blatant oxidation. Fresh and kicking in the mouth, but still fairly smooth, with nutty, toasty flavors and a hint of baked apple. Nutty, creamy and not too acidic or scouring on the finish. Fine Estates From Spain. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$13/500 ml



**88 Cono Sur 2011 Organically Grown Grapes Sauvignon Blanc (San Antonio).** Opens with peach, bell pepper and mellow mineral notes. About as wet, fresh and zesty as they come, with passion fruit, pineapple and tangerine flavors. Lively, crisp, green and pithy on the finish. Pure liquid freshness from start to finish. Vineyard Brands. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$13

**BEST BUYS**


**88 Cono Sur 2011 Vision Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley).** Fresh, pointed and tropical up front, then nothing but wet and fun in the mouth, with snap pea, fresh bell pepper and lime flavors. Short, tight and ultrafresh on the finish, with a hint of pith and bitterness as it fades away. Really good value SB. Vineyard Brands. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$13



**88 Cru Vin Dogs NV The Loyal Companion (Sonoma County).** Zinfandel and Syrah bring peppery and meaty flavors to this robust, dry red blend. Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec add body, tannins and a rich, dark blackberry depth. Production was a little more than 2,000 cases. **Best Buy.** —S.H.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$13



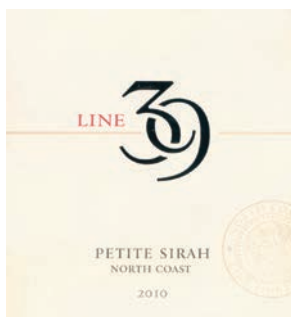
**88 Giesen 2010 Riesling (Marlborough).** Ripe and fragrant, with hints of peaches and cinnamon on the nose, followed by bold, fruit-driven flavors and more than a touch of sweetness. Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. **Best Buy.** —J.C.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$12



## BEST BUYS



**88 Gnarly Head 2010 Pinot Grigio (California).** For the price, this is a great buy. It's rich in fruit and dry, with mouthwatering acidity. The lemon and lime flavors are good enough to inspire you to drink a few glasses and savor more. **Best Buy.** —S.H.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10



**87 Line 39 2010 Petite Sirah (North Coast).** A delightfully easy-drinking Petite Sirah with cherry fruit and licorice overriding a subtle note of tobacco. Drink now. **Best Buy.** —V.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10



**87 Tenuta Rapitalà 2010 Piano Maltese (Sicilia).** A great value white from Sicily, Piano Maltese is a blend of Grillo, Catarratto and Chardonnay that opens with cut grass, citrus, white flower and peach. Overall the wine boasts a floral and fresh quality. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12



## BEST BUYS



**87 Ventisquero 2011 Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley).** About as typical and pleasant as you'll find in this price range. The nose is snappy, with aromas of fresh peas, bell pepper, citrus and wild herbs. Feels light and fresh, with flavors of lime and apple alongside tangerine. San Francisco Wine Exchange. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10



**85 J. Garcia Carrion 2010 Opera Prima Tempranillo (La Mancha).** Shows dark fruit aromas and raisin on the nose, feels fresh, zesty and edgy, with a bright mix of cherry, berry and mild spice flavors. Feels pretty good and offers a reasonably solid and long finish for a \$6 red. CIV/USA. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$6

## ROSÉS

**85 Galil Mountain 2010 Rosé (Upper Galilee).** Chalky accents add character to the red berry and white strawberry aromas and flavors of this wine. It's fresh and clean in the mouth with zippy acidity and an easy finish. Drink now. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$15

**84 Flam 2010 Rosé (Judean Hills).** Made with 70% Cab Franc and 30% Merlot, there is a green streak to this wine that runs alongside tart notes of currant and rhubarb. The mouth is straight-forward but juicy, and the finish mouthwatering. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$30

## CABERNETS & BLENDS

**91 Domaine du Castel 2007 Grand Vin (Haut-Judée).** A delicious vintage of Grand Vin, this wine shows great depth and drinkability now with the promise to age gracefully for at least another five years thanks to a ripe fruit center, medium acidity, structured tannins and superb overall balance. Black fruit and leathery spice dominate, with additional notes of black tea, licorice root, cassis and espresso grinds all fleshing out the complex and layered palate. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$70

**91 Golan Heights Winery 2008 Yarden El Rom Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Galilee).** A stunning and balanced Cab, the El Rom Vineyard boasts ripe blackberry, cherry and cassis aromas and flavors, dusted with accents of cedar, cocoa powder and cigar box spice. Round and hedonistic in the mouth with seductive dark fruit and a mocha-driven finish, this wine is approachable now but can also stand some years in the cellar. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$59

**91 Psagot 2009 Edom (Judean Hills).** A gorgeous Cab-based blend with 17% Cab Franc, 15% Petit Verdot and 7% Merlot, Edom is rich and seductive. Sultry notes of mulled boysenberry and blackberry are infused with cigar tobacco, cedar and roasted cocoa nib accents. A strong structure of firm tannins and moderate acidity carry through to the black-pepper-flecked finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$35

**90 Alexander 2009 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Galilee).** Aged for 20 months in French (70%) and American (30%) oak, this dark and brooding Cab is loaded with woody notes of cigar box, tree bark and leathery spice, but they're balanced by concentrated fruit flavors of black cherry, black currant and plum guts on the palate. Firmly structured with young, gripping tannins and a long finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$36

**90 Galil Mountain 2008 Yiron (Galilee).** For full review see page 11. **Editors' Choice.**  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$22

**90 Galil Mountain 2007 Yiron Kosher Dry Red Wine (Galilee).** Made from 62% Cab Sauv, 31% Merlot and 7% Syrah, this delicious blend offers a fleck of crushed rose-petal florals to the dark fruit core of blackberry, date and chocolate covered black cherry. Full but firmly structured, with roasted cocoa nib, cigar box spice and leather flavors lingering on the finish. Good now, but should hold through 2014. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$22

**90 Gamla 2009 The Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Galilee).** Scents of vanilla bean and crushed violet add interest to the dark-fruit driven bouquet. The firmly structured mouth shows the same depth of flavor, with concentrated notes of boysenberry and cassis that are matched against similarly strong earthy elements of black tea leaves and leathery spice. Royal Wine Corporation. *Editors' Choice.* —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$21

**90 Golan Heights Winery 2008 Yarden Cabernet Sauvignon (Galilee).** For full review see page 11.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$30

**90 Golan Heights Winery 2007 Yarden Katzrin (Galilee).** Only made in exceptional years, the 2007 Katzrin is a Cab-based wine with 9% Merlot that's aged for two years in French oak. It's lush and fruit forward, with aromas and flavors of cassis, black cherry and plum framed by spicy accents of cigar box, fruit cake and cracked black peppercorns. Round and creamy on the palate with a rich mocha and licorice-infused finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$139

**90 Shiloh Winery 2009 Legend (Judean Hills).** This blend of 45% Shiraz, 40% Petite Sirah, 9% Petit Verdot and 6% Merlot exudes complex notes of fresh mint and pressed violet petals against a core of red cherry and plum fruit. Hints of black tea leaves, cocoa nibs and sweet spice linger on the close. It's till young and a bit tight, so decant now or give it some time to mellow. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$30

**90 Shiloh Winery 2009 Secret Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Judean Hills).** Dark and rich, there's a slightly liquorous sensation to the blackberry and cassis core. The medium-weight mouth offers lifting acidity, great balance and depth, with attractive notes of cigar spice, cocoa powder and roasted espresso grinds on the finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$40

**89 Alexander 2007 The Great Amaro Red Wine (Israel).** This is an interesting wine, made from 40% Cab Sauv, 40% Merlot, 7% Petit Verdot, 6% Cab Franc and 4% Shiraz and 3% Grenache in the Italian *appassimento*-style. It's strong and robust, loaded with dark fruit flavors of blackberry, cherry and plum along with a streak of black currant liqueur and espresso with anisette. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$75

**89 Bazelet HaGolan 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Galilee).** Cocoa powder, tobacco leaves and leathery spice all accent the black fruit soul of this wine. Ripe flavors of blackberry, cassis and juicy plum flesh flood the medium weight mouth, framed by a solid structure of gripping tannins that stay through the long close. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$40

**89 Carmel 2007 Kayoumi Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Upper Galilee).** There's a richness to this wine, exhibited through oak-driven, vanilla-infused blackberry aromas, that's lifted by complex accents of anise, leather and cigar box. It's concentrated but approachable with a crushed satin texture to the mouth and a cherry-skin and mocha edge to the flavorful finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**88 Alexander 2009 Gaston-Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot-Shiraz (Galilee).** Fine but gripping tannins provide a solid structure and crushed velvet texture to this wine, which is otherwise loaded with ripe dark cherry, plum and boysenberry fruit flavors. A streak of sweet hickory smoke infuses the nose and mouth, and the finish closes with a light dusting of cocoa powder flavor. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$36

**88 Galil Mountain 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Galilee).** A decadent note of vanilla crème graces the all-fruit preserves and boysenberry center of this Cab. Soft tannins give way to an approachable structure, leading through to a juicy finish flecked with sweet spice accents. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$15

**87 Domaine du Castel 2009 Petit Castel (Haut-Judeé).** This Bordeaux-style blend of 50% Cab Sauv, 45% Merlot and 5% Petit Verdot exhibits an attractive herbal character throughout, with notes of forest foliage accenting the blackberry, cherry and currant core. Gripping and firm in the mouth, with a soft hint of sweet spice on the close. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$50

**87 Flam 2009 Classico (Israel).** There's a bit of warmth to the nose of this wine, but forest berry and red cherry aromas and flavors keep things vibrant and flavorful. It's approachable now with soft tannins and an easygoing structure, ending with a hint of milk chocolate. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Flam 2008 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Israel).** The bouquet of this wine is a little restrained, with soft aromas of black fruit flesh, savory herbs and vanilla bean. The mouth offers more character, with vibrant plum and cherry flavors alongside lifting acidity and approachable tannins. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Psagot 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Judean Hills).** There's a richness to this wine

that's paired with a soft warmth throughout, as forward notes of kirsch, muddled ripe strawberries, braised rhubarb and red-plum flesh flood the nose and mouth. Drinkable now, but with a gripping finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$30

**87 Segal's 2009 Special Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Galilee).** Brambly blackberry and cassis fruit dominates the overall character of this wine, with additional hints of cedary spice and black tea leaves unfolding in the background. A touch of cocoa flavor dusts the medium-length finish, while soft tannins and medium acidity make this an easy drinker now. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$20

**85 Barkan 2010 Classic Merlot-Argaman (Dan).** This 50-50 blend is easy and drinkable now, with a soft structure of delicate red fruit flavors, light tannins and moderate acidity. An herbal, almost leafy character adds depth to the bouquet. Drink now. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$12

## MERLOT

**90 Golan Heights Winery 2007 Yarden Odem Vineyard Merlot (Galilee).** A concentrated and seductive Merlot that's perfect for folks who like 'em big, ripe and oaky. Mulled boysenberries and blueberry compote flood the nose and mouth, with lush notes of milk chocolate, blackcurrant liqueur and dark coffee spicing up the finish. Round and velvet-textured, with medium tannins. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$50

**89 Shiloh Winery 2009 Secret Reserve Merlot (Judean Hills).** With 20 months spent in new French oak, this is a lush and woody wine, with assertive aromas and flavors of sweet spice, vanilla and coffee accenting the black plum and berry fruit core. Round and full in the mouth, with a texture like crushed satin and a long, sweet oak-driven finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$40

**88 Golan Heights Winery 2007 Yarden Merlot (Galilee).** A little coarse and rugged on the nose, there's a meaty and earthy cedar streak to the otherwise black plum and berry fruit core of this Merlot. The concentrated fruit carries through to the medium-weight mouth, with a softly chewy texture of dusty tannins and powdery mocha flavors. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$22

**88 Psagot 2009 Merlot (Judean Hills).** Decadent berry compote leads the bouquet of this wine, while secondary notes of fig and date unfold on the back. The balanced, medium-weight mouth is rich and ripe, with assertive flavors of cherry skin, fudgy chocolate and sweet woody spice that flood the palate and linger on the finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$25



**87 Bazelet HaGolan 2007 Reserve Merlot (Galilee).** A soft acetone streak permeates the red cherry- and berry-driven bouquet, while red fruit and pomegranate flavors dominate the palate. A slightly twiggy herbal accent adds depth and staying power to the finish. Drink now. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$60

**87 Gamla 2009 The Reserve Merlot (Galilee).** Fresh red fruit flavors are framed with interesting and lifting notes of savory herbs, whole tobacco leaf and a touch of milk chocolate. It's juicy and lively with fine tannins and a mouthwatering finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$21

**87 Golan Heights Winery 2006 Yarden Kela Vineyard Merlot (Galilee).** A touch green and stemmy on the nose, but ripe red plum and cherry notes unfold on the palate alongside accents of dusty chocolate-milk mix and sweet baking spice. Medium weight, with an approachable structure and a solid finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$50

**86 Galil Mountain 2009 Merlot (Galilee).** Lightweight and easy in the mouth, with bright, juicy red fruit aromas and flavors spiced up by olive tapenade and fruitcake accents. Clean and balanced with a medium-length finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$15

**85 Binyamina 2007 Reserve Merlot (Upper Galilee).** An easy and drinkable wine, with soft notes of soft black plum and cherry guts along with a hint of savory herb stems. Clean and bright on the finish; drink now. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$25

**85 Flam 2008 Reserve Merlot (Israel).** Mulled red-berry aromas and flavors dominate this wine, with secondary accents of foliage and sweet spice unfolding in the background. It's lean and tight in the mouth with a slightly sharp alcoholic warmth to the close. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Alexander 2009 Reserve Merlot (Galilee).** There's a high-toned streak to the red fruit core of this wine, with secondary accents of chocolate-milk mix and vanilla extract to keep things from being too sharp. Drink now. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$36

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## PINOT NOIR

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**88 Golan Heights Winery 2007 Yarden Pinot Noir (Galilee).** A delicate and approachable selection, there's a true Pinot character to this wine, with bright fruit notes of red cherry, strawberry and red plum flesh, all lifted by accents of *sous bois* and orange peel. Juicy and mouthwatering, with light tannins and a clean finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$28

**86 Galil Mountain 2009 Pinot Noir (Galilee).** A strongly seductive mocha character adds lush-

ness and weight to this easy-drinking red. Flavors of juicy raspberry and ripe cherry abound, while the texture is in the slightly creamy. Drink now. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$18

**84 Barkan 2010 Classic Pinot Noir (Negev).** Easy-drinking and straightforward, this approachable Pinot offers bright notes of red cherry, blueberry and strawberry framed by dusty tannins and a softly herbal finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12

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## SYRAH/SHIRAZ

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**91 Golan Heights Winery 2007 Yarden Yonatan Vineyard Syrah (Galilee).** Lifted and vibrant, this expressive Syrah shows great life and freshness. The red berry and blueberry fruit backbone balances the creamy vanilla and sweet smoke frame. Raspberry, cocoa-dusted cherry, coffee and anise flavors fill the round mouth with a lush, velvety texture; black pepper and baking spice notes remain through the long finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$50

**90 Shiloh Winery 2009 Secret Reserve Shiraz (Judean Hills).** Nuanced scents of crushed purple flower petals, forest floor and raw coconut are supported by a fruity backbone of blackberry and raspberry. The lush mouth is ripe and concentrated, with a satiny texture and bold dark-cherry and plum-flesh flavors framed by hints of cocoa. Drink now—2015. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$40

**89 Alexander 2009 Syrah (Galilee).** Brimming with ripe boysenberry and blueberry compote aromas and complemented by a fudgy chocolate streak, this Syrah is lush and decadent, with good balance and an approachable yet mouth-filling structure. Flecks of black pepper and coffee grinds linger on the medium-length close. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$36

**89 Carmel 2007 Kayoumi Single Vineyard Shiraz (Upper Galilee).** An assertive cured game and sweet smoke streak permeates the bouquet of this single site Shiraz. It's round but structured in the mouth, with fine yet firm tannins and lifting acidity. Fresh black-fruit flavors of plum and cherry abound in the mouth, while a fudgy flavor stays after swallow. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**88 Golan Heights Winery 2007 Yarden Avital Slope Vineyard Syrah (Galilee).** The bouquet of this Syrah is tight and a bit warm, and it takes time to open up. Blueberry and raspberry aromas finally emerge alongside the purple floral and soft game scents. The mouthfeel is creamy and lush, with a weightiness to the rich berry flavors spiced with pepper and mocha. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$50

**87 Binyamina 2009 Reserve Shiraz (Galilee).** Fresh and fruit-forward, there's a nice overall

vibrancy to this wine that makes it an ideal choice for lightly-stewed chicken dishes or pizza. Strawberry and red cherry flavors flood the palate, while a hint of bittersweet chocolate remains after swallow. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25

**86 Golan Heights Winery 2007 Yarden Syrah (Galilee).** Ripe and easy-drinking, this thick Syrah is brimming with fleshy black cherry, blueberry and blackberry fruit flavors alongside hints of violet and milk chocolate powder. It's very round and filling in the mouth, with a fudgy finish. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$25

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## OTHER RED WINES

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**90 Barkan 2007 Superieur Pinotage (Judean Hills).** This is a big and brooding wine, with a lot of aromas and flavors going on all at once: black currant liqueur, anise, cured meat, black plum, sweet spice and dark chocolate. The mouth is full and firmly structured, with intensely concentrated dark fruit character that evolves into a chicory-infused finish. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Carmel 2007 Appellation Old Vines Petite Sirah (Judean Hills).** Dusty cocoa and tree bark notes lead the nose, with additional supporting characteristics of black licorice, jerky, cigar box and tar. Mulled boysenberry and blackberry fruit forms the center. Bold and expressive, this fairly intense wine shows excellent concentration and depth of flavors. Pair with similarly assertive red-meat entrées. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$30

**88 Carmel 2007 Appellation Old Vines Carignan (Shomron).** Blackcurrant liquor, licorice root and roasted espresso aromas all pepper the black berry fruit core of this wine. A firm, mouth-coating structure and medium tannins give longevity and texture to the finish, along with a touch of fudgy milk chocolate flavor. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$30

**86 Shiloh Winery 2009 Shor Barbera (Judean Hills).** Bright and vibrant, with slightly liquorous red cherry and berry aromas as well as a softly herbaceous streak throughout. The fruit is fresh and the palate light, but it's all a touch fleeting on the close. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$30

**85 Galil Mountain 2008 Barbera (Upper Galilee).** This Barbera has an almost Pinot-like character to it, with hints of coffee, earthy tobacco and mushroom to the red cherry fruit profile. It's lightweight and easy drinking, with a softly woody finish. Drink now. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

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## DESSERT WINES

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**90 Carmel 2007 Sha'al Single Vineyard Late Harvest Gewürztraminer (Galilee).** This

late harvest selection boasts ripe apricot, lychee, golden raisin, honeydew and baked apple fruit characters alongside glimmers of sweet spice, candied orange rind and raw honeycomb. It's full and deliciously weighty in the mouth, with a stunning ginger-infused lift to the long close. Royal Wine Corporation. —L.B.  
**abv:** 10.5% **Price:** \$26/375 ml

**88 Golan Heights Winery 2009 Yarden Muscat (Galilee).** This Muscat offers notes of guava, mango, yellow peach and lychee braced with an appropriate touch of acetone-like lift. It's round and mouth-coating on the palate with an orange oil and sweet spice accent on the back. Pair with a simple dessert, like lemon pound cake with vanilla ice cream. Yarden Wines, Inc. —L.B.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$18/500 ml

## PORTUGAL

### WHITE WINES

**94 Cartuxa 2009 Pêra-Manca Branco (Alentejo).** One of Portugal's legendary wines, this white Pêra-Manca is beautifully rounded and ripe, with apricots, toast and an intense series of fruit and herbal flavors. It has concentration, while also showing great elegance and impressive aging potential. Drink in two years, but also age for five. Tri-Vin Imports. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$33

**92 Herdade da Malhadinha Nova 2010 Malhadinha Branco (Alentejano).** With some Chardonnay in the blend, this is a wine that combines a toasty character with rich yellow fruit and green plums. There is a good tang of orange zest that brightens the aftertaste of this rich wine. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$44

**89 Herdade de São Miguel 2010 San Miguel Branco (Alentejano).** Perfumed green plum aromas impart an attractive floral quality to this wine, which also has some wood aging. The acidity is light but just right for the textured white fruit flavors. There is good freshness on the finish. Saraiva Enterprises. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$10

**88 Dao Sul 2010 Casa de Santar Branco (Dão).** A rich and rounded wine, with attractive ripe fruit and pear flavors. The wine is soft, with just the lightest tang of acidity and lime zest. Not for aging. Grape Moments. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Herdade da Malhadinha Nova 2010 Monte da Peceguina Branco (Alentejano).** While the wine is packed with ripe kiwi and peach fruit, it also has a crisp citrus core that gives freshness. The acidity cuts through the warm fruits and tight finish. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$20

**87 Herdade de São Miguel 2010 Colheita Seleccionada (Alentejano).** This is a very crisp wine dominated by herbaceous notes and intense

acidity. It is bright and lively, hinting at spice and toast and tantalizingly fresh on the finish. Saraiva Enterprises. —R.V.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$10

**87 Kopke 2010 Reserva Branco (Douro).** A deliciously fresh wine, the bright acidity coming from green fruit and peaches. A creamy character adds a sense of roundness, but there is a crisp, taut aftertaste. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Burmester 2010 Reserva Branco (Douro).** Creamy apple and pear flavors give this wine a bright, while full-bodied style. Wood tastes and taut acidity combine easily with the fruit. Drink now. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Campolargo 2010 Branco Arinto (Bairrada).** Heavily toasted aromas promise strong wood flavors. The fruit, rich with pear flavors, balances that wood, although the wine does need a few months more integration. Tri-Vin Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

**86 Campolargo 2010 Entre Il Santos (Bairrada).** A smooth, creamed apple-wine, ripe and delicious. It has a sweet feel to it, the acidity just giving a bite. A great apéritif. Tri-Vin Imports. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$11

**86 Dao Sul 2010 Cabriz Branco Encruzado (Dão).** Made from Dão's signature Encruzado grape, this has ripe almonds, yellow fruit and a seductive perfumed character. It's a rounded wine, the acidity well integrated into the ripe character. Drink now, but could age a year. Aidil Wines & Liquor Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Dao Sul 2010 Monte da Cal Branco (Alentejano).** A soft, rounded melon and pear flavored wine. Very fruity, it is rich, smooth and ready to drink. Aidil Wines & Liquor Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Herdade de São Miguel 2010 Ciconia Branco (Alentejano).** A soft fruited wine, its flavors are rounded with an attractive sunny feel. The wine is ripe while also attractively light, finishing with just the right amount of acidity. Tri-Vin Imports. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$8

**86 Quinta do Pinto 2010 Vinhas do Lasso Branco (Lisboa).** Apples, green plums and peaches go with lemon zest acidity in this soft, fruity white wine. It is ready for drinking, finishing with an attractive warm finish. Vino Cava. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Poças 2010 Coroa d'Ouro Branco (Douro).** A broad wine, but with flavors of ripe melon, kiwi and an edge of lime. It is rounded and warm, although with a good final crisp edge of acidity. Suprex International. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12

**84 Aveleda 2010 Praia (Vinho Verde).** A just off-dry Vinho Verde, fresh and spritzy. Acidity, sweet apples and a breezy citrus edge combine easily and lightly. Ready to drink. Kysela Père et Fils. —R.V.  
**abv:** 10% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Finisterra 2010 Branco (Alentejano).** This wine features soft apple and pear fruit with light tannins and grapefruit freshness. It is clean, well-made and ready to drink. Value Vines LLC. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$7

**82 Dao Sul 2010 Casa de Santar Terras do Dão (Dão).** A rare, maybe unique, blend of Arinto and Sauvignon Blanc, which imparts a curiously mineral character. The fresh character of both grape varieties seem lost in the rounded character of the wine. Grape Moments. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$NA

### SPARKLING WINES

**86 Murganheira 2005 Rosé Bruto (Vinho Espumante de Qualidade).** Attractive, soft raspberry fruit is evident, along with some toast. Flavors have light spice and balanced acidity, finishing with a yeasty character. Aidil Wines & Liquor Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Murganheira 2005 Bruto (Vinho Espumante de Qualidade).** The perfumes of Malvasia Fina shine in this attractive dry sparkling wine. It is fruity, although with a yeasty edge, creating a fine apéritif style. Aidil Wines & Liquor Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

### RED WINES

**94 Quinta da Romaneira 2008 Tinto (Douro).** Since we last reviewed a vintage of Romaneira, with the 2005 wine, the estate has moved closer to realizing its potential. This is an impressive, powerful yet elegant wine. Its dark fruits are sustained by wood and leavened by acidity. It has a great sense of style and considerable aging potential. Southern Wine and Spirits. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**93 Herdade da Malhadinha Nova 2009 Malhadinha Tinto (Alentejano).** At this high alcohol, the wine should be bursting the envelope. Yet it still has great elegance, its richness rolling around the mouth. Red- and blackberry-jelly flavors are laced with fine tannins and a young, juicy aftertaste. Only at the end does the alcohol show. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$90

**93 José Maria da Fonseca 2008 Domini Plus (Douro).** For full review see page 5. **Cellar Selection.**  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**93 Quinta do Portal 2009 Colheita (Douro).** For full review see page 13. **Best Buy.**  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

**92 Cartuxa 2007 Foral de Evora Colheita (Alentejo).** A powerful expression of rich red fruit, smoothed by wood aging and nearly four years in bottle. It has layers of acidity, spice, soft tannins and flavors of maturing fruit. It is ready to drink now but worth aging as well. Tri-Vin Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$19

**92 Dao Sul 2008 Quinta das Tecedeiras Reserva (Douro).** A big, ripe earthy wine, layered with tannins and dark black fruits. It has density and concentration, while keeping a sense of freshness and balance. A powerful and impressive wine that will age well. Aidil Wines & Liquor Inc. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$30

**92 Herdade de São Miguel 2009 Reserva (Alentejano).** A big, black-colored wine, impressively rich. Fermented in open stone lagars, it has an opulent ripe character, the black fruits sweet and generous. At the same time, the dense tannic structure promises good aging. Keep for 5–6 years or more. Saraiva Enterprises. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$33

**92 Quinta do Portal 2009 Duradouro (Vinho da Mesa).** A blend of fruit from the Spanish Ribera del Duero and the Portuguese Douro and made at Quinta do Portal in the Douro. It's a seamless blend that as produced a ripe, spicy wine with a fine structure of ripe, dry tannins, along with black cherry and currant fruits. Age for 2–3 years. M Imports, LLC. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$29

**91 José Maria da Fonseca 2009 Domingos (Setubal).** For full review see page 9.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

**90 Burmester 2009 Reserva (Douro).** This is a firm, structured wine but with the warmth of ripe blackberries. The dusty tannins offer a framework for the spice and richness, punctuated by acidity. This elegant wine will age for 2–4 years. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**90 Campolargo 2008 Pinot Noir (Bairrada).** Very true to the variety, this is a soft, barnyardy, raspberry flavored wine. With its ripe fruit and well integrated tannins, it has a smooth mouthfeel that is freshened with acidity on the finish. Tri-Vin Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$31

**90 José Maria da Fonseca 2009 Domini (Douro).** For full review see page 11. **Editors' Choice.**  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$16

**90 Quinta da Romaneira 2009 Syrah (Duriense).** A smoothly rich wine, this unusual Syrah from the Douro valley shows how good the variety can be there. It flows easily and generously in the mouth, with black cherry, sweet tannins and light acidity. Probably not for long aging, but delicious. Southern Wine and Spirits. —R.V.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$40

**89 Castro Pena Alba 2008 Duvalley Reserva (Douro).** This is a firm and dark colored wine, dense and very concentrated. Its black fruits are ripe and structured, layering intense acidity with delicious blackberry jam; the tannins blended into the ripe texture. Wine Enterprises LLC. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Dao Sul 2009 Quinta das Tecedeiras Flor de Tecedeiras (Douro).** A fresh wine, with red berry fruit and fine acidity. It has a firm core of tannins balanced with the fruit. The wine, made from 20-year-old vines, is likely to be ready to drink in the next two years. Aidil Wines & Liquor Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$15

**89 Dao Sul 2009 Quinta do Encontro Q do E (Bairrada).** A juicy, fruity wine with just a line of tannins at its core. Its red berry fruits are delicious and easy to drink, the wine with its richness needs no aging. It's pure fruit bomb pleasure. Aidil Wines & Liquor Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Kopke 2009 Reserva (Douro).** With its red currant fruit and layered tannins, this is a full-bodied, solidly structured wine. It has fine, ripe juicy acidity to go with the firm finish. The wine could age for 2–3 years, but is ready to drink now. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Quinta da Romaneira 2008 Sino da Romaneira (Douro).** Impressively textured, this is the second wine of Quinta da Romaneira. It brings out black fruit, acidity and a well balanced layer of tannins. It's a wine that will age over the short-term, but is already delicious to drink. Southern Wine and Spirits. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$25

**89 Quinta do Pinto 2004 Vinhas do Lasso Reserva (Alenquer).** A ripe wine, its fruits showing rich maturity. Black plums are melded with soft tannins, a jammy texture and a suggestion of wood aging. The wine is ready to drink. VINO CAVA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Campolargo 2008 Entre II Santos (Bairrada).** The vineyard is between two small churches. The wine is ripe and juicy, with a core of firm tannins that give it depth and structure. A great value that is ready to drink. Tri-Vin Imports. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$10

**88 Caves Velhas 2008 Catedral (Dão).** Spicy wood and ripe fruit go well together in this young-tasting wine. At this stage, it is all black fruit with a bright line of acidity. The weight and the more structured character will come later. Admiral Imports. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$9

**88 Herdade de São Miguel 2010 Ciconia The Reserva (Alentejano).** Still young, this is a firmly tannic wine, its fruit under this dry surface. Give it a few months for the ripe blackcurrant and blackberry

fruits to come forward. In two years, it will be a finely balanced wine. Tri-Vin Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

**88 Herdade de São Miguel 2010 Colheita Seleccionada (Alentejano).** A finely structured, still young wine with an edge of austerity. It does have a rich core of red fruit, giving a slightly juicy character, but with its tannins it will always be a firm wine, dense and serious. Saraiva Enterprises. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**88 Poças 2008 Coroa d'Ouro Tinto (Douro).** Well balanced, ready-to-drink wine. It has a dry core of tannins that are surrounded by accessible blackberry and juicy cranberry fruit. The feel is open, soft and warming. Suprex International. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12

**87 Campolargo 2008 Os Corvos da Vinha da Costa Po (Bairrada).** Named after the crows that fly on the Campolargo estate, this is a warm, ripe-ly fruity wine with sweet flavors and soft tannins. It is ready to drink, a delicious winter warmer. Tri-Vin Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$13

**87 Dao Sul 2008 Cabriz Touriga Nacional (Dão).** This big-seller is a delicious mint and wood polished wine, its berry fruits rounded and softened. The tannins meld easily into a warm, rich, accessible, forward-fruited wine that is definitely ready to drink. Aidil Wines & Liquor Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Herdade da Malhadinha Nova 2010 Monte da Peceguina (Alentejano).** With soft tannins and sweet red-berry fruits, this is a wine that is made for early drinking. It does have a firm core serving to give shape to this otherwise smooth, juicy, fruity wine. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**87 José Maria da Fonseca 2009 Periquita (Setubal).** This attractive, soft and fresh wine is fruity, with red berry flavors, balanced acidity and warm tannins. With its light touch of spice, it is ready to drink. Palm Bay International. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

**87 Quinta do Portal 2008 Mural Reserva (Douro).** Sweet and fruity, this is a balanced, ripe wine. It brings blackberry fruit right up front, the tannins soft and warm. With its attractive edge of acidity there is just the right amount of freshness as a contrast. M Imports, LLC. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$11

**86 C. Cruz & Co 2007 Calheiros Cruz (Douro).** A big, bold, ripe wine. It is full-bodied and peppery, full of blueberry fruit. Soft tannins finish with a light dry edge. Ready to drink. Wine Adventures Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Cartuxa 2010 EA Tinto (Alentejano).** The lightest wine from Cartuxa, EA stands for Eu-

gênio de Almeida, the creator of the charity that owns the winery. It's simple and fruity, with attractive tannins and red cherry fruit. Ready to drink. Tri-Vin Imports. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$10

**86 Evidência 2007 Dão.** An evidently wood-matured wine, it has spice and toast as well as black currant fruits. It is soft, ripe and ready to drink. Wine Adventures Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Herdade de São Miguel 2010 Ciconia (Alentejano).** A soft, earthy wine with light fruits and plum jelly flavors. It is a wine that should be drunk young to enjoy its balance of fruitiness, acidity and light tannins. Screwcap. Tri-Vin Imports. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

**83 Finisterra 2010 Tinto (Alentejano).** A soft, open wine with only light tannins. The fruit is just as light, with strawberry and some spice. For drinking now. Value Vines LLC. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$7

**80 Quinta do Pinto 2008 Touriga Nacional (Lisboa).** A curious sauerkraut perfume leads to a hard edged wine, the wood not in balance with the fruit. It is raw and not completely clean. Two bottles tasted. Vino Cava. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

## VINTAGE PORT

**97 Taylor Fladgate 2009 Vargellas Vinha Velha Vintage Port.** For full review see page 3. **Cellar Selection.**  
**abv:** 20.5% **Price:** \$NA

**96 Taylor Fladgate 2009 Vintage Port.** For full review see page 3. **Cellar Selection.**  
**abv:** 20.5% **Price:** \$NA

**95 Fonseca 2009 Vintage Port.** For full review see page 3. **Cellar Selection.**  
**abv:** 20.5% **Price:** \$NA

**93 Croft 2009 Vintage Port.** For full review see page 5.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$NA

**92 Ramos-Pinto 2009 Quinta da Ervamoira Vintage Port.** A supremely ripe Port from Ramos-Pinto's vineyard in the far east of the Douro. It is finely perfumed, with layered tannins upon structured plum skins and black cherry fruit. It's in a fruity style, but the structure certainly promises aging. Maisons Marques & Domaines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 19.5% **Price:** \$88

**92 Wiese & Krohn 1983 Colheita Tawny Port.** Wiese & Krohn have made a specialty of Colheitas, vintage-dated wood-aged Ports. This 1983, aged in wood for 28 years, is an opulent, ripe example of the style. It is sweet and very concentrated, with burnt old wood flavors to go with raisins and prunes. The acidity

is intense, a fine counterpoint to the rich fruit. Megawine Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$45

**91 Poças 2009 Vintage Port.** A big, bold, black vintage Port, already enticingly perfumed, packed with as much rich fruit as tannin. It's in the sweet vintage Port arena, an immediately attractive wine, yet layered with enough structure to keep it maturing for many years. The final sense is all richness. HGC Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$75

**89 Poças 2006 Late Bottled Vintage Port.** This is an LBV that could well age. Its tannins are still firm, although it does already have a delicious perfume of violets and rose hips, along with sweet black fruit. It will need decanting if drunk now. HGC Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$25

**89 Wiese & Krohn 2000 Colheita Tawny Port.** For a wood-aged colheita, this is a young wine, the color still ruby and the raisins and sweet damson fruit still in evidence. The wood-aging comes through to give almond and coffee complexity. Megawine Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$20

**89 Wiese & Krohn 1997 Colheita Tawny Port (Port).** Fourteen years in wood have given a wine that shows dried fruit, a definite old-toast character, along with nuts, licorice and intense acidity. The alcohol gives a burn to the wine and does hide some of the richness. Megawine Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$25

**88 Ramos-Pinto 2007 Late Bottled Vintage Port.** A perfumed wine, with aromas of lavender and ripe plum jelly. On the palate, the wine has great ripeness and sweet tannins, the fruit showing red berries, the sweet spice pounding through the acidity. Maisons Marques & Domaines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$26

**87 Cálem 2006 Late Bottled Vintage Port.** Raisins and ripe fruit combine in this LBV that has some richness while remaining on the dry side. Blackberry jelly is layered with acidity and a dark tannic structure. For drinking now. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Rozes 2009 Quinta do Pêgo Vintage Port.** Quinta do Pêgo produces a light, fast maturing style of vintage Port. This 2009 has the bonus of great richness, although its fruity character and soft tannins suggest it will mature rapidly. Vranken America. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$28

## NONVINTAGE PORT

**93 Burmester NV 30-Year-Old White Port.** Wood-aged white Port giving the gold color and an aged toast character. The wine, aged for an average of 30 years in barrel has sweetness, but this has been

transformed into maturity, richness and a final almond flavor. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$NA/375 ml

**93 Burmester NV 40-Year-Old White Port.** The color is now deep amber, the result of long wood aging. The wine has retained its sweetness as well as its freshness, the acidity shooting through. A wine almost at its limit of aging, with immense concentration. It is for sipping and appreciating slowly. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$NA/375 ml

**93 Wiese & Krohn NV 30 Anos Tawny Port.** The old gold color promises a long-aged wine. Fruit has gone, morphing into almond and walnut flavors, tense acidity, great concentration and a smooth unctuous texture. It's a superb Port, offering calm contemplation. Megawine Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20.5% **Price:** \$80

**92 Rozes NV Over 40 Years Old Tawny Port.** This old tawny Port has developed a green-gold color and extreme concentration. With a beautiful floral perfume, the flavors are of almonds, acidity and a bite of spirit, while overall is the beautiful smooth texture. Vranken America. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$56

**91 Burmester NV 20-Year-Old White Port.** With its fine aged-wood and fruit character, this is a sweet yet complex wine. Toast, almonds, a hint of spirit and the palate and delicate acidity all combine easily in a harmonious wine whose closest comparison is with a great amontillado. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$NA/375 ml

**91 Kopke NV 20-Years-Old Tawny Port.** A rich, smooth, sweet wine, full of caramel and almonds, with just a hint of acidity. The spirit edge gives the right bite in this mature, rounded, delicious tawny. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$NA

**91 Wiese & Krohn NV 20 Anos Tawny Port.** In this 20-year-old tawny, you find a marvelous balance between fruit and extreme concentration. Burnt wood-aged flavors and acidity play with raisins and black figs give a sweet wine with a hint of dryness. Ready to drink. Megawine Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20.5% **Price:** \$60

**88 Kopke NV 10-Years-Old Tawny Port.** The red fruit character merges easily into a more mature, nutty character. The Port has a smooth, rich, chocolate texture, the dryness of wood aging just beginning to show through the sweet caramel. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Wiese & Krohn NV 10 Anos Tawny Port.** Dried fruit with great freshness in this warm, rounded 10-year-old tawny. It has delicious acidity, ripe fruitiness and a caramel richness. Like all aged tawnies, it is ready to drink. Megawine Inc. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$23

**87 Rozes NV Porto White Reserva Port.** A sweet style of white Port, almost tawny in character, with nuts, acidity and old fruit flavors. Crystallized red fruits add an extra element. Drink by itself, or as long cocktail with tonic. Vranken America. **Best Buy.**—R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$12

**85 Kopke NV Reserve Tawny Port (Port).** A soft, open wine, with flavors of wood aging to go with the sweet caramel and red fruit tastes. The wine has just a hint of tannin to hold it all together. Sogevinus Fine Wines USA. —R.V.  
**abv:** 20% **Price:** \$NA

## SPANISH WHITES

### RÍAS BAIXAS

**87 Maior de Mendoza 2010 Sobre Lías Albariño (Rías Baixas).** Neutral aromas suggest peach, apple and minerality. Solid, compact and healthy on the palate, with peach and white pepper flavors. Good on the finish but starting to show some maturity; at peak level now so drink immediately or wait for the 2011. M Imports, LLC. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**85 Lusco 2010 Albariño (Rías Baixas).** Opens with peachy, citric and saline aromas. Feels moderately fresh, but seems as though it's starting to mature as it's fleshy and pithy. Flavors of nectarine, orange and bitter pith are good but lack that ethereal quality that can make Albariño special. Drink now. Opici Wines. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$30

**85 Zarate 2010 Albariño (Rías Baixas).** Minerally on the bouquet, with apple and oceanic notes. Turns citric and acidic on the palate, with pineapple, orange and tangy flavors. Shows astringency on the finish, but at least it's juicy and driving. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$25

**85 Zarate 2009 Balado Albariño (Rías Baixas).** Tight, citric and minerally up front, with less-than-expressive white fruit aromas. Extremely high in acidity, which is why this wine is still kicking. Tastes of tart white grapes and citrus, with zest galore on the finish. 220 cases produced. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —M.S.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$60

**84 Lusco 2010 Zios Albariño (Rías Baixas).** Peach, melon and light oceanic aromas. Feels a bit flat, with slightly bitter flavors of almond skin and pithy citrus. Picks up steam on the finish courtesy of lasting acidity. Opici Wines. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

### OTHER WHITE WINES

**88 Masies d'Avinyo 2010 Abadal Chardonnay-Sauvignon Blanc-Picapoll (Pla de Bages).** Smells clean as a mountain stream, with apple,

peach and mellow citric aromas. Shows medium intensity and controlled citrusy acids along with grapefruit, pineapple and passion fruit flavors that come largely from the 20% Sauvignon Blanc in the blend; the rest is 70% Chardonnay and 10% the local Picapoll grape. Interesting, and a very good Catalonian white wine to match with seafood. Grapes of Spain. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$19

**87 Albet I Noya 2010 XA Vinyes Velles Made with Organic Grapes Xarel-lo (Penedès).** Opens with waxy, sweet aromas of yellow apples and honey. Feels good, round and balanced, with Golden Delicious apple flavors sweetened by honey drippings and melon. Stays sweet but maintains a fruit component on the finish even as the texture and intensity dissipate. Good for varietal Xarel-lo. Opici Wines. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Albet I Noya 2010 Petit Albet Made with Organic Grapes Chardonnay-Xarel-lo (Penedès).** Feels sturdy and properly acidic, with melon, papaya and apple flavors running alongside almond bitterness. Simple and quick on the finish; 60% Xarel-lo and 40% Chardonnay. Opici Wines. —M.S.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$13

**86 Marqués de Cáceres 2010 Satinela Medium-Sweet (Rioja).** Seems as though this medium-sweet Viura-Malvasia blend has gotten better in recent years as the winery has dialed down the sweetness and weight. Lately, this vintage included, Satinela has been fresh, cleanly made and easygoing, with sweet pear and peach flavors and not too much weight or residual sugar. Captures the essence of medium sweet. Vineyard Brands. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$9

**84 Finca Antigua 2010 Viura (La Mancha).** Aromas of lemon blossom, apple and melon are friendly enough, and the palate has a clean, lifted feel. Flavors of pineapple, green apple and citrus are fresh but limited, while the finish is zesty but turns towards bitterness and almond skin. Winebow. —M.S.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**83 J. Garcia Carrion 2010 Opera Prima Sweet White (La Mancha).** Moscato aromas leap from the glass, taking the form of shampoo, lychee and jasmine. Feels light but choppy, with dilute lychee and green melon flavors. Not too sticky or cloying. CIV/USA. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 10.5% **Price:** \$8

**83 Raimat 2010 Castell de Raimat Chardonnay (Costers del Segre).** Yellow in color, then fleshy and floral on the nose, with a hint of peach but also corn stalks. Feels full and clumsy, with sharp acidity and corny, cidery key flavors. Struggles to reach that next level. Aveniü Brands, Inc. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$10

**81 Bodegas Riojanas 2010 Viña Albina Semi Dulce (Rioja).** Unusual aromas of creamed corn and exotic notes are too unfamiliar to register properly. It's thick but not entirely cloying, with powdered sugar and dried mango flavors. Weird stuff that

probably won't find too many takers. Vintage Wines Inc. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**81 Carlos Serres 2010 Serres Viura (Rioja).** Stalky smelling, with a mineral streak. Feels tangy and lean, with lemon, sour apple and white currant flavors. Short on the finish. Testa Wines Of The World. —M.S.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$10

**81 Vega Sindoa 2010 Chardonnay (Navarra).** Powdery and oaky smelling, with not much fruit to get excited about. Feels soft and mushy, with banana, pear and resinous vanilla flavors. Feels resinous on the finish, too. Fine Estates From Spain. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$14

**80 Torito Bravo NV Sweet Chardonnay-Moscato (Spain).** Strained from front to back. The nose smells pickled and funky, while the palate is boring in feel and tastes candied but also a lot like brine or caper juice. Sweet on the finish. Indigo Wine Group. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

## SPANISH REDS

### RIBERA DEL DUERO

**92 Dominio de Atauta 2008 Ribera del Duero.** Even in marginal vintages like 2008, Atauta manages to shine above the rest. This delivers a gorgeous mix of blackberry blended with complex notes of fine herbs, vanilla and chocolate. It's alert in the mouth, with strong but manageable tannins and full flavors of berry, cherry and vanilla. Short but precise on the finish; drink now through 2015. Aviva Vino. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$32

**89 Condado de Oriza 2006 Reserva (Ribera del Duero).** Opens in good form, with aromas of blackberry, rubber and earth. Feels a touch chunky and heavy, but it's easygoing and offers full flavors of berry fruits, rubber, hoisin sauce and fig. Finishes smooth and round; drink now. Luneau USA Inc. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Finca Torremilanos 2008 Torremilanos (Ribera del Duero).** Lightly herbal on the nose, but otherwise it's ripe and ready to go. The feel is slightly tannic and tight, but it's as fresh and healthy as can be. Flavors of raspberry, red plum and mild spice are comported and correct. Finishes long, with vigor. Drink now through 2014. Grapes of Spain. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**88 Convento Oreja 2006 Memoria Reserva (Ribera del Duero).** Soft and raisiny on the bouquet, with leather, earth, prune and baked qualities. Feels meaty and solid in the mouth, with drawing tannins along with herbal, moderately intense blackberry flavors. Darkens up on the finish, where cocoa, prune and coffee flavors are dominant. Drink now. Kysela Père et Fils. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$49

**88 Viña Arnáiz 2008 Crianza (Ribera del Duero).** For full review see page 13.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25

**88 Viña Mayor 2006 Reserva (Ribera del Duero).** A totally pleasant wine, with earthy berry and toast aromas that lead to a full, cushioned, properly tannic palate. Shows lemony oak, citrusy notes, tomato, herbs, plum and raspberry flavors. Finishes dry, with tobacco as a lingering flavor. A very nice, dry style of Ribera reserva. HAB North America. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$25

**87 Convento San Francisco 2006 Ribera del Duero.** After an aromatic opening that includes wet leather, rubber and brine, this wine finds its stride, and while it's firmly tannic, the flavors of dark fruits, tomato, herbs, tobacco and cured meats do the trick. It gets better the longer it sits; drink now but give it as much air as possible. Winebow. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$30

**86 Bodegas Peñafiel 2008 Miro (Ribera del Duero).** Starts out odd and exotic, with blueberry and Middle Eastern spice aromas. Feels condensed and jammy, with full flavors of herbs, boysenberry and plum. Shows freshness along with simplicity, with finishing herbal notes of sage and tarragon. Contains 10% each Merlot and Cabernet. Vino Cava. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$13

**84 Bodegas Peñafiel 2006 Miro de Ribera Crianza (Ribera del Duero).** On the plus side, the wine is exotic and different, with blueberry, herbal notes, juniper and roasted aromas. But in the mouth, it's lean to the point of being thin, with sharp acidity and tight red plum, pie cherry and herbal flavors. Short on the finish, with tang and scour. Vino Cava. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$27

**84 Finca El Encinal 2008 Single Vineyard Tempranillo Crianza (Ribera del Duero).** Jumpy and funky on the nose, with a lack of cohesion and a scent of wet dog. Feels grabby but lacks concentration; tastes herbal and mildly candied, with a scratchy and sweet tasting finish. Good but doesn't stand up to scrutiny. Vision Wine & Spirits. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$17

## RIOJA

**97 Bodegas Roda 2009 Cirsion (Rioja).** Solid as a battleship, with lemony oak, marzipan and layer upon layer of black fruit aromas. Almost syrupy in its richness but not fully; it's chewy and creamy, with vital acids. The flavors are mega ripe and rich, emphasizing blackberry, black cherry preserves, fudge and fig paste. Yet at the same time it's an ethereal wine; the epitome of modern Rioja. Drink now through 2015. Kobrand. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$250

**95 Sierra Cantabria 2009 Finca El Bosque (Rioja).** El Bosque is Eguren family top-shelf Rioja that's a knockout. It's dark as night, with dusty aro-

mas of cola, cocoa, marzipan, blackberry and spice all rolled into a finessed whole. Feels tight as a drum but balanced, with monstrous flavors of boysenberry, cassis, peppercorn, baking spices and chocolate. Young and raring to go; hold until 2013 then drink through 2018. Fine Estates From Spain. *Cellar Selection.* —M.S.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$170

**94 Viñedos de Paganos 2009 La Nieta (Rioja).** This single-vineyard Rioja always impresses through its impeccable balance, depth of aromas and richness. Aromas of jammy blackberry come with blueberry, orange peel, graham cracker and graphite. It's tight and mildly tannic, with pure boysenberry, cassis, roasted plum, charred spice and toast flavors. Coconut, vanilla and coffee flavors are on the front side of the finish. A beautiful wine that will be best from 2013–2016. Fine Estates From Spain. *Editors' Choice.* —M.S.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$165

**92 Carlos Serres 2004 Onomástica Reserva (Rioja).** For full review see page 6.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**92 Marqués de Cáceres 2009 MC (Rioja).** For full review see page 7.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$33

**92 Valenciso 2005 Reserva (Rioja).** Smooth and inviting from the start, with floral aromas, popping cherry and ripe plum on the bouquet. Feels fresh and forward, with black cherry, cola, baked plum and spice flavors. Gets it right all the way through, with smoothness and chocolaty oak on the finish. Drink now through 2015. Classical Wines. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$41

**91 Artadi 2008 Viñas de Gain (Rioja).** Tight and edgy but ultimately oaky and generous on the nose, with earth, vanilla, dried cheese and blackberry notes. Feels cushioned and complete, with depth of feel and flavor; tastes of deep berry, mild herbs and finally a toasty wave of coffee and chocolate takes over. Impressive for a 2008; drink now through 2014. Folio Fine Wine Partners. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**91 Bodegas Riojanas 2004 Monte Real Reserva (Rioja).** Ripe and leaning to the dark fruit side, with spicy blackberry aromas. Feels round and complete as it unfolds, and not at all edgy. Flavors of plum, cocoa and spice come with toasty oak, and the finish is bright and snappy. Will age for another decade without much trouble, but it's more than drinkable now. Vintage Wines Inc. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$27

**91 Carlos Serres 2004 Gran Reserva (Rioja).** For full review see page 8.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$30

**91 Ysios 2005 Reserva (Rioja).** Arguably the best Ysios reserva to date; it shows a full, lightly baked bouquet with berry aromas, spice, barrel char and herbs. Feels fresh and lush, with balance and tasty flavors of black fruit, fig, tobacco and chocolaty oak. It's a touch oaky and warm on the finish, but elegant and

very well made. Drink now through 2015. Pernod Ricard. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**90 Dinastía Vivanco 2005 Reserva (Rioja).** Rooty, leathery and spicy aromas accent dry baked-berry notes. The feel is smooth and natural, with texture and acidity supporting toasty, leathery, spicy berry and plum flavors. Mildly baked tasting on the finish, with cinnamon and pepper accents. Drink now through 2014. Opici Wines. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25

**90 Marqués de Riscal 2005 Reserva (Rioja).** Textbook Rioja reserva from a legendary label and a top vintage. Smells lightly baked and smooth, with leather, tobacco, raspberry and spice. Feels zesty, clean and pure, with reedy berry, tobacco and leathery baked plum flavors. Savory and smooth on the finish. Drink now through 2014. Shaw-Ross International Importers. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$17

**89 Beronia 2004 Gran Reserva (Rioja).** Elegant and classically built on the nose, with lemony oak, coconut, cola and dried cherry aromas. Feels a bit high in acidity, with raspberry, dry spice and tobacco flavors. Juicy and long on the finish, and with this type of acidity it'll last another decade, no sweat. Drink now through 2020. San Francisco Wine Exchange. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$28

**89 Bodegas Franco-Españolas 2006 Rioja Bordón Reserva (Rioja).** Classic in its aromas, earthiness, zesty acidity and dried fruit character. The mouthfeel is bright, juicy and fresh, with earthy berry flavors, a mild baked element, chocolate notes and leather. Expands on the finish, and overall this is a textbook wine that's honest and sings of what Rioja represents. Vision Wine & Spirits. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

**89 Carlos Serres 2005 Reserva (Rioja).** Gets going with rooty, spicy aromas along with baked plum scents and fresh berry accents. Feels racy, tight and snappy, with dry spice, tomato, tobacco, pepper and raspberry comprising the flavors. Finishes focused, spicy and crisp; fresh and traditional in style. Testa Wines Of The World. —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$20

**89 Obalo 2010 Crianza (Rioja).** Starts out smelling charred and heavy, but with time the bouquet softens and shows aromas of smoky berry and fresh brewed coffee. Feels grippy and resinous, but healthy, with herb-infused flavors of blackberry, spice, clove and tobacco. Long, winding and oaky on the finish. Drink now through 2013. Aviva Vino. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$19

**89 Raiza 2006 Reserva (Rioja).** For full review see page 14. *Best Buy.*  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$14

**88 Bodegas Riojanas 2004 Viña Albina Reserva (Rioja).** Foresty aromas blend with cola, nutmeg and spicy berry scents. The palate is a touch clacky and narrow, with zesty acidity and flavors

of lemon, mushroom and dried raspberry. Turns sharper and more angular on the finish, but overall it's still a very nice taste of traditional Rioja. Vintage Wines Inc. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$27

**88 Bodegas Vinícola Real 2008 Cueva del Monge (Rioja).** Ripe, with a slightly baked persona turns more jammy with airing. Despite aromatic richness, the wine is a bit jagged and jabby in the mouth, with roasted berry, leather and acid-based sharpness. Still, it's a very good modern Rioja from a not-so-great vintage. Grapes of Spain. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$33

**88 Montecillo 2006 Reserva (Rioja).** Full and fruity, but with an aromatic pinch of latex and rubber that subsides with airing. Feels healthy on the palate, with good grip and weight to bolster raspberry, plum, cola and spice flavors. In golfing terms, it splits the fairway; it's perfectly good and should generate no complaints. Underdog Wine & Spirits. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

**87 Bodegas Valdemar 2008 Inspiración Valdemar (Rioja).** Sweet, jammy and a touch raisiny on the bouquet, with a roasted quality summing things up. Feels more acidic than expected, with zest and juiciness pushing flavors of blackberry mixed with tobacco and vanilla. Finishes herbal and oaky, but ripe and ready. CIV/USA. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$20

**87 Carlos Serres 2010 Serres Tempranillo (Rioja).** Clean, fresh and full of bright cherry and strawberry aromas. Offers the right size and balance, with red plum and red berry flavors touched up by light oak. Mildly toasty and textured on the finish. Testa Wines Of The World. **Best Buy.** —M.S.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

**87 Criadores de Rioja 2005 Castillo de Clavijo Reserva (Rioja).** Opens with earth, lemon peel and lightly baked plum aromas. Feels easy and plump, with a good mouthfeel and proper acidity. Shows creamy oak flavors along with rooty berry, toast and milk chocolate. Turns more spicy and dusty on the finish. W.J. Deutsch & Sons. —M.S.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$18

**87 Viña Bujanda 2006 Reserva (Rioja).** Starts out somewhat fiery, with a dose of aromatic horseradish. After airing out, this varietal Tempranillo is fresh, juicy and crisp on the tongue, with flavors of baking spices, tomato, roasted plum and earth. Feels juicy on the finish, maybe a bit lean, and overall it's cut from the classic cloth. Winebow. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$20

**86 Campo Viejo 2010 Tempranillo (Rioja).** Solid on the opening, with red fruit aromas and a mild stalkiness. Feels healthy and medium in weight, with mild oak, fresh plum and berry, and a touch of cocoa for flavors. Dry and crisp on the finish, with leftover oak flavor and good balance. Pernod Ricard. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$12

**86 Loriñon 2006 Reserva (Rioja).** Smells full but reduced, with a foxy, candied leaning and aromas of vitamins and minerals. Feels big, bulky, grabby and thick, with baked blackberry and plum flavors. Full on the finish, with some heat. Classical Wines. —M.S.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**86 Marqués de Terán 2009 Selección Especial (Rioja).** Opaque in color, with blackberry and licorice aromas but also a distinct streak of brambly herbs and green. Later on, pine needle and tartness enter the fray. This is a commendable modern Rioja but it does have a few issues, namely a green herbal component. M Imports, LLC. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$24

**86 Palacios Remondo 2008 La Montesa (Rioja).** The tough conditions of the 2008 vintage are reflected in this scratchy wine. Plum is the key fruit aroma, and that's followed by a tight, firm body with toasty oak, black fruit flavors, herbal notes and peppery spice. Quick and a touch hot on the finish. Folio Fine Wine Partners. —M.S.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$20

**85 Dinastía Vivanco 2008 Crianza (Rioja).** Earthy berry aromas come with rubbery notes, tobacco and bramble. The feel is scratchy but lively, with flavors of lean red fruits, dry oak and milk chocolate. Oaky on the finish, with some heat. Needs food to help it along. Opici Wines. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

**85 Viña Bujanda 2010 Tinto (Rioja).** Bouncy, jumpy, candied aromas come with scratchiness and minty green. Feels tangy and bordering on sheer, with zesty flavors of red berry fruits, citrus and herbs. Mild and not too deep on the finish. Winebow. —M.S.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$12

**84 Bodegas Muriel 2008 Vendimia Selecciónada Crianza (Rioja).** Roasted, oaky and creamy smelling, with baked berry aromas. Conversely, it's rather edgy and citric in the mouth, with plum, citrus and tomato flavors accented by dill weed. Ends in herbal fashion, with crisp acidity. Quintessential Wines. —M.S.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**84 El Circulo 2010 (Rioja).** Scratchy red fruit aromas greet you along with leather and cheese scents. Feels juicy, light and mild, with plum, raspberry and freshness. Clean but lean, with zesty red fruit flavors and snappy acidity. Luneau USA Inc. —M.S.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Viña Bujanda 2008 Crianza (Rioja).** Smells decidedly burnt and stalky, with rubbery berry and black plum aromas. Shows grip on the palate, along with the same flavors hinted at on the nose: leather, burnt coffee, herbs and roasted berries. Feels pretty good, but the stalky, burnt core dominates. Winebow. —M.S.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**83 Bodegas Riojanas 2008 Monte Real Crianza (Rioja).** Baked and raisiny smelling, with

kirsch. In a word, it's stewy. Ditto for the mouthfeel, which is chunky and heavy. Features thick black plum, herb and carob flavors and feels beefy on the finish. Vintage Wines Inc. —M.S.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**83 Criadores de Rioja 2010 Monte Clavijo (Rioja).** Stalky and reedy smelling, with a touch of cherry and plum to the bouquet. There's not much to the palate other than mild citrus and red plum fruit, while the finish is little more than zesty. A fresh quaff. Saranty Imports. —M.S.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$9

**81 Finca Valpiedra 2008 Cantos de Valpiedra (Rioja).** Gritty cherry and plum aromas lead into a sheer, high-acid palate with citric burn and tart flavors of raspberry and plum skins. Finishes with limited flavor and leftover acid. Winebow. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$21

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## BIERZO

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**88 Luna Beberide 2009 Bierzo.** Floral and not overpowering in style, with good red-fruit aromas. Feels smooth and silky, not edgy, with tasty berry flavors touched up by a dollop of oak and chocolate. A fresh, easy wine to sip by the glass or with casual tapas. Grapes of Spain. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$17

**86 Bodegas Adriá 2009 Vega Montán (Bierzo).** Light and a little scratchy on the bouquet, with leathery notes. Feels fresh and kind of light in weight, with basic but clean red-fruit flavors and a dash of peppery spice. Flows easily on the finish, with a bit of fire and heat. Classical Wines. —M.S.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$13

**85 Pago de Valdetruchas 2009 Los Cerezales (Bierzo).** Molten black-cherry aromas are followed by a tight but limited palate with hard tannins and hard-driving black-fruit flavors that turn quickly to pepper and ultimately a slight bitterness. Teases you at first then ducks out. Grapes of Spain. —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$22

**82 Vinos de Arganza 2009 La Mano Roble (Bierzo).** Grassy and green on the nose, and then lean, light and crisp in the mouth. Tastes brambly and herbal, with a thin finish. O.K. but not really rewarding. Axial Wines USA. —M.S.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$20

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## LA MANCHA

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**86 Campos Reales 2010 Tempranillo (La Mancha).** Dark in color, with concentrated, jammy aromas of wild berry and plum. Offers a big body given that it's a \$7 La Mancha varietal, with concentration, solid structure and full, mildly baked flavors of black fruits and baked fig. Short but stout on the finish. Fine Estates From Spain. **Best Buy.** —M.S.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$7

**86 Paso a Paso 2010 Made with Organic Grapes Tempranillo (La Mancha).** Plum

and blueberry aromas come with a hint of green herbs. Feels fresh and clamps down with good tannins in the mouth before unleashing dark plum along with toast and peppery spice flavors. Juicy on the finish. Fine Estates From Spain. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**85 J. Garcia Carrion 2010 Opera Prima Tempranillo (La Mancha).** For full review see page 15. **Best Buy.**  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$6

**85 Venta Morales 2010 Tempranillo (La Mancha).** Bramble and red berry aromas are attractive and almost exotic. Feels a bit furry and scratchy, but tastes of blueberry with an herbal tinge. Finishes well, with a pinch of minty green flavor. Fine Estates From Spain. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$7

## OTHER RED WINES

**88 Avanthia 2009 Tinto Cuvee Mosteiro (Valdeorras).** Fairly rubbery and smoky on the nose, with hickory aromas vying with blueberry and plum notes. Feels good and full, with sweet berry flavors and plenty of oak. In fact, this is a woody, modern style of Mencía that's lengthy and round. Fine Estates From Spain. —M.S.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$25

**84 Bodegas Fontana 2010 Mesta (Uclés).** A bit scratchy up front, with some heat and rubber to the bouquet. Feels bold, grippy and alive, with lightly herbal flavors of roasted berry and leather. Herbal and blackened on the finish; ripe but basic in quality. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$8

## DESSERT WINES

**94 Alvear NV Solera 1927 Pedro Ximénez (Montilla-Moriles).** For full review see page 4. **Editors' Choice.**  
**abv:** 16% **Price:** \$25/375 ml

**93 Gonzalez Byass NV Noe Viejo Pedro Ximénez (Jerez).** Perfectly sweet, unctuous and rich, with lush coffee and cocoa aromas that indicate that complexity is coming. That promise is rewarded on the palate, which hits fifth gear in seconds flat. Flavorwise, it's complex and balanced, with good acidity forcing up orange and honey flavors in addition to raisin and brown sugar. A Wow wine where there finish lasts for minutes on end. San Francisco Wine Exchange. **Editors' Choice.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$49/375 ml

**91 Bodegas Dios Baco S.L. NV Oxford 1.970 Pedro Ximénez (Jerez).** For full review see page 14. **Best Buy.**  
**abv:** 17% **Price:** \$15/500 ml

**91 D.G. Viticultors NV Caligo Essència Sweet White Wine Chardonnay (Spain).** Bold and gold, with penetrating aromas of orange, dried apricots, sweat and honey comb. The feel is rich and

layered, with just enough acidity to lend volume to the apricot, dried peach and honey flavors this late-harvest Chardonnay is pushing. Thick and a bit unctuous on the finish; drink now. Grapes of Spain. —M.S.  
**abv:** 8% **Price:** \$90

**91 Hidalgo NV Vino Dulce Natural Pedro Ximénez (Jerez).** Ultraconcentrated and almost heavy on the nose, but not fully syrupy or leaden. Has a heavy disposition in the mouth, with brown sugar, caramel and other usual suspects making up the flavor profile. Creamy and chunky on the finish. Excellent dessert wine for the price. Winebow. —M.S.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$14/375 ml

**90 Alvear 2008 de Añada Pedro Ximénez (Montilla-Moriles).** Light brown and slightly translucent in color. Aromas lean toward raisin and prune, but there's orange zest and molasses on the bouquet as well. Bores straight ahead on the palate, with sweet flavors of burnt brown sugar, caramel and prune. Satisfying and balanced even if it's not overly complex. Fine Estates From Spain. —M.S.  
**abv:** 17% **Price:** \$23/375 ml

**90 Gonzalez Byass NV Nectar Dulce Pedro Ximénez (Jerez).** A deep, cool, mellow style of PX with requisite raisin and prune aromas along with molasses and a touch of heat. Feels unctuous and almost cloying, with concentrated caramel and raisin flavors. Very long and supersweet, with excellent power and commendable balance. San Francisco Wine Exchange. —M.S.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$20/375 ml

**90 Hidalgo NV La Panesa Especial Fino Sherry.** Tan in color and elegant beyond what's normal, this high-end fino shows full, complex aromas of honey, citrus, rancio, dried gouda cheese and nuttiness. It feels both easy and fresh, with dry, intense flavors of citrus and almond. Long and smooth on the finish, with zero burn or bite. Winebow. —M.S.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$50

**89 Hidalgo NV Fino Jerez Seco Sherry (Jerez).** Toasty smelling, with a hint of burnt banana chip, vanilla and roasted nuts. Round and mouthfilling for a fino, with toasty, nutty flavors followed by dry apricot and mild citrus. Focused on the finish, and lightly nutty as it fades away. Winebow. **Best Buy.** —M.S.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$13

**88 Alvear 2006 Fino en Ramal Pedro Ximénez (Montilla-Moriles).** For full review see page 14. **Best Buy.**  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$13/500 ml

**88 Bodegas Dios Baco S.L. NV Manzanilla Riá Pitá D.O. Sanlúcar de Barrameda Sherry (Jerez).** Crisp, nutty and very much as you'd expect a Manzanilla Sherry to be, but with a bit more color, body and nuttiness. Feels nice in the mouth, with modest, controlled flavors of toasted almond, baked apple, green olive and brine. Turns oily and slightly bitter on the finish. CIV/USA. —M.S.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$10/375 ml

**87 Gonzalez Byass NV Tio Pepe Fino Muy Seco (Jerez).** Pinched smelling at first, with a note of turpentine. Airing eliminates that burn, leaving standard nut and vanilla aromas. Feels good and lively, with refreshing acidity and nutty, dry flavors of white fruits including peach and apricot. Finishes long and fresh. San Francisco Wine Exchange. —M.S.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$18

**87 Alvear NV Fino Pedro Ximénez (Montilla-Moriles).** Tight on the nose but also a bit oxidized and yeasty smelling. Feels more tangy and juicy than Alvear's Fino en Rama, with forward acidity, bite and cut. Flavorwise, there's a heavy dose of nuts, apricot and citrus followed by a zesty finish. Fine Estates From Spain. —M.S.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$15

## ITALIAN WHITES

### SICILIA

**92 Planeta 2010 Cometa (Sicilia).** For full review see page 7.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$43

**91 Planeta 2009 Chardonnay (Sicilia).** For full review see page 9.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$43

**90 Duca di Salaparuta 2009 Bianca di Valguarnera Insolia (Sicilia).** Careful winemaking and low vineyard yields make this a classy and sophisticated Sicilian white with a rich, creamy mouthfeel. The wine's compelling aromas include apricot, almond, yellow candy, pineapple and exotic fruit. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$50

**90 Duca di Salaparuta 2007 Bianca di Valguarnera Insolia (Sicilia).** Made with fruit sourced from very old, head-pruned Insolia vines (with extremely low yields), this structured Sicilian white wine opens with a bright, off-gold color and creamy notes of apricot, honey and vanilla. Pair it with Cornish hen or pulled-pork. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$50

**90 Planeta 2010 Carricante (Sicilia).** Planeta set out to make a great white wine on the volcanic slopes of Mt. Etna using the indigenous Carricante grape. The results are chiseled and clean, with pristine aromas of zesty citrus, herbal nuances and rain-soaked slate roof. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$36

**90 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Tenuta Regaleali Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Sicily's Tasca family does a terrific job with this golden Chardonnay. The wine reflects the sunshine, warmth and generosity of the island. Aromas of stone fruit, vanilla, rose and almond blossom are followed by a beautifully creamy mouthfeel. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$60

**90 Tasca d'Almerita 2008 Tenuta Regaleali Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Here's a creamy,



rich and beautifully fragrant Chardonnay that would pair with lemon chicken, tangy Indian dishes or lobster risotto. This bright white wine is redolent of peach, pear, crushed almond and tangy citrus rind. Winebow. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Baglio del Cristo di Campobello 2009 Laudari Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Warm, creamy, rich and beautifully intense, Laudari is a compelling expression of Chardonnay from Sicily, with bold aromas of stone fruit, pineapple, butter and toasted almond. Pair this wine with baked white fish. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$32

**89 Tenuta Rapitalà 2008 Cielo d'Alcamo (Sicilia).** Alcamo is one of the best areas in Sicily for white wine production. This creamy blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Catarratto opens with honey, apricot and Golden Delicious apple. The mouthfeel is rich and dense, and you can feel the smooth texture glide across the palate. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$35/500 ml

**88 Abbazia Santa Anastasia 2008 Baccante (Sicilia).** Baccante is an exciting Sicilian blend of Grillo and Chardonnay that opens with floral aromas, kiwi, exotic fruit, peach and white almond. There's substance and depth in the mouth that helps fuel a long, fresh close. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Cusumano 2010 Jalé Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Jalé is an all-Sicilian expression of Chardonnay, with sun-drenched aromas of apricot, honey, pineapple, caramel and butterscotch. This versatile white would pair with rich foods like chicken in cream sauce that will contrast the slight sourness on the close. Vin Divino. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$29

**88 Feudi del Pisciotto 2009 Alberta Ferretti Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Alberta Ferretti (an all-Sicilian expression of Chardonnay) sees eight months in oak to produce a creamy, dense white wine with overtones of apricot, honey, almond paste, vanilla and butter. It's a New World-style wine from the Old World. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$21

**88 Feudo Arancio Stemmari 2009 Dalila (Sicilia).** Dalila is a relatively new product from Stemmari (formally known as Feudo Arancio) that's a blend of Grillo (80%) and Viognier. The first grape gives the wine a fresh, piquant feel and the second adds aromas of white flower and honey. Prestige Wine Imports Corp. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$16

**88 Feudo Montoni 2010 Catarratto (Sicilia).** Feudo Montoni delivers a delightful expression of Catarratto (one of Sicily's most popular white varieties) with an intense bouquet that is redolent of cut grass, citrus, grapefruit, almond skin and white flower. Very nice and easy-drinking with medium density and

good freshness. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. **Editors' Choice.** —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**88 MandraRossa 2010 Santannella (Sicilia).** Santannella is an innovative blend of Fiano, Viognier and Chenin Blanc from sunny Sicily, with bold aromas of pineapple, toasted almond, exotic and passion fruits. There are background tones of clove and cinnamon and generous, buttery intensity on the close. Palm Bay International. **Editors' Choice.** —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

**88 Tasca d'Almerita 2010 Sallier de la Tour Le Bianche (Sicilia).** An unusual wine for Sicily, Sallier de la Tour Le Bianche represents an innovative blend of Viognier, Semillon and Sauvignon. The aromatic intensity—with almond blossom and honey—is definitely there, and the wine is smooth, silky and soft on the finish. Domaines and Appellations. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$30

**88 Valle dell'Acate 2009 Bidis (Sicilia).** Bidis is a smooth blend of Chardonnay and Insolia from the southern side of Sicily. The 60% Chardonnay component adds depth, balance and stone fruit aromas. The Grillo element grounds the wine in local tradition with fresh notes of wild herbs and fragrant white flowers. Polaner Selections. —M.L.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$32

**87 Baglio del Cristo di Campobello 2010 Adenzia (Sicilia).** Chardonnay (75%) and Grillo are blended to produce an intense wine with pungent notes of ripe fruit, pineapple, candied lemon and yellow rose. There is alcoholic heat on the close but it is softened by the general density and thickness of the wine's texture. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$23

**87 Baglio di Pianetto 2010 Ginolfo Viognier (Sicilia).** Viognier and Sicily work well together to produce fragrant wines with aromas of honey, violets and exotic fruit. There's also a touch of alcoholic heat on the close. Vinvino Wine. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$23

**87 Caruso & Minini 2010 Terre di Giumara Inzolia (Sicilia).** Terre di Giumara is a fresh and tight white wine with bright yellow fruit, peach and honey-roasted almond. The wine is full and ripe, with a touch of piquant spice on the close. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**87 Cusumano 2010 Angimbé (Sicilia).** Angimbé is a versatile and food-friendly blend of Insolia and Chardonnay, with deep aromas of caramel, pineapple, honey and apricot. The wine sports an off-gold color, a sweet, creamy finish and a dash of piquant spice on the close. Vin Divino. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$17

**87 Cusumano 2010 Cubia Insolia (Sicilia).** Cubia is a bright, off-gold expression of Insolia with intense aromas of ripe fruit, apricot, caramel and

butterscotch. More honey, passion fruit and pineapple follows on the palate. Vin Divino. —M.L.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$21

**87 D'Alessandro 2010 Grillo (Sicilia).** Grillo is a popular white variety planted in many areas of Sicily and once used as a blending component in Marsala. This expression is fresh, clean and marked by bright citrus endnotes. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$20

**87 Donnafugata 2009 Lighea (Sicilia).** Lighea is a terrific wine and an excellent pairing partner to vegetarian and seafood recipes alike. Thanks to the aromatic Zibibbo grape, the wine offers a fragrant bouquet of citrus flower and honey. But it is not overtly sweet in the mouth and that's why it pairs with savory foods. Folio Fine Wine Partners. —M.L.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$20

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2010 Colomba Platino (Sicilia).** This beautiful Sicilian Insolia opens with a fragrant bouquet of almond and citrus blossoms, peach and passion fruit. The mouthfeel is silky and pure, making this wine an excellent choice for sushi or Vietnamese fish specialties. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$15

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2010 Kados Risignolo (Sicilia).** Grillo is the base for many famous Sicilian white wines including fortified Marsala. However in this case, the grape produces a crisp, fresh, easy-drinking wine that pairs with seafood or Thai mango salad. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2009 Colomba Platino (Sicilia).** Colomba Platino (a pure expression of Insolia) opens with fresh aromas of citrus, mint, exotic fruit, papaya and white flower. Pair this crisp white wine with Thai coconut curry. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$15

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2009 Kados Risignolo Grillo (Sicilia).** Here's a very pretty white wine from Sicily (made with Grillo grapes) that opens with creamy, light nuances of almond blossom, stone fruit and citrus. Pair this wine with steamed white fish. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**87 Feudi del Pisciotto 2008 Alberta Ferretti Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Named after fashion designer Alberta Ferretti, this oak-aged Chardonnay delivers layers of soft, ripe mango and pineapple. The mouthfeel is thick and creamy. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Feudi del Pisciotto 2008 Carolina Maren-ga Grillo (Sicilia).** Here's an elaborate expression of Grillo that shows more density and richness than you normally see with this Sicilian native white grape. The wine offers peach, apricot and almond flavors. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$21

**87 Feudo Disisa 2010 Grillo (Sicilia).** Here's a fragrant and fresh expression of Grillo that shows sharp, green tones of Granny Smith apple, kiwi, cut grass and lemon soda. The wine is clean and zesty, and will make your mouth pucker. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

**87 Feudo Monaci 2009 Catarratto (Sicilia).** Feudo Montoni is a beautiful wine estate located in an isolated spot in central Italy. Its Catarratto is a fresh, easy wine with a pretty aromatic ensemble of lemon, exotic fruit and white peach. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**87 Feudo Montoni 2010 Grillo (Sicilia).** This fresh Grillo with fruit sourced from inland Sicily offers tonic aromas of zesty lime, Granny Smith apple, spice and exotic fruit. You'll also enjoy the note of nutmeg on the close. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**87 Firriato 2009 Altavilla della Corte Grillo (Sicilia).** This pristine expression of Grillo opens with dry aromas of hay and crushed white stone followed by melon, citrus, pear and white almond. There's a spicy touch of white pepper on the close. Soil-air Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**87 Maurigi 2007 Terre di Sofia Tenuta di Budonetto Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Terre di Sofia is an oak-aged Chardonnay, with lemon zest, vanilla, exotic fruit, pineapple and light shadings of exotic spice. It's smooth and supple in the mouth. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$29

**87 Nicosia 2010 Fondo Filara Catarratto (Sicilia).** For full review see page 13.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**87 Planeta 2010 La Segreta (Sicilia).** La Segreta is intentionally engineered to be one of those easy Italian whites that washes down fried calamari and spaghetti con vongole. Aromas include citrus, pear, white almond and honey. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$15

**87 Tasca d'Almerita 2010 Leone d'Almerita (Sicilia).** Leone d'Almerita is a blend of Catarratto, Chardonnay, Sauvignon and Traminer that opens with a fragrant floral bouquet and pretty notes of honey, peach blossom and marzipan. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**87 Tenuta Rapitalà 2010 Piano Maltese (Sicilia).** For full review see page 15. *Best Buy.*  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12

**87 Valle dell'Acate 2010 Zagra (Sicilia).** Zagra means "citrus blossom" in Sicilian dialect and the Grillo that carries this proud name is indeed packed tight with bright floral aromas. It also boasts

mango, peach and white almond skin. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$21

**87 Viticoltori Associati Canicatti 2009 Delicio Fiano (Sicilia).** Delicio is a Sicilian expression of Fiano with a creamy mouthfeel and easy aromas of dried hay, pear and Golden Delicious apple. Pair this wine with Caesar salad. Sober LLC. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Abbazia Santa Anastasia 2009 Contempo Grillo (Sicilia).** Contempo is a fresh, easy white wine that opens with crisp citrus, kiwi, papaya, hazelnut and honey. These aromas are delivered over a bright, tonic mouthfeel. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Abbazia Santa Anastasia 2009 Sinestesia Sauvignon Blanc (Sicilia).** You don't see much Sauvignon Blanc in Sicily (the variety is usually associated with cooler climates) but when you do, they resemble Sinestesia. There are ripe fruit and peach aromas with yellow rose, honey and jasmine. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Baglio Curatolo Arini 1875 2010 Villa Tonino Grillo (Sicilia).** From a winery founded 137 years ago, this Grillo-based Sicilian white offers fresh aromas of citrus, honey, exotic fruit and Granny Smith apple. The finish is pure, simple and clean. Grape Expectations (CA). *Best Buy.* —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$8

**86 Baglio del Cristo di Campobello 2009 C'D'C' (Sicilia).** Cristo di Campobello's value line, C'D'C', includes this fresh blend of Chardonnay, Grillo, Insolia and Catarratto. This easy-going white offers citrus tones of pink grapefruit and lemon zest backed by dried hay and honey. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**86 Brugnano 2010 Kue (Sicilia).** Kue is a floral blend of Insolia (70%) and Viognier, with subtle notes of peach blossom and jasmine that would pair with basil pesto or fresh tomato bruschetta. The wine presents a thin, simple but crisp feel on the finish. Elite Brands. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$20

**86 Brugnano 2010 Lunario Catarratto (Sicilia).** Although the wine is made in stainless steel, there's a tiny touch of oxidation here (only a distant accent) that shapes a warmer, broader bouquet of stone fruit, honey and butterscotch. It's silky and smooth on the close. Drink now. Elite Brands. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$28

**86 Brugnano 2010 V90 Catarratto (Sicilia).** V90 offers loads of fresh citrus and grapefruit with background aromas of fragrant white flower and peach blossom. The wine offers a soft, almost sweet delivery that would work nicely next to shellfish or shrimp. Elite Brands. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$13

**86 Calatrasi 2010 Terre di Ginestra Catarratto (Sicilia).** This easy Sicilian white offers peach blossom and citrus over a tight, crisp mouthfeel. This is the kind of no-fuss wine to drink on a hot weekend afternoon. Vision Wine & Spirits. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**86 Cantine Barbera 2010 Inzolia (Sicilia).** Here's a focused and sharp Sicilian white that shows bright aromas of citrus, cut grass, kiwi and stone fruit. Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$15

**86 Cantine Rallo 2010 Bianco Maggiore Grillo (Sicilia).** Bianco Maggiore delivers touches of lemon drop and kiwi with fresh lime and yellow rose. The mouthfeel is thicker and denser than you'd expect, and it offers a long, tangy fruit-driven finish. Francoli USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Caruso & Minini 2010 Timpune Grillo (Sicilia).** Grillo tends to oxidize easily during winemaking. Timpune does in fact show distant aromas of butterscotch and caramel that fit squarely within the aromatic profile of the grape. Otherwise, the wine ends with fresh peach, citrus and pineapple. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25

**86 Corvo 2010 Terrae Dei Grillo (Sicilia).** Here's a value white from southern Italy that offers a light golden appearance and clean aromas of lemon zest, peach and white almond. It's thin but fresh on the close. Corvo USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**86 Di Giovanna 2010 Grecanico (Sicilia).** Made with organically-farmed fruit, this Sicilian Grecanico opens with nice fullness, density and creamy aromas of lemon mousse and tangerine skin. The wine would make a perfect match to raw fish or sushi. Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$19

**86 Di Giovanna 2010 Grillo (Sicilia).** Di Giovanna (an organic producer) shows a nice portfolio of easy-drinking white wines. This Grillo, for example, is redolent of passion fruit, lemon soda and vanilla cream. Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$19

**86 Duca di Salaparuta 2010 Calanica Grillo-Viognier (Sicilia).** The blend is 60-40 Grillo and Viognier and the wine offers aromatic components of both varieties. The first imparts green notes of kiwi and cut grass and the second offers sweet floral fragrances. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**86 Duca di Salaparuta 2010 Calanica Inso-lia-Chardonnay (Sicilia).** This value wine opens with a fresh, citrusy bouquet and features a compact, streamlined mouthfeel. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**86 Duca di Salaparuta 2009 Calanica Grillo-Viognier (Sicilia).** This Sicilian white delivers a clean, crisp mouthfeel followed by flavors of peach, almond and Golden Delicious apple. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**86 Duca di Salaparuta 2009 Calanica Inso-lia-Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Insozia and Chardonnay make great blending partners and produce a white wine that is easy, crisp, genuine and food-friendly. This is not an overtly sophisticated or complicated wine, but nor is it meant to be. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**86 Feudo Maccari 2010 Grillo (Sicilia).** Simple and one-dimensional, this is one of those no-fuss Italian whites that pairs so perfectly with informal seafood dishes or fried calamari rings. It keeps the palate refreshed, thanks to abundant citrus, honey and yellow fruit. Kobrand. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$17

**86 Firriato 2010 Quater (Sicilia).** As its name suggests, Quater is a blend of four Sicilian grape varieties (Grillo, Catarratto, Carricante and Zibibbo). It opens with thick aromas of pineapple, crushed clove, caramel and candied fruit. The creamy mouthfeel is capped by a touch of zesty spice. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$32

**86 Fondo Antico 2010 Grillo Parlante (Sicilia).** An improvement over the previous vintage, this value wine shows a simple but clean aromatic profile, with citrus zest, Granny Smith apple and apricot. There's a sweet touch of lemon mousse on the close. Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**86 MandraRossa 2010 Pinot Grigio (Sicilia).** You can't beat the low price of this Sicilian Pinot Grigio. This food-friendly white would pair with fried calamari, shrimp cocktail or even sushi, thanks to the wine's easy aromas of tangerine, citrus and fragrant white flower. Palm Bay International. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$9

**86 Masseria del Feudo Grottarossa 2010 Il Giglio (Sicilia).** Made with organically-farmed fruit, Il Giglio is a blend of Inzolia (75%) and Grillo. It opens with a clean, straightforward bouquet of citrus, cut grass, green apple and exotic fruit. The wine is easy and tight in the mouth. Massanois Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$17

**86 Maurigi 2009 Bacca Bianca Tenuta di Budonetto (Sicilia).** Bacca Bianca from the vineyards of Tenuta di Budonetto, is a blend of Inzolia, Gre-canico and Chardonnay. This wine is slightly muddled aromatically, but it does possess a fresh, zesty mouthfeel. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$15

**86 Maurigi 2009 Le Chiare Viognier (Sicilia).** Fragrant Viognier aged in stainless steel is redolent of violets, citrus blossom and crushed miner-

als. This expression is clean, crisp and lean in terms of mouthfeel. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$22

**86 Tasca d'Almerita 2010 Sallier de la Tour Inzolia (Sicilia).** A great value bargain, this fresh Inzolia offers aromas of cut grass, lemon zest, pear and Golden Delicious apple. Pair it with smoked salmon dishes. Domaines and Appellations. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$11

**86 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Sallier de la Tour Inzolia (Sicilia).** Inzolia is one of the most widely planted varieties in Sicily and the results are surprisingly consistent. The grape is usually vinified in stainless steel to lock in its freshness and lemon-lime aromas. This wine faithfully follows suit. Domaines and Appellations. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Valle dell'Acate 2010 Case Ibidini Insozia (Sicilia).** A great wine to drink as a cocktail or with light finger foods, Case Ibidini has a clean, crisp disposition and loads of citrusy intensity. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

**85 Calatrasi 2010 La Piazza Alta Grillo (Sicilia).** La Piazza Alta is a value wine from Sicily that shows lemon soda, pineapple and kiwi-like aromas. It's fresh, sharp and bright on the finish. Pelican Brands, LLC. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$9

**85 Calatrasi 2010 Terre di Ginestra Magnifico Viognier (Sicilia).** This easy Viognier from the folks at Calatrasi opens with aromas of yellow flower, peach and natural rubber. It shows some density and medium length. Vision Wine & Spirits. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

**85 Colosi 2009 Cariddi (Sicilia).** A blend of Catarratto and Grillo, Cariddi is a fresh and easy white wine with mild tones of citrus, stone fruit and pear. Pair it with raw fish or smoked salmon. Vias Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$12

**85 Corvo 2010 Bianco (Sicilia).** Corvo Bianco is a tried and true white wine that helped introduce Sicilian wines to international markets. It's worth revisiting this wine if you are looking for something fresh to wash down seafood. Corvo Wines USA. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$10

**85 Corvo 2009 Bianco (Sicilia).** This fresh, easy-going Sicilian white would go with fresh seafood or spicy Thai curry. The wine shows bright notes of peach and citrus with a touch of soft sweetness on the close. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$10

**85 Corvo 2009 Terrae Dei Grillo (Sicilia).** Terrae Dei is a value wine from Sicily with fresh aromas of citrus, almond and honey. This is an easy, no-

fuss wine that would pair well with pasta salad. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**85 Cottanera 2010 Barbazzale (Sicilia).** Barbazzale is a 50-50 blend of Inzolia and Viognier. A touch of burnt matchstick blows off after a few minutes in the glass. Once the wine opens, it offers a full and generous mouthfeel and stone fruit flavors. Banville & Jones Wine Merchants. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$16

**85 Cusumano 2010 Insozia (Sicilia).** Cusumano's fresh Insozia delivers a steady, neutral nose with distant aromas of honey, Golden Delicious apple and dried grass. It's a lean, simple wine at a competitive price. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$12

**85 D'Alessandro 2010 Inzolia (Sicilia).** This Sicilian Inzolia releases fresh aromas of citrus, sage, passion fruit, pear and apple. The wine feels fresh, zippy and clean overall. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$12

**85 D'Alessandro 2009 Inzolia (Sicilia).** Inzolia is a fantastic partner to raw tuna, shrimp or ceviche. This example is simple and clean, with bright citrus, peach, lime and white flower. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

**85 Feudo Disisa 2009 Grillo (Sicilia).** Grillo is a native grape of southern Italy and this bright expression of the variety delivers a creamy, fatty texture and melon, apricot and Golden Delicious apple notes. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$12

**85 Firriato 2010 Santagostino Baglio Soria (Sicilia).** This blend of Catarratto and Chardonnay shows a tiny touch of oxidation, with butter-scotch and caramel aromas behind candied fruit, apricot and pineapple. The mouthfeel is soft, thick and sticky. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$22

**85 Fondo Antico 2010 I Versi Bianco (Sicilia).** A great value choice, I Versi Bianco (made with Gre-canico, Inzolia and Grillo) is a crisp wine, with easy aromas of lemon zest, cut grass, almond skin and crushed brimstone. Pair it with Southwestern grilled chicken salad. Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$8

**85 Maurigi 2008 Coste all'Ombra Sauvignon Blanc (Sicilia).** From the estate's Tenuta di Budonetto property, this warm-climate Sauvignon Blanc shows intense aromas of peppermint, chopped basil and medicinal herb. It won't be loved by everyone, but this wine is distinctive. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$24

**85 Tasca d'Almerita 2010 Regaleali (Sicilia).** This fresh and easy Sicilian white is a blend of Insozia, Gre-canico and Catarratto with easy citrus and

stone fruit aromas. Pair it with Chinese chicken salad. Winebow. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

abv: 12% Price: \$10

**85 Tasca d'Almerita 2010 Sallier de la Tour Grillo (Sicilia).** Sushi, fried calamari, grilled vegetables or barbecued shrimp would all make perfect companions to this fresh, easy Sicilian white wine. It ends with citrus, lime and herbal aromas. Domaines and Appellations. —M.L.

abv: 12% Price: \$11

**85 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Sallier de la Tour Grillo (Sicilia).** This is a fresh, tonic and light Grillo that would pair with endive salad and sliced oranges or red beets in vinaigrette. The wine offers citrus, green herb and fresh kiwi aromas. Domaines and Appellations. —M.L.

abv: 12.5% Price: \$NA

**85 Tenuta Barone Nicolò La Lumia 2010 Gloria Insolia (Sicilia).** Here's an easy expression of Insolia that opens with citrus, kiwi and almond paste aromas. The wine is a perfect choice for appetizers of toasted tomato bruschetta and chopped basil. —M.L.

abv: 12.5% Price: \$NA

**85 Tenuta Rapitalà 2010 Grillo (Sicilia).** Here's a straightforward and simple white wine that delivers fresh peach and citrus aromas backed by a touch of bitter almond. The texture is thick and creamy. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$12

**85 Viticultori Associati Canicatti 2010 Aquilae Grillo (Sicilia).** There's a touch of sulfur that takes a few seconds to blow off. Once it does, this wine offers yellow rose, exotic fruit, peach and almond skin. Franco Wine Imports. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$13

**84 Baglio Curatolo Arini 1875 2010 Terre Grillo (Sicilia).** Packaged in a screw cap bottle (still a rare sight in Italy) this fresh white is packed with almond blossom, lemon zest and dried herb aromas. Try it with lemon chicken. Winebow. —M.L.

abv: 12.5% Price: \$10

**84 Calatrasi 2010 La Piazza (Sicilia).** A blend of Catarratto and Chardonnay, this is one of those easy Italian whites that will wash down fresh seafood or chicken salad. Ripe fruit and spice build some momentum in the mouth. Pelican Brands, LLC. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$8

**84 Calatrasi 2010 Terrale Oro Grillo (Sicilia).** Easy, fresh and crisp, this well-priced Grillo would make a great choice for, predinner sipping. Aromas include citrus zest, white almond and wild flower. Vision Wine & Spirits. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$10

**84 Corvo 2010 Fiore (Sicilia).** Here's an easy, no-fuss white wine to pair with rice salad or grilled vegetables. Citrus, almond blossom and stone

fruit are capped by a slightly sweet feel in the mouth. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

abv: 10.5% Price: \$11

**84 Di Giovanna 2010 Viognier (Sicilia).** Made with organically-farmed Viognier, this is a unique, slightly awkward white wine with muddled aromas of kiwi, green fruit, green leaf and wild caper. The mouthfeel is thin, compact and fresh. Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$20

**84 Feudi del Pisciotto 2010 Baglio del Sole Inzolia (Sicilia).** Here's a simple, clean white wine that opens with grassy tones, citrus and stone fruit aromas. The mouthfeel is somewhat heavy and thick. Vias Imports. —M.L.

abv: 12.5% Price: \$10

**84 Feudi del Pisciotto 2010 Baglio del Sole Inzolia-Catarratto Sicilia.** This is an easy-drinking Sicilian white to pair with salmon, grilled tuna or Thai spring rolls. It's crisp and clean, with notes of citrus, peach and candied fruit. Vias Imports. —M.L.

abv: 12.5% Price: \$NA

**84 Fondo Antico 2009 I Versi (Sicilia).** A blend of Grecanico and Inzolia, this bright white wine opens with intense aromas of honey, exotic fruit and butterscotch. It's an easy-drinking, informal wine with a crisp close. Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$10

**84 Maggiovini 2009 Pithoi Insolia (Sicilia).** This creamy expression of Insolia is redolent of citrus mousse, melon and a touch of baked apricot. Pair it with spaghetti and clam sauce. Caffo Beverages Inc. —M.L.

abv: 12% Price: \$NA

**84 Masseria del Feudo Grottarossa 2009 Haermosa Chardonnay (Sicilia).** Haermosa is made with organically-farmed fruit. It shows milky notes of peach yogurt and white chocolate. But it also shows zesty crispness on the close despite the thickness and fullness of the wine's overall texture. Massanois Imports. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$28

**83 Fondo Antico 2009 Grillo Parlante Grillo (Sicilia).** Grillo Parlante ("talking cricket") is a pure expression of Grillo with slightly oxidized aromas of butterscotch and caramel. Fresh fruit comes through as melon, apricot and candied lemon. Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$14

## ETNA

**90 Benanti 2007 Pietramarina Carricante (Etna).** Pietramarina (a pure expression of Carricante) shows light touches of lemon rind and exotic fruit followed by etched mineral notes of crushed granite and brimstone. The finish is tight, fresh and capped by a slightly menthol-like sensation. Wine Warehouse Imports. —M.L.

abv: 12.5% Price: \$45

**90 Graci 2010 Quota 600 (Etna).** A blend of Carricante and Catarratto from vineyards plated 600 meters above sea level on the slopes of Mount Etna, Quota 600 is among Sicily's best white wines. Compact, tonic and streamlined, it does a beautiful job of presenting delicate floral and peach fruit aromas against an austere backdrop of crushed stone and talcum powder. Sherbrooke Cellars. —M.L.

abv: 12.5% Price: \$39

**88 Firriato 2010 Cavanera Ripa di Scorciavacca (Etna).** From blackened volcanic soils comes this brilliantly pristine white wine, with aromas of pear, Golden Delicious apple, stone fruit and citrus. Saline notes of brimstone and crushed stone appear on the finish. Soilair Selection. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$29

**88 Scilio 2010 White (Etna).** This is a terrific white wine from the Etna area of Sicily (representing a blend of Carricante and Catarratto) that delivers a rich, generous style with loads of density and intensity. Soft aromas of peach, apricot, dried hay and honey bring up the rear. North Berkeley Imports. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$18

**88 Tenuta delle Terre Nere 2010 White (Etna).** Although Etna is gaining international acclaim thanks to its increasingly popular red wine production, the volcano is also home to beautifully elegant white wines. This expression opens with bright tones of white peach, citrus, honey and a drying mineral note at the back. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.

abv: NA Price: \$NA

**87 Firriato 2009 Cavanera Ripa di Scorciavacca (Etna).** Cavanera is a white blend produced by one of the most important wine families based in Trapani, on the other side of Sicily. The wine is crisp and fresh, with a drying mineral note that gives it momentum in the mouth. Soilair Selection. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$NA

**87 Nicosia 2010 Fondo Filara (Etna).** A blend of Carricante and Catarratto (two of Sicily's most expressive indigenous varieties), this Etna white would pair well with seafood or vegetarian dishes. It boasts focused tones of citrus and Granny Smith apple. Rolivia, Inc. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$19

## OTHER SOUTHERN WHITES

**89 Donnafugata 2009 La Fuga Chardonnay (Contessa Entellina).** La Fuga is a fresh and delicious Chardonnay from the popular Donnafugata winery. It opens with bright aromas of stone fruit, citrus, dried herb and exotic fruit. The wine makes a perfect pairing partner to the delightful fish dishes served regularly in Mediterranean restaurants. —M.L.

abv: 13% Price: \$NA

**88 Cantina Santadi 2009 Cala Silente (Vermentino di Sardegna).** Cala Silente is a smooth and sophisticated Vermentino that exhibits a

bright, golden color and opulent layers of apricot, honey, butterscotch and almond. A spicy touch of acidity keeps the wine from feeling too heavy in the mouth. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$19

**88 Tasca d'Almerita 2010 Nozze d'Oro (Contea di Sclafani).** Created to celebrate a 50th wedding anniversary, Nozze d'Oro is a blend of Inzolia and Sauvignon that offers bright floral intensity and a wonderfully pristine and crisp mouthfeel. Pair this wine with lobster risotto. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$30

**87 Argiolas 2009 Is Argiolas (Vermentino di Sardegna).** This well structured wine from sunny Sardinia opens with an off-gold color and intense aromas of ripe melon, apricot, honey and almond. Spice and acidity make for a crisp finish. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$20

**87 Argiolas 2009 Iselis (Isola dei Nuraghi).** Made with a mix of indigenous grapes, this satisfying white wine from Sardinia would pair well with shellfish, grilled vegetables, exotic spicy dishes or Italian kitchen classics. The wine imparts aromas of stone fruit, honeysuckle and white almond. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$20

**87 Cantina Santadi 2008 Villa di Chiesa (Valli di Porto Pino).** This oak-heavy blend of Chardonnay and indigenous Sicilian grapes opens with luscious tones of toasted almond, apricot and candied lemon. There's a spicy vanilla note on the close, and the wine will appeal to those who appreciate an oaky Italian white. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$40

**87 Cantina Santadi 2009 Villa Solais (Vermentino di Sardegna).** This bright Vermentino opens with an off-gold color and intense aromas of yellow fruit, cantaloupe and chestnut honey. There's a piquant hit of tangy acidity on the close. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**87 Cantine Barbera 2010 Dietro le Case Inzolia (Menfi).** Dietro le Case ("behind the houses") is a pure expression of Inzolia that opens with a pale hay color and fragrant aromas of melon, apricot and dried flowers. It's a simple, fresh wine with accents of citrus and honey. Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$22

**87 Cantine Rallo 2010 Beleda (Alcamo).** Made with organically-farmed Catarratto grapes, Beleda is a fragrant white wine with aromas of dried flower, kiwi, mango and lime. There's a sharp, tonic, zesty quality to the mouthfeel. Francoli USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Fazio 2010 Levantio Inzolia (Erice).** From the Erice area of Sicily in the southwest corner of the island, this bright Inzolia offers crisp aromas of citrus, cut grass and white almond. It's a simple, genuine wine that is put together nicely. Vinarium Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$18

**87 Santa Maria La Palma 2009 I Papiri (Vermentino di Sardegna).** I Papiri is a fresh and fragrant white, with bright aromas of citrus, cut grass and white peach. Pair it with any Mediterranean fish dish. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**87 Valle dell'Acate 2010 Insolia (Vittoria).** From the newly created Vittoria appellation in Sicily, this bright white wine opens with citrus, crushed almond, peach and exotic fruit. The mouthfeel is fresh, compact and tight. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$21

**86 Tenuta Soletta 2010 Kyanos (Isola dei Nuraghi).** This blended white wine from Sardinia opens with fragrant tones of soapy spring flower, honeysuckle and peach blossom. There are touches of caramel and butterscotch as well. Tricana Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$34

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## NORTHEAST WHITES

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**88 Abbazia di Novacella 2009 Praepositus Riesling (Alto Adige).** This beautifully fragrant Riesling opens with pear, white flower and honey. The wine's structure is tight but creamy at the same time and will age five years or more. Vintage Epicure. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$37

**87 Fondazione Edmund Mach 2010 Istituto Agrario San Michele all'Adige Riesling (Trentino).** This pretty expression of Riesling Renano offers fruity aromas of pear and peach backed by natural rubber and fragrant floral tones. The wine is soft, smooth and thick on the close. Vias Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**87 Kuenhof 2010 Kaiton Riesling (Alto Adige).** Riesling Kaiton is partly aged in large casks to achieve a smooth, creamy mouthfeel with bright aromas of peach blossom, honey, natural rubber and fresh kiwi fruit. There's a tiny touch of white almond on the close as well. Petit Pois. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

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## SPARKLING WINES

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**88 Tasca d'Almerita 2008 Almerita Brut (Contea di Sclafani).** Only a handful of *metodo classico* sparkling wines are produced in Sicily, and this Chardonnay-based bubbly from the Tasca family is among the best. Perfect for appetizers on a warm spring afternoon, the wine delivers tonic effervescence and aromas of white flower and citrus. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$60

**88 Benanti NV Noblesse Brut Carricante (Sicilia).** This is a fascinating sparkling wine. Made in the *metodo classico* using Carricante grapes, this lively bubble opens with stone fruit, citrus and floral aromas. What really sets it apart are those drying mineral tones of slate and brimstone. Tradizione Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$60

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## ROSÉS

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**86 Cantina Santadi 2009 Tre Torri Rosé (Carignano del Sulcis).** This bright, ruby-colored rosé opens with lively tones of cranberry, raspberry and white almond. It's soft and creamy with a touch of sweet berry or ripe cherry on the close. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$13

**88 Tenuta delle Terre Nere 2010 Rosé (Etna).** This is a gorgeous rosé that should be paired with salmon canapés, poached bream or shellfish risotto. The color is a beautiful pale pink and the aromas include white almond, cassis, wild berries and rose. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**87 Scilio 2010 Rosato (Etna).** Here's a wonderful rosé wine from (made with Nerello Mascalese grapes) that opens with a dusty pink color and fragrant tones of berry fruit and crushed stone. The wine has the density and staying power to pair with pork or veal. North Berkeley Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**87 Tenute Soletta 2010 Prius Rosé (Isola dei Nuraghi).** Prius is a bright rosé from Sardinia that offers fun aromas of myrtle berry, chopped herb, bramble and savory spice. It's a crisp, silky wine that would pair with Thai or Indian dishes. Tricana Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$27

**86 Cantine Barbera 2010 La Bambina (Sicilia).** La Bambina is a fresh and easy-drinking Sicilian rosé (made from Nero d'Avola) that opens with a pretty peach-pink color and bright aromas of raspberry, white cherry and cassis. Try it with swordfish carpaccio. Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$15

**86 Planeta 2010 Rosé (Sicilia).** Planeta breaks new ground with this Sicilian rosé made from Syrah. Clean packaging and a screw cap bottle set the stage for a modern, pristine and impeccably made wine that is fresh, zesty and very easy to drink. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$16

**86 Tasca d'Almerita 2010 Regaleali Le Rose (Sicilia).** This is a terrific value wine (a rosé made from the indigenous grapes of Sicily) that opens with a bright pink color and fragrant tones of raspberry, white almond and rose petal. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$13

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## ITALIAN REDS

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### SICILIA

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**93 Passopisciaro 2008 Passopisciaro (Sicilia).** Passopisciaro is the name of a tiny town on the slopes of Mount Etna in the heart of the volcano's most celebrated wine area. Tuscan nobleman Andrea Franchetti bought property here many years ago and

now leads a charge for quality wines from this unique site in southern Italy. His expression is nuanced and complex, with firmly polished tannins and bright end notes of wild berry, crushed stone and dried rosemary. Trinoro USA. *Cellar Selection*. —M.L.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$NA

**92 Abbazia Santa Anastasia 2005 Litra Cabernet Sauvignon (Sicilia).** Probably the best expressions of Cabernet Sauvignon from the Cefalù area of Sicily (north of Palermo). This beautiful estate, crowned by an ancient stone abbey, has seen a few difficult years, but thankfully, the vines remain productive. Gorgeous, rich and round, Litra delivers black cherry and chocolate flavors and velvety tannins. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**92 Cusumano 2008 Noà (Sicilia).** A blend of Nero d'Avola, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon) the 2008 vintage of Noà shows excellent concentration and intensity with lingering tones of ripe blackberry, cinnamon, wet earth and Graham cracker. It's a bold red wine, but the distinctive Nero d'Avola personality comes through nicely, linking the wine to its territory. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$42

**92 Donnafugata 2007 Tancredi (Sicilia).** Tancredi is a versatile, quality red wine that will content almost everyone. It opens with gorgeous aromas of chocolate and exotic spice, cherry and blackberry with Sicilian touches of toasted almond and pistachio. Folio Fine Wine Partners. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**91 Baglio del Cristo di Campobello 2009 Lusirà Syrah (Sicilia).** Lusirà is Sicilian dialect for "Syrah" grape and this hearty expression opens with inky dark concentration and intense aromas of ripe blackberry, blueberry, cinnamon, leather and smoked bacon fat. It shows a rich, chewy feel in the mouth. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$38

**91 COS 2005 Syre Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** COS is a nod to the three friends who founded the winery, Giambattista Cilia, Giusto Occhipinti and Cirino Strano. This beautiful Nero d'Avola opens with bright berry aromas, toasted pistachio nut and bright accents of chopped herbs. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$50

**91 Cusumano 2008 Sàgana Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Sàgana shows its best qualities in the 2008 vintage. It opens with a dark, inky appearance and thick aromas of red cherry, chocolate, espresso bean and dark spice. It's a bold and concentrated wine, with savory endnotes of soy and Teriyaki sauce. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$35

**91 Cusumano 2007 Noà (Sicilia).** Noà is a successful blend of Nero d'Avola, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon that offers rich and creamy aromas of blackberry jam, spice, leather and dark cola. The wine

is firm and dense, with lasting berry flavors. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$40

**91 Duca di Salaparuta 2005 Duca Enrico (Sicilia).** For full review see page 9.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$67

**91 Feudo Disisa 2008 Tornamira (Sicilia).** Tornamira is a blend of Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot that shows dark and sophisticated aromas of cured meat, leather, Teriyaki sauce, black fruit and toasted almond. There's a modern touch of oaky spice on the finish, with soft, velvety tannins to boot. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$35

**91 Feudo Montoni 2008 Vrucara Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Blessed with some of the most beautiful vineyards in an isolated spot in central Sicily (Contea di Sclafani), vintner Fabio Sireci's full attention goes to the quality of his fruit. This top-shelf expression of Nero d'Avola offers bright red fruit and softly toasted almond. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**91 Feudo Montoni 2007 Vrucara Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Vrucara represents a new, exciting page in the story of Sicily's most important indigenous grape, Nero d'Avola. The purity of the fruit comes through loud and clear, and the wine doesn't deliver that bittersweet finish you sometimes get. Instead, it shows cherry, spice and an elegant mineral tone. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**91 Firriato 2009 Harmonium Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Harmonium is a gorgeous, opulent wine with a generous bouquet that is packed tight with blackberry, cherry liqueur, dark mocha, toasted vanilla bean and bright touches of black licorice. It's a very pleasurable and elaborate interpretation of Sicily's number one indigenous grape. Soilair Selection. *Editors' Choice*. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$40

**91 Firriato 2008 Quater (Sicilia).** Quater is an innovative blend of Nero d'Avola, Perricone, Frappato and Nerello Cappuccio (four important indigenous grapes of Sicily) with a vinous but intense bouquet of red fruit, chocolate and spice. The mouthfeel is soft, velvety and opulent. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$32

**91 Firriato 2008 Ribeca Perricone (Sicilia).** Few Sicilian producers export 100% Perricone wines to the U.S. Among those who do, Firriato's Ribeca is among the best. This is a bold, concentrated and modern wine, with opulent chocolate and dark berry aromas framed by oak spice and vanilla. Keep it in your cellar for a few more years. Soilair Selection. *Cellar Selection*. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$45

**91 Morgante 2006 Don Antonio Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Morgante's Don Antonio is a wine that faithfully mirrors the growing success of Sicily. It's

been around long enough to provide a model for younger vintners and it's quality remains excellent, thanks to a dense, inky texture and bright aromas of dark cherry and toasted almond. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$40

**91 Planeta 2008 Burdese (Sicilia).** For full review see page 9.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$42

**91 Planeta 2008 Santa Cecilia Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** For full review see page 9.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$40

**91 Tasca d'Almerita 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Sicilia).** The Tasca family shows a deft hand with Cabernet Sauvignon, and has worked hard to match this international variety to the unique Sicilian territory. This beautiful vintage opens with nicely ripened dark fruit, cola, root beer, cured meat and Teriyaki sauce. The wine's texture is polished, smooth and firm. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$50

**91 Tasca d'Almerita 2007 Rosso del Conte (Sicilia).** An icon wine of Sicily, Rosso del Conte is the Sassaia of southern Italy because it opened the road for a quality-based revolution. This gorgeous blend (55% Nero d'Avola, 17% Perricone and 28% other mixed varieties) is soft, subtle and rich, with long-lasting tones of cherry and spice and well-extracted concentration. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$70

**91 Valle dell'Acate 2006 Tané (Sicilia).** Tané is a beautiful barrique-aged blend of Nero d'Avola and Syrah from southeast Sicily that shows rich intensity and a velvety feel in the mouth. The fruit is dense and smooth, and the wine's bright flavors last a long time on the palate. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$52

**90 Abbazia Santa Anastasia 2007 Passomaggio (Sicilia).** This vintage of Passomaggio (a blend of Nero d'Avola and Merlot) shows impressive strides in quality. From an estate with a beautiful sea-facing abbey built in the 1100s, the wine is modern, clean, plush and driven by ripe fruit and spice. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$NA

**90 Baglio del Cristo di Campobello 2009 Lu Patri Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Lu Patri (named after the "fathers") is a pure expression of Nero d'Avola with sophisticated oak notes and deep layers of ripe fruit and spice. There's a slightly jammy aroma here, but it works well within the thick, dense personality of this hearty red wine. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$40

**90 Benanti 2008 Il Drappo Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Il Drappo is a pure expression of Nero d'Avola that has been aged carefully in oak to produce a soft, rich mouthfeel and lively notes of bright berry and savory spice. There's a touch of toasted pistachio nut as well. Wine Warehouse Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**90 Benanti 2006 Lamorèmio (Sicilia).** Benanti releases wines from previous vintages to show the impressive aging potential of Mount Etna. This blend of Nerello Mascalese, Cabernet Sauvignon and Nero d'Avola offers currant and candied fruit aromas backed by soft spice and crushed granite. Wine Warehouse Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**90 Brugnano 2008 Honoris Causa (Sicilia).** Honoris Causa is a 75-25 blend of Nero d'Avola and Syrah (aged in French oak) that opens with bold, chewy, modern aromas of black cherry and chocolate. The wine delivers a round, velvety mouthfeel and a touch of sun-ripened berry sweetness on the close. Elite Brands. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$40

**90 Cottanera 2008 Fatagione Nerello Mascalese (Sicilia).** Fatagione delivers great intensity of cola, mint, licorice and rosemary-like aromas. The finish is dusty and dry, high lighted by brimstone and crushed mineral. Banville & Jones Wine Merchants. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$32

**90 Cottanera 2007 Sole di Sesta Syrah (Sicilia).** Cottanera interprets Etna through the lens of international grape varieties like Syrah. Sole di Sesta shows chewy berry and smoked bacon overtones that are characteristic of the grape, with enhanced mineral finesse that is typical of volcanic soil. Banville & Jones Wine Merchants. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**90 Cusumano 2007 Sàgana Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Cusumano's Sàgana brings the focus to the quality of the fruit. The wine shows red berry, spice and a unique toasted note that resembles almond or pistachio. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$32

**90 Cusumano 2006 Sàgana Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Sàgana is a pure expression of Nero d'Avola with loads of dark berry and cherry backed by toasted almond and milk chocolate. It shows a fair degree of elegance, and would pair with chicken, pork or over-baked pasta. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**90 D'Alessandro 2008 Rosso (Sicilia).** From the Agrigento area of southern Sicily, this blend of Nero d'Avola and Syrah offers dark concentration, plush berry flavors, spice, leather and crushed black pepper. It ends on bittersweet notes of spice and prune. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$22

**90 Duca di Salaparuta 2007 L'àvico Vajasin-di Nerello Mascalese (Sicilia).** L'àvico is a tight, bright wine that shows an elegant and austere side of sunny Sicily. The wine is redolent of wild berries, cola, dried ginger and light spice. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$19

**90 Duca di Salaparuta 2006 Duca Enrico Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** A founding father of

Sicily's quality wine tradition, the 2006 Duca Enrico is a plush and rich red with bold berry flavors and a spicy vegetal touch of green curry leaf. An icon of southern Italian wine, the wine is well suited to roast beef or sophisticated meat dishes. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$67

**90 Feudo Arancio 2006 Hedonis (Sicilia).** Hedonis is a beautiful blend of Nero d'Avola (70%) and Syrah, with a soft, velvety feel and bold berry flavors. It offers endnotes of cassis, almond, tobacco and savory cured meat. Prestige Wine Imports Corp. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**90 Feudo Disisa 2006 Tornamira (Sicilia).** Tornamira is a blend of Syrah, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon that offers plush, fruity layers of black fruit, spice, cola, tobacco and softly worn leather. Pair this wine with grilled sausage and bell peppers. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**90 Feudo Maccari 2007 Saia Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Saia is an opulent, darkly concentrated wine that opens with lush tones of prune, dark fruit, spice, cola, leather and toasted nut. Try pairing it with potato gnocchi and veal ragù. Kobrand. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$35

**90 Firriato 2009 Santagostino Baglio Soria (Sicilia).** This blend of Nero d'Avola and Syrah offers balance and harmony, with no aromatic element out of place. It presents a steady wall of black fruit, soft cherry, tobacco, rum cake and dark leather. The soft, velvety tannins make this a great pasta or lasagna wine. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$24

**90 Firriato 2008 Camelot (Sicilia).** Camelot is a bold blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot that shows great balance and elegant composure. It's not overdone or jammy, despite the hot climate that shaped it. Instead, it shows focus and precision in its blackberry, cherry, oak spice and cinnamon notes. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$47

**90 Firriato 2007 Quater (Sicilia).** Quater is a rich red blend that opens with blackberry, rum cake, Indian spice, cola and ground clove. It combines intensity and complexity with a bold, opulent mouthfeel. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$32

**90 Masseria del Feudo Grottarossa 2007 Rosso delle Rose (Sicilia).** Rosso delle Rose is a 70-30 blend of Syrah and Nero d'Avola that opens with smoky, savory elements of exotic spice, cured meat, ripe fruit and crushed white peppercorn. The wine's appearance is thick and dense, as is the mouthfeel, but there is also a touch of acidity to keep it fresh. Massanois Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$30

**90 Planeta 2009 Maroccoli Syrah (Sicilia).** With the spice markets and romanica bazaars of North Africa not far off the coast of Sicily, Maroc-

coli embodies a sensual spirit with bright cinnamon and clove backed by black fruit and dried fig. The wine is rich, plush and smoothly textured. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$42

**90 Planeta 2008 Merlot (Sicilia).** Planeta's delicious Merlot opens with modern touches of spice and milk chocolate that enhance a solid core of red berry fruit. The tannins are soft and polished, but firm enough to give the wine impressive staying power. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$40

**90 Planeta 2008 Syrah (Sicilia).** What a fabulous value wine. If you love Sicily and you love Syrah, this beauty delivers the best of both. The low price tag is unbelievable. Aromas include blackberry, bacon fat, cigar tobacco and spice. The wine is soft, smooth and velvety on the finish. Palm Bay International. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$12

**90 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Sallier de la Tour La Monaca Syrah (Sicilia).** This is a dark and muscular expression of Syrah executed in a quasi-Australian style, with loads of concentration and spice, backed by smoked bacon, Teriyaki, candied berry and Indian spice. Domaines and Appellations. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**90 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Tascante Nerello Mascalese (Sicilia).** Tascante combines "Tasca" and "Etna" spelled backwards. This wine represents the estate's first vintage of Nerello Mascalese from the fiery Sicilian volcano. It's a tight, tonic expression with small berry fruit and a long finish highlighted by crushed clove and nutmeg. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**90 Tenuta Barone Nicolò La Lumia 2007 Signorio Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Signorio is a surprisingly polished and elegant Nero d'Avola with a silky, fine texture and bright flavors of dried fruit, cassis, espresso and dark chocolate. Pair this pretty wine with saffron and shrimp risotto. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**90 Tenuta di Serramarrocco 2006 Serramarrocco (Sicilia).** Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot from the Sannichele vineyard of the Serramarrocco estate are blended to produce a thick, inky Sicilian red that is redolent of blackberry, dried prune, rum cake and exotic clove or cardamom. Pair this richly textured red with stewed beef or game meat. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$NA

**90 Tenuta Rapitalà 2009 Nadir Syrah (Sicilia).** Nadir is an impressive rendition of Syrah that delivers round, sweet aromas of blackberry, cherry, rum cake and smoked bacon. The high quality of the mouthfeel also sets this wine apart: It is soft, modern and very rich. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. **Editors' Choice.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

**90 Tenuta Rapalà 2008 Hugonis (Sicilia).** For full review see page 12.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$45

**90 Valle dell'Acate 2007 Rusciano (Sicilia).** Rusciano is a blend of Syrah and Nero d'Avola that displays impressive depth and complexity. Aromas of dark fruit, spice, black currant and earthy tobacco build in intensity as the wine evolves in the glass. The finish is smooth and rich. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$32

**89 Duca di Salaparuta 2008 Làvico Vajasindi Nerello Mascalese (Sicilia).** This bright edition of Làvico opens with bright fruit aromas of blueberry and dried raspberry, followed closely by crushed mineral and light shadings of exotic spice. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$19

**89 Feudo Arancio Stemmari 2008 Cantadoro (Sicilia).** Cantadoro is a blend of Nero d'Avola (80%) and Cabernet Sauvignon that is packed tight with bright fruit and pretty shadings of exotic spice and tobacco. It's a balanced, fresh red wine that would pair well with roast chicken or beef. Prestige Wine Imports Corp. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

**89 Feudo Maccari 2008 Saia Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Saia is a plump and modern expression of Nero d'Avola that opens with a richly concentrated appearance and intense aromas of black cherry, brown sugar, cola and toasted oak. There's a vinous, raw quality that should integrate with two or three more years of bottle aging. Kobrand. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$36

**89 Firriato 2008 Santagostino Baglio Soria (Sicilia).** Nero d'Avola and Syrah make for a great marriage, and this wine from Firriato proves the point. It's luscious and warm with pulsing red cherry and blackberry fruit backed by smoke, spice and barbecue. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Gulfi 2006 Neromàccarj Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This wine is definitely on the ripe and chewy side of the Nero d'Avola spectrum, with bold berry and black cherry aromas. The mouthfeel is soft and slightly sweet. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$50

**89 Maurigi 2004 Tenuta di Budonetto Lù Petite Verdot (Sicilia).** Maurigi's top wine, this dark Petite Verdot offers black fruit, prune, plum, barbecue smoke and steak sauce notes. The Etna environment appears to have added a darker and rich quality to the overall bouquet. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$46

**89 Terre di Giurfo 2006 Kuntàri Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Terre di Giurfo is worth keeping an eye on. It specialized in Frappato and Nero d'Avola. This oak-aged wine opens with inky dark concentration

and ripe blackberry and cherry notes. Wirtz Beverage. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$23

**88 Alessandro di Camporeale 2010 Donnata Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Donnata is made in a hefty, concentrated style with overtones of cola, smoked meat, toasted nut, tobacco and sun-ripened fruit. There's roundness and bold personality, yet with a soft, smooth feel to the tannins. Panebianco. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$22

**88 Alessandro di Camporeale 2009 Kaid Syrah (Sicilia).** Plump, sweet and bursting with chewy blueberry and milky chocolate flavors, this is a dense, creamy Syrah to enjoy on a cold winter night. The wine delivers a velvety mouthfeel and long spicy overtones. Panebianco. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**88 Baglio del Cristo di Campobello 2009 Adenzia (Sicilia).** Nero d'Avola, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon combine to produce a darkly concentrated wine with bold aromas of blueberry, blue flowers, sweet spice and rum cake. The wine's texture is plump and chewy. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$25

**88 Baglio di Pianetto 2007 Ramione (Sicilia).** Ramione is a 50-50 blend of Nero d'Avola and Merlot that offers bright fruit: blackberry, cherry and plum. Smoky oak spice fills in the back adding more intensity and density to the overall mouthfeel. Vinvino Wine. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$19

**88 Brugnano 2010 V90 Syrah (Sicilia).** Youthful and bright, this Syrah offers plump fullness and loads of cherry, blackberry, rum cake, coffee and crushed mineral aromas. There's a touch of bright sweetness in the mouth that makes a cheerful endnote. Imperial Beverage. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Calatrasi 2007 'A Naca Rosso (Sicilia).** Nero d'Avola (95%) is enhanced by tiny percentages of Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon to produce a thick, impenetrable Sicilian red that is based on ripe fruit, blackberry, prune, syrupy cherry sauce and shaved oak wood. It's a bold, chewy wine with a thick and soft mouthfeel. Vision Wine & Spirits. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$35

**88 Caruso & Minini 2009 Cutaja Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Cutaja opens with a healthy dose of cinnamon and spice backed by bright cherry and toasted almond. The fruit shows a dark, ripe quality, with overtones of black olive and caper, but there is enough acidity to keep the palate refreshed. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$35

**88 Caruso & Minini 2008 Cutaja Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Cutaja opens with lively red fruit, wild berry, cassis and marzipan. There's a raw, almost syrupy quality to the fruit that reflects the sun-

drenched nature of Sicilian winemaking. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$22

**88 Cottanera 2008 Grammonte Merlot (Sicilia).** Grammonte shows touches of ripe fruit and cured meat lavished over a thickly concentrated mouthfeel. The wine is plush and richly textured with a touch of sour cherry on the close. Banville & Jones Wine Merchants. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Cottanera 2008 L'Ardenza Mondeuse (Sicilia).** One of a tiny handful of Mondeuse-based wines made in Italy, L'Ardenza offers plump, dark tones, combined with ripe fruit and dense richness. Because this wine originates from Mount Etna, it is also redolent of black soil and crushed minerals. Banville & Jones Wine Merchants. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Cusumano 2010 Benuara (Sicilia).** Benuara is a 70-30 blend of Nero d'Avola and Syrah with a strongly menthol-driven nose enhanced by dark fruit, spice and green olive. Pair this wine with tapenade-crusted chicken. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$17

**88 Cusumano 2009 Benuara (Sicilia).** Nero d'Avola and Syrah are blended to produce a dark, hearty red wine with overtones of dried herb and black olive. The wine is fresh and smooth, with a touch of bitter almond on the finish. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$16

**88 Cusumano 2008 Pinot Nero (Sicilia).** There is new interest in planting Pinot Nero grape in Sicily. This ruby-colored wine delivers bold fruit, bramble, earthy tones and button mushroom. It's a surprise, but it works. Vin Divino. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 D'Alessandro 2009 Syrah (Sicilia).** D'Alessandro's plump Syrah is a bold and generous red wine, with richly layered aromas of cherry, blackberry, rum cake, bacon fat and toasted nut. Pair this wine with *abbacchio arrosto* (roast lamb). Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$20

**88 D'Alessandro 2007 Rosso (Sicilia).** An oak-aged blend of Nero d'Avola and Syrah, this wine shows warm, earthy notes of tobacco, leather, dark fruit and cured meat. The wine would be perfect alongside hearty bean soup or chili con carne. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$28

**88 Feudi del Pisciotto 2009 Valentino (Sicilia).** Valentino (a Sicilian expression of Merlot) is aged in oak to produce a wine that offers equals parts cherry and spice in terms of its aromas. In the mouth, it is sticky, chewy and bursting with bright berry fruit. Vias Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$21

**88 Feudi del Pisciotto 2008 Valentino (Sicilia).** Inspired by the fashion designer Valentino,



this Sicilian Merlot shows sun-ripened tones of blackberry, cherry liqueur, and dried prune. It's a soft, round wine with a dense and chewy mouthfeel. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Feudo di Santa Tresa 2007 Avulisi Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This oak-aged Nero d'Avola delivers dried berry, raspberry and cassis notes along with elegant touches of spice, leather and pipe tobacco. The fruit is dense and chewy. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$22

**88 Feudo Montoni 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Here's a simple but genuine interpretation of Nero d'Avola that presents bright aromas of black fruit, almond, prune and cherry cola. It leaves a soft, chewy impression on the palate. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**88 Feudo Montoni 2008 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Feudo Montoni's beautiful hillside vineyards produce very clean and characteristic expressions of Nero d'Avola. This wine features nuances of bright cherry, wild berry, toasted almond and pistachio. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**88 Firriato 2008 Chiamonte Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Chiamonte is a pure expression of Nero d'Avola from a winery located in the Trapani area of southern Sicily. The fruit shows ripe characteristics of blackberry and spice, and the mouthfeel is long and soft. Soilair Selection. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Firriato 2007 Camelot (Sicilia).** Camelot is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot that shows solid structure, ample length, smooth tannins and loads of dark fruit and spice. Pair this hearty red wine with breaded veal rolls fried in olive oil. Soilair Selection. —M.L.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 MandraRossa 2009 Cartagho (Sicilia).** Cartagho from powerhouse winery MandraRossa (one of Italy's most important cooperatives) presents a very modern, opulent expression of Nero d'Avola, with dark fruit and bright Christmas spice. The finish offers a lively touch of bitter almond. Palm Bay International. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$25

**88 Palari 2008 Rosso del Soprano (Sicilia).** Vintner Salvatore Geraci's Rosso del Soprano is a bright, lively red blend from the northern-most Sicily. The wine opens with cherry, raspberry and wild berry, with darker notes of leather, tobacco and crushed minerals at the back. Panebianco. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$52

**88 Planeta 2009 Sito dell'Ulmo Merlot (Sicilia).** Sito dell'Ulmo is a new vineyard-designated Merlot that combines pretty floral tones of red rose and spice with cherry, blackberry and rum cake. It shows

a soft, fine texture that delicately caresses the palate. Palm Bay International. —M.L.

**abv:** NA **Price:** \$42

**88 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Lamùri Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Lamùri is a terrific value wine from Sicily that would pair well with pizza or backyard barbecues. The wine is plump, soft and easy and driven by bright berry fruit. Winebow. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$13

**88 Tasca d'Almerita 2008 Cygnus (Sicilia).** Cygnus is a hearty blend of Nero d'Avola and Cabernet Sauvignon that opens with perfumed aromas of red rose and cinnamon potpourri followed by warm aromas of leather and spice. At the wine's core are black fruit and chocolate flavors. Winebow. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$30

**88 Tenuta di Fessina 2008 Ero Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Ero is packed tight with bright berry, cassis and white almond. That all-Sicilian jamminess you sometimes find in this variety is absent here. Winebow. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$25

**88 Tenuta Rapitalà 2009 Alto Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This wine opens with pulpy heft and concentration and offers a tight but yielding sensation in the mouth. That extra density really helps it work and underlines the wine's natural cherry, cola and chewy almond flavors. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$22

**88 Terre di Giurfo 2009 Belsito Frappato (Sicilia).** Frappato is a terrific native grape from the southern-most parts of Sicily that offers the elegance and brightness of a Pinot Noir and the easy approachability of a Beaujolais. It's a red wine that would pair with fish dishes or a white asparagus risotto. Wirtz Beverage. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**88 Terre di Giurfo 2009 Kudyah Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Kudyah is aged only in stainless steel to preserve the freshness of the fruit, offering raspberry, cherry and white almond. Pair this wine with meat dishes or pasta. Wirtz Beverage. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

**88 Valle dell'Acate 2008 Il Moro Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Il Moro offers intense aromas of blackberry, cherry, plum and rum cake. It's a tight, compact wine with great fruit intensity that would pair well with vegetable risotto or smoked cheeses. Polaner Selections. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25

**88 Zisola 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** The Zisola estate is owned by Florence's Mazzei family. Partly age in French oak, this Nero d'Avola shows bright cherry and blackberry aromas, with toasted nut and bitter almond on the close. Palm Bay International. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25

**87 Abbazia Santa Anastasia 2009 Contempo Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Contempo is a fresh and lean expression of Nero d'Avola from western Sicily that opens with aromas of wild berry, rose petal and toasted almond. It's a simple red wine that would pair with pasta or easy meat dishes. Empson (USA) Ltd. —M.L.

**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**87 Baglio di Pianetto 2009 Shymer (Sicilia).** As its hybrid name suggests, Shymer is a blend of Syrah and Merlot. The wine presents a friendly bouquet accented by red cherry, white pepper and sweet cinnamon. The tannins are soft and plush. Vinvino Wine. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$17

**87 Brugnano 2010 V90 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** V90 is a soft red with bold fruit concentration and sweet aromas of jammy fruit, candied almond, vanilla and Christmas spice. It's a well-made wine with an easy approach and a bold mouthfeel. Elite Brands. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

**87 Brugnano 2009 V90 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This wine features earthy characteristics of wild mushroom, wild berry, forest floor and bright cassis. The texture is thick and velvety, and there's a touch of softness on the close. Imperial Beverage. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Brugnano 2008 Lunario Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Lunario offers bright sensations of cola, wild berry, red rose and drying talc powder. The wine boasts a thick, textured mouthfeel, and finishes with toasted notes of almond and pistachio. Imperial Beverage. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$35

**87 Cantine Barbera 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** From the beautiful Menfi area of southern Sicily comes this clean and genuine expression of Nero d'Avola featuring bright berry aromas and silky tannins. Pair this wine with roast pork. Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Cantine Rallo 2010 Il Principe Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** From the Alcamo area of western Sicily, this organically-farmed Nero d'Avola opens with slightly raw, vinous notes of cherry and fresh plum. The wine presents a bright, ruby color and offers flavors of toasted pistachio and spice on the close. Francoli USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Cantine Rallo 2008 Rujari (Sicilia).** Rujari is a hearty blend of Nero d'Avola, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon that opens with a dark, inky appearance and heavy aromas of ripe blackberry, cherry jam, cola and black licorice. The wine imparts a thick but slightly sour feel on the close. Francoli USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Caruso & Minini 2008 Sachia Perricone (Sicilia).** Single-variety expressions of Perricone (a dark red grape found in Sicily) are showing up

more frequently and are quickly cementing the grape's quality potential. A dark red color marks this wine's appearance, as do intense aromas of blackberry, plum and spice. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$25

**87 Caruso & Minini 2008 Terre di Giumara Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Terre di Giumara is a line of value wines. This Nero d'Avola offers bright aromas of berry, cassis, fennel, moist earth and almond that recall the natural fragrances of Sicily. The wine is simple, fresh and clean on the close. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$12

**87 Ceuso 2008 Scurati Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Scurati is a balanced and firm wine with a bright, almost crunchy quality to the fruit and easy notes of leather and spice on the close. Pair it with barbecued grilled sausages or hamburgers. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$19

**87 Colosi 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Aged only in stainless steel to preserve the freshness of the fruit, this wine is redolent of wild berries, violets, cola, crushed stone and licorice. The mouthfeel is sharp, clean and bright. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$16

**87 Cusumano 2010 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** A great value choice, this bright Nero d'Avola shows aromas of ripe fruit and blackberry framed by oak spice and leather. There's a pleasing fullness and thickness to the wine that would match up well with grilled meats. Vin Divino. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$12

**87 Cusumano 2009 Pinot Nero (Sicilia).** Pinot Nero in Sicily either works or it doesn't. This one does. The wine shows aromas of wild berry, peppermint, chopped mint, white cherry and red rose. Vin Divino. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$21

**87 Donnafugata 2009 Sedàra (Sicilia).** Sedàra is a popular Sicilian red that is readily available around the world. This lively vintage shows bright berry tones, white almond and bright touches of cola and cassis. The mouthfeel is sharp, crisp and compact. Folio Fine Wine Partners. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2009 Passo delle Mule Suor Marchesa (Sicilia).** Duca di Salaparuta sources fruit from vineyard sites spanning the island of Sicily. From the Passo delle Mule location, this bright Nero d'Avola is generous in terms of its fruit-forward aromatic profile. The mouthfeel is firm, polished and crisp. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$19

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2008 Passo delle Mule Suor Marchesa Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Sometimes you need a solid wine to pair with spaghetti and meat sauce or simple meat dishes like pork or breaded veal. This Sicilian Nero d'Avola fits the bill and

offers a bright bouquet of berry, almond and cola. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$19

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2008 Triskelè (Sicilia).** Nero d'Avola and Merlot are blended to produce a tight, crisp, cherry-driven red wine with almond and toasted pistachio overtones. Pair this wine with veal, chicken or pork. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$30

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2008 Nawàri Vajasin-di Pinot Nero (Sicilia).** Nawàri is Pinot Nero from high altitude vineyards in Sicily, offering sweet fruit aromas of wild berry and almond paste with background notes of rubber, smoked bacon and crushed minerals. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2007 Triskelè (Sicilia).** A blend of Nero d'Avola and Merlot, Triskelè is a simple, fruity wine with a soft mouthfeel and a generous aromatic profile. The wine would work well with beef dishes like meatloaf or prime rib. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$30

**87 Duca di Salaparuta 2007 Nawàri Vajasin-di Pinot Nero (Sicilia).** Sicilian Pinot Nero shows much of the variety's natural aromas of blue flower and wild berry, only in a thicker, more concentrated context. The southern Italian sun has done its part to produce a round, broad mouthfeel. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Feudi del Pisciotto 2009 Missoni (Sicilia).** Missoni is an oak-aged Cabernet Sauvignon that opens with soft, chewy fruit and aromas of cherry liqueur, rum cake, espresso and exotic spice. The mouthfeel is plush, round and driven by plump blackberry flavors. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$21

**87 Feudi del Pisciotto 2009 Versace Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Inspired by fashion icon Versace, this interpretation of Nero d'Avola opens with dense blackberry and blueberry aromas with background tones of spice and almond. This Sicilian estate belongs to the owner of one of Italy's biggest fashion-media groups. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$21

**87 Feudi del Pisciotto 2008 Missoni (Sicilia).** Here's an inky black and densely concentrated Cabernet Sauvignon that would pair with grilled sausage or barbecued steak. The wine is soft, round and slightly sweet on the finish. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Feudi del Pisciotto 2008 Versace Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Versace is a smooth but easy Sicilian Nero d'Avola with ripe fruit and loads of dark, sun-ripened concentration. The mouthfeel is soft, round and chewy. Vias Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Feudo Arancio Stemmari 2010 Syrah (Sicilia).** Sicilia and Syrah make a formidable team. This value wine from the Sambuca area of the island opens with a soft, velvety mouthfeel and delivers plump aromas of black fruit, cherry, white pepper and dark spice. The fruit element is bright and focused. Prestige Wine Imports Corp. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**87 Feudo Arancio Stemmari 2010 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This bright wine offers fresh and tangy fruit, dark concentration and bold aromas of blackberry and toasted almond. That nutty note is typical of this popular Sicilian grape variety. Prestige Wine Imports Corp. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$9

**87 Feudo Arancio Stemmari 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (Sicilia).** If you are staging an informal outdoor barbecue with franks and burgers, this value wine will meet all your pairing needs. It's soft, plush and round, with exotic spice, ripe fruit and black pepper. Prestige Wine Imports Corp. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**87 Feudo Arancio Stemmari 2010 Merlot (Sicilia).** A great value wine to pair with homemade spaghetti sauce or grilled sausage with onions and bell peppers, this wine is soft and lush, with cherry, almond and blackberry notes. There's a touch of sweet strawberry on the close. Prestige Wine Imports Corp. **Best Buy.** —M.L.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**87 Feudo Disisa 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This youthful wine plays most of its cards in the mouth, where it offers a plump, fruity feel with fresh accents of tangy acidity on the finish. The bouquet is redolent of red berry, cola and leather. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$16

**87 Feudo Principi di Butera 2008 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** From a beautiful vineyard site in southern Sicily, this easy Nero d'Avola would pair well with lasagna or grilled pork sausages. Cherry, almond and wild berry aromas are followed by a bright, fresh mouthfeel. Zonin USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**87 Feudo Principi di Butera 2008 Syrah (Sicilia).** This estate dominates one of the most beautiful wine valleys in the southern half of Sicily. Rolling hills and chalky white soils help shape a bright but polished Syrah with sharp berry tones and lingering notes of crushed stone and talcum powder. Zonin USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**87 Feudo Principi di Butera 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Sicilia).** Sicilian Cabernet Sauvignon is aged in large oak barrels to produce a clean, polished red wine with aromas of wild berry, blackberry, curry leaf, dried herb and white mushroom. Zonin USA. —M.L.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**87 Feudo Principi di Butera 2008 Surya (Sicilia).** Surya is a blend of Nero d'Avola and Merlot from the Sicilian estate of northern Italy's Zonin family. The wine shows ripe fruit qualities of blueberry and raspberry, with a touch of bitter almond so characteristic of many Sicilian red wines. Zonin USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$13

**87 Fondo Antico 2010 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Fondo Antico offers a clean and pretty Nero d'Avola without those messy, charred aromas you sometimes find in cheap versions of this indigenous grape. The nose is well put together, with elements of cherry, spice, almond and fresh citrus zest. Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. *Editors' Choice.* —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**87 Fondo Antico 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Fondo Antico's entry-level Nero d'Avola offers a clean portrait of the Sicilian indigenous grape, with tones of red cherry, blackberry, red rose and lightly toasted almond. The tannins are soft and silky. Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Gulfi 2009 Rossojbleo Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Rossojbleo opens with distinct aromas of oatmeal cookie, Graham cracker and bright red fruit. It's a unique expression, with just enough acidity to keep the plate refreshed. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**87 Gulfi 2006 Nero Baronj Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Big ripeness and bold fruit flavors characterize this sun-drenched expression of Nero d'Avola. The wine is soft and chewy, with cherry liqueur notes on the close. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$50

**87 Maggiovini 2007 Amongae (Sicilia).** An easy blend of oak-aged Nero d'Avola, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, Amongae represents a new, modern side of Sicilian winemaking. There are plush fruit aromas here, enhanced by tobacco, cigar box and drying mineral nuances. Caffo Beverages Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$16

**87 MandraRossa 2010 Syrah (Sicilia).** This easy expression of Syrah is redolent of ripe berry, moist earth and forest floor. There's a touch of fresh mint or peppermint as well, and a drying mineral feel on the close. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**87 MandraRossa 2009 Bonera (Sicilia).** Bonera is a blend of Nero d'Avola (50%) and equal parts Cabernets Franc and Sauvignon. The bouquet is sweet and soft, with bright tones of red cherry, chocolate and espresso bean. The mouthfeel is firm, tight and fresh. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$19

**87 Masseria del Feudo Grottarossa 2009 Il Giglio Syrah (Sicilia).** Sicily and Syrah make perfect partners. This wine offers linear, smooth berry tones with touches of barbecue smoke and crushed

minerals or talcum powder on the finish. Massanois Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$23

**87 Maurigi 2004 Tenuta di Budonetto Terre di Maria (Sicilia).** Terre di Maria is a Sicilian blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Pinot Noir that opens with dark concentration and savory aromas of spice, cured meat, smoked bacon and dark berry fruit. The bouquet is slightly muddled but the mouthfeel is bright and fresh. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$27

**87 Maurigi 2004 Tenuta di Budonetto Terre di Ottavia Pinot Nero (Sicilia).** This Pinot Nero is neutral on the nose with distant tones of small berry and violet. There's more power in the mouth, thanks to the long and silky nature of the tannins. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$46

**87 Mineo Family Vineyards 2008 Aliso Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Aliso opens with ripe fruit aromas of blackberry jam and cinnamon bread. It's a simple, plush red wine that would pair well with pasta, meatloaf or roast beef. Pelican Brands, LLC. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$19

**87 Morgante 2008 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Morgante is an excellent Sicilian estate that has shown consistency in quality throughout the years. This fruit-filled Nero d'Avola would pair well with veal encrusted with chopped pistachio or pork marinated in garlic and rosemary. Aromas here include wild fruit, cassis and black currant. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$17

**87 Palari 2009 Rosso del Soprano (Sicilia).** This edition of Rosso del Soprano from boutique winemaker Salvatore Geraci offers bright berry tones with easy background notes of almond, pistachio and tobacco. There's also a drying mineral note of crushed stone or talcum powder that gives the wine backbone. Panebianco. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$52

**87 Planeta 2010 La Segreta (Sicilia).** A great value wine from Sicily present on restaurant lists across southern Italy, La Segreta is a famously food-friendly red blend that offers light berry, cherry, almond and spice aromas. The easy mouthfeel pairs with pasta, risotto, veal or roast chicken. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**87 Planeta 2009 La Segreta (Sicilia).** Le Segreta is an easy, popular red wine from Sicily that offers the wild berry, fennel, cola and almond-like aromas associated with the beautiful Mediterranean island. The mouthfeel is informal and crisp. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**87 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Regaleali Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** A great value choice from Sicily, this bright Nero d'Avola is perfumed and floral,

with red rose, violet and wild berry aromas. The mouthfeel is delicate, polished and fresh. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$13

**87 Tasca d'Almerita 2007 Lamùri Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Lamùri is a solid value wine from Sicily that shows fresh fruit nuances and loads of wild berry and white almond. Try it with baked salmon or creamy shellfish dishes. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**87 Tenuta Barone Nicolò La Lumia 2002 Torreforte Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This aged wine shows tertiary aromas of dried fruit, cured meat, bresaola and toasted almond. The wine is garnet in color with browning hues. Drink immediately. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Tenuta di Serramarrocco 2006 Barone di Serramarrocco Perricone (Sicilia).** From the Erice area of Sicily (in the southwest, near Trapani), Barone di Serramarrocco is made with Pignatello (also known by the name Perricone) and small percentages of other indigenous varieties. This oak-aged red shows dark concentration and toasted notes of almond and dried fruit. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Tenuta Rapitalà 2008 Nuhar (Sicilia).** Nuhar is an innovative blend of Nero d'Avola (70%) and Pinot Nero that surpasses expectations and does justice to both grape varieties. The cherry and almond tones of the first grape are present, as are the delicate violet, raspberry and cassis aromas of the second. The finish shows bright menthol and spearmint overtones. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

**87 Valle dell'Acate 2010 Case Ibidini Syrah (Sicilia).** Fresh, youthful and redolent of bright berry fruit, this Sicilian Syrah would pair perfectly with pizza, home-cooked pasta or light meat dishes. Blueberry and raspberry fruits dominate the bouquet and lend a soft, chewy feel in the mouth. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$16

**87 Valle dell'Acate 2009 Case Ibidini Syrah (Sicilia).** Sicily is doing wonderful things with Syrah and this expression from the southern-most part of the island shows a fresh and informal side to the grape. The wine is packed tight with lush, bright red fruit flavors. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**87 Viticultori Associati Canicatti 2008 Aquilae Merlot (Sicilia).** This wine delivers plump cherry and blackberry with a soft, velvety, easy-going mouthfeel. Sober LLC. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Baglio Curatolo Arini 1875 2009 Terre Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Easy, fresh and approachable, this screw cap Sicilian red opens with raspberry, cherry and toasted almond aromas. There's a touch of bitterness on the finish. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Baglio del Cristo di Campobello 2010 C'D'C' (Sicilia).** A blend of Nero d'Avola, Syrah, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, Campobello's entry-level red is slightly muddled, but it does a good job of offering genuine fruit flavors and overall freshness. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$17

**86 Botter 2010 Caleo Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Caleo opens with a bright, almost pungent note of almond paste, cassia and dried apple. Bramble, wild berry and almond skin appear on the easy finish. Total Wine & More. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Bruignano 2008 Naisi (Sicilia).** A 75-25 blend of Nero d'Avola and Tannat, Naisi is a plump, jammy red with aromas of blackberry, leather and cured meat. The finish is layered with sweet and sour elements. Elite Brands. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$22

**86 Calatrasi 2009 La Piazza (Sicilia).** A terrific value wine, La Piazza (in a screw cap bottle) is a blend of Merlot and Nero d'Avola. Bright aromas of cinnamon, Spanish cedar, mocha, black cherry and bitter almond have a raw, vinous quality. Pelican Brands, LLC. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$8

**86 Cantine Barbera 2010 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Cantine Barbera presents a classic but simple expression of Nero d'Avola with an easy nose of cherry, raw fruit and white almond skin. The mouthfeel is bright and compact and shows a touch of sour fruit as well. Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**86 Caruso & Minini 2009 Terre di Giumara Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Terre di Giumara shows dark concentration and savory aromas of forest floor, barbecue sauce, blackberry and button mushroom. Bitter almond appears on the close and there's a touch of tight astringency as well. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$14

**86 Colosi 2008 Rosso (Sicilia).** A well-priced wine packed tight in oak-aged aromas of ripe fruit and spice. There's a warm, jammy feel and the mouthfeel is soft and easy. Vias Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12

**86 Corvo 2009 Terrae Dei Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Terrae Dei is a simple wine with bright fruit and a clean, berry-driven palate. Pair this wine with spaghetti and sauce stewed with cubed bacon bits. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**86 Cusumano 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Cusumano is a terrific Sicilian estate that offers both high-end expressions and a consistent line of value wines. This well-priced Nero d'Avola is fresh, clear, fruit-forward and easy to drink. Vin Divino. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$10

**86 Cusumano 2009 Syrah (Sicilia).** A great value wine, Cusumano's cheerful Syrah is aged in stainless steel to lock in its fresh berry nuances. The wine's texture is clean and simple, but nicely smooth and soft as well. Vin Divino. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$10

**86 D'Alessandro 2008 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Here's a simple, straightforward Nero d'Avola from a relatively new estate located just steps away from the temples of Agrigento. The wine's aromas include sun-ripened fruit and cured meat. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12

**86 Duca di Salaparuta 2009 Calanica Nero d'Avola-Merlot (Sicilia).** Nero d'Avola and Merlot are combined to produce an easy-going red that would pair with grilled meat or breaded veal. The wine is lean and crisp with light berry tones and a touch of charred toast on the close. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**86 Duca di Salaparuta 2008 Calanica Nero d'Avola and Merlot (Sicilia).** There are several versions of Calanica made from various blends of red grapes. This version combines Nero d'Avola and Merlot, and opens with ripe aromas of black cherry and dried raspberry. The mouthfeel is soft, simple and chewy. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**86 Feudi del Pisciotto 2009 Carolina Maren-ga Frappato (Sicilia).** Frappato is a wonderfully light and fruity red wine for all seasons, even hot summer months. This expression sees some oak aging that adds extra density and spice. Vias Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$21

**86 Feudo di Santa Tresa 2007 Nivuro (Sicilia).** This blend of Nero d'Avola and Cabernet Sauvignon shows easy tones of blackberry, prune, plum and cherry liqueur. It's soft and velvety in the mouth, with an easy-going personality. Vias Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Fondo Antico 2010 I Versi (Sicilia).** I Versi is a youthful blend of Nero d'Avola, Merlot and Syrah that offers plump aromas of ripe cherry and blackberry backed by soft tones of cinnamon and toasted almond. It's a perfect pairing to a heaping plate of spaghetti carbonara with crispy fried bacon. Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$8

**86 Gulfi 2006 Nerobufaleffj Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Nerobufaleffj delivers ripe fruit, blackberry and some distant tones of citrus and apple. It's frank, easy and smooth on the close. Selected Estates of Europe Ltd. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$50

**86 MandraRossa 2010 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** A consistent wine, year in and year out, MandraRossa's fresh Nero d'Avola would pair perfectly with pizza or simple spaghetti and tomato sauce. It

shows loads of cola, licorice, dark fruit and bright acidity on the close. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**86 Masseria del Feudo Grottarossa 2010 Il Giglio Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This organic Nero d'Avola offers bold aromas of black cherry, cured meat, black espresso and tangy Indian spice. Massanois Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$17

**86 Maurigi 2009 Tenuta di Budonetto (Sicilia) Bacca Rossa).** A blend of Nero d'Avola, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon from Etna, Bacca Rossa is an informal, light wine with disjointed aromas of spice, red fruit and rose. The mouthfeel is sharp and compact. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**86 Maurigi 2007 Saia Grande (Sicilia).** Saia Grande is a blend of Merlot, Syrah and Pinot Noir that offers plump fruit flavors of cherry and wild berry followed by toasted almond and crushed white pepper. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$22

**86 Maurigi 2004 Tenuta di Budonetto Gran-Cabernet Franc (Sicilia).** Maurigi is a young, dynamic estate located on the blackened slopes of Mount Etna. This hearty Cabernet Franc shows tertiary aromas of leather, tobacco, licorice and inky dark fruit. USA Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$46

**86 Mineo Family Vineyards 2008 Damis (Sicilia).** A blend of Merlot, Petit Verdot and Syrah, Damis is a plump, jammy wine with bold aromas of strawberry and blackberry preserves, spice and toasted nut. It's an easy-drinking wine with a fresh, almost sour note on the close. Pelican Brands, LLC. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$19

**86 Nicosia 2010 Fondo Filara Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** For full review see page 13.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

**86 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Sallier de la Tour Syrah (Sicilia).** A great value wine, this fruity Syrah opens with bright blueberry, cherry and plum woven between subtle nuances of leather, spice and smoked bacon. Domaines and Appellations. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$11

**86 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Sallier de la Tour Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** The Sallier de la Tour line from Tasca d'Almerita offers some of Sicily's best values. This easy expression of Nero d'Avola shows mild tones of cherry, spice and almond. It's a perfect pasta or pizza wine. Domaines and Appellations. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$11

**86 Valle dell'Acate 2010 Case Ibdini Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This cheerful Nero d'Avola opens with fragrant tones of blue flower and wild ber-

ry. There's loads of fruit in the mouth, with a touch of bright potpourri at the end. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$15

**86 Valle dell'Acate 2009 Case Iridini Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Case Iridini is a line of value wines from the Ragusa area of Sicily, with the island's best Baroque architecture may be found. This Nero d'Avola (aged in stainless steel) presents crisp cherry and bright almond aromas. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**86 Viticultori Associati Canicatti 2008 Aquilae Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Aquilae is an oak-aged Nero d'Avola that offers bold aromas of ripe fruit, blackberry, prune, plum and cured meat. In fact, the finish is very much driven by savory tones of leather, earth and smoked bacon. Sober LLC. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$12

**86 Viticultori Associati Canicatti 2008 Aquilae Syrah (Sicilia).** This solid value wine would pair perfectly with pizza. An easy expression of Syrah, the wine is soft and silky, with simple, fruity layers of blueberry and cherry. Sober LLC. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$12

**86 Viticultori Associati Canicatti 2008 Calio (Sicilia).** A cheerful blend of Nero d'Avola and Nerello Cappuccio, Calio would pair well with potato gnocchi with butter and chopped sage. Cherry, wild berry and almond are backed by a powerful but smooth mouthfeel. Franco Wine Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Calatrasi 2010 La Piazza Alta Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** La Piazza is a fresh and fragrant Nero d'Avola packaged in a fun, screw top bottle that would pair with easy pasta dishes or home baked pizza. The wine boasts a dark, inky color with bold cherry, mocha and tobacco flavors. Pelican Brands, LLC. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$9

**85 Caruso & Minini 2009 Sachia Perricone (Sicilia).** Perricone is a little-known variety from Sicily and this expression of the grape shows intense aromas of mint, spearmint, cola, licorice and small berry fruit. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$25

**85 Corvo 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Corvo's entry-level Nero d'Avola opens with a bright, lean appearance and sharp berry tones with almond and cassis. It's a bit lean but fresh. Corvo Wines USA. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$10

**85 Corvo 2008 Rosso (Sicilia).** The wine that first introduced Americans to Sicily, this classic Corvo blend offers a light, bright appearance followed by easy tones of red berry, bitter almond and cassis. Corvo Wines USA. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$10

**85 Di Giovanna 2009 Nerello Mascalese (Sicilia).** Made from organically-farmed Nerello Mascalese, this simple wine does show true varietal

characteristics of wild fruit, dark mineral and cola. The aromas are mild and the mouthfeel delivers medium intensity. Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$19

**85 Duca di Salaparuta 2009 Calanica Frappato-Syrah (Sicilia).** This version of Calanica (made from 60% Frappato and 40% Syrah) offers a low impact bouquet of earthy forest fruit and bramble. It's a light, lean wine with a touch of soft spice on the close. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**85 Duca di Salaparuta 2008 Calanica Frappato-Syrah (Sicilia).** Made from an interesting blend of Frappato and Syrah, this Calanica offers the bright, fruity freshness of the first variety against the bold, soft chewiness of the second. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**85 Feudi del Pisciotto 2009 Baglio del Sole Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Baglio del Sole is a solid value wine that would pair with four-cheese pizza or grilled sausage sandwiches. Bright cherry and cassis is backed by zesty citrus. Vias Imports. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**85 Feudi del Pisciotto 2008 Carolina Marenga (Sicilia).** From the fashion line of Feudi del Pisciotto's portfolio, Carolina Marenga is an oak-aged expression of Frappato that shows easy, fresh berry nuances backed by bitter almond and mild spice. Vias Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Feudo Arancio Stemmari 2010 Pinot Nero (Sicilia).** It does seem crazy, but a handful of producers in Sicily do include Pinot Noir in their portfolios. The grape certainly does take on hot climate characteristics of ripe raspberry and spice, but the overall effect is not too far off from what you should expect of this delicate, feminine grape. Prestige Wine Imports Corp. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**85 Feudo Disisa 2007 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Jammy black fruit and inky blackberry preserves open the bouquet of this syrupy red wine. The wine's texture is both dense and gritty. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

**85 Fondo Antico 2009 I Versi (Sicilia).** Plump, lively and packed tight with cherry and blackberry, this blend of Nero d'Avola and Merlot would pair well with grilled sausage or hamburgers. The mouthfeel is soft, easy and fresh. Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Maggiovini 2007 Rasula Cabernet Sauvignon (Sicilia).** Rasula shows ripe aromas of blackberry and prune with lingering tones of spice and leather in the background. It's a simple value wine with a chewy, rich mouthfeel. Caffo Beverages Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$12

**85 Tenuta di Serramarrocco 2008 Baglio di Serramarrocco Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Baglio di Serramarrocco opens with a slightly browning hue and savory aromas of cured beef and black currant. There's an earthy tone as well, backed by mild grittiness in the mouth. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Calatrasi 2010 Terrale Oro Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Terrale Oro is a perfect pasta or pizza wine to drink on nights at home with family and friends. It delivers bright red fruit, blackberry and almond paste. Vision Wine & Spirits. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

**84 Corvo 2010 Fiore (Sicilia).** A blend of Nero d'Avola and Frappato, Fiore is a sharp, tonic red wine that would pair with fried dough or cheese melts. Bramble, berry, cola and bitter almond appear on the close. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$11

**84 Corvo 2009 Fiore (Sicilia).** Fiore is a down-to-earth Sicilian wine that offers simple and pure aromas of small berry fruit, almond paste and blueberry. It closes with fresh tones of citrus and spice. Corvo Wines USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$11

**84 Feudo Maccari 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This simple, easy-going Nero d'Avola opens with a slightly burnt or charred characteristic that recalls asphalt and rubber tire. Wait a few minutes for the red fruit and almond to come through. Kobrand. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$17

**84 Maggiovini 2008 Pithoi Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Pithoi opens with light aromas of forest berry and raw fruit backed by touches of spice and bitter almond. It's an easy wine that could pair with pizza or take-out fried chicken. Caffo Beverages Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Maggiovini 2008 Rasula Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Made with organically-farmed fruit, Rasula opens with sharp and somewhat sour aromas of white cherry and bitter almond. It's a simple, no-fuss wine for informal occasions. Caffo Beverages Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**84 Resonata 2010 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** This simple Sicilian red delivers bright berry fruit, blue flower and white almond skin. It shows almost Pinot Noir-like aromas and the power and gritty mouthfeel usually associated with Nero d'Avola. Kysela Père et Fils. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

**84 TerrAmore 2010 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Made from organically farmed fruit, this fresh Sicilian red is appropriate for informal occasions or stay-home TV dinners. It shows bright berry fruit and bitter almond. Saranty Imports. **Best Buy.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$6

**83 Azienda Agricola Milazzo 2008 Castello Svevo (Sicilia).** Nero d'Avola is enhanced by 10% Perricone (a second native red grape of Sicily) to produce a simple, easy-drinking pizza wine that is redolent of clove, dark berry, asphalt and dill weed. CWS Ltcl. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

**83 Calatrasi 2009 Terrale Oro Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Terrale Oro is a simple, somewhat watered down expression of Nero d'Avola that would pair well with easy pasta dishes or take out pizza. Cherry, blueberry and almond flavors characterize the palate. Vision Wine & Spirits. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

**83 Di Giovanna 2010 Syrah (Sicilia).** This all-Sicilian Syrah opens with smoky or burnt aromas of asphalt and toasted nut. There is some distant red fruit in the background, along with tangy citrus and dill. Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$24

**82 Di Giovanna 2010 Gerbino (Sicilia).** Gerbino is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Nero d'Avola and Syrah that offers an awkward bouquet of red fruit, bitter almond and tangy dill. A charred burnt note also appears on the close. Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$16

**82 Poggionotte 2009 Nero d'Avola (Sicilia).** Made from organically-grown fruit, this wine opens with muddled aromas of cherry fruit and dillweed. Chalky, earthy tones appear on the close. Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**81 Di Giovanna 2010 Cabernet Franc (Sicilia).** Made from organically-farmed fruit, this Sicilian expression of Cabernet Franc is heavily marked by sour aromas of green vegetables and chopped dill. Montecastelli Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$24

## ETNA

**94 Girolamo Russo 2008 San Lorenzo (Etna).** One of the ultimate expressions of Etna, San Lorenzo is an elegant, determined and sophisticated wine with a steady stream of delicate aromas—wild berry, crushed granite, smoke and cola—that build in momentum and evolve beautifully over time. The mouthfeel is firm and structured, with polished tannins and a bright berry endnote. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. **Cellar Selection.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$55

**94 Pietro Caciorgna 2007 N'Anticchia (Etna).** N'Anticchia is a wine that has rapidly reached cult status in Italy and around the world. Its elegance, beauty and overall sophistication represent the best of winemaking on Mount Etna. More importantly, however, it faithfully portrays a personality that reflects the dramatic volcanic environment of its origins. The aromas are delicate, fine and polished, but the finish is

firm and powerful. North Berkeley Imports. **Cellar Selection.** —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**94 Tenuta delle Terre Nere 2008 Guardiola (Etna).** From what may well be the most beautiful vineyard in Italy comes this gorgeous expression of elegance and power. Guardiola is a tiny plot on the slopes of Mount Etna with blackened soils, majestic fruit trees and religious shrines peppered between a jungle of gnarled grapevines. The wine delivers a steady stream of wild berry and mineral nuances, all backed by a firm, drying mouthfeel. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. **Cellar Selection.** —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**93 Girolamo Russo 2008 Feudo (Etna).** Vintner Giuseppe Russo (the estate is named after his father) presents Feudo, a fine and sophisticated wine that shows the best of winemaking on Etna. The bouquet is redolent of delicate tones of cassis, wild blueberry, crushed stone and tobacco. In the mouth, the wine delivers power, length and finely polished tannins. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**93 Tenuta delle Terre Nere 2008 Calderara Sottana (Etna).** Over the centuries, lava flows from Mount Etna have formed natural vineyard terracing and tiny farming pockets, each characterized by a unique microclimate. The Calderara Sottana is a particularly fortunate niche that produces high quality fruit, elegant aromas and firmly polished structure. This wine is silky, long and very beautiful. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. **Cellar Selection.** —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**92 Benanti 2008 Serra della Contessa (Etna).** The explosive success of Etna today has a lot to do with this wine. Serra della Contessa became one of the first bottles to show the enological potential of the Sicilian volcano. Elegant and pristine, this dark garnet wine offers drying mineral tones backed by natural rubber, small berry fruit and cola. The tannins are very polished and fine. Wine Warehouse Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**92 Graci 2009 Quota 600 (Etna).** Quota 600 is one of the protagonists of a new class of wines from the Etna denomination. Sourced from 600 meters above sea level on the slopes of the volcano, the wine shows delicate nuances of small berry, mountain herb, cola and wet river stone. Tight tannins and firm structure give it momentum on the finish. Sherbrooke Cellars. **Cellar Selection.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$46

**92 Tenuta delle Terre Nere 2008 Santo Spirito (Etna).** In reaction to Mount Etna's volcanic eruptions, local farmers have adopted a unique mix of Christianity and mysticism to protect against imminent dangers. Many vineyard sites are anointed with religious names, like Santo Spirito, as if the name were a lucky charm in itself. This delightful vineyard-designate wine

is ethereal and bright, with loads of small berry intensity and a dusty, dry finish. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**91 Frank Cornelissen NV Munjebel 7 (Etna).** Frank Cornelissen is one of the rising stars of Italy's natural wine movement. Munjebel 7 (he does editions, instead of vintages) shows a bright ruby appearance with suspended particles that give it a slightly cloudy appearance. The aromas are fine, delicate and complex with wild berry, crushed granite and dusty earth. His wines are aged in large clay amphorae. Zev Rovine Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**91 Frank Cornelissen NV Munjebel 7 VA (Etna).** Made with a blend of Nerello Mascalese from different vineyard sites, or contrade, as well as various vintages, this special "Vigna Alta" Etna red shows elegant tones of small berry, black pepper and crushed stone. The wine represents the best of a natural, biodynamic and organic winemaking tradition that is taking hold in Sicily. Zev Rovine Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**91 Tenuta di Fessina 2008 Il Musmeci (Etna).** One of the highest expressions of Sicilian enology—both figuratively and literally—Il Musmeci is mostly Nerello Mascalese, with some Nerello Cappuccio. This rising star of Etna shows extremely delicate and fine-tuned notes of small berry and spice and a powerful and polished feel in the mouth. Age 10 years or more. Winebow. **Cellar Selection.** —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$65

**91 Tenuta di Fessina 2007 Il Musmeci (Etna).** Il Musmeci is quickly reaching cult status in Italy as one of the best wines to emerge from Etna. Made from Nerello Mascalese and a small component of Nerello Cappuccio, it shows fine and elegant aromatic nuances of small berry, cola and volcanic stone. The wine's real power comes in the mouth thanks to its tannic structure and length. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**90 Cottanera 2008 Etna.** Cottanera's Etna blend (Nerello Mascalese and Nerello Cappuccio) opens with a brooding dark color and earthy aromas of crushed stone, forest floor and leather. There's a bright, vinous fruit note of wild berry and red currant as well. Banville & Jones Wine Merchants. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$57

**90 Cottanera 2007 Rosso (Etna).** With the looming crater of the Etna volcano visible just outside the winery door, Cottanera pays homage to local viticulture with this red blend of local grapes. The wine is focused and firm, with bright berry and zesty spice overtones. Banville & Jones Wine Merchants. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**90 Girolamo Russo 2009 'A Rina Nerello Mascalese (Etna).** Girolamo Russo's 'A Rina is an approachable red wine with a streamlined and compact feel in the mouth. It beautifully shows characteristic Etna aromas of crushed mineral, wild berry and

toasted pistachio nut. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**90 Tenuta delle Terre Nere 2010 Rosso (Etna).** Marc de Grazia is a vocal enthusiast of Nebbiolo and Pinot Noir, so it's no surprise that he would include the indigenous grapes of Mount Etna, Nerello Mascalese and Nerello Cappuccio, on his list of favorite varieties. These grapes all share similar characteristics: They are delicately nuanced and complex on the nose with a silky but firm quality of tannin. And, they all show long aging potential. A Marc de Grazia selection; various American importers. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**89 Benanti 2008 Rosso di Verzella (Etna).** Benanti's Etna red opens with earthy tones of terracotta, dark chocolate, roasted espresso and crème de cassis. There's a gritty, thick feel to the tannins and the overall structure. Wine Warehouse Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

**89 Firriato 2009 Cavanera (Etna).** Cavanera is Firriato's Mount Etna estate, and its flagship wine, Cavanera, is a traditional blend of Nerello Mascalese and Nerello Cappuccio. It offers small berry aromas of wild strawberry and raspberry with drying nuances of talcum powder and crushed stone. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$40

**89 Firriato 2007 Cavanera (Etna).** Cavanera is an elegant, lively red wine with forest berry, wild mushroom, talcum powder, exotic spice and cola notes. The mouthfeel is long, dusty and dry. Soilair Selection. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$40

**89 Graci 2010 Etna.** Graci is a dynamic, young producer with a beautiful estate at the base of the Etna volcano. This lively Nerello Mascalese opens with delicate floral intensity and background notes of mint, cola, licorice, crushed mineral and rosemary oil. Sherbrooke Cellars. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$28

**88 Cottanera 2010 Barbazzale Etna.** Barbazzale is a blended red wine that's 90% Nerello Mascalese and 10% Nerello Cappuccio. It opens with ripe berry aromas and smoky overtones of crushed granite and spice. The wine shows nice balance and firm structure. Banville & Jones Wine Merchants. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

**88 Frank Cornelissen NV Contadino 8 (Etna).** Contadino 8 is a fetish wine for serious collectors of new experiences in natural and organic wines. Made with fruit from different vintages, it opens with a light ruby color and aromas of raw grapes, red candy, white pepper and dried apple. It is crisp, smooth and silky on the close. Zev Rovine Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Scilio 2009 Orphéus (Etna).** A blended red, Orphéus shows balance and harmony, with clean berry notes, licorice, drying mineral, pencil shav-

ing, rosemary and dried herb. It would pair well with spicy lamb in yogurt sauce. John Given Wines. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$32

**88 Tenuta di Fessina 2009 Erse (Etna).** Some of the best expressions from Etna share some of the brightness and beauty of Burgundian Pinot Noir. Erse offers delicate berry and blue flower aromas and is driven by polished tannins and a firm, but precise mouthfeel. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$36

**88 Tenuta di Fessina 2008 Erse Nerello Mascalese (Etna).** Erse opens with light, delicate tones of wild berry, cassis, blue flower and polished river stone. There's an extremely finely-etched, but also firm, quality to the tannins. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$33

**87 Nicosia 2009 Fondo Filara Rosso (Etna).** For full review see page 13.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$19

**87 Scilio 2009 Rosso (Etna).** With fruit harvested from 650 meters above sea level on the slopes of Mount Etna (making this one of the highest altitude vineyards in Italy), this bright red blend shows small berry nuances, with tangy almond, crushed clove and menthol notes. Drying mineral notes bring up the rear. John Given Wines. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$18

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## VITTORIA

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**91 COS 2008 Cerasuolo di Vittoria.** COS is a natural, biodynamic and organic wine estate in southern Sicily and a leader in the rising popularity of the Cerasuolo di Vittoria denomination. This expression is particularly delicate and expressive, with nuanced layers of wild berry, white chocolate and cola. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$30

**90 COS 2009 Cerasuolo di Vittoria.** COS is a leader in Cerasuolo di Vittoria thanks to the strict organic and biodynamic philosophy applied to their production. This vintage shows bright berry, cola, dried herb, olive, tobacco and warm, earthy aromas. In the mouth, the wine is crisp, fresh and firm. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —M.L.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$30

**89 COS 2007 Cerasuolo di Vittoria.** Cerasuolo di Vittoria is a fresh, compact and lean red wine that can pair with white meat or shellfish. You can also serve the wine slightly chilled in warmer months. The bouquet shows layers of blue flower, mineral, cola and wild berry fruit. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$30

**89 Planeta 2009 Dorilli (Cerasuolo di Vittoria Classico).** Cerasuolo di Vittoria is one of southern Italy's most exciting red wines. It's food-friendly, fresh and easy to drink like Beaujolais, but also delivers the elegance and firmness of Pinot Noir. Try it slight-

ly chilled with chicken, pasta or a heaping summer salad. Palm Bay International. *Editors' Choice.* —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$33

**88 Feudo di Santa Tresa 2007 Cerasuolo di Vittoria Classico.** Cerasuolo di Vittoria is a classic food wine. Its light, lean texture and crisp acidity go down beautifully with pasta, lasagna or veal. Aromas include bright berry, almond and barbecue smoke. Vias Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Valle dell'Acate 2008 Cerasuolo di Vittoria Classico.** Cerasuolo di Vittoria is an easy-drinking blend of Nero d'Avola and Frappato (aged in oak) that pairs with pasta, veal or even a hearty hamburger with cheese, bacon and the works. This pretty wine shows nice heft and texture with a bright cherry close. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$24

**88 Valle dell'Acate 2010 Il Frappato (Vittoria).** Il Frappato is a seriously fun wine that would pair with pasta, pizza or even spicy Indian food. It's a light, crisp red wine (serve it slightly chilled) with bright berry aromas of blueberry and wild strawberry. It's informal but attractively layered at the same time. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$22

**87 Nicosia 2009 Fondo Filara (Cerasuolo di Vittoria Classico).** Fondo Filara is a blend of Nero d'Avola and Frappato, two important indigenous grapes. This expression offers tangy spice, bright fruit and a fresh, lean mouthfeel. Rolivia, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$19

**87 Planeta 2010 Cerasuolo di Vittoria.** Planeta has done a terrific job of communicating the merits of Cerasuolo di Vittoria to wine drinkers around the world. This light, ruby-colored red wine is packed with bright fruit nuances and a crisp mouthfeel. It makes an ideal pairing partner to the best Italian pasta recipes. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$24

**87 Valle dell'Acate 2009 Il Frappato (Vittoria).** Il Frappato is a light, fruity red wine that is vinified in stainless steel to maintain its lively raspberry and blueberry flavors. It can be served slightly chilled and goes down easily with vegetables, veal or white meat. Polaner Selections. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$20

**86 Maggiovini 2007 Vigna di Pettine (Cerasuolo di Vittoria).** A blend of Nero d'Avola and Frappato, this easygoing Cerasuolo di Vittoria offers a nice mix of freshness, informality and richness. Layers of raspberry, cherry and almond build on the close. Caffo Beverages Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

## OTHER SOUTHERN REDS

**93 Donnafugata 2007 Mille e Una Notte (Contessa Entellina).** For full review see page 8.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$60

**90 Planeta 2009 Santa Cecilia (Noto).** Santa Cecilia is a Sicilian icon wine and a quality benchmark for the newly inaugurated Noto subzone. The 2009 vintage takes time to open and build momentum. It feels sharper and edgier than past years and is focused, linear and crisp. Give it 3–5 more years of cellaring. Palm Bay International. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$43

**88 Cantine Barbera 2007 Coda della Foce (Menfi).** Coda della Foce is a blend of Nero d'Avola, Petit Verdot and Merlot that offers wild berry, forest floor, cola, tobacco and charred almond or chestnut aromas. The wine ends with a silky, clean mouthfeel and a touch of dried herb. Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$42

**88 Cantine Barbera 2007 La Vota Cabernet Sauvignon (Menfi).** La Vota is a Cabernet Sauvignon from a hot climate that surprises the palate with its crisp, green aromas. There's a touch of soya, wasabi, bramble and forest floor. But you'll also recognize wild berry and toasted almond. Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$36

**88 Cantine Barbera 2006 La Vota Cabernet Sauvignon (Menfi).** La Vota is a surprisingly delicate and feminine wine considering it's from Sicily and it's made from hearty Cabernet Sauvignon. Forest fruit and violets emerge on the bouquet and the mouthfeel is silky and firm. Enotec Imports, Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Feudo Disisa 2008 Vuarìa Nero d'Avola (Monreale).** A plump, modern expression of Nero d'Avola with evident oak tones of chocolate, spice, toasted almond and a darkly concentrated appearance. Some bright red fruit and wild berry peeks through and offers a touch of much-needed freshness in the mouth. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$28

**88 Feudo Disisa 2007 Vuarìa Nero d'Avola (Monreale).** From the Monreale subzone of western Sicily, Vuarìa is a fresh, lively wine that has seen some contact with toasted oak. Cherry, blackberry, roasted almond and exotic spice make this an easy, food-friendly wine. Vinifera Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$23

**87 Cantine Rallo 2009 Nero d'Avola (Alcamo).** This informal red wine is the kind of bottle you'll want to stash away in the kitchen for easy pairings with weekday family dinners. The bouquet presents red berry, almond and cola nuances. Francoli USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$16

**87 Fazio 2009 Torre dei Venti Nero d'Avola (Erice).** There's a jammy, sun-ripened note of strawberry or blackberry jam, but also soft layers of chocolate fudge and savory spice at the back of this Sicilian red. The mouthfeel is smooth and velvety. Vinarium Inc. —M.L.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$21

## MARSALA

**90 Cantine Florio 1991 Targa Riserva (Marsala).** Packaged in a special 170th anniversary bottle, this Marsala opens with a dark amber color, adds luscious depth and finishes long. It delivers flavors of candied fruit, *marron glacé*, brown sugar and dark vanilla bean. —M.L.  
**abv:** 19% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Cantine Florio NV Fine Dry (Marsala).** Made with a blend of Grillo and Catarratto, this dry Marsala opens with a dark amber color and aromas of candied fruit, caramel, maple syrup, resin and candied apricot. Sicily's most traditional wine, Marsala is perfect for easy sipping after dinner with a cigar and soft music. Banfi Vintners. —M.L.  
**abv:** 18% **Price:** \$20

**88 Cantine Florio 2001 Targa Riserva 1840 (Marsala).** This semisecco Marsala from 2001 opens with a dark amber color and savory notes of wild mushroom and spice followed by caramel and toasted almond. There are touches of citrus and candied fruit woven into the wine's thick texture. —M.L.  
**abv:** 19% **Price:** \$18/500 ml

**88 Vito Curatolo Arini NV Superiore Riserva (Marsala).** Aged for at least 10 years before its release, this amber-colored Marsala offers a touch of musky wood, white mushroom or toasted nut and caramel and butterscotch. It's smooth and silky with a blast of alcoholic power on the finish. Grape Expectations (CA). —M.L.  
**abv:** 18% **Price:** \$20

**87 Florio NV Fine Sweet (Marsala).** This sweet Marsala opens with a dark amber color and bright aromas of caramel, brown sugar, candied fruit and spice. Try a few sips of this delicious wine after dinner as a *digestivo*. Banfi Vintners. —M.L.  
**abv:** 18% **Price:** \$13

**86 Cantine Florio 2000 Terre Arse Vergine (Marsala).** This amber-colored Marsala opens with earthy tones of porcini mushroom, caramel, burnt sugar and candied fruit. It's a thick, syrupy wine with savory, leathery details on the long finish. —M.L.  
**abv:** 19% **Price:** \$18/500 ml

## OTHER DESSERT WINES

**93 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Capofaro Malvasia (Salina).** From the tiny island of Salina off the north coast of Sicily (where the Tasca family runs a beautiful boutique hotel called Capofaro), comes this excellent expression of Malvasia. This dessert wine

shows exactly what this versatile white grape variety is built to do best: The bouquet is redolent of honey, golden vanilla cream, candied apricot and sweet almond marzipan. Winebow. *Editors' Choice.* —M.L.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$66/500 ml

**92 Feudo Maccari 2010 Sultana (Moscato di Noto).** In keeping with Sicily's Arab-European identity, Sultana is a thick and luscious dessert wine enhanced by attractive layers of cinnamon apple, toasted walnut and candied fruit. Golden Delicious apple and pear aromas are in the forefront, and the wine feels rich and smooth with soft touches of chewy sweetness on the close. Kobrand. —M.L.  
**abv:** 10.5% **Price:** \$50/500 ml

**92 Planeta 2010 Passito di Noto.** For full review see page 7.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$41/500 ml

**91 Tasca d'Almerita 2009 Diamante (Sicilia).** Diamante is a *passito* dessert wine from the producer's historic Tenuta Regaleali property outside Palermo. The wine boasts a beautiful golden color along with aromas of candied fruit, honey and marzipan. Winebow. —M.L.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$60/500 ml

**90 Benanti 2009 Il Musico Moscato Passito (Sicilia).** Il Musico is a unique dessert wine that opens with aromas of resin, pine nut, caramel and candied fruit. The viscous mouthfeel is sweet and rich, but there's also a really nice blast of refreshing lemon zest on the close. Tradizione Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 10% **Price:** \$26/500 ml

**90 Cantine Rallo 2010 Anima Mediterranea Zibibbo (Sicilia).** This unique Sicilian dessert wine shows distinctive notes of eucalyptus and hummus over candied apricot and honey-glazed chestnut. There's nothing else like it; then there's a touch of zesty acidity on the close. Francoli USA. —M.L.  
**abv:** 16% **Price:** \$NA/500 ml

**88 Baglio di Pianetto 2009 Rais (Moscato di Noto).** Sicily is home to some of the best Italian dessert wines made today. The Noto subzone, located on the eastern side of the island, has many Moscato vineyards for the production of sweet, generous, sun-ripened wines like this. Citrus, almond blossom, apricot and honey make up the fragrant bouquet. Vinvino Wine. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$35/500 ml

**86 Scilio 2005 Sikélios (Sicilia).** This is a distinctive dessert wine that opens with an inky, dark ruby color and savory aromas of root beer, button mushroom, sun-dried fruit, prune and figs. The wine's sweet finish is dense and sticky. North Berkeley Imports. —M.L.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$37/375 ml



## FRENCH WHITES

### CHABLIS

**95** **Domaine Christian Moreau Père et Fils 2009 Clos des Hospices Les Clos Grand Cru (Chablis).** A superbly rich wine, with its acidity well integrated into the concentrated and rounded fruit. It has great texture and fruit that bursts from the glass. It is generous, warm and toasty, while also preserving the steeliness that is hallmark of the Les Clos vineyard. Age for at least five years. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**94** **Domaine Christian Moreau Père et Fils 2009 Les Clos Grand Cru (Chablis).** A taut, steely, very mineral wine, showing a tense, textured character. Fruit flavors run from grapefruit to peach, with a delicious tang of zest along the way. With its acidity and structure, this is a wine for long-term aging. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**93** **Domaine Christian Moreau Père et Fils 2009 Valmur Grand Cru (Chablis).** This Valmur brings out great richness from the vineyard and the vintage while keeping an intense texture, orange zest and grapefruit flavors and a firm butter and toast aftertaste. Age for four years. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**92** **Domaine Christian Moreau Père et Fils 2009 Cuvée Guy Moreau Vaillon Premier Cru (Chablis).** Concentrated white fruits, layering melon, pear and red apples with the balancing acidity. For a Chablis, it is ripe and opulent, a delicious already approachable product of the warm year. It does have texture to age well. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**92** **Domaine Vrgnaud 2010 Mont de Milieu Premier Cru (Chablis).** A wine that is destined for good aging, with its mineral structure and toast flavors. It has weight and richness but equally it has intense pear and citrus fruits layered with acidity. Age for at least four years. Serge Doré Selections. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$60

**92** **Domaine Vrgnaud 2009 Fourchaume Premier Cru Vieilles Vignes (Chablis).** Opulent and rich, this is a concentrated wine with toast and fruit both showing strongly. The new wood flavors offer spice, while the fruit suggests pineapple, kiwi and fresh plums. Worth aging 2–3 years. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$65

**92** **Domaine Vrgnaud 2009 Les Vaupulans Fourchaume Premier Cru (Chablis).** While it is rich, the wine is more dominated by the minerality and structure of Chablis. White fruits, melon and pear

come through, with a citric edge and firm toast. It is taut and tense, ready to age. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$50

**92** **Garnier et Fils 2009 Les Clos Grand Cru (Chablis).** A closed, structured wine, revealing the steely side of Chablis rather than the richness of 2009. It has intense citrus fruit flavors, the acidity an important element along with the wood. However, it is the minerality that dominates, resulting in a taut, textured wine that needs five years aging. Serge Doré Selections. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$120

**92** **Olivier Leflaive 2009 Vaudésir Grand Cru (Chablis).** Powerful, concentrated Chablis. It is rich, with ripe apricot and nectarine fruit, laced with Seville orange acidity. With a touch of toast, a well-integrated structure, this is a wine for medium-term aging. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**91** **Garnier et Fils 2009 Mont de Milieu Premier Cru (Chablis).** This wine has the richness of 2009, while still is mineral, taut and textured. The yellow fruits are balanced by intense acidity and a ripe, full-bodied feel. The wine is complex, needing aging; the aftertaste intense, crisp and fruity. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.8% **Price:** \$48

**91** **Garnier et Fils 2009 Vaudésir Grand Cru (Chablis).** Initially a very soft wine, it slowly shows its ripe fruits, intense texture and blend of buttery toast and acidity. Yellow fruits dominate, bursting through the acidity to give a ripe, opulent finish. Age for 3–4 years. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$120

**91** **Olivier Leflaive 2009 Fourchaume Premier Cru (Chablis).** A rich style of Chablis, with a toasty quality and yellow fruits mixed with acidity. The wine is open and round, full in the mouth, with concentrated ripe fruit and a soft texture. It should easily age for 2–3 years, but it is delicious now. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**90** **Domaine Christian Moreau Père et Fils 2009 Vaillon Premier Cru (Chablis).** Ripe and rich, a wine that shows orange, pear and lime zest flavors alongside toast and herbs. It has a pure line of acidity and minerality that cuts through the warm fruit and gives extra shape to the wine. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**90** **Domaine Vrgnaud 2009 Fourchaume Premier Cru (Chablis).** The toast shows through strongly in this wine, giving a burnt edge. At the same time, the delicious fruit with its flavors of peach and green plum, is rich enough to develop well and produce a balanced wine. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$50

**90** **Garnier et Fils 2007 Grains Dorés (Chablis).** Aged in oak and tank for 30 months, this

wine wine is fat, full-bodied and rich. The texture is stretched tightly on a wire, with a steely incisiveness. The wine is intense and fresh, supporting aging as well as offering drinking pleasure now. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$45

**89** **Domaine Vrgnaud 2009 La Champréaux (Chablis).** Impressive for a simple Chablis. In fact, it is not simple at all, with its toast and ripe peach fruits, rounded texture and uncommon depth of flavor. The steely Chablis character is there, but surrounded by rich fruit. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$38

**87** **Garnier et Fils 2010 Chablis.** Intense acidity and a mineral texture show the northern origins of this wine. It is all citrus and grapefruit, the green apple flavors adding a tense texture. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$29

**87** **Olivier Leflaive 2009 Les Deux Rives (Chablis).** Round from the vintage, this is still an apple crisp and mineral Chablis. Its tang comes from citrus, with the bite of terroir adding a dry texture. The wine is not complex, ready to drink now. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86** **Domaine Christian Moreau Père et Fils 2009 Chablis.** The softness of the 2009 vintage is very apparent in this wine. It is rounded with pear and ripe apple flavors, a touch of toast and a gentle lemon zest aftertaste. Ready to drink. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

**86** **Domaine Corine Perchaud 2009 Vaucoupin Premier Cru (Chablis).** A soft wood- and almond-flavored wine. It misses fresh fruit, instead offering a rounded, ripe character that suggests it is not for aging. Kysela Père et Fils. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86** **Domaine Vrgnaud 2010 Chablis.** Butter and toast flavors give this wine extra richness and some weight. At the same time, the textured citrus and grapefruit flavors combine with the wine's minerality to give a more lively aftertaste. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$29

**84** **Domaine Corine Perchaud 2009 Chablis.** Light and fresh, although on the thin side. The wine has some delicate white fruit and toast flavors, light acidity and some minerality. Drink now. Kysela Père et Fils. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

### MEURSAULT

**93** **Olivier Leflaive 2009 Charmes Premier Cru (Meursault).** The vintage as well as the vineyard gave this hugely rich wine. It has weight, concentrated fruit and toast flavors, the acidity on line right through the center. Peach, pineapple and grapefruit

combine to give an impressive, textured fruitiness. Age for 2–3 years. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**92 Louis Jadot 2009 Charmes Premier Cru (Meursault).** A wine that reveals a textured side of Meursault. It has weight, ripe apricot and pineapple fruit with a refreshing touch of acidity. But the chalky, mineral character equally defines the wine. Age for 3–4 years. Kobrand. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$75

**90 Joseph Faiveley 2009 Blagny Premier Cru (Meursault).** A spicy but austere wine, with the emphasis on wood, apple acidity and citrus. There is some riper fruit (pineapple), but the wine remains textured, taut and nervy. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Joseph Drouhin 2009 Meursault.** A full-bodied, unctuous wine, packed with ripe peach and apricot fruit. The wood aging gives an extra sweetness to this rounded wine. It is nicely textured, with spice and a smooth, creamy finish. Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$50

**89 Olivier Leflaive 2009 Meursault.** This warm and rich wine features generous rounded white-fruit flavors. The wine gradually shows its wood aging, while the fruit continues to exude ripeness as well as acidity. The wine is already ready to drink, its tangy aftertaste a delicious bite. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

## CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE

**96 Louis Jadot 2009 Corton-Charlemagne.** A hugely rich, powerful Chardonnay, layering ripe fruit with a core of tannic structure, acidity, wood and huge depth of flavor. The wine is concentrated, with layers of fruit and textured acidity. Of course, it needs aging—7 years at least. Kobrand. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$130

**93 Pierre André 2008 Corton-Charlemagne.** From Pierre André's Château Corton-André, they can look up at the hill of Corton and the Corton-Charlemagne vineyard. That gives them a neighborly interest. This is reflected in this rich, powerful, muscular wine, full of yellow fruit, ripe wood and tense acidity. It should age for 4–5 years. William Harrison Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

## PULIGNY-MONTRACHET

**94 Louis Jadot 2009 Les Folatières Premier Cru (Puligny-Montrachet).** Ripe plush pineapple laces through the steely acidity of this tautly textured wine. Toast shows underneath all this richness, a subtle hint of smoke, while the fruits open out to re-

veal a massive wine. For aging over 5–6 years. Kobrand. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$80

**94 Louis Jadot 2009 Les Referts Premier Cru (Puligny-Montrachet).** An impressively ripe wine that still keeps its structure and sense of place. There's a chalky-steely character to go with the richness. Green plums are merged with apricots to show great fine fruit. Age five years. Kobrand. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$60

**90 Joseph Drouhin 2009 Puligny-Montrachet.** For full review see page 11.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$60

## CHASSAGNE-MONTRACHET

**94 Olivier Leflaive 2009 Clos Saint Marc Premier Cru (Chassagne-Montrachet).** An intense, mineral-driven wine, tasting of the limestone soil as well as very ripe fruit. Great acidity keeps the richness in line, toast offering sweetness. The wine is full-bodied, the flavors going right through to the apple-skin-textured core. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**93 Louis Jadot 2009 Abbaye de Morgeot Premier Cru (Chassagne-Montrachet).** Richly textured wine, with pear and citrus fruit layered over an opulent core of ripe yellow fruits and toast. It develops slowly, opening to show intense acidity, freshness and flavors. Kobrand. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$70

**91 Chartron et Trébuchet 2009 Les Embazées Premier Cru (Chassagne-Montrachet).** A finely balanced wine with toast and ginger flavors peeking through the ripe peach and apricot fruits. It is striated with minerality giving an intense ageworthy texture. The acidity shows through strongly at the end. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$100

**90 Olivier Leflaive 2009 Chassagne-Montrachet.** A steely wine, its acidity dominating the attractive toast, white fruits and grapefruit flavors. It is rich, full in the mouth, a wine that shows some opulence while also preserving a firm, strict structure. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Louis Jadot 2009 Chassagne-Montrachet.** Lush tropical fruits are laced with mineral acidity. The two are held in balance by the citrusy texture. The wine is fresh while also rich, the edge of wood showing as a smoky aftertaste. Kobrand. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$50

## POUILLY-FUISSÉ

**90 Domaine Sangouard-Guyot 2010 Quintessence (Pouilly-Fuissé).** A fine combination of toast and yellow fruit has produced an exotic, opulent wine that's ripe and generous. The balance is

exactly right, while the richness of the wine doesn't lose sight of the lime acidity. Vin de Garde Wines. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Domaine Sangouard-Guyot 2010 Ancestral (Pouilly-Fuissé).** Round, soft wine, its currant and peach fruits ripely integrated into the acidity. It has a touch of wood, although not enough to suppress the ebullient yellow fruit, finished with pink grapefruit. Vin de Garde Wines. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Joseph Drouhin 2009 Pouilly-Fuissé.** For full review see page 12.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$29

**88 Domaine Sangouard-Guyot 2010 Authentique (Pouilly-Fuissé).** Without any intervention of wood, this is a ripe yellow fruit and mineral wine. It has a bite of steel as well as sweet, juicy acidity. With its weight and richness, it needs to age for at least a year. Vin de Garde Wines. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

## CÔTE DE BEAUNE

**91 Domaine Emmanuel Giboulot 2009 La Grand Chatelaine (Côte de Beaune).** A rounded wine, although still young. It has ripe fruit, creamed apples and fresh acidity. The wood flavors give an extra smoothness as well as a more complex long-lasting finish. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$55

**90 Domaine Emmanuel Giboulot 2009 Les Pierres Blanches (Côte de Beaune).** A soft wine, favoring warm fruit, pear and peach flavors, the minerality coming later. The wine is crisp and fresh, with an intensity of acidity rare in 2009. That suggests it will age, although it is already fruity and refreshing. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Domaine Emmanuel Giboulot 2009 La Combe d'Eve (Côte de Beaune).** A very perfumed ripe wine. The fruit flavors range from mango through peach to a taut citric finish. With just a hint of wood, this is a bright and fruity wine, delicious to drink now. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$75

## MÂCON-VILLAGES

**87 Domaine Guillemot-Michel 2009 Mâcon-Villages.** Soft, ripe and warm, this has attractive acidity, its lemon and pineapple fruit offering richness as well as a fine texture. Very pure fruit give the wine a delicious final line of acidity. Kysela Père et Fils. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Henri Perrusset 2010 Mâcon-Villages.** A creamy wine, its apple fruit flavors smoothed by touches of butter and spice. There is a fine citrus aftertaste that gives the rich wine a delicious, refreshing lift. Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$18

**86 Louis Jadot 2010 Mâcon-Villages.** A soft, yet also mineral-textured wine. Its lemon and grapefruit flavors are crisp, reflecting the taut structure of the vintage. A fresh wine, with a crisp finish, ready to drink. Kobrand. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**85 Cave de Lugny 2009 Les Charmes (Mâcon-Villages).** With old vines from a single vineyard, this wine has some good weight and concentration. Ripe peach and pineapple flavors are supported by a touch of spice as well as a warm finish. Screwcap. Pasternak Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Domaine Sangouard-Guyot 2010 Clos de la Bressande (Mâcon-Villages).** Fresh and fruity, a wine with no wood but plenty of ripe lemon and apple flavors to go with the fine acidity. The texture has a richly vibrant tang, ready to drink. Vin de Garde Wines. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Cave de Lugny 2010 L'Aurore (Mâcon-Villages).** A crisp, lemon-scented wine, then layering on butter, toast and ripe melon fruit flavors. It's immediately attractive, not needing any aging, with a soft, yet fresh, finish. Viceroy Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Cave de Lugny 2010 La Côte Blanche (Mâcon-Villages).** A fresh, lemon-scented wine, with white flower aromas and soft, crisp lime flavors. The wine has some softness as well as an attractive zesty finish. Screwcap. Pasternak Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

## OTHER BURGUNDY

**91 Maurice Ecard 2009 Les Hauts Jarrens Premier Cru (Savigny-lès-Beaune).** With a fine butter-and-mineral texture, this is an ageworthy wine. Its white and citrus fruit flavors offer both richness and acidity, with toast adding a note of spice. Keep for 2–3 years. Kysela Père et Fils. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Chartron et Trébuchet 2009 Les Gresigny Premier Cru (Rully).** A mineral driven, ripe wine that reveals green and white fruits, a strong line of acidity and steely minerality. With all this structure, the wine still shows the richness of the vintage, with wood and cream flavors that come through at the end. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$40

**89 Olivier Leflaive 2009 Rabource Premier Cru (Rully).** A butter-smooth and rounded wine. Its pear and ripe apple fruits are contrasted with a layer of wood and crisp acidity. It opens up to give richness, weight and delicious final yellow fruit flavors on the finish. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Chartron et Trébuchet 2009 Saint-Romain.** With its tropical fruit aromas, this is a superripe wine. The fruits are dominant— rounded man-

go and yellow peach with an attractive touch of essential citrus acidity. It's ready to drink but will age over 3–4 years. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$35

**88 Domaine Marc Jambon 2010 Cuvée Fût de Chêne (Mâcon-Pierreclos).** A lightly wood-aged wine, with the citrus and peach fruits much more dominant. The wine has some structure—a mineral edge that complements the buttery richness of the texture. Jao Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$25

**88 Olivier Leflaive 2009 En Remilly Premier Cru (Saint-Aubin).** Intensely wood-aged wine, with plenty of toast. That doesn't make the wine any less attractive with its yellow fruit flavors giving weight in the background. In a year's time, the wood and fruit balance should even out. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$NA

**87 Joseph Drouhin 2009 Montagny.** Soft and rounded wine, with rich peach and pineapple flavors. The wine is smooth, the wood aging adding a subtle touch of spice. The long, creamy aftertaste suggests a wine that is ready to drink. Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$25

**87 Olivier Leflaive 2009 Les Sétilles Chardonnay (Bourgogne).** A blend from Puligny-Montrachet and Meursault, this is a soft rounded wine with white fruit acidity, almond flavors and a gentle lemon zest texture. Drink in the next two years. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Cave de Lugny 2009 La Carte (Mâcon-Lugny).** A rich and rounded single-vineyard Chardonnay. It has weight and a smoky character to go with the peach, kiwi and lime juice flavors. The acidity is light, but does give a line of freshness. Pasternak Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Maurice Ecard 2009 Chardonnay (Bourgogne).** Attractive ripe fruits go with lime and toast flavors. The wine is soft and green, with flavors of apricot and intense final acidity. A delicious, ready-to-drink wine. Kysela Père et Fils. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Cave de Lugny 2009 Les Beluses (Mâcon-Chardonnay).** This wood-matured wine features toast and spice as well as some pineapple and peach fruits. The wine is warm, rounded and soft, ready to drink now. Pasternak Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Domaine Marc Jambon 2009 Cuvée Fût de Chêne (Mâcon-Pierreclos).** A rounded wine that is soft and fruity, the flavors edged with toast. There is an attractive citrus flavor that gives some crispness to what feels a fat wine. Drink now. Jao Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$25

**85 Domaine Sangouard-Guyot 2010 Au Brûlé (Saint-Véran).** A simple, white fruited wine. Its texture is light, bright, the acidity coming from a touch of wood and apple and cream fruits. Easy drinking, ready to go. Vin de Garde Wines. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Domaine Talmard 2009 Mâcon-Chardonnay.** A simple, ripe and fruity wine that offers soft almond and toast flavors. The wine is balanced, with ripe acidity. Drink now. Vintus LLC. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

## BORDEAUX

**90 Château Suduiraut 2009 Lions de Suduiraut (Sauternes).** From the Suduiraut vineyard, this is a wine created to be drunk young. It has just the right amount of honey along with marmalade flavors. The texture is smooth, accessible and ready to drink. It combines opulence and freshness. Heidelberg Distribution. —R.V.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Château Briot 2010 Bordeaux Blanc.** Very herbaceous, Sauvignon Blanc-dominated wine. It has gooseberry flavors that are rounded out with pea and green bean tastes. A wine that can be drunk young and with seafood. Screwcap. Jandell Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$NA

## FRENCH REDS

### BEAUJOLAIS

**87 Domaine Chasselay 2010 Cuvée de la Platière (Beaujolais).** For a simple Beaujolais, this is an intensely rich wine with toast spice coming through the black cherry fruit. The tannins give a ripe structure. All the time, the wine remains true to its fruity origins. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$25

**86 Antonin Rodet 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** Excellent color on this firmly fruity wine. It has an attractive edge of tannins giving it good structure while showing all of the fresh nouveau fruit. Boisset Family Estates. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$12

**86 Domaine Chasselay 2010 Les Grands Eparcieux (Beaujolais).** A ripe, fruity wine with a light structure of tannins and acidity, it has some density while remaining fruity and juicy. The red cherry fruit blends into the closing acidity. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$21

**86 Domaine Dupeuble Père et Fils 2010 Beaujolais.** With its bright cherry fruits, this is a warm and ripe wine. It has soft tannins and strawberry acidity. Drink now for red fruit pleasure. Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$15

**86 Paul Durdilly 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** Bright red fruits in this attractive cherry and banana flavored wine. It has a soft tannic edge, laced with acidity and finishing spice. Michael Skurnik Wines. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$12

**85 Domaine Chasselay 2010 Quatre Saisons (Beaujolais).** A warm and rich wine that shows soft, ready-to-drink fruit flavors, a touch of red cherry and some freshness from the acidity. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$20

**85 Henry Fessy 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** Henry Fessy's can-can dancer is with us again on this bottle of red cherry fruity wine. There is a texture of acidity, the fruit attractively integrated. Soft tannins complete this fresh, fruity wine. Louis Latour Inc. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$9

**85 Joseph Drouhin 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** A wine with a good balance between taut structure and forward fruit. Red cherries dominate this attractive light and fruity wine. Dreyfus, Ashby & Co. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$10

**85 Mommessin 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** Soft and richly fruity, this has all the right red cherry and banana flavors that are immediately attractive. A delicious, juicy wine. Screwcap. Boisset Family Estates. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$10

**85 Vignerons de Bel Air 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** An attractively ripe and lightly concentrated wine, with black cherry and an edge of dry tannins. Sweet fruit, richly juicy, right up front. Holiday Beverage. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**84 Georges Duboeuf 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** There is a layer of tannins here that impart a dry edge to what is otherwise sweetly fruity wine. It is full and juicy, with strawberry fruit flavors. W.J. Deutsch & Sons. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$10

**84 Thorin 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** Bright red cherry fruits, fresh and light with fruit acidity and the minimum of tannins. Boisset Family Estates. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$13

**83 Albert Bichot 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais).** The wine has a bitter edge with a burnt character that clashes with the red fruit and banana flavors. Maybe better in a few months, but by then, of course, it will have been drunk. European Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$10

## BEAUJOLAIS-VILLAGES

**88 Louis Jadot 2010 Beaujolais-Villages.** A wine that combines richness with sweet cherry

flavors and a firm tannic edge. Acidity and ripeness have produced a structured, food-friendly wine. Kobrand. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

**87 Domaine de la Madone 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais-Villages).** With some weight, this is a smooth red-fruited wine with just a hint of bananas. The balance works well, marrying acidity and light tannins. Fruity and attractive. Michael Skurnik Wines. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$13

**87 Henry Fessy 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais-Villages).** A rich Nouveau, with fine black cherry fruit and some sweetness. It's a full-bodied wine, the tannins and acidity offering a sense of structure. A definite food Beaujolais. Louis Latour Inc. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$10

**87 Mommessin 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais-Villages).** A solid, ripe wine, very much a nouveau for food, with some rich cherry fruit and an underlying smoky tannin layer. The fruit is ripe and full. Boisset Family Estates. **Best Buy.** —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$10

**86 Vignerons de Bel Air 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais-Villages).** A rich wine, with some weight, black cherry flavors and an edge of tannin. This is sufficiently structured to age, but the fresh fruit is all ready to appeal now. Holiday Beverage. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$NA

**85 Albert Bichot 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais-Villages).** An attractively fruity wine, with light tannins and juicy fruit. It has all the right red fruited elements for a nouveau, bubbling with freshness. European Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$12

**85 Bouchard Aîné & Fils 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais-Villages).** All red fruit, red cherries and the lightest tannins. This is full-bodied and exuberant, with the typical acidity of young Beaujolais. Boisset Family Estates. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$13

**84 Georges Duboeuf 2011 Nouveau (Beaujolais-Villages).** All red cherry and banana fruit, this is a soft, juicy and bright wine. Attractive and fresh, just edged with a slightly dry texture. W.J. Deutsch & Sons. —R.V.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$11

**84 Gérard Brisson 2010 Beaujolais-Villages.** A fruity wine, full of red cherries and plenty of acidity. There is dry structure, making it food friendly, but the wine is not for aging. Jao Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$16

## CRU BEAUJOLAIS

**91 Domaine Chasselay 2009 La Chapelle des Bois (Fleurie).** A splendidly rich wine, with mint from new wood adding an extra dimension to

the ripe cherry fruit and sweet tannins. It's a wine that shows the full assets of the fine 2009 vintage, spice and ripeness. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$30

**91 Domaine Chasselay 2010 Morgon.** Organically grown grapes have yielded a firm, dense wine that brings out the power of Morgon. It has dark plum skins and cherry fruit, layered with firmly structured tannins. It's an impressive wine for aging 2–3 years. Serge Doré Selections. **Cellar Selection.** —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$30

**89 Gérard Brisson 2010 Les Charmes Cuvée la Louve (Morgon).** A structured age-worthy wine, layering tannins with dark cherry fruit. The acidity gives freshness and a textured character. With its dry flavors, the wine will age for 2–3 years or more. Jao Wine Imports. —R.V.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$21

**88 Domaine Chasselay 2010 La Carrière (Chénas).** A sweet-fruited wine with flavors of raisins and dried cherries along with fresh red berry fruit and acidity. The wine has some structure and an attractive lightness. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$29

**88 Domaine Chasselay 2009 Premier Cru l'Héronde (Côte de Brouilly).** A wine that shows more of the structure of 2009 than the year's richness. It has tannins, red berry fruit, spice from new wood and layers of acidity. It could age well another six months. Serge Doré Selections. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$28

**88 Vignerons de Bel Air 2010 Belairissime Le Py (Morgon).** A big, powerfully structured wine with concentrated tannins and plenty of black fruit. It has density, juicy fruitiness, layered acidity and the potential for aging at least a year. Holiday Beverage. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**86 Vignerons de Bel Air 2010 Hiver Gourmand (Morgon).** A weighty wine that has black fruits, solid tannins and richness. It has a dense layer of spice and fruit that has acidity as well as juiciness. Worth aging for 6–12 months. Holiday Beverage. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Vignerons de Bel Air 2010 Été Fleuri (Chiroubles).** With relatively high altitude vineyards, Chiroubles can produce wines like this, with an austere backbone and high acidity. Together they make for a tight wine with red berries and a dry texture. Age for six months. Holiday Beverage. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

**85 Vignerons de Bel Air 2010 Automne Festif (Côte de Brouilly).** A wine with some warm black cherry fruit as well as structured acidity. It has a dry texture to go with the fruit, making it a ripe but food friendly wine. Holiday Beverage. —R.V.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$NA

# Wines of Chile

*The natural choice*



Imagine. A long and narrow country, at the ends of the Earth.  
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**84 Vignerons de Bel Air 2010 Été Indien (Brouilly).** A wine that shows bright acidity as well as red cherry fruits. It is soft and rounded, with the lightest touch of tannin. With its fruitiness, it should be drunk now. Holiday Beverage. —R.V.  
abv: 13% Price: \$NA

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## BORDEAUX

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**98 Château Léoville Las Cases 2009 Saint-Julien.** A beautifully structured wine, with its tannins layered between the ripest black plums, damsons and black currants. It is opulent while remaining dense, concentrated and very serious. Certainly a wine for long-term aging. *Cellar Selection.* —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**96 Château Montrose 2009 Saint-Estèphe.** Enormous tannins, dominant black fruit and a solid, dense structure. The wine, packed with dark fruits, dry tannins, very firm in character. With its huge tannins as well as fruit, this is a wine that really needs many years of aging. *Cellar Selection.* —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**96 Château Pichon Longueville 2009 Pauillac.** With a structure that runs between acidity and dark smoky tannins, this is a wine with potential opulence. Very rich in character; dense and dark. The black plum flavors are dominant, along with excellent acidity. For the long-term. *Cellar Selection.* —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**94 Château Tronquoy-Lalande 2009 Saint-Estèphe.** The tannins are very fine, with rich fruited and smoky flavors. Red berry and black plums give a fruity character, along with delicious acidity. The wine is structured while still remaining very approachable. —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**94 Clos du Marquis 2009 Saint-Julien.** A dense wine, the wood just showing at this stage through its dark tannins and superb rich fruit. The wine is ripe, with a density of tannins that go right down deep. Big and powerful. —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**93 Château Nenin 2009 Pomerol.** Structured, but so rich, with the tannins enveloped by sweet plum fruits and excellent acidity. The wine is juicy, sweet and darkly rich. —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**93 Château Petit-Village 2009 Pomerol.** Very juicy, smoky, smooth and velvety. It has great acidity as well as sweet fruit. An opulent, open wine, yet with a great final structure; big and sweet. —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**92 Château Pibran 2009 Pauillac.** A richly smoky wine, with all its juiciness surrounded by dark tannins. Despite a dominance of Merlot, this is still intensely structured. The wine has so much richness as well as acidity. —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**92 Château Potensac 2009 Médoc.** Shows smoky new wood and black currant fruit. This is a structured wine, powerful, while preserving just the right balance of acidity. It's dark and dense in character, yet with great freshness. Château Léoville las Cases. —R.V.  
abv: NA Price: \$NA

**87 Château Dubraud 2009 Blaye Côtes de Bordeaux.** A red-fruited wine, with an attractive edge of tannins. The wine has red-berry fruit flavors, a dry core and a fresh, smoky aftertaste. Ready to drink. Jandell Selections. —R.V.  
abv: 12.5% Price: \$NA

**87 Château Saint-Nicholas 2008 Premières Côtes de Bordeaux.** Now maturing, this wine still retains some of the freshness of the vintage. It also has spicy blackberry fruits, rich tannins and a full, powerful finish. Drink now, or keep for 2–3 years. Jandell Selections. —R.V.  
abv: 14% Price: \$NA

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## CHILE

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### SAUVIGNON BLANC

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**89 Emiliana 2011 Novas Gran Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley).** Sweet on the nose yet firm as a bristle brush, with lime and pineapple as the key aromas. Feels juicy, tight and light on the tongue, with fine acidity propelling nectarine, lime and melon flavors. Zesty, crisp and pure throughout. A serious value among white wines. Banfi Vintners. *Best Buy.* —M.S.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$14

**88 Cono Sur 2011 Organically Grown Grapes Sauvignon Blanc (San Antonio).** For full review see page 14. *Best Buy.*  
abv: 13% Price: \$13

**88 Cono Sur 2011 Visión Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley).** For full review see page 14. *Best Buy.*  
abv: 13% Price: \$13

**88 Emiliana 2011 Novas Gran Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (San Antonio).** Stony, oceanic and minerally on the nose, with no shortage of pungent green aromas. Feels tight and juicy, with wiry acidity and zesty flavors of gooseberry, green vegetables and lime. Definitely a green, cool-climate wine, but one with lasting zest and juicy acidity. Banfi Vintners. —M.S.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$14

**88 Morandé 2011 Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley).** Crystal clear and easy to like. The nose is a mix of crisp, oceanic, green aromas tied to fresh tropical fruit and bitter nut oil. Zesty and pure on the palate, with tangerine and pink grapefruit flavors leading to a cleansing finish. Drink this year. Morandé USA. *Best Buy.* —M.S.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$13

**87 Ventisquero 2011 Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley).** For full review see page 15. *Best Buy.*  
abv: 13% Price: \$10

**86 Casas del Bosque 2011 Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley).** It's pretty easy pegging this for Chilean SB; the nose is full of grass, lettuce leaf and bell pepper along with citrus. Feels fresh and deep, with good cut and pointed flavors of green bean and lychee. Runs heavy on the bell pepper and capsicum. Wine Symphony, Inc. —M.S.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$15

**85 Cornellana 2011 Reserve Sauvignon Blanc (Cachapoal Valley).** Light on the nose, with a hint of apple and lime. Feels scouring, with sour-apple acidity and juicy but narrow flavors of white citrus and pineapple. Tangy but limited in flavor. Will work best as a palate-prepping or cleansing wash. Viña La Rosa USA. —M.S.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$14

**84 Indomita 2011 Gran Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley).** Crisp and grassy on the nose, then lemony in the mouth, with narrow citrus and white peach flavors along with a hint of the veggies. Tangy, lean, slick and acidic in terms of feel, with a tight, lemony finish. Laird & Company. —M.S.  
abv: 12.5% Price: \$NA

**84 Lapostolle 2011 Casa Grand Selection Sauvignon Blanc (Rapel Valley).** Basic tropical aromas suggest apple and slight minerality. The feel is standard and melony, with sweet, chunky flavors of melon and green banana. Round and turning bitter on the finish, with a sugary sweetness and stinky notes. Marnier-Lapostolle. —M.S.  
abv: 13% Price: \$12

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## CABERNETS & BLENDS

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**89 Estampa 2008 Gold Carménère-Cabernet Sauvignon-Petit Verdot-Cabernet Franc (Colchagua Valley).** Whole and typical of Chile on the nose, with aromas of eucalyptus, spice, berry, plum and leather. Full, structured and tannic in the mouth, with herbal blackberry, tobacco and cola flavors. Spicy and integrated on the finish; Carmenère, Cabernet, Petit Verdot and Cab Franc. American Estates Wines, Inc. —M.S.  
abv: 14% Price: \$24

**89 Lafken 2008 Garage Wine (Maipo Valley).** Opens with aromas of moss, baked blackberry and dried cheese. Turns creamy and deep in the mouth, with soft, jammy tannins. Tastes of herbs, thyme, lightly baked black plum and carob. Long, earthy, herbal and cuddly on the finish. Soft on acidity; drink now through 2013. The Artisan Collection. —M.S.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$99

**88 Altaïr 2008 Sideral (Rapel Valley).** Big and forceful up front, with fiery, hot aromas that fall off to rooty and jammy. Tannic and aggressive on the palate, with an herbal, brambly blend of red plum, oregano, tomato, buttery oak and spice flavors. Big, loud

and not short on spice and fire on the finish. Drink now through 2014. Bertin Henri Selections. —M.S.

abv: NA

Price: \$25

**88 Domaines Barons de Rothschild (Lafite) 2009 Los Vascos Grande Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Colchagua Valley).** Herbs, leather and warm berry aromas are sound and typical for Chile. The feel is a bit clacky and acidic, but there's layering and quality red plum, raspberry and tomato flavors. Tight, fresh and focused on the finish; strapping enough to age for 3–5 years. Pasternak Wine Imports. —M.S.

abv: 14%

Price: \$20

**88 Viña Chocalan 2008 Gran Reserva Blend (Maipo Valley).** A typical Maipo red, but untypically it's made from six grapes led by Cabernet Sauvignon. Smells mossy and of tobacco, olive, dried herbs and black fruits. Rich in the mouth except for a streak of acidity, with oaky flavors of vanilla, tobacco, stewed plum and berry. Finishes with coconut and power. Domaine Select Wine Estates. —M.S.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$16

**86 Chono 2009 Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon (Maipo Valley).** Compact and candied on the bouquet, with dusty red berry aromas. Feels blocky and tannic but healthy, with cassis and blackberry flavors touched up by typical Chilean herbal notes. A flavorful wine for everyday drinking. Masciarelli Wine Co. —M.S.

abv: 14%

Price: \$12

**86 Morandé 2009 Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon (Maipo Valley).** Smells roasted and spicy, with an herbal, brushy character. Tannic and tight in the mouth, with pinching grip and flavors of herbal plum and berry. The finish turns up fresh tomato and drying tannins. Seems high in red fruit acidity. Morandé USA. —M.S.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$18

**85 Morandé 2008 Edición Limitada Syrah-Cabernet Sauvignon (Central Valley).**

Thick, raisiny and a heavy on first take, with meaty aromas. Feels jammy and soft, but the middle layers aren't well defined. Tastes dark and sweet, with fig, prune and lemony oak. Bulky, but struggles to reach a higher plane. Morandé USA. —M.S.

abv: 14.8%

Price: \$23

**83 Casa Silva 2009 Los Lingues Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon (Colchagua Valley).** Pinched and hard, no two ways about it. The bouquet is herbal and rubbery, with blackened berry and plum aromas. Feels clumpy, with hard tannins and herbal berry flavors. Leafy as it bangs and clangs its way along. Vin Divino. —M.S.

abv: 14%

Price: \$22

**83 Sundance 2009 Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon (Maule Valley).** Big, jumbled and foxy, with forced berry aromas. Feels full and bulky, with roasted, herbal flavors that suggest cherry and cassis. Mildly astringent and chalky feeling on the finish. IBESC Wine Distributor. —M.S.

abv: 14%

Price: \$12

## CARMENÈRE

**88 Maquis 2009 Carmenère (Colchagua Valley).** Super dark and dense, with black fruit, marzipan and mossy aromas. Feels tight and grabby, with firm tannins and dark, smoky flavors of blackberry, espresso and pepper. Turns harder and overtly tannic as it opens; needs food to show its best side. Global Vineyard Importers. —M.S.

abv: 14%

Price: \$20

**86 Emiliana 2009 Novas Gran Reserva Carmenère (Colchagua Valley).** Smells good and correct for the variety, with leather, roasted berry and herbal-spicy aromas. Racy and tight in the mouth, with narrowing acidity and forward flavors of red plum, herbs, vanilla and heat. Banfi Vintners. —M.S.

abv: 14%

Price: \$16

**83 TerraNoble 2009 CA2 Costa Carmenère (Colchagua Valley).** Stick to the Andes, guys. Terranoble's CA1 Andes Carmenère is better than this condensed, oaky coastal specimen with outsized acidity. Aromas of oak-based lemon rind and spice blend with graphite, tea and herbs. Dark flavors don't do so well with blazing acids; too much mixing and matching. Winebow. —M.S.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$23

**82 P.K.N.T. 2009 Gold Reserve Carmenère (Maule Valley).** Herbal, spicy and rubbery smelling, with mulchy berry aromas. Feels soft, creamy and confected, with more milk chocolate and vanilla flavor than legitimate fruit. Sweet and soft on the finish. Bronco Wine Company. —M.S.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$14

**81 Root:1 2009 Carmenère (Colchagua Valley).** Hits heavy with the olive and burnt rubber aromas, then turns ultrazesty and citric in the mouth. Tastes tangy and herbal, with tomato and sour plum flavors. A raw, tart wine. Winebow. —M.S.

abv: 14%

Price: \$12

## PINOT NOIR

**88 Kingston Family 2010 Alazan CJ's Barrel Pinot Noir (Casablanca Valley).** Brambly and bold on the nose, with jumpy red fruit and cool, briney action as well. Feels tight and solid, with spicy oak bolstering wild berry and herbal flavors. Polished and juicy, with an honest, vintage-reflective package of acidity and dry, zesty fruit. Kingston Family Vineyards. —M.S.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$38

**86 Kingston Family 2010 Alazan Pinot Noir (Casablanca & Leyda Valleys).** Plum and cherry aromas turn herbal and piney with airing. Definitely a leaner, sharper Alazan than in the past, with body as well as piercing acidity. Black fruit flavors have an herbal undertone as the palate transitions to peppery spice. Bright and zingy; not much finish. Kingston Family Vineyards. —M.S.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$32

**85 Indomita 2010 Gran Reserva Pinot Noir (Casablanca Valley).** Rough at first, with hard cherry and nail polish aromas. Airing reveals a still-edgy wine with fresh acids bracing earthy strawberry and red plum flavors. Not a heavy type of wine; dry, spicy and lean on the finish. Laird & Company. —M.S.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$NA

**84 Casas del Bosque 2010 Gran Reserva Pinot Noir (Casablanca Valley).** Fiery and pushy on the nose, with pine and sharp cherry aromas. Comes across both lean and tight as well as oaky, with wood tannins present on the mouthfeel and oak driven into the core red berry flavors. Despite being crisp it's chocolaty tasting on the finish. Wine Symphony, Inc. —M.S.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$32

**82 Emiliana 2010 Novas Gran Reserva Pinot Noir (Casablanca Valley).** Hot and fiery up front, with raspberry and leather on the nose. Feels astringent, with tomatoey acidity and pointed cherry flavors that come with an herbal, peppery aftertaste. Has an aggressiveness to it. Banfi Vintners. —M.S.

abv: 14%

Price: \$16

## AUSTRALIA

### RIESLING

**93 Pewsey Vale 2005 The Contours Museum Reserve Riesling (Eden Valley).** Thank the folks at Pewsey Vale for aging this stellar wine five years before its release. The result is what Australian Rieslings aspire to become, a medium-bodied wine of uncommon elegance. Orange marmalade, honey and toast characters mingle easily yet finish crisp, long and completely dry. Drink now or hold through 2015, possibly longer. Negociants USA, Inc. *Editors' Choice.* —J.C.

abv: 12.5%

Price: \$28

**91 Penfolds 2010 Bin 51 Riesling (Eden Valley).** Features an admirably lean, elegantly fine line of acids from start to finish, off of which hang notes of crushed stone, green apple and lime, with just the merest hints of riper fruit, like nectarine. Crisp and long, this should develop well over the next 5–10 years. Treasury Wine Estates. *Editors' Choice.* —J.C.

abv: 12.5%

Price: \$20

**91 Wakefield Estate 2011 Riesling (Clare Valley).** For full review see page 10. *Editors' Choice.*

abv: 12.5%

Price: \$17

**90 Jim Barry 2011 The Lodge Hill Dry Riesling (Clare Valley).** Wet stone and lemon-lime. If those sound good to you, this ageworthy Riesling is a fit for you. It's medium in body yet very crisp and linear in structure, with a hint of citrus pith on the finish. Drink 2015–2020. Negociants USA, Inc. *Editors' Choice.* —J.C.

abv: 12.5%

Price: \$18

**90 Pewsey Vale 2011 Individual Vineyard Selection Dry Riesling (Eden Valley).**

Punched up aromas of lime sherbet, talcum powder and apple blossom only tell part of the story. This is a concentrated wine with a firm backbone of acid that shows off the intense citrus character, plus hints of crushed stone and underripe peaches. Drink now–2020. Negotiants USA, Inc. **Editors' Choice.** —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$18

**90 Wirra Wirra 2010 The Lost Watch Riesling (Adelaide Hills).** This is pretty hefty at 13% alcohol, yet retains a long, bright line of acidity that lights up the wine's petrol, lime and tangerine shadings. Nicely balanced, with a long, mouthwatering finish. International Vines, Inc. **Editors' Choice.** —J.C.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$17

**89 Katnook Estate 2009 Founder's Block Riesling (Coonawarra).** Despite being virtually dry and only carrying 11.5% alcohol, this wine seems more rounded than most Australian Rieslings, with hints of crushed stone accenting notes of tangerine, melon and cinnamon-like spice. Drink now–2017. Victoire Imports. —J.C.

**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$17

**89 Kilikanoon 2010 Mort's Block Watervale Riesling (Clare Valley).** Lean and crisp to the point of being ungenerous at this point in time, give this reticent Clare Riesling 3–4 years to loosen up. Right now, there's not a lot of fruit to be found, just hints of paraffin and tart green apples. Old Bridge Cellars. **Cellar Selection.** —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$20

**89 Kilikanoon 2010 Mort's Reserve Watervale Riesling (Clare Valley).** Seems somewhat developed for a 2010 Riesling, showing hints of honey and toast alongside lime and petrol notes. Rounder and less angular than the Mort's Block, this seems ready to drink now. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$35

**89 Thorn Clarke 2010 Mount Crawford Estate Grown Single Vineyard Riesling (Eden Valley).** A great price for a solid example of Eden Valley Riesling. Lime sherbet and talcum powder define the aromas, and green apple joins in on the palate. It's crisp, dry and nicely textured, with a hint of iodine on the finish. Kysela Père et Fils. **Best Buy.** —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

**89 Wakefield Estate 2011 Promised Land Riesling (South Australia).** For full review see page 14. **Best Buy.**

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$12

**89 Yalumba 2010 The Y Series Riesling (South Australia).** Very floral and citrusy, with lime and orange sherbet notes and hints of green apple and white pepper. It also shows good length for such an inexpensive drop. Drink now. Negotiants USA, Inc. **Best Buy.** —J.C.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$12

**88 D'Arenberg 2010 The Dry Dam Riesling (McLaren Vale).** Unlike most Australian Rieslings, this one has a hint of residual sugar left in it, giving it an appealing plumpness on the midpalate. Ripe apple

and sweet peach notes are balanced by zingy lemon-lime acids on the finish. Ready to drink now. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.

**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$17

**88 Mesh 2010 Riesling (Eden Valley).** Unlike many of its brethren, this Eden Valley Riesling relies on weight and texture rather than a fine line of acid to make an impression. It has the region's lime sherbet and wet stones, but is plump on the palate rather than lean and wiry, making it more approachable in its youth. Negotiants USA, Inc. —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$25

**88 Milton Park 2010 Riesling (South Australia).** Milton Park is a lower-priced offshoot of Thorn-Clarke, whose wines often represent excellent values. This Riesling might be a bit broad for aging, but it offers ample green apple and lime fruit and a hint of petrol for near-term consumption. Kysela Père et Fils. **Best Buy.** —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$12

**88 Pualetts 2010 Antonina Polish Hill River Riesling (Clare Valley).** Starts off with petrol-like scents and gingery-peppery spice notes, then folds in pleasantly citrusy flavors. It's a bit plump through the midpalate but remains focused on the finish, resulting in a wine that's harmonious and easy to drink now. International Spirits & Wines, LLC. —J.C.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$NA

**88 Pikes 2009 The Merle Reserve Riesling (Clare Valley).** Broad and weighty for a Clare Valley Riesling, with hints of wet stone followed by notes of ripe orchard fruits and citrus. A very good Riesling that's near-ready to drink now, priced at the top of the market. The Country Vintner. —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$46

**88 Plantagenet 2010 Riesling (Mount Barker).** Fine and delicate, with a light-bodied character that works well with the wine's notes of crushed stone, lime zest and green apples. It's already harmonious and ready to drink. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$21

**86 Frisk 2011 Prickly Riesling (Victoria).** A soft, fruity style, with a hint of CO<sub>2</sub>-derived spritz to provide zest to the peachy fruit. A hint of bitterness on the finish helps balance the residual sugar. Drink now. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.

**abv:** 8.9% **Price:** \$12

**86 Jacob's Creek 2010 Reserve Dry Riesling (Barossa).** This is a medium-bodied Riesling that seems destined for rather early consumption, as it lacks the fine edge of acidity that distinguishes age-worthy examples. Apple and lime flavors are tinged with gingery spice on the finish. Pernod Ricard. —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$13

**86 Leeuwin Estate 2010 Art Series Riesling (Margaret River).** A bit developed already, with a round mouthfeel and some honey character accentuated by citrus and gingery-peppery spice. Pleasant to

drink now, but seems to lack the vivacity for extended aging. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$22

**85 Château Tanunda 2010 Grand Barossa Riesling (Barossa).** Yes, a certain amount of acidity is desirable in Australian Riesling, but this one is exceedingly lean and crisp. Perhaps it will blossom with age, but for now it is simply intensely citrusy and rather skinny. Pair it with oysters, or put it in a cool dark place and hope for the best. Banfi Vintners. —J.C.

**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$16

**85 Pualetts 2010 Polish Hill River Riesling (Clare Valley).** Has typical Clare Valley Riesling elements of crushed stone and citrus, but also considerable petrol and hints of honey and ripe apple. It's medium-bodied and tart, with a metallic or slightly pithy note on the finish. International Spirits & Wines, LLC. —J.C.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$NA

## NEW ZEALAND

### RIESLING

**91 Neudorf 2010 Moutere Riesling (Nelson).** Neudorf seems to do almost everything well, and the winery's efforts with Riesling off the Moutere clays are no exception. It's made in a light- to medium-bodied style, off dry, with crisp notes of lime, green apple and wet stone that linger on the mouthwatering finish. The Country Vintner. —J.C.

**abv:** 10% **Price:** \$27

**90 Forrest 2010 The Doctors' Riesling (Marlborough).** Made in a sweet style with only 8.5% alcohol, pair this delicately-textured wine as you might a Mosel *spätlese*, with sweet-spicy dishes. Green apple and citrus notes provide crisp balance to the residual sugar. American Wine Distributors. **Editors' Choice.** —J.C.

**abv:** 8.5% **Price:** \$17

**90 Greywacke 2010 Riesling (Marlborough).** This is the rare Riesling that has seen some oak influence. Yet it's not obtrusive at all, and just adds hints of honey, vanilla and toast to the wine's already complex flavors, encompassing lilac blossoms, fresh greens, peach and tangerine. It's on the full-bodied side of the Riesling spectrum, with just a pinch of residual sugar and a pleasant creaminess on the midpalate. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$25

**90 Jawbone 2009 Reserve Selection Classic Riesling (Marlborough).** A medium-bodied, off-dry style, with scents of baked apples and vegetable oil followed by flavors of apple and peach accented by peppery cinnamon-tinged spice. It's slightly creamy in texture, with a long, mouthcoating finish. Drink now. Jawbone Winery and Vineyards. —J.C.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$24

**90 Seifried 2011 Riesling (Nelson).** Light in weight, delicate in style, this is just barely off dry. Crisp apple fruit carries hints of riper stone fruit



(nectarine?) but is underlain by a distinctly stony note. The lingering finish ably balances tart and sweet. American Wine Distributors. —J.C.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$17

**88 Carrick 2010 Riesling (Central Otago).** Medium-sweet on the IRF scale, this light- to medium-bodied Riesling displays classic scents of petrichor, green apple and lime. Shows decent length and hints of petrol on the finish. American Wine Distributors. —J.C.  
**abv:** 10.5% **Price:** \$23

**88 Giesen 2010 Riesling (Marlborough).** For full review see page 14. *Best Buy.*  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$12

**88 Lake Chalice 2009 Falcon Vineyard Riesling (Marlborough).** This wine's ripeness and power are similar to many Rheingau Rieslings. Honey, apple, peach, spice and petrol all combine easily into a slightly broad, off-dry style. American Wine Distributors. —J.C.  
**abv:** 10.5% **Price:** \$17

**87 Forrest 2010 Riesling (Marlborough).** Classified as medium dry on the IRF scale, this is a medium-bodied Riesling without much texture, yet classic apple and citrus aromas and flavors. A sensation of wet stone creeps in on the finish. American Wine Distributors. —J.C.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$17

**86 Mud House 2010 The Mound Vineyard Riesling (Waipara).** Broad and off dry, this is bulky for Riesling, with weighty notes of honey and stone fruit. There's a pleasant whiff of mossy stones and a hint of petrol, but also a hint of bitterness on the finish. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —J.C.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$22

**85 eco.love 2009 Riesling (South Island).** Light to medium in body, with simple off-dry apple and citrus flavors and a hint of peppery spice on the finish. Drink now. Lineage Imports, LLC. —J.C.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$17

## PINOT NOIR

**92 Carrick 2009 Pinot Noir (Central Otago).** This is a fairly big, muscular Pinot Noir, with beefy black-cherry fruit and oaky overtones of brown sugar. Give it a year or more to smooth out, because the long, intense finish filled with berry fruit shows tremendous promise. Drink 2013–2020. American Wine Distributors. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$50

**91 Cloudy Bay 2009 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Although CB made its reputation on Sauvignon Blanc, the Pinot Noir is finally achieving a similar level of quality. Dark cherry fruit is couched in notes of sandalwood, cinnamon and clove, framed by tannins that are silky without being excessively soft. Drink now–2016. Moët Hennessy USA. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$35

**91 Felton Road 2009 Bannockburn Pinot Noir (Central Otago).** Always one of the most approachable Pinot bottlings from Felton Road, the Bannockburn is a medium-bodied wine in 2009, redolent of earth, smoke and mushrooms. Silky tannins on the finish frame flavors of ripe cherries, dark earth and a hint of espresso. Drink now–2016. Wilson Daniels Ltd. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$53

**91 Huia 2009 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** The husband-and-wife team of Mike and Claire Allen have turned out 2,000 cases of this terrific value, which delivers authentic Pinot Noir complexity at an attractive price. Bold black cherry fruit carries subtle herb, twig and vanilla shadings with aplomb, while the texture turns velvety on the lengthy finish. Drink now–2017. Adventures In Wine. *Editors' Choice.* —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$17

**90 Carrick 2009 Unravelled Pinot Noir (Central Otago).** This Pinot Noir from the Bannockburn subregion is a bit chunky and extracted without going too far, marrying ripe black cherry fruit with hints of cinnamon and coffee. It lacks the finesse of Carrick's pricier bottling, but offers a rich mouthful of Pinot at an attractive price. American Wine Distributors. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$28

**90 Dog Point 2008 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** The 2008 vintage wasn't an easy one in Marlborough, but Ivan Sutherland and James Healy (both formerly of Cloudy Bay) have turned in an excellent effort. Even after almost four years, the wine remains dark and vibrant in color, with bold black cherry fruit accented by hints of plum and coffee. Tannins are soft and acids crisp, making it a wine to enjoy over the next few years. Vintus LLC. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$41

**90 Jules Taylor 2009 The Wrekin Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** From a single vineyard at the top of the Brancott Valley, this is a harmonious, silky-textured Pinot, with typical black cherry and sous bois notes and hints of charred beef and cedar. Finishes long, crisp and vibrant. Drink now–2016. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. *Editors' Choice.* —J.C.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$22

**90 Nautilus 2009 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** The Nautilus wines have been getting better and better, and this dark-toned Pinot is no exception. It shows excellent complexity—black cherry and dark earth notes alongside hints of cured meat and saffras—as well as a round mouthfeel that never turns jammy. It's firm enough to hold 2–3 years, if you prefer. Negotiants USA, Inc. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$27

**89 Hawkshead 2009 Pinot Noir (Central Otago).** Sourced from the Gibbston subregion, this is a fresh, zesty Pinot Noir, perhaps slightly leafy, but also amply endowed with bright cherry fruit. The finish delivers tart, lingering notes of berry zinger tea, plus a

hint of dark coffee. Drink now–2018. Fruit of the Vines, Inc. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$NA

**89 Kennedy Point 2009 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Kennedy Point is located on Waiheke Island, so this is contract grown and made for the label in the Marlborough region but the results in 2009 are very good. It delivers campfire-like notes, plus black cherry fruit and hints of brown sugar, mocha and cinnamon. Drink this supple wine over the next year or so. Kysela Père et Fils. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$29

**89 Momo 2009 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Basically a second label of Seresin, this is a medium-bodied, crisp Pinot Noir with bright cherry-berried fruit, a slightly briary, peppery quality and hints of button mushroom. It should drink well for the next few years. The Sorting Table. *Editors' Choice.* —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$23

**89 Villa Maria 2008 Reserve Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** From a difficult vintage, this is an impressively youthful wine, loaded with bold cherry fruit that's vibrant, fresh and clean, with shadings of coffee-tinged oak on the silky finish. For drinking now and over the next few years. Ste. Michelle Wine Estates. —J.C.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$40

**88 Marisco Vineyards 2009 The Ned Benmorven Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Sourced from the Waihopai Valley subregion, this is a round, soft Pinot Noir. It emphasizes fruit, but the black cherry notes are undeniably attractive and nicely balanced, framed by silky tannins. Easy to like and easy to drink, now–2014. Pelican Brands, LLC. —J.C.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$19

**88 Saint Clair 2009 Pioneer Block 4 Sawcut Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** This is a crisp, solidly structured Marlborough Pinot (a region known more for soft and accessible Pinots), which gives it a leg up on much of the competition. Plum and cherry fruit dominates, with shadings of mocha, root beer and tea leaves adding touches of complexity. Drink now–2018. Winesellers Ltd. —J.C.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$30

**87 Villa Maria 2009 Cellar Selection Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Slightly herbal in style, with hints of tomato leaf accenting black cherry fruit. This is a crisp, fresh—even tangy—red that perhaps needs a few months to settle down and smooth out. Try it later this year; it should cellar well through 2018. Ste. Michelle Wine Estates. —J.C.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$30

**87 Winegrowers of Ara 2009 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** A light-bodied, delicate style of Pinot Noir, with pretty cherry fruit and plenty of forest and earth complexity. Silky on the finish, with hints of tea leaf. Probably best over the next year or two. Winegrowers of Ara. —J.C.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**86 Jules Taylor 2009 Ballochdale Estate Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Sourced from a high-altitude vineyard near the top of the Awatere Valley, this wine shows some of the leafiness characteristic of the region. The fruit is more roasted root vegetable than tree fruit, with a potent savory and fairly muscular character. Maritime Wine Trading Collective. —J.C.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$22

**86 Spy Valley 2008 Satellite Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Reflecting the difficulties of the vintage, this is a slightly edgy, coarsely textured wine, with sweet, oaky notes framing cherries and roasted beets. Try it with something slightly rustic, like beef stew. Broadbent Selections, Inc. —J.C.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$24

**86 Wairau River 2009 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Shows a slightly evolved color for a wine this young, with hints of brick already creeping in at the rim, but it also delivers elegant *sous bois* aromas, bright cherry and cranberry fruit and notes of scorched wood and leather that turn more mocha-like on the finish. Drink now. Terlato Wines International. —J.C.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$30

**86 Winegrowers of Ara 2009 Pathway Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** This is slightly bigger and earthier than Ara's other 2009 Pinot Noir, with notes more of beet than cherry, and hints of dried herbs and mushrooms. It's a sturdy wine that could stand up to braised meats. Winegrowers of Ara. —J.C.  
abv: 13% Price: \$15

**86 Winegrowers of Ara 2008 Composite Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** Ready to drink, this Pinot is already losing color and going brick at the rim, its modest red berry fruit falling away to reveal notes of brown sugar, vanilla and even a touch of wintergreen. Supple in texture, with mouthwatering acids on the finish. Winegrowers of Ara. —J.C.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$22

**85 Mt. Difficulty 2009 Roaring Meg Pinot Noir (Central Otago).** A supple, medium-bodied Pinot Noir with a pronounced acidic edge. Cranberry is the starring fruit here, framed by coffee-like oak. Crisp and a bit astringent on the finish. American Estates Wines, Inc. —J.C.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$23

**85 Nobilo 2009 Icon Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** This wine shows a fair bit of oak influence; notes reminiscent of brown sugar and mocha mingle with savory, root-vegetable-like fruit. The tannins are supple, the wine reasonably balanced in terms of alcohol and acids. Drink now. Constellation Brands, Inc. —J.C.  
abv: 14% Price: \$22

**84 Dashwood 2009 Pinot Noir (Marlborough).** This is a tart, lean, somewhat ungenerous Pinot Noir, but one that still manages to deliver an attractive, creative tension between its earthy, composty aromas and bright cranberry fruit. Pasternak Wine Imports. —J.C.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$17

## CALIFORNIA

### CHARDONNAY

**93 J Vineyards & Winery 2010 Barrel 16 Estate Grown Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** With exceptional dryness, acidic crispness and minerality, this Chardonnay can be described as Chablis-style. The structure is certainly noble, and nobody would ever accuse it of being a fruit bomb despite the rich pineapple tart and lemon drop flavors. Hard to predict its future, but probably best over the next four years. —S.H.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$40

**93 J Vineyards & Winery 2010 Strata Estate Grown Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 5. *Cellar Selection.*  
abv: 14.3% Price: \$45

**93 Jarvis 2009 Estate Chardonnay (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 5.  
abv: 14.8% Price: \$48

**92 J Vineyards & Winery 2010 Estate Grown Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** Quite an impressive young Chardonnay, with brisk acidity, a tangy minerality and a bone dry finish. You'll find suggestions of pineapple, Meyer lemon, lime and kiwi flavors, with a kiss of smoky oak. Chill it well, then savor it as it warms in the glass. —S.H.  
abv: 14.3% Price: \$28

**92 J Vineyards & Winery 2010 Jewell Ranch Vineyard Estate Grown Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 7. *Cellar Selection.*  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$45

**91 Isabel Mondavi 2010 Chardonnay (Carneros).** The winemaker pulled out all the bells and whistles, barrel fermenting this Chardonnay, putting it through partial malolactic fermentation, and aging it on the lees. The result is a rich, creamy wine, ripe in pineapple, orange, pear, vanilla and honeysuckle flavors, and brightened with brisk Carneros acidity. Shows impeccable balance, at a fair price. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
abv: 13.9% Price: \$25

**91 Testarossa 2010 Dos Rubios Vineyard Chardonnay (Santa Lucia Highlands).** A brilliant Chardonnay, brimming with powerfully ripe tropical fruit and pear flavors, enriched with smoky, sweet oak. The key here is acidity and the minerality that accompanies the best Santa Lucia Chards. Drink this flamboyant wine now for maximum vibrancy. —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$39

**90 Ancient Oak Cellars 2008 Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** Shows lots of fruity richness, with Asian pear, pineapple, peach and green apple flavors, brightened by crisp acidity. It's surprisingly fresh for a 2008 Chardonnay, but you should drink it quickly before it starts to go downhill. —S.H.  
abv: 13.7% Price: \$20

**90 Fess Parker 2010 Bien Nacido Chardonnay (Santa Barbara County).** High acidity and ultraripe fruit, in the form of pineapples, mangoes, pears and lemons, give this Chard a rich, exotic taste. New French oak adds the perfect touch of buttered toast. It's an impressive, intense young wine of high pedigree. —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$35

**90 Kunde 2010 Reserve Chardonnay (Sonoma Valley).** For full review see page 11.  
abv: 14.8% Price: \$30

**90 Martin Ray 2010 Bald Mountain Reserve Chardonnay (Santa Cruz Mountains).** For full review see page 11.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$25

**89 Gloria Ferrer 2008 Chardonnay (Carneros).** Another solid Chardonnay from Gloria, continuing a string of recent successes. At more than three years of age, the wine is holding nicely, with oak, buttered toast, pineapple, crème brûlée and custard spice flavors, brightened with exceptionally brisk acidity. —S.H.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$18

**89 Summers 2009 La Nude Chardonnay (Alexander Valley).** A lovely Chardonnay that straddles a welcome balance between ripeness and holding back. Made unoaked, it stars ripe Alexander Valley fruit, with pineapple, Meyer lemon, tangerine and tropical fruit flavors, brightened with acidity, and finishing dry and spicy. —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$20

**88 Bishop's Peak 2010 Chardonnay (Central Coast).** With just a bit of oak adding a note of buttered toast, this bone-dry, high-acid Chardonnay tantalizes with savory citrus fruit enriched with pear and honeysuckle. From Talley, and made from their vineyards in the Edna and Arroyo Grande valleys. Good price for a Chardonnay this elegant. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
abv: 13.9% Price: \$15

**87 Cosentino 2009 The Chard Chardonnay (California).** Good price for a Chardonnay this rich and satisfying. It's oaky and ripe and flamboyant in orange and pineapple fruit, yet a brisk cut of acidity and minerality saves it from being too sweet. —S.H.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$15

**87 Davis Bynum 2010 Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** A solid, flashy Russian River Chardonnay, rich in pineapple, kiwi, tropical fruit and oak flavors, and brightened by crisp acidity. With a creamy, buttery texture, it's a solid hit down the middle of the popular style. —S.H.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$25

**87 Dogwood 2010 McMinn Vineyards Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** This Chardonnay straddles the line between complexity and simplicity, with toasty orange and pineapple flavors brightened with citrusy acidity. Savory minerality adds interest and food friendliness. —S.H.  
abv: 12.5% Price: \$30

**87 HandCraft 2010 Chardonnay (California).** For full review see page 13. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$13

**87 Kunde 2010 Estate Chardonnay (Sonoma Valley).** Rich and fine, if a little too sweet and oaky. But those are the popular tastes in Chardonnay, and Kunde delivers. The fruit is potent in pineapple jam and Key lime pie. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$17

**87 Storrs 2010 Chardonnay (Santa Cruz Mountains).** A fine spine of minerals and acidity provides welcome relief to the sweet pineapple, vanilla, buttered toast and tropical fruit flavors of this Chardonnay. It's soundly made in the popular style. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$25

**87 Testarossa 2010 Chardonnay (Santa Cruz Mountains).** Sweet, smoky oak marks this Chardonnay, lending it buttered toast and charred wood flavors that challenge the orange, apricot and pineapple fruit. It's an impressively powerful wine, if a little overworked. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$32

**86 Chanin 2009 Los Alamos Vineyard Chardonnay (Santa Barbara County).** A streak of green testifies to some unripe notes, which are accompanied by notable acidity. The wine is rather lean and angular, especially compared with lusher, riper Chards from the vicinity, but some will like its linearity and low alcohol. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.4% **Price:** \$30

**86 Effort 2009 Chardonnay (Edna Valley).** Sweet, ripe and intense, with vibrant acidity brightening lime, kiwi, orange, pear and pineapple flavors. It's long-hangtime Edna Valley fruit, pure and simple. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$22

**86 Hanna 2010 Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** Sweet and oaky, with orange, pineapple and pear jam, buttered toast and vanilla flavors. Plays it safe down the middle by appealing to the popular taste. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$26

**86 Hilltown 2010 Chardonnay (Monterey County).** You'll be surprised how much class there is in this inexpensive Chardonnay. It's rich in orange, pineapple and butterscotch flavors, while brisk acidity etches it in brightness. Finishes a little sweet, but you can stand this against many Chards that cost two or three times as much. *Best Buy.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.3% **Price:** \$7

**86 Wilson Daniels 2010 Chardonnay (Central Coast).** For the price, this is a good value in California Chardonnay. It shows ripe flavors of citrus and tropic fruits, with a creamy, oaky mouthfeel that finishes with a clean scour of acidity. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.4% **Price:** \$15

**85 Frank Family 2010 Chardonnay (Napa Valley).** Not much going on in this soft, di-

rect Chardonnay, besides sweet oak, with its buttered toast, vanilla and butterscotch flavors. Way underneath is pineapple and lemondrop fruit. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$32

**85 Markham 2010 Chardonnay (Napa Valley).** Sharp acidity and even some tannins mark this simple Chardonnay. In its favor are savory green apple, peach and lime flavors, with creamy, oaky notes. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$19

**85 Ministry of the Vinterior 2010 Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** Simple and sugary sweet, with buttered toast, vanilla, orange and pineapple flavors, brightened with a squirt of lime-juice acidity. It's made in a style meant to appeal to millions of Chardonnay lovers. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$16

**85 RouteStock Cellars 2010 Route 121 Chardonnay (Carneros).** Good, in a simple way, with Chardonnay personality that will appeal to lots of people. It's dry and creamy in texture, with bright acidity framing citrus and tropical fruit, peach, mineral and vanilla flavors. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$15

**85 Snapping Turtle 2010 Chardonnay (California).** Pretty good for a California-appellated Chard at this price, showing ripe flavors of pineapples, pears and green apples, with a touch of smoky vanilla from oak. Finishes a little too sweet, but lots of people will like that. —S.H.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$11

**84 Angel's Secret 2010 Chardonnay (Carneros).** Not much fruity concentration, but nonetheless, this is a pretty good Chardonnay to drink with everyday fare, like salmon cakes or chicken breasts in a white cream sauce. It's dry, crisp and citrusy. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$17

**84 Cru Vin Dogs NV The Loyal Companion Chardonnay (Sonoma County).** Made in the popular style, with sweet vanilla, buttered toast and orange jam flavors. Proceeds from the sale of this wine go to animal shelter groups. *Best Buy.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$13

**84 Foodies 2010 Chardonnay (California).** Sugary sweet and simple in the modern style, with vanilla, caramel, buttered popcorn, orange jam and toast flavors. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$8

**84 Geyser Peak 2010 Chardonnay (Sonoma County).** Ripe and oaky, with vanilla, buttered toast, pineapple jam, orange cream and butterscotch flavors that are rich and sweet. A bit simple and soft, but it offers plenty of crowd-pleasing Chardonnay richness. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$13

**84 Gnarly Head 2010 Chardonnay (California).** Sweet in sugary pineapple and lime fla-

vors, with the caramel and buttered toast of oak, this is a simple Chardonnay made in the popular style. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**84 La Merika 2010 Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** Lots of zippy acidity in this Chardonnay. Lots of sweetness, too. Tastes like lemon and pineapple pie filling, with heat from the alcohol. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$15

**84 Napa Family Vineyards 2010 Chardonnay (Napa Valley).** Sweet and sour in apricot, orange and vanilla flavors, this simple Chardonnay is fairly priced for the quality. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**84 Newton 2010 Red Label Chardonnay (Napa County).** This is a sweet, oaky, simple Chardonnay. It's forward in ripe pineapple, orange and melon fruit flavors, with a honeyed finish. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$25

**84 Petroni 2009 Estate Grown Chardonnay (Sonoma Valley).** Sweet and sugary in pineapple, lime and green apple flavors, this Chardonnay has a strong overlay of sweet oak. Everything is too much. It lacks subtlety and complexity. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$30

**84 Sonoma Hills 2009 Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** Too sweet, with sugary orange, pineapple and banana flavors. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$16

**83 Terlato 2009 Chardonnay (Russian River Valley).** Sweet and simple, with dessert-wine flavors of pineapples, oranges and vanilla. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$28

**82 Glen Ellen 2010 Proprietor's Reserve Chardonnay (California).** Sweet and simple, with pineapple and apricot jam flavors. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$10/1.5 L

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## SAUVIGNON BLANC

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**92 Dragonette 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Santa Ynez Valley).** A terrific Sauvignon Blanc, pure and bright in citrus and tropical fruit, mineral and honeysuckle flavors, finished with a little bit of creamy oak. Finishes sweet in fruity essence, yet clean and dry. Shows how compatible the Sauvignon Blanc grape is with the valley's climate and soils. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25

**92 Dry Creek Vineyard 2009 Estate DCV3 Sauvignon Blanc (Dry Creek Valley).** For full review see page 7.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$25

**90 Dry Creek Vineyard 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Dry Creek Valley).** For full review see page 11. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$16

**90 Gainey 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Santa Ynez Valley).** A lovely wine that continues Gainey's string of successful bottlings. It's finely crisp in acidity, with a refreshing mouthfeel carrying ripe pineapple, lime and kiwi fruit flavors. *Best Buy.* —S.H.  
abv: NA Price: \$14

**89 Six Sigma 2010 Michael's Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc (Lake County).** This barrel-fermented SB opens with a rich vanilla nose and then gets delicately tropical without overdoing it. A very fine example of Lake County's ability to grow nicely mannered Sauvignon Blanc and Six Sigma's deftly achieved balancing act between crisp and creamy. —V.B.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$22

**88 Cornerstone 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Napa Valley).** Here's a fancy Sauvignon Blanc, rich enough to drink with upscale dishes. It's smooth and creamy and very ripe in pineapple and tropical fruit flavors. Tastes sweet, but the sugariness disappears into a swirl of spice on the finish. —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$25

**88 Dogwood 2010 Hummingbird Hill Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc (Sonoma Coast).** Rich in lime, white currant and gooseberry flavors, this wine has lots of acidity that gives it a tingly brightness. It's dry dry and complex, the white wine equivalent of Cabernet Sauvignon. —S.H.  
abv: 12.5% Price: \$25

**88 Envy 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Napa Valley).** Shows lots of citrus and tropical fruit, pear and peach flavors, with a delicious coating of vanilla and buttered toast. Finishes a little on the sweet side, which suggests pairing with Asian and fusion dishes. —S.H.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$23

**88 Six Sigma 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Lake County).** Six Sigma's workhorse Sauvignon Blanc is light and bright, like a lemon crisp enveloped by grapefruit and melon. It's fully stainless-steel fermented and ready for spring and summer. —V.B.  
abv: 12.5% Price: \$16

**87 Alta Maria 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Santa Ynez Valley).** A nice clean Sauvignon Blanc, whose brisk acidity gives the lemon-drop and lime flavors a kick. Tastes distinctly sweet in the finish. There's no oak in this fresh, fruity young wine. —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$22

**87 Concannon 2010 Reserve Sauvignon Blanc (Monterey County).** Lots of up-front lemon, lime, orange and tropical fruit flavors in this wine, which is balanced with crisp acidity and finishes dry. A tang of minerality helps to make it clean and vibrant. Great food wine, especially with Asian fare. —S.H.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$20

**85 Markham 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Napa Valley).** A good Sauvignon Blanc, clean and crisp, with slightly sweet lemon, lime and vanilla flavors, brightened by zesty acidity. Easy to drink with roast chicken. —S.H.  
abv: 13.8% Price: \$15

**84 Dragonette 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Happo Canyon of Santa Barbara).** A controversial wine that will have its fans. Dryness and acidity make it a little sour, and a medicinal taste invades the citrus and tropical fruits. —S.H.  
abv: 13.8% Price: \$35

**84 Petroni 2010 Estate Grown Sauvignon Blanc (Sonoma Valley).** There's a minty, ammonia streak of greenness that can charitably be described as gooseberry in this dry Sauvignon Blanc. Oak brings sweet vanilla richness, but the wine is still pretty eccentric. —S.H.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$24

**83 Hannah Nicole Vineyards 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Contra Costa County).** This Contra Costa-grown SB, fermented entirely in stainless steel, has grassy and flinty aromas and flavors but could use a little more oomph in its middle. —V.B.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$17

**82 Entropy Cellars 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Livermore Valley).** Entropy only made 30 cases of this SB, sourced from the Blanches Vineyard in Livermore Valley. It's a tad thin, made in the grassy style of the variety. —V.B.  
abv: 13.9% Price: \$19

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## VIIGNIER

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**93 Blair Fox 2010 Paradise Road Viognier (Santa Barbara County).** For full review see page 4. *Editors' Choice.*  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$29

**93 Fess Parker 2010 Viognier (Santa Barbara County).** For full review see page 5. *Editors' Choice.*  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$25

**92 Jaffurs 2010 Viognier (Santa Barbara County).** A lovely wine, off-dry to moderately sweet, with tropical fruit, honeysuckle and vanilla flavors, accented with a roasted almond, granola toastiness. Once you accept that it's not really dry, it's easy to fall in love with this Viognier, most of which comes from Bien Nacido Vineyard. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$27

**90 Cedarville Vineyard 2010 Estate Bottled and Grown Viognier (El Dorado).** A beautifully floral Viognier, its aromas tenderly inviting, with uplifting hints of apricot, pear and white fig. It's a deftly made white with lovely minerality and a fleshy mouthfeel all wrapped up in the end with a light touch of lemon. —V.B.  
abv: 14.8% Price: \$20

**89 Kunde 2010 Estate Viognier (Sonoma Valley).** Ripe and forward in tropical fruit, green apple, pear and peach flavors, this Viognier also is marked by brisk acidity and a deft touch of oak. Slightly off-dry, it's one of the more balanced Viogniers out there, a nice companion to Asian fare. —S.H.  
abv: 14.4% Price: \$18

**87 Concannon 2010 Reserve Viognier (Livermore Valley).** A new release for Concannon, this smallish release for the winery has honey, sweet vanilla, citrus and apricot, supported by a light, creamy mouthfeel. Finishing slightly sweet, with a coating of lemon, too, this would make a fine introduction to California Viognier for the novice. —V.B.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$20

**85 Hannah Nicole Vineyards 2010 Viognier (Contra Costa County).** This wine opens sweet, smelling of lemon and grapefruit, and is appropriately creamy in mouthfeel, with a sliver of sweetness on the finish. —V.B.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$20

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## RIESLING

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**92 Zocker 2009 Paragon Vineyard Riesling (Edna Valley).** For full review see page 8. *Editors' Choice.*  
abv: 13.4% Price: \$20

**88 Esterlina 2010 Riesling (Cole Ranch).** Light in color and subtle in aromatics, Esterlina's Riesling is just slightly sweet in a tropical kind of way, but lightly and delicately so. Overall, very balanced, crisp and perfumed, this is an elegant wisp of a wine. —V.B.  
abv: 10% Price: \$22

**88 Fess Parker 2010 Riesling (Santa Barbara County).** With some residual sugar, this lovely Riesling is off-dry, but the sweetness is balanced by refreshing acidity. The citrus, tropical fruit, honeysuckle and spice flavors are delightful. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
abv: 12% Price: \$14

**87 Dashe Cellars 2010 Dry Riesling McFadden Farms Riesling (Potter Valley).** Dashe uses 30-year-old vines from Guinness McFadden's farm in the southeastern end of Mendocino County, organically grown and planted in rocky, chalky soil. Golden in color and thick in texture, the wine has lovely acidity and is definitely dry, austere and very Germanic, with a nutty earthiness. —V.B.  
abv: 13.4% Price: \$20

**87 Esterlina 2010 Dry Riesling (Cole Ranch).** Esterlina's Dry offering is smooth, crisp and yes, dry, with a lot of light lemon scents and flavors. Would pair well with seafood or lemony chicken. —V.B.  
abv: 12.4% Price: \$22

**85 Jacella 2010 Riesling (El Dorado County).** Slightly fizzy at first, but honey and almond jump out from the start as the wine finishes light and dry. —V.B.  
abv: 13% Price: \$14

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## WHITE BLENDS

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**92 Vellum 2010 White Wine (Napa Valley).** Just what you want in a Sauvignon Blanc-based white Bordeaux-style wine. It's bone dry and mouthwateringly tart in acidity, while the citrus flavors suggest

gooseberries, but don't fall into the trap of green under-ripeness. Sémillon constitutes 20% of the blend. —S.H.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$38

**90 Daou 2010 Chemin de Fleurs (Paso Robles).** A blend of Grenache Blanc, Roussanne and Viognier, this is a powerfully rich wine, with flavors of pears, peaches, mangos, oranges and almost any other fruit you can name. Thankfully, it's dryish, with a creamy texture and a spicy finish. Almost a food group in itself, it suggests pairing with strongly flavored, umami-rich dishes. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$36

**88 Montemaggiore 2010 3 Divas (Russian River Valley).** This blend of Viognier, Marsanne and Roussanne, in roughly equal measures, is technically incorrect. It's a little dirty, a little fizzy and a little too sweet for a dry table wine. But you know what? It's fun to drink, and that's wine's ultimate obligation. Shows rich, satisfying flavors of apricots, oranges, peaches, honey and herbs, finished with a dry minerality. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$25

**87 Yorkville Cellars 2010 Eleanor of Aquitaine (Yorkville Highlands).** Yorkville has been making this blend of Sémillon and Sauvignon Blanc (for this vintage it's 60% the first and 40% the latter), for many of its 25 years, and it achieves a nice balance, the Sémillon there for richness, texture and color, the SB for acidity and the wine's citrus and herb finish. Made from organic grapes. —V.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$25

**86 Carlotta 2010 Charlene (North Coast).** The blend is Viognier, Roussanne and Marsanne, with a few other minor varieties. The orange and apricot flavors are strong and fruity-sweet. It's a country-style wine to drink with rustic poultry and pork dishes. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$40

**86 Murrieta's Well 2010 The Whip White Wine (Livermore Valley).** Murrieta's blend of 31% Sauvignon Blanc, 27% Viognier, 15% Sémillon, 11% Pinot Blanc, 8% Orange Muscat and 8% Muscat Canellii is well-made and likable, medium-thick and somewhat sweet in style with citrus and almond accents. Delightfully quaffable. —V.B.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$19

**82 Amberhill 2010 Secret Blend (California).** Simple and sugary sweet with pineapple and mango fruit. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**82 Cupcake 2010 Angel Food (California).** Made with undisclosed grape varieties, this rustic, softly sweet wine has apricot, honey and herb flavors. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

## OTHER WHITE WINES

**88 Gnarly Head 2010 Pinot Grigio (California).** For full review see page 15. *Best Buy.*  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10

**87 Graziano 2010 Chenin Blanc (Mendocino).** Greg Graziano's Chenin, grown in a 30-plus-year-old vineyard, among the last of its kind in Mendocino County, is crisp and nutty, supported by dried apple, honey and melon-tinged minerality. Fermented in all French oak barrels, the wine has a calming roundness amid its acidity. —V.B.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$14

**87 Jaffurs 2010 Thompson Vineyard Grenache Blanc (Santa Barbara County).** Very rich and opulent, if a little soft, offering a flood of orange cream pie, meringue, butterscotch and cinnamon spice flavors. Delicious, if a bit one-dimensional. Try as an alternative to an oaky Chardonnay. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.2% **Price:** \$30

**87 Storrs 2009 Viento Vineyard Gewürztraminer (Monterey).** Gewürztraminer has lost some popularity lately, but this is really a lovely wine. It's spiciness and slight sweetness, not to mention the acidity, suggest pairing with today's Asian-inspired fare, especially based around chicken, lamb and pork. —S.H.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$16

**87 Terlato 2010 Pinot Grigio (Russian River Valley).** Rich and spicy, with oak-influenced green apple, pear, peach and citrus flavors, brightened with fine acidity. The finish seems pretty sweet, making the wine more off-dry than dry. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$24

**87 Vermeil 2010 Luvisi Vineyard Dry Sémillon (Calistoga).** Not really dry, like the label says, but with apricot and orange jam richness. Sauvignon Blanc adds citrus fruit notes and acidity. There's also a lot of new oak. Drink this tasty wine now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$24

**85 Geyser Peak 2011 Pinot Grigio (California).** Made without any oak, this wine shows ripe, long hangtime flavors of oranges, pineapples, limes and white flowers that straddle the border between dry and sweet. It's an easy-drinking wine for drinking now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12

## SPARKLING WINES

**93 J Vineyards & Winery 2001 Late Disgorged Vintage Brut (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 5.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$90

**87 J Vineyards & Winery 2005 Vintage Brut (Russian River Valley).** You can taste the dosage on this Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier brut in the overt sweetness that accompanies the pear, citrus and raspberry fruit flavors. With notice-

able residual sugar, it's not really a dry sparkling wine, but it is delicious. —S.H.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$48

**85 Allure NV Moscato (California).** Sweet and fizzy, with orange soda and vanilla flavors. Made to appeal to serve the low-cost Moscato craze, and does a pretty good job. —S.H.  
**abv:** 10% **Price:** \$13

## ROSÉ

**85 Lasseter 2010 Enjoué Rosé (Sonoma Valley).** This Provençal-style blush is made from Syrah, Mourvèdre and Grenache. It's a good wine, dry and crisply acidic, but not without its faults. The main problem is a streak of green mint and vegetables. But there's enough sweet raspberry and cherry fruit to get by. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$24

## CABERNET SAUVIGNON

**97 Shafer 2007 Hillside Select Cabernet Sauvignon (Stags Leap District).** In keeping with the voluptuous approachability of the 2007 vintage, this 100% Cabernet Sauvignon is simply fabulous now for its flood of the ripest, sweetest blackberries, cherries, cassis and chocolate imaginable. Especially noble is the tannin structure, firm and soft, dry and sweet, a combination of opposites. The depth is vast, and the spicy finish goes on for a long time, suggesting the wine's concentration. Simply a joy to drink, it should develop over many years, but you might want to err on the side of youthfulness and open it by 2015. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$225

**97 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2008 Cask 23 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 3.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$195

**96 Jarvis 2006 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 3.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$95

**95 Baldacci 2008 Brenda's Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Stags Leap District).** For full review see page 3.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$105

**95 Prime 2008 Midoriya Hills Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** An enormous Cabernet, but it's not simply the power of its fruit that's so impressive. Shows massive blackberry, blueberry, crème de cassis and oak flavors packed into profoundly beautiful tannins. The fruit is so sweet that it's surprising how dry the finish is. The winemaker, Ted Henry, also is at the helm of Jarvis. This young Cabernet should develop over the next dozen years, at least, in a good cellar. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$55

**95 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2008 S.L.V. Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 4.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$125

**94 Antica 2008 Townsend Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Doesn't say so on the label, but this is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, from the Atlas Peak area. Very dry and tannic, with an astringent lockdown, it's functionally undrinkable now, but it does show the intensity of this mountainous region for Cabernet, with explosive blackberry, blueberry and black currant flavors. All indications are that it's an ager. Hold until 2015, at the very least. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$95

**94 Baldacci 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Stags Leap District).** For full review see page 4. *Cellar Selection.*  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$65

**94 Reverie 2009 Estate Special Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Diamond Mountain).** If you cellar only a few Napa Cabernets a year, this is one you should seek out. It's so tannic, so shut down, yet so explosive in blackberries, currants, dark chocolate and sweet oak, that it will easily negotiate the next decade. If you really have to open it before 2015, at least give it a decent decant. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$93

**94 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2008 Fayette Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 4.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$95

**94 Summers 2008 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Calistoga).** For full review see page 4.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$59

**93 Ideology Cellars 2007 Reserve Block Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** So sweet and strong in jammy blackberry fruit, this young Cabernet is hardly drinkable now. The vineyard is in the Oak Knoll District, and the wine shows the big tannins and fine acidity of this cooler part of Napa Valley. An obvious cellar candidate, it needs 6–8 years of bottle age to begin to mellow. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$68

**93 Madrigal 2008 Las Vinas del Señor Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Pricy, yes, but Madrigal pulled out all the stops on this flashy wine, making it their best Cabernet ever. It's a big, tannic and dry wine, stuffed with blackberry, currant and oak flavors. Voluptuous and dramatic, but it needs age, possibly a lot. Give it a rest until 2015 and see how it's doing then. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$80

**93 Tudal 2009 Cliff Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Put this one in the cellar for a good six years, at the very least. Right now, it's tight and tannic, with dramatically layered blackberry, currant, dark chocolate, mint and cedar flavors. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$40

**93 Yates Family Vineyard 2006 Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon (Mount Veeder).** Hard to imagine greater concentration in a Napa Cabernet than you'll find here. It's just insanely rich in

blackberries and blueberries and liberally oaked, while the tannins are hard and potent. Nowhere near ready now, even though it's already more than five years old. Give it at least six years in a good cellar, and it could easily go another decade beyond that. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.

**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$65

**92 Aurielle 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 6.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$90

**92 Clos Pegase 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** This wine is another rewarding Cabernet from a winery with a great track record over the years. Blended with some Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot, it's dry and ultrasmooth, and while the tannins are thick, they're sweet and ripe. The blackberry, cherry, blueberry and cassis flavors have a rich, fleshy opulence. Drink now–2015. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$48

**92 Raymond 2007 Generations Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** This is the darkest, biggest, richest of Raymond's 2007 Cabernets. It's ripe and full in blackberries and currants, with a thick coating of sweet, toasty oak, but it's not really drinkable now because the tannins are so strong. Designed for the cellar, it should develop bottle complexity over the next 10–12 years. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$85

**92 Reverie 2009 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Diamond Mountain).** Like almost all of Reverie's Cabernets on release, this one needs time in the cellar. Tasted in fall 2011, it's tight and grapey, with blackberry jam flavors girded by a firm, stony minerality and sweet, but hard, tannins. Give it 6–8 years. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$75

**92 Valance 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 8. *Cellar Selection.*  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$80

**91 Hourglass 2009 Blueline Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** This is a big, tannic, midnight black Cabernet, rude in youth and barely drinkable. The tannins are powerful enough to lock down the palate. The grapes, grown in Calistoga, are very ripe in blackberries, currants and dark chocolate, but those tannins are stubbornly astringent. Almost old-fashioned in toughness despite very high alcohol, it's a curiosity that seems likely to develop in the cellar, but with so little evidence of past vintages, all bets are off. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.4% **Price:** \$125

**91 Vermeil 2008 Jean Louis Vermeil Frediani Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Calistoga).** For full review see page 10.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$85

**90 Cornerstone 2009 The Cornerstone Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** This is a rich, elaborate Cabernet Sauvignon. It's opulent and flashy, with upfront blackberry jam, black currant, choc-

olate, spice and new oak flavors, and the tannins are ultrasmooth. Made in the soft, appealing modern style. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$125

**90 Frank Family 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** This is a big, rich Cabernet, loaded with gobs of lip-smacking blackberry, cherry, currant and oak flavors. Couldn't be riper, and the tannins are soft and smooth. A little obvious in its charms, but a real crowd pleaser. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$50

**90 Kirkland Signature 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Simply delicious, showing ripe, soft blackberry, cherry and blueberry flavors. So soft and gentle, it's completely ready to drink now. A good example of the art of blending. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$18

**90 Longboard 2008 Mavericks Signature Series Goosechase Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Alexander Valley).** Rich and bright in blackberries and cherries, this 100% Cabernet is, in a word, delicious. The fruit stars front and center, supported by soft, complex tannins and an overlay of smoky new oak. Should hang in there for up to six years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$65

**90 Prime 2008 District 4 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** A very good Cabernet, with ripe blackberry, currant, anise and oak flavors. Despite firm tannins, it doesn't seem to be an ager, but it is an elegant, complex young wine to drink over the next year or two. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$39

**90 St. Supéry 2007 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 12. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$30

**90 Summers 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Calistoga).** For full review see page 12. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$26

**89 Martin Ray 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Sonoma County).** For full review see page 12. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$20

**89 Napa Family Vineyards 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Surprisingly good for the price, this Cab appeals for its dryness and elegance. With pleasant blackberry, blueberry and smoke flavors, its tannins are firm, leading to a long, sweet finish. Production was just under 1,500 cases. *Best Buy.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**89 Raymond 2009 Reserve Selection Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** This is a very good Cabernet. It's made in a drinkable style, with jammy blackberry, blueberry and cherry flavors, and

a sweet, toasty coating of new French oak. Drink this flashy wine now and over the next six years. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$35

**89** **Tudal 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa County / Sonoma County).** This two-county blend is fine for drinking now. It's rich, dry and thick in tannins, with elaborate blackberry, cherry, spice and oak flavors. Decant it for several hours to let it mellow a bit. —S.H.

**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$28

**88** **Buena Vista 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (Sonoma County).** Tastes like black cherry and blueberry jelly, a very fruity, sweet wine with a bite of citrusy acidity. Absolutely delicious, yes, but not showing much complexity or nuance. —S.H.

**abv:** NA **Price:** \$15

**88** **Ca' Momi 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 12.

**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$25

**88** **Pure Cru 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Made with a little Cabernet Franc and Merlot, this is a beautiful wine to drink now, although you might want to give it an hour or two in a decanter. It's soft and luscious in blackberries, bluberries, currants and mocha, and feels fine through the long, spicy finish. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$38

**87** **Alta Maria 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon (Santa Ynez Valley).** An exorbitantly rich Cabernet, one of the ripest from Santa Ynez Valley in memory. Just huge in blackberry, cherry and chocolate flavors, if a bit direct. Drink soon. —S.H.

**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$28

**87** **Cosentino 2008 The Cab Cabernet Sauvignon (California).** What a nice wine for \$20 or less. It's lovely to drink now, with soft, sweet tannins and forward cherry, raspberry, currant, red licorice and chocolate flavors. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$20

**87** **HandCraft 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (California).** For full review see page 13.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$13

**87** **Hanna 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Alexander Valley).** Soft in tannins and acids, this Cabernet has a gentle, drink-me-now mouthfeel. The flavors are rich and sweet in milk chocolate, blueberries and blackberries. Easy to like, if a little pricey for what you get. —S.H.

**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$38

**87** **Michael James Wines 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Lots of forward fruit flavor in this ripe Cabernet. It floods the mouth with blackberries, cherries and currants, with a smoky overlay of oak. Not particularly subtle, but it defines the modern style of Cabernet, and lots of people will love it. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$50

**87** **Raymond 2009 Family Classic Cabernet Sauvignon (North Coast).** A bit abrupt, with edgy tannins, but quite good for the price. Give it an hour or two in a decanter to let it mellow, and enjoy the blackberry, black currant and oak flavors. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$20

**87** **Stepping Stone by Cornerstone 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** A fine Cabernet for drinking now. It's rich and soft in blackberry, currant, cherry, mocha and oak flavors, with a smooth mouthfeel and a long, spicy finish. Give it a brief decant. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$35

**87** **Thomas Fogarty 2007 Gist Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon (Santa Cruz Mountains).** From the very fine 2007 vintage comes this surprisingly tannic Cabernet. Even at the age of more than four years, it's still tough and astringent. It has a sweet core of blackberries, and it's tempting to recommend aging. But there's a troubling touch of raisins, so drink up. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$60

**87** **Vellum 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Impressive from the start for its rich blackberry and dark chocolate flavors, thick tannins and sweet overlay of smoky oak. Could be an ager, but some bitterness in the middle suggests the fruit will fall out before the tannins resolve. —S.H.

**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$65

**87** **Y Rousseau 2009 Cavedale Vineyards Smokin' Cabernet Sauvignon (Sonoma Valley).** A rich, dry young Cabernet, with fresh blackberry, cherry and oak flavors, brightened by a burst of citrusy acidity. The tannins are strong, however, giving the wine a sandpapery astringency. Needs a few years, although it doesn't have the stuffing for the long haul. Your window is around 2014. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$45

**86** **Geyser Peak 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Alexander Valley).** You get lots of rich, extracted blackberry, cherry and mocha flavors in this sweet, softly tannic young wine. For the price, it's a classy wine to drink now. —S.H.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

**86** **Rock Wall 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** A pretty good Cabernet, dry and softly tannic, with blackberry, black currant, herb and cedar flavors. Finishes a touch overripe, with the bitter taste of raisin skins. Ready to drink now. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$38

**85** **Glen Ellen 2010 Proprietor's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (California).** A solid wine. At the equivalent of \$5 for a regular bottle, it offers plenty of Cabernet flavor and texture, with smooth tannins framing flavors of blackberries, currants and spices. **Best Buy.** —S.H.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$10/1.5 L

**85** **Leese-Fitch 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (California).** Here's a robust Cabernet for

everyday drinking. It's dry and smoothly tannic, with earthy flavors of blackberries and plums. —S.H.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$12

**85** **Markham 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** There are solid Cabernet flavors of blackberries and black currants in this dry, tannic wine. It's rough and astringent in the mouth, without much charm, but a rich steak, maybe topped with a gorgonzola sauce, will make it shine. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$34

**85** **Ministry of the Interior 2009 The Messenger Cabernet Sauvignon (Oakville).** The address is Oakville, and the price is right, but this Cab could be from anywhere. It's soft and sweetly simple in cherry and blackberry jam, vanilla and oak flavors. Drink now before it fades away. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$21

**85** **Tamber Bey 2009 Deux Chevaux Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Yountville).** Ever since Tamber Bey made the switch from Oakville fruit to their vineyard in Yountville, their Cabernets have dropped in quality. This '09 is dry, tannic and uninteresting, with a harshness that makes it difficult to appreciate the blackberry and cherry fruit. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$42

**85** **Windsor Sonoma 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Alexander Valley).** Smooth, sweet and savory, this Cabernet has forward flavors of blackberries, black currants, cola and sweet oak. It's an easy wine to drink now. —S.H.

**abv:** NA **Price:** \$30

**84** **Cornerstone 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Howell Mountain).** Too extracted by far, so rich and sweet in fruit, it's like a blackberry and cherry Slurpee. Doesn't really showcase Howell Mountain at all, except for the polished, firm tannins. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$75

**84** **Hunt Cellars 2007 Bon Vivant Destiny Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon (Paso Robles).** Hot in alcohol, soft in acidity and sweet in berry-cherry fruit, this simple Cabernet earns a point or two for its lush, ripe tannins. —S.H.

**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$45

**84** **Padilla Erickson 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** A rustic, sweet Cabernet, with an irregular, mouthfeel and sharp, jammily candied blackberry flavors. The sharpness is unlikely to age away. —S.H.

**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$60

**84** **Petroni 2007 Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon (Sonoma Valley).** Rugged and astringent in texture, with jammy blackberry and spice flavors. —S.H.

**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$70

**83** **Concannon 2010 Selected Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon (Central Coast).** This Cab is sweet and simple in berry jam and spice flavors, with bright acidity. —S.H.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**83 First Press 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** Thick and heavy in texture, with rather sweet, candied blackberry, cherry and cola flavors. Drink now. —S.H.  
abv: 14% Price: \$20

**83 Rutherford Hill 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** At the age of four-plus years, this bone dry Cabernet still is tannic and sharp, with green, unripe flavors of mint and peppercorn. It's classically structured, but not going anywhere. —S.H.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$40

**82 Alta 2009 Oso Malo Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley).** A simple, thin wine, with vegetable aromas and flavors that warm up a little in the glass to turn into sweet cherries. —S.H.  
abv: NA Price: \$42

**82 Ancient Oak Cellars 2009 Warnecke Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon (Alexander Valley).** An unbalanced wine, with harsh tannins and some overripe, pruny flavors. Oddly enough, there also are underripe, green notes. —S.H.  
abv: 14.4% Price: \$32

**82 Madrigal 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Atlas Peak).** Way too ripe, with raisiny, porty aromas and flavors that turn bitter on the finish. —S.H.  
abv: 14.6% Price: \$65

**82 Magistrate 2008 Limited Production Cabernet Sauvignon (Paso Robles).** With overripe raisin and prune flavors, this Cabernet is almost like a Port, except that it's dry. The official alcohol level is 13.9% by volume, but it tastes hotter and headier than that. —S.H.  
abv: 13.9% Price: \$17

**81 Foodies 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (California).** Bottled for the World Market Cost Plus chain, this Cabernet is harsh, dry and simple, with watery flavors. —S.H.  
abv: 12.5% Price: \$8

**81 Hideaway Creek 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Sonoma County).** A big, thick, somewhat dull wine, with candied fruit and sweet cherry cough-medicine flavors. —S.H.  
abv: 13.8% Price: \$19

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## CABERNET FRANC

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**91 Thomas Fogarty 2007 Gist Ranch Vineyard Cabernet Franc (Santa Cruz Mountains).** Fans of fruit-forward wines will love this Cab Franc for its explosion of cherries, blackberries and blueberries. The flavors go on and on. Sweet in fruit, yet it finishes bone dry. Not an ager, but a beauty with salty pork or duck dishes. —S.H.  
abv: 15.2% Price: \$48

**90 Madrigal 2008 Cabernet Franc (Calistoga).** So sweet and rich in cherry, vanilla and cinnamon spice flavors, what's not to like? It's dry, gentle in

tannins and complex. Seems designed for easy pairing with a great steak. —S.H.  
abv: 14.6% Price: \$65

**90 Occasio 2009 Del Arroyo Vineyard Cabernet Franc (Livermore Valley).** Occasio continues to plumb the depths of the Del Arroyo Vineyard and its abilities with each of the red Bordeaux grapes, this time deftly showing what it can do with the enfant terrible that is Cab Franc. Give it some time to open and then enjoy its densely layered richness of cherry and coffee and plum. —V.B.  
abv: 14.9% Price: \$50

**90 Reverie 2009 Estate Cabernet Franc (Diamond Mountain).** Cabernet Franc is a difficult variety to make by itself in California, which is why so few wineries do. Reverie gives it a good try. Their '09 is quite tasty in cherries, minerals and oak, with distinguished mountain tannins and a savory, spicy finish. But it's not one for the cellar, so drink before 2014. —S.H.  
abv: 14% Price: \$64

**88 Andis Wines 2009 Bill's Block Reserve Cabernet Franc (Sierra Foothills).** Let this mountain-grown baby open, but once it does, Andis' Cab Franc has classic aromas. This spicy, woody and cola-esque wine would make a fine introduction to California Cabernet Franc, or a reminder of how good it can be when done nicely. —V.B.  
abv: 13.9% Price: \$28

**87 Stepping Stone by Cornerstone 2009 Cabernet Franc (Napa Valley).** Pair this salty, umami-rich Cab Franc with the right foods, and all will be right. By itself, it's rather straightforward in cherry marmalade and buttered toast flavors. It wants sausage, ham, smoked pork or similar protein dishes. —S.H.  
abv: 14.3% Price: \$35

**86 Malibu Rocky Oaks 2009 Cabernet Franc (Los Angeles County).** Lighter than Malibu Oak's Cabernet Sauvignon, this Cab Franc shows the variety's characteristic herby notes and is otherwise easy and light, with enough depth to pair well with a range of meats. —V.B.  
abv: 14.8% Price: \$27

**86 Rock Wall 2009 Holbrook Mitchell Vineyard Cabernet Franc (Napa Valley).** Tastes hot and prickly in alcohol, which puts everything else off, including the black cherry, bacon, olive and herb flavors, which are actually pretty good. Drink now. —S.H.  
abv: 15% Price: \$32

**86 Vinum Cellars 2008 The Scrapper Cabernet Franc (El Dorado County).** Let this heavyweight open; its tannins are tight at first, a showcase of its mountain heritage and more savory personality. Clove and ripe fruit battle against dark coffee and chocolate and those scrappy tannins, which don't ever relent. —V.B.  
abv: 14.9% Price: \$30

**85 Cosentino 2007 The Franc Cabernet Franc (California).** Soft, sweet and fruity,

tasting like a granola bar, with roasted almonds, raspberry filling and cinnamon spice. —S.H.  
abv: 14.6% Price: \$20

**83 Naggiar 2008 Estate Cabernet Franc (Sierra Foothills).** Very tannic, without the necessary fruit to make it sing, this Sierra Foothills' Cab Franc has some pleasant spiciness to it that veers dangerously close to pepper land. —V.B.  
abv: 14.7% Price: \$24

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## MERLOT

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**93 Jarvis 2008 Estate Merlot (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 5.  
abv: 14.6% Price: \$75

**89 Geyser Peak 2007 Merlot (Alexander Valley).** This is Geyser Peak's best Merlot in quite a while, a wine of real elegance and charm despite the everyday price. The cherry, red currant and oak flavors are plump, with a pleasant earthiness, and the mouthfeel is gentle in tannins. Decant for an hour before pouring. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$18

**89 Hourglass 2009 Blueline Vineyard Merlot (Napa Valley).** Hourglass's Merlot has not been as rewarding a wine as their Cabernet Sauvignon, and this 2009 shows the difficulties the variety so often encounters. It's quite good, rich and firm and dry, with complex blackberry, plum, dark chocolate, anise and sandalwood flavors. But the tannins are tougher than they should be, and the wine doesn't have the stuffing to age. Decant and drink up. —S.H.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$75

**86 St. Supéry 2008 Estate Merlot (Napa Valley).** The attack, or entry, of this Merlot is a massive assault of flavor. It's all raspberry and cherry jam, dark chocolate and the creamy caramel of new oak. Delicious, yes, but where's the subtlety? Drink now. —S.H.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$50

**85 Y Rousseau 2009 Cavedale Vineyards Pèpè Merlot (Sonoma Valley).** You get plenty of rich, ripe cherry, red currant, cappuccino and peppery spice flavors in this briskly tannic, dry young Merlot. The mouthfeel is a little rugged, though. Drink up. —S.H.  
abv: 14.3% Price: \$39

**84 Napa Family Vineyards 2010 Merlot (Napa Valley).** Gritty and rustic, with blackberry, prune and spice flavors. It's a dry, tannic wine, for drinking with simple foods, like burritos. —S.H.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$10

**83 Glen Ellen 2010 Proprietor's Reserve Merlot (California).** Simple and green, with mint, tobacco and cherry flavors. It's a sound, clean wine. Even though the fruit isn't exactly concentrated, it's an easy wine to drink at parties. —S.H.  
abv: 13% Price: \$10/1.5 L



**83 Leese-Fitch 2009 Merlot (California).** The flavors of this rugged wine are extracted and sweet in berry jam, raisins, pepper and oak. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$12

**83 Parkers Estate 2010 North Peyton Block Merlot (Sonoma County).** Tough in tannins and bone dry, this Merlot's raisin and blackberry fruit simply isn't strong enough to stand up to the astringency. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$20

**82 Concannon 2010 Selected Vineyards Merlot (Central Coast).** Dry and gritty, with rugged tannins and lots of acidity. Unfortunately, the fruit just isn't powerful enough to stand up to it, making this Merlot tough to like. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**82 Markham 2008 Merlot (Napa Valley).** The mouthfeel on this Merlot is all wrong. It's harsh and jagged in tannins, and raspingly dry. And the fruit is lacking. A real disappointment. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$21

**82 Wild Coyote 2009 Prankster Merlot (Paso Robles).** Feels harsh and sharp in the mouth, with cherry-berry flavors. Pretty rustic drinking, with a bitter finish. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$20

## PINOT NOIR

**95 Talley 2009 Rincon Vineyard Pinot Noir (Arroyo Grande Valley).** Sheer opulence is the hallmark of this wine. Call it feminine in its soft silkiness, and the way the raspberry, cherry and sandalwood flavors caress the palate. Yet there's a firmness of structure, a stony, mineral quality that lends power and authority. Great now, and will develop in the bottle for the next 6–8 years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$58

**95 Talley 2009 Rosemary's Vineyard Pinot Noir (Arroyo Grande Valley).** A great Pinot Noir, although it's rugged now in its youth, with a scoury mouthfeel. Raspberries, cherries, cola, mushrooms splashed with balsamic, and white pepper, clove and cinnamon spices mark the flavors. Should emerge from austerity by 2015 and provide good drinking for several years afterward. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$70

**93 De Loach 2009 OFS Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 5. *Cellar Selection.*  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$40

**93 De Loach 2009 van der Kamp Vineyard Pinot Noir (Sonoma Mountain).** For full review see page 5. *Cellar Selection.*  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$45

**93 Dolina 2010 Rio Vista Vineyard Pinot Noir (Sta. Rita Hills).** Dryness marks this elegant Pinot Noir, a remarkable feat since the strawberry and raspberry fruit is so opulently ripe. With fresh acidity,

firm tannins and a touch of minerals, it's a wonderful expression of Santa Rita fruit. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$30

**93 Joseph Jewell 2009 Aprian Way Vineyards Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** Packed with ripe, upfront raspberry, cherry and cola fruit, this Pinot certainly delivers in the flavor department. But it goes well beyond that, framing the richness in a fine structure of smooth tannins, crisp acidity and a deft application of oak. Straddles the line between immediate drinkability and ageability, so drink it now and over the next four years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.6% **Price:** \$45

**93 Joseph Jewell 2009 Floodgate Vineyard Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 6. *Cellar Selection.*  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$45

**93 Standish 2010 Triangle Block Day Ranch Pinot Noir (Anderson Valley).** A distinguished Pinot Noir, dry, crisp in acidity and complex in flavor. The cherry, raspberry, cola and mushroom flavors are very rich, almost sweet, except that they finish in a dry scour of spices. Defines a young Anderson Valley Pinot, and should develop bottle complexity over the next 6–8 years. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$75

**93 Standish 2009 MoDa Pinot Noir (Anderson Valley).** This young Pinot Noir is difficult and challenging. It's all acidity, cherries and pomegranates, tightly wound and aloof, giving little of itself. Yet there's enormous promise. The color is pale for a California Pinot, the alcohol is modest, and there are tantalizing hints of herbs, minerals, forest undergrowth, mushrooms, cedar, truffles. All indications suggest that this is a seriously ageable wine. Cellar until at least 2015. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.7% **Price:** \$90

**92 Balletto 2009 Winery Block Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 6.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$34

**92 De Loach 2009 Pinot Noir (Green Valley).** For full review see page 6. *Cellar Selection.*  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$45

**92 Joseph Jewell 2009 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** This is a restaurant-style Pinot Noir, classy and restrained. It shows classic raspberry, cherry, cola, pomegranate and spice flavors, with brisk Russian River acidity and a silky mouthfeel. Doesn't seem like an ager, but it's a lovely wine now and for the next few years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$33

**92 Kynsi 2008 Estate Stone Corral Vineyard Pinot Noir (Edna Valley).** This cool-climate vineyard seems to need warmth to ripen, and 2008 provided just enough to make the wine tantalizing. It's dry, crisp and elegant, with a silky mouthfeel framing cherry, cola, bacon, cinnamon and white pepper flavors that are

frankly irresistible. May not have much of a future, but it sure is good now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$48

**91 Balletto 2009 BCD Vineyard Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 8.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$34

**91 Balletto 2009 Burnside Road Vineyard Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 8.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$40

**91 De Loach 2009 Thornton Vineyard Pinot Noir (Sonoma Coast).** For full review see page 9.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$45

**91 Gloria Ferrer 2008 Estate Pinot Noir (Carneros).** For full review see page 9. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$22

**91 Kynsi 2008 Pinot Noir (Edna Valley).** Edna Valley Pinot Noirs can be simple, but this one's not. It has a depth and seriousness that are good enough to accompany a great steak, lamb chop or grilled tuna. Dry and smooth, its cherry and raspberry flavors are enhanced with a deft touch of sweet, smoky oak. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$32

**90 Davis Bynum 2010 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 11.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$35

**90 Magistrate 2010 Limited Production Pinot Noir (Sonoma Coast).** This Pinot is immediately drinkable for its early charm, but that doesn't mean it lacks substance. It has complex flavors of red fruits, cola, mushrooms and spices, and is balanced by crisp acidity and a hint of tannins. The texture is pure silk and satin. Quite a serious Pinot Noir, at a great price. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$21

**90 Mahoney 2009 Mahoney Ranch Pinot Noir (Carneros).** This is a dry, acidic Pinot Noir. It's a wine for Pinot aficionados willing to seek out its subtleties, rather than one of immediate charm. There's a place in white tablecloth restaurants for such wines, and kudos to Mahoney for resisting the tug of excessive ripeness and opting instead for elegance. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$36

**90 Talley 2009 Stone Corral Vineyard Pinot Noir (Edna Valley).** Ripe, flashy raspberry and cherry jam fruit marks this young, elegant Pinot Noir. It feels fine and sensual in the mouth, with a silkiness brightened by Edna Valley acidity. Drink now–2015. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$50

**89 Balletto 2010 Estate Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 12.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$28

**89 Bishop's Peak 2010 Pinot Noir (San Luis Obispo County).** For full review see page 12. *Editors' Choice.*  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$20

**89 Dragonette 2010 Presidio Vineyard Pinot Noir (Santa Barbara County).** So ripe and sweet in raspberries, cherries and blueberries, it's practically like pie filling, except this Pinot manages to finish dry. You have to give it credit for sheer razzle-dazzle. —S.H.  
abv: 14.3% Price: \$48

**89 Gainey 2009 Pinot Noir (Sta. Rita Hills).** A very intense Pinot Noir, fresh and concentrated in jammy cherries, raspberries and plums. It's what the French call *nerveux*, tense in acidity and a little tight now, but balanced. Give it a year or two in the bottle. —S.H.  
abv: NA Price: \$28

**89 Testarossa 2009 Garys' Vineyard Pinot Noir (Santa Lucia Highlands).** Shows lots of early drinkability in its raspberry, cherry and spice flavors. Brisk acidity and a gentle tug of tannins provide needed structure. It's an elegant wine, but doesn't seem to have the stuffing for aging, so drink now-2015. —S.H.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$59

**88 Cadre 2008 The Architects Pinot Noir (Central Coast).** The '07 release of this wine, a blend of four considerable vineyards, was great. This 2008 is less so, although it's still a fine wine. Packed with cherry, cola and spice flavors, it's a little raw in the mouth. Decant for a few hours before drinking. —S.H.  
abv: 14.3% Price: \$50

**88 Kynsi 2008 Bien Nacido Vineyard Pinot Noir (Santa Maria Valley).** A good, solid Pinot Noir, with pleasantly upfront raspberry and cherry flavors. It's silky and dry, with a bite of acidity. Earns extra points for sheer deliciousness. Drink now. —S.H.  
abv: 13.9% Price: \$39

**88 Ministry of the Interior 2009 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** A little light in body, but a solid Pinot Noir, at a good price. Shows real Russian River character, with cherry, pomegranate, persimmon and spicy Dr. Pepper flavors. Drink now. —S.H.  
abv: 14.8% Price: \$18

**88 Small Wonders 2010 Pinot Noir (Sonoma Coast).** This is one of the best Pinot Noirs on the market in this price range. It's delicious in raspberry, cola, vanilla, cinnamon spice and smoky oak flavors, wrapped into soft tannins and brightened with acidity. Production was 1,470 cases. *Best Buy.* —S.H.  
abv: 13.9% Price: \$12

**88 Testarossa 2010 Pinot Noir (Santa Lucia Highlands).** Ripe, spicy, raspberry and cherry fruit flavors mark this vibrant Pinot Noir. It shows the flashy elegance of the Santa Lucia Highlands, with brisk acidity lifting the fruit. Drink it over the next few years. —S.H.  
abv: 14.4% Price: \$39

**87 Chanin 2009 Bien Nacido Vineyard Pinot Noir (Santa Barbara County).** Lusty and ripe, jam-packed with upfront raspberries and cherries. A little lacking in complexity, but likeable for sheer deliciousness. —S.H.  
abv: 13.8% Price: \$45

**87 HandCraft 2010 Pinot Noir (California).** For full review see page 13.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$13

**87 Mahoney 2009 Las Brisas Vineyard Pinot Noir (Carneros).** A tight, dry and somewhat one-dimensional Pinot Noir. It offers cherry, cola and spice flavors, and is elegantly structured. Grows more interesting as it warms in the glass, but it's ready for drinking now. —S.H.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$36

**87 Parkers Estate 2010 Four Keys Crossing Pinot Noir (Sonoma County).** Good price for a Pinot of this quality. It's dry and silky in the mouth, with classic Pinot flavors of cherries, spices and cola, enriched with smoky oak. —S.H.  
abv: 13.2% Price: \$21

**87 Talley 2009 Pinot Noir (Arroyo Grande Valley).** A nice Pinot Noir, with ripe, flashy red berry, cola and spice flavors. It's a bit rustic around the edges, but it does show a certain amount of elegance. —S.H.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$36

**87 Terlato 2009 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** There's an aroma and taste of hay, or dried twigs, in this Pinot that dominates the cherry fruit. It's also pretty tannic. This undoubtedly is due to the winemaker's style, resulting in an earthy, dry wine that might develop over the next six years or so. —S.H.  
abv: NA Price: \$60

**87 Testarossa 2010 Dos Rubios Vineyard Pinot Noir (Santa Lucia Highlands).** A difficult Pinot Noir to evaluate. It's very dry, acidic and tannic, with sharp flavors of blackberries that sweeten into jam on the finish. The question is one of ageability. Try cellaring for five years and see what happens. —S.H.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$54

**87 Testarossa 2009 Brosseau Vineyard Pinot Noir (Chalone).** With brisk acidity and a tight, mineral feeling, this Pinot Noir is very dry, showing robust cherry flavors. It seems like an ager, but some raisiny overripeness might compromise it. —S.H.  
abv: 14.4% Price: \$54

**86 Ancient Oak Cellars 2009 Siebert Ranch Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** Ripe and fruity in raspberries and cherries, this Pinot is also sweet in toasty oak. It has a nice, pleasantly silky texture. Not going anywhere, but good for drinking now. —S.H.  
abv: 14.4% Price: \$35

**86 Baileyana 2008 Grand Firepeak Cuvée Pinot Noir (Edna Valley).** A pretty good Pinot Noir, dry and elegantly constructed, with crisp acidity and a backbone of tannins. The flavors of raspberry and cherry fruit are delicious, but the texture is scoury

and a little warm, even though the alcohol is relatively low. —S.H.  
abv: 13.5% Price: \$30

**86 Concannon 2009 Reserve Pinot Noir (Santa Lucia Highlands).** A little sour in acidity, or maybe the acidity sticks out because the raspberry and cherry fruit isn't strong enough. Either way, this dry, silky Pinot Noir is rustic, but it does show real varietal character. —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$30

**86 Mahoney 2009 Pinot Noir (Carneros).** A good, standard Pinot Noir, dry and crisp in acidity, with cherry, cola and pomegranate flavors accented by smoky oak. Drink now. —S.H.  
abv: 13.8% Price: \$24

**86 MICA Cellars 2010 Smith Road Vineyards, Rows 2-5 Pinot Noir (Santa Cruz Mountains).** Loaded with dark cherry earth, this is a dense, drinkable Pinot Noir. From a tiny Watsonville-based producer who sources from all over the state to make a handful of different wines. —V.B.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$30

**86 Storrs 2008 Pinot Noir (Santa Cruz Mountains).** Robust and fruity, this Pinot has drink-me-now flavors of cherries, raspberries, red licorice and cinnamon spice, with a touch of raisins. Earns extra points for its crisp acidity and silky texture. —S.H.  
abv: 14.5% Price: \$36

**85 Ancient Oak Cellars 2008 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** Soft and one-dimensional, this Pinot has ripe, sweet raspberry and cola flavors. It's drinkable now with a juicy hamburger. —S.H.  
abv: 14.4% Price: \$25

**85 Ancient Oak Cellars 2008 Siebert Ranch Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** This Pinot Noir is thin and simple, but it does have some pretty spice, raspberry candy and persimmon flavors. Tastes fairly sweet, but crisp acidity provides balance. —S.H.  
abv: 14.4% Price: \$35

**85 Ancient Oak Cellars 2007 Siebert Ranch Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** Soft and sweet, this Pinot has simple but appealing raspberry, cherry, cola and spice flavors. It would score higher if the texture was more potent. —S.H.  
abv: 14.2% Price: \$35

**85 Dawn's Dream 2009 Pinot Noir (Carmel Valley).** Tastes and feels harsh and acidic, lacking Pinot's voluptuous nature, although there are serious, even complex, flavors of berries, cola, tobacco and spices. With Pinot Noir, texture is everything, and this wine is just a little off. —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$24

**85 Dawn's Dream 2009 Pinot Noir (Carneros).** Pleasant cherry, cola, spice and sandalwood flavors mark this bone dry Pinot Noir. It's a little harsh in texture, with sharp acids and tannins defining a certain rustic style from California. —S.H.  
abv: 14.1% Price: \$24

**85 Hangtime 2010 Force Canyon Vineyard Pinot Noir (Arroyo Seco).** Shows the acidity and dryness that red wines from this appellation always have. It's Pinot Noir-esque in the silky texture and cola flavors, and is ready to drink now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$20

**85 Kenwood 2010 Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley).** A small Pinot Noir, rustic and simple, but not without its charms. Has a silky mouthfeel housing pleasant raspberry and cherry Lifesaver candy flavors. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

**85 Storrs 2007 Christie Vineyard Pinot Noir (Santa Cruz Mountains).** The fruit is extracted and sweet in this scoury wine. It floods the mouth with raspberry and cherry jam, with plenty of toasty oak. The texture is irregular, though, with some harsh tannins. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$42

**83 Concannon 2010 Selected Vineyards Pinot Noir (Central Coast).** Soft and simple, with sweet, easy cherry and strawberry jam flavors and a silky texture. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**82 Effort 2009 Pinot Noir (Edna Valley).** Heavy and dull, with extracted raspberry jam flavors. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$27

**82 Wilson Daniels 2010 Pinot Noir (Central Coast).** Not much going on in this dry, unripe wine. It's vegetal, with thin, acidic flavors of berries and spices. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.3% **Price:** \$19

**81 Hunt Cellars 2009 Imagine Reserve Pinot Noir (Santa Barbara County).** Smells raisiny, feels hot, tastes overripe. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$62

## PETITE SIRAH

**90 Blair Fox 2009 Fox Family Vineyard Petite Sirah (Santa Barbara County).** This very fine Petite Sirah mysteriously blends the variety's robust, full-bodied tannins with the silky delicacy of a Pinot Noir. The flavors are big and deep, offering an explosion of dried fruits, berries, tobacco, spicy ginger-snap cookie and grilled meat. Drink with hearty stews and barbecue now, or stash it away for a few years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$45

**90 Spellbound 2007 Reserve Petite Sirah (Napa Valley).** A big, muscular Petite Sirah, showing the classic profile of the variety. Rich and thick in tannins, it showcases powerful blackberry, plum, currant, bacon and black pepper flavors that finish with fruity sweetness, although the wine is technically dry. A welcome addition to the top tier of Petite Sirah in California. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$45

**89 Cedarville Vineyard 2009 Naylor Vineyard Petite Sirah (El Dorado).** A hugely purple Petite with layers of black pepper, bacon fat, cedar and earth. It's chewy and inky but in balance; its tannin structure is as thick as walls yet the wine's stewy plum goodness goes down easy. —V.B.  
**abv:** 15.3% **Price:** \$27

**88 Occasio 2009 Del Arroyo Vineyard Petite Sirah (Livermore Valley).** This is lovely in violet perfume and bacony leather, structured like a tall building and best left to mellow out for further development. Winemaker John Kinney destemmed without crushing to preserve as many whole berries as he could, and kept the wine fermenting at lower temperatures to tame the tannins. *Cellar Selection.* —V.B.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$30

**88 Page Mill Winery 2007 Petite Sirah (Livermore Valley).** A blend of estate-grown vineyards and fruit from Casa de Vina, one of Livermore's most dazzling vineyard sites, Page Mill has made a Petite with a sweet nose of red fruit and very soft tannins. It's docile in style and subdued, but its licorice and chocolate notes are deliciously vibrant on the finish. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$19

**87 Concannon 2008 Captain Joe's Petite Sirah (Livermore Valley).** A classic Concannon Petite with plum and meat that's nicely integrated, smooth going down and resplendent in aromatics, topped off with a cherry finish. Captain Joe was the founder of Concannon's son, a member of the first American calvary. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$30

**87 Concannon 2008 Reserve Petite Sirah (Livermore Valley).** Concannon's Reserve Petite swirls in plum, dark chocolate and coconut with densely layered tannins that are expertly contained. No puckering here. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$40

**87 Concannon 2007 Heritage Petite Sirah (Livermore Valley).** Age has been kind to this Petite, one of Concannon's smaller bottlings. The wine is noticeably easygoing with mellowed plum and blackberry fruit and tamed tannins. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$60

**87 Line 39 2010 Petite Sirah (North Coast).** For full review see page 15. *Best Buy.*  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$10

**86 HandCraft 2009 Petite Sirah (California).** A little sweet and simple, but with lots of charm in the ripe blackberry, cherry and chocolate-covered raisin flavors. The tannins are rich and smooth, the mouthfeel supple. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$13

**86 McCay Cellars 2008 Petite Sirah (Lodi).** There's no doubt this is 100-percent Petite Sirah, full of dark plummy fruit and an earthy element that's close to mushrooms and dirt. Aged over two years in French oak the wine even has a slight hint of game and caramel. The tannins are soft but ample. —V.B.  
**abv:** 15.7% **Price:** \$24

**85 Darcie Kent Vineyards 2008 Madden Ranch Petite Sirah (Livermore Valley).** A spicy, blackberry Petite marked by stewed plums, anise and tar. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$24

**85 Michael David 2009 Earthquake Petite Sirah (Lodi).** Whoa... need... water. Michael David's Earthquake is all about impact, no bones about it. And this one won't disappoint people who like their wine like finely aged Scotch, high in alcohol. For them, its bold smoky chocolate, savory bacon on toast notes will be delightful. —V.B.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$26

**84 Storrs 2008 Petite Sirah (Santa Cruz Mountains).** Call this wine rustic for its berry and cherry flavors that are so ripe, they veer into raisins. It's almost like a minor Port, with an inky black color and an overtly sweet, milk chocolate finish. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$23

**83 Hannah Nicole Vineyards 2009 Reserve Petite Sirah (Contra Costa County).** Dark, deep purple in color, this Petite grown in Contra Costa is still quite closed and tight with no signs of opening anytime soon. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$38

**82 Eagle Castle 2008 Petite Sirah (Paso Robles).** Harsh and pruny, with overripe flavors that are like Port, except the wine is dry. Wildly overpriced for the quality. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$50

## SYRAH

**94 Testarossa 2009 Garys' Vineyard Syrah (Santa Lucia Highlands).** Testarossa is better known for Pinot Noir, but their Syrahs, and particularly those from Garys' Vineyard, are some of the best around. This 2009 is delectable now for its sheer drinkability. It's rich and luscious in blackberry, blueberry, smoked meat, pepper and earthy tobacco flavors, wrapped into smooth, complex tannins. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$54

**93 Andrew Murray 2009 Watch Hill Vineyard Syrah (Central Coast).** If more Syrah tasted like this, the variety just might overtake Cabernet in popularity. It's really good, combining a dry, firm structure with lush flavors, in the way of blackberries, blueberries, currants and a meatiness like the sweet, charred fat on a steak. Kudos to vintner Murray for bottling it in a screwtop. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$36

**93 Blair Fox 2009 Paradise Road Vineyard Syrah (Santa Barbara County).** Enormously rich, with intense blackberry and cherry jam, currant, dark chocolate and bacon flavors, wrapped into firm tannins. The vineyard is in a warm, high elevation part of the county. Delicious now, and should acquire additional bottle interest over the next six years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$37

**93 Longboard 2008 Goosechase Vineyard Syrah (Russian River Valley).** A tremendous Syrah, so rich and tasty, it makes you wonder why more people don't drink this variety. Shows intense, explosive blackberry, currant, bacon and black pepper flavors, with a savory hint of raisins. New oak is perfectly in keeping with the wine's volume. Dramatic and lush, this single-vineyard Syrah will provide good drinking over the next four years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.1% **Price:** \$47

**92 Andrew Murray 2008 Reserve Syrah (Central Coast).** This is a rich, flamboyant Syrah. The Central Coast appellation is because the grapes are a blend of Santa Barbara's cool vineyards and a warm one from Paso Robles. It's a good recipe, with ripe, forward flavors wrapped into a firm structure. Only 150 cases were produced. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$50

**92 Blair Fox 2009 Tierra Alta Vineyard Syrah (Santa Ynez Valley).** The grapes for this Syrah come from the Ballard Canyon area, which is likely to be Santa Barbara's next official appellation. It's a big, full-bodied wine, tannic and dry, with blackberry, blueberry, smoked meat, black pepper and sandalwood flavors. Feels fine and dramatic in the mouth, and should develop bottle interest through 2015. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$39

**92 Epiphany 2009 Stagecoach Vineyard Syrah (Napa Valley).** This young Syrah is marked by jammy berry, cherry and mocha flavors, wrapped into an elegant structure of soft tannins. Sweet new oak adds a lovely touch of toast. Round and mellow in the mouth, it should develop additional nuances with up to six years in the bottle. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.2% **Price:** \$49

**92 Fess Parker 2009 Syrah (Santa Barbara County).** For full review see page 7. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$22

**92 Jaffurs 2010 Syrah (Santa Barbara County).** Here's a rich, ripe, opulent Syrah, all jammy blackberry, cherry and currant flavors, sprinkled with black pepper and housed in a structure of firm, strong tannins. It's a blend of some of the best vineyards in the county, including Bien Nacido, Larner and Ampelos. Drink now–2015. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$27

**92 Longboard 2008 Ledbetter Family Vineyard Syrah (Russian River Valley).** For full review see page 7. *Cellar Selection.*  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$33

**92 Montemaggiore 2009 Syrafina Estate Grown Syrah-Viognier (Dry Creek Valley).** Amazing how the addition of just 3% of Viognier lifts the winery's Syrah and makes this wine so fine. The white variety's citrusy acidity and lime flavor uplifts and brightens Syrah's blackberry and blueberry fruit, giving the wine a zesty punch. Drink now for its freshness. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$42

**92 Rusack 2009 Ballard Canyon Estate Syrah (Santa Barbara County).** One of the best Syrahs at this price point in California. It's lush in blackberries, blueberries, chocolate and sweet oak, with a creamy mouthfeel. Drink now for freshness. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$25

**92 Terlato 2008 Syrah (Dry Creek Valley).** Beautiful to drink now, one of the most rewardingly plush Syrahs on the market. It's easy to like, with soft tannins and a creamy mouthfeel housing ripe, savory cherry and blueberry pie flavors. If only more Syrahs were this delicious. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$35

**92 Yorba 2007 Shake Ridge Vineyards Syrah (Amador County).** Viticulturalist Ann Kraemer, who farms Shake Ridge Vineyards for many other producers, keeps some of the grapes for Yorba, her label with winemaker Ken Bernards of Ancien. The result is an exceptionally good dark plum, black cherry and blackberry-tinged Syrah with pepper and meat thread throughout the deep fruit concentration of this still-tight, mountain-grown wine. Cellar another 2–5 years. *Cellar Selection.* —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$32

**92 Zaca Mesa 2008 Mesa Reserve Syrah (Santa Ynez Valley).** For full review see page 8.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$44

**91 Epiphany 2009 Syrah (Sta. Rita Hills).** Sweet and luscious, with powerful raspberry and cherry fruit. Made from 100% Syrah grown in the Moorman Vineyard, it was aged for nearly two years in French oak, much of it new. The alcohol is fairly high, giving the wine a full-bodied, glyceriney mouthfeel. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$35

**91 Longboard 2008 Syrah (Russian River Valley).** A wonderful Syrah, one of the most drinkable on the market. It's delicious, with thick, soft tannins housing dry, complex flavors of blackberries, black currants, cola, anise and black pepper. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$28

**89 Cedarville Vineyard 2009 Estate Bottled Syrah (El Dorado).** Savage and smelling of earth, this estate-grown and -bottled Syrah from husband and wife team Jonathan Lachs and Susan Marks is rightly mountainous, with a wall of tannin, still thick and tight but teeming with potential. Lay it down and let that wall melt into fruit and spicy earth. *Cellar Selection.* —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$25

**89 Fess Parker 2009 The Big Easy Syrah (Santa Barbara County).** Flamboyantly ripe raspberry, cherry and blackberry fruit marks this Syrah, a blend drawn from several vineyards throughout the county. The wine contains smaller amounts of Petite Sirah and Grenache, giving it a rich, tannic complexity. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$35

**89 Montemaggiore 2008 Paolo's Vineyard Estate Grown Syrah (Dry Creek Valley).** Tastes as sweet and delicious as chocolate-covered blueberries, sprinkled with black pepper, and finished with the warmth of alcohol and a bite of lemony acidity. Try with a grilled steak in gorgonzola sauce. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$38

**88 db Winery 2009 Premier Coastal Vineyard Syrah (Santa Barbara County).** A good Syrah, rugged in tannins and a little rustic, but offering plenty of blackberry, roasted meat and black pepper flavors. It's full-bodied and lusty, and suggests equally strong dishes, like beef stew, short ribs or game birds. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$29

**88 Montemaggiore 2009 Paolo's Vineyard Estate Grown Syrah (Dry Creek Valley).** A little too soft for a serious Syrah, especially at this price. But the flavors are enormously rich and complex, ranging from blackberries and blueberries to dark chocolate, bacon, sautéed wild mushrooms, black pepper and dusty Indian spices. Drink now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$38

**88 Page Mill Winery 2008 Tazetta Vineyard Syrah (Livermore Valley).** Thick and concentrated, with brambly fruit and caramel from the American oak. The whole package is intense at first, but with air mellows into elegant flavors of red cherry and rich chocolate, and it would make a fine wine next to wintertime stews. Tasted two bottles with some bottle variation. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$30

**88 Terlato 2008 Block 9 Syrah (Dry Creek Valley).** A big, ripe, exuberant wine, offering a mouthful of blackberry, blueberry and cherry jam and oak flavors. The wine was fermented in 100% new French barrels. It's a bit aggressive in both oak tannins and fruit, but such is the balance that 4–5 years in the cellar could make it more interesting. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$48

**87 Cabot Vineyards 2007 Kimberly's Syrah (Humboldt County).** This Syrah from Humboldt County is red fruit-forward and jam-packed with smoky caramel, cinnamon and meat. Thick as tar. —V.B.  
**abv:** 15.3% **Price:** \$28

**87 Malibu Rocky Oaks 2009 Syrah (Los Angeles County).** Dark and berrylicious, a Syrah with leather, cedar and mint undertones that's both dense and rustic. Its dark plum, boysenberry and blueberry flavors long and lingering on the finish. —V.B.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$27

**87 Vineyard of Pasterick 2007 Estate Syrah (Dry Creek Valley).** Don't look for subtlety in this Syrah. It's all about overt, in-your-face ripe blackberry jam, mushu plum sauce and dark chocolate flavors. The wine is dry, tannic and soft, with a long, spicy finish. Doesn't seem capable of aging, as the alcohol is high, so drink up. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$48

**87 Wild Coyote 2009 Bragger Syrah (Paso Robles).** Very peppery even for Syrah. Marked also by intense blackberry jam flavors, it's a full-bodied, tannic bruiser, but one with brooding depth. Decant it a few hours before serving. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$20

**86 Cabot Vineyards 2007 Syrah (Humboldt County).** From husband-and-wife team in California redwood country, comes this interesting Syrah, sourced from dry-farmed estate vines. Smelling of cedar pine and red fruit, it's very savory, full of pepper and leather, dark coffee and espresso. Lay it down another year or so to tame its wild soul. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$24

**85 Carlotta 2009 Betty Syrah (North Coast).** Here's a sweetly fruity, simple young Syrah, brimming with berry and cherry jam, sweet oak and spice flavors. It's soft and smooth in the mouth. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.1% **Price:** \$50

**84 Eagle Castle 2008 Syrah (Paso Robles).** This dry, full-bodied Syrah is impressively packed with blackberry, currant, crispy bacon and black pepper flavors. On the downside is an overripeness suggesting raisins, with the tannic bitterness of raisin skins. Drink now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$40

**84 Petroni 2007 Estate Grown Syrah (Sonoma Valley).** Too sweet and soft, like a perfection in a glass. Tastes like a raspberry and cherry tart, spiced with cinnamon and dusted with cocoa, and turns hot and Porty-like on the finish. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$40

## GRENACHE

**92 Cedarville Vineyard 2009 Estate Bottled Grenache (El Dorado).** A tremendous Grenache from the Foothills, estate grown from Beaucastel budwood and let to develop slowly, this wine has acres to go before it sleeps. Still superdense and dark with fruity plum and anise predominating, it'll grow old with tenderness and grace. *Cellar Selection.* —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$25

**89 Blair Fox 2009 Fox Family Vineyard Grenache (Santa Barbara County).** This rich, full-bodied Grenache shows ripe cherry and blueberry fruit, enriched with smoky, caramelized oak. It's fat, soft and flashy, if a bit direct. Drink now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.7% **Price:** \$45

**89 Dragonette 2009 Grenache (Santa Barbara County).** Rich and flashy, this Grenache is one of the better evocations of the variety, which is a difficult one to master. It dazzles with black raspberry jam and white chocolate flavors that are balanced with fine acidity and tannins. Drink now for freshness. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$38

**89 Jaffurs 2009 Grenache (Santa Barbara County).** A pretty, polished Grenache, balanced and savory. Shows a Pinot Noir-like delicacy in

the mouth, with cherry and red plum fruit, leading to a slightly sweet finish. Drink now for its freshness. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$34

**87 Epiphany 2009 Grenache (Santa Ynez Valley).** Shows enormously extracted black cherry and mocha flavors, a testament to how nicely ripe the difficult Grenache variety got in the winery's Rodney's Vineyard. Oak lurks in the background, giving smoky, buttery notes. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$30

## ZINFANDEL

**92 Dry Creek Vineyard 2008 Old Vine Zinfandel (Dry Creek Valley).** For full review see page 7. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$28

**92 Vermeil 2009 Luvisi 1908 Vineyard Zinfandel (Calistoga).** For full review see page 8.  
**abv:** 15.3% **Price:** \$38

**91 Frank Family 2009 Zinfandel (Napa Valley).** A very zinny Zin, packed with the variety's briary blackberry, anise, dark chocolate, bacon and crushed black-pepper flavors. It's the winery's best Zinfandel since the 2006 vintage. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$37

**91 JR Wine 2009 George's Vineyard Zinfandel (Napa Valley).** Just delicious. Feels like a modern, cult-style Napa Cabernet, soft and complex and slightly sweet, with tannins so finely ground, it's drinkable now. The flavors are Cabernet-like also, with blackberries, blueberries, mocha and spices, although its briary, brambly quality is distinctive to Zinfandel. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$34

**89 Buena Vista 2010 Zinfandel (Sonoma County).** Here's a luscious Zinfandel to drink now. It's rich in tannins and brisk in acidity, with savory blackberry, blueberry, pepper, cinnamon, anise and sandalwood flavors. Textbook Sonoma Zin for drinking with barbecue. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$15

**89 Daou 2009 Zinfandel (Paso Robles).** Rich and ripe in fruit, in the way of many Paso Robles reds. Offers forward blackberry, blueberry and cocoa flavors, sprinkled with pepper, and a few overripe notes of raisin. The alcohol is quite high, but balanced. One minor quibble is excessive softness. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.2% **Price:** \$42

**86 Tierra Caliente 2008 Zinfandel (Napa Valley).** A soft, savory and fruity Zinfandel, with flavors of raspberries, cherries, cloves, black pepper and sandalwood. Drink now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$28

**85 Joseph Jewell 2008 Grist Vineyard Zinfandel (Dry Creek Valley).** Lots to admire in this single-vineyard Zinfandel from Zin's natural home, Dry Creek Valley. It's rich in ripe summer berry and spice flavors, with briary, fuzzy tannins. Two problems,

though. It's too sweet, and high alcohol makes it feel hot. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$39

**83 Glen Ellen 2010 Proprietor's Reserve Old Vine Zinfandel (California).** Raw and fresh, with jammy mulberry, blackberry and pepper flavors. A rustic wine for rustic food. *Best Buy.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$10/1.5 L

**83 Goats Trail 2010 Zinfandel (California).** A difficult Zinfandel, harsh and scoury in the mouth, with mint, raspberry jelly and black pepper flavors. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$12

**83 Wild Coyote 2009 Mischievous Zinfandel (Paso Robles).** There's too much overripe fruit in this Zin, in the form of dried raisins. It's a fault, even though the taste isn't bad. The shriveled fruit yields bitter tannins from the grape skins. —S.H.  
**abv:** 13.6% **Price:** \$20

**82 Ancient Oak Cellars 2010 Pagnano Vineyard Zinfandel (Russian River Valley).** A superspicy Zin, marked by a blast of black pepper, clove and anise. The flavors are extracted and sweet to the point of appearing overripe, with blackberries and prunes leading to a tannic, bitter finish. Drink now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$32

**82 Ministry of the Vinterior 2009 The Messenger Old Vine Zinfandel (Amador County).** Surprisingly unripe for an Amador County Zinfandel. Smells like dried twigs, turns obscure and heavy in the mouth, with sweet cherry pie and prune flavors, framed in hard, green tannins. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$17

## SANGIOVESE

**88 Pure Cru 2007 Sangio Vetta Sangiovese (California).** A little overripe around the edges, with touches of raisins and prunes, but they don't detract from the wine's attractions. Dry and smooth in the mouth, its blackberry and anise flavors also feature Sangiovese's bright acidity. Drink now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$25

**88 Vino Noceto 2008 Riserva Sangiovese (Shenandoah Valley).** Crafted from five estate lots, Vino Noceto's Riserva is classic Foothills Sangiovese, with cranberry and dark cherry mingling around a light texture, high acidity and a smooth, caramel finish. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$24

**86 Monte Volpe 2007 Sangiovese (Mendocino).** Greg Graziano has been producing Sangiovese for a long time in California and has managed to coax its thick tannins into a swirl of herby, dark plum and dried black-cherry flavors that are rich, ripe and full, ready for grilled Italian-inspired foods. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$17

**85 Noceto 2009 Sangiovese (Amador County).** Much higher production than Noceto's Riserva and sourced more broadly, this Sangiovese is more rustic and earthy, its cranberry flavors bursting from the seams, and would be yummy with thin-crust pizza. —V.B.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$18

**82 Petroni 2005 Poggio Alla Pietra Brunello di Sonoma Estate Grown Sangiovese (Sonoma Valley).** This is a silly name, and it's not a very good wine. Acids and tannins dominate, making it astringent and bitter, and the cherry fruit is thin and rather overripe. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$60

## RED BLENDS

**95 Arkenstone 2008 Obsidian (Howell Mountain).** Gigantic and impossibly tannic. Don't even think about drinking this Cabernet now. It's tightly wrapped in astringency, yet the molten core of blackberries, currants, blueberries and dark chocolate, and a firm minerality, almost guarantees extended aging through 2016, at least. It's a worthy followup to the 2006 and 2007. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$125

**94 Shafer 2008 Relentless Syrah-Petite Sirah (Napa Valley).** Go ahead, knock this wine for high alcohol, if you want. It's still one of the best blends of its kind in California. It oozes blackberry and blueberry jam, melted dark chocolate, bacon, anise and pepper flavors that are extraordinarily rich. Drink it soon for maximum freshness. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.6% **Price:** \$60

**94 Summers 2007 Checkmate (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 4. *Cellar Selection.*  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$100

**93 Justin 2009 Savant (Paso Robles).** For full review see page 6. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$45

**92 Montemaggiore 2007 Nobile Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon-Syrah (Dry Creek Valley).** There aren't many California Cab-Syrah blends this satisfying. Perhaps the main reason, aside from good viticulture and winemaking, is the source, Dry Creek Valley, where the grapes got sweet and ripe in blackberry, currant, bacon and spice flavors, yet maintained enough acidity for balance. The tannins are a bit tough and brambly, but this is a delicious wine to drink now with richly sauced beef dishes. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$45

**92 Yates Family Vineyard 2008 Alden Perry Reserve (Mount Veeder).** A distinguished Bordeaux blend from a winery that flies a bit under the radar. It's rich and dramatic in intensely concentrated mountain fruit, brimming with blackberry and black currant flavors, liberally oaked and framed in thick, refined tannins. Possesses real elegance and dynamism,

but it needs bottle age. Hold until 2014. *Cellar Selection.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$60

**91 Epiphany 2008 Gypsy (Santa Ynez Valley).** Red wine doesn't get richer or more delicious than this Rhône-style blend of five varieties, based on Grenache. It's flamboyant in raspberry, cherry and milk chocolate flavors, yet the sweetness is balanced by fine acidity and a mushroomy earthiness. Drink now—2014. *Editors' Choice.* —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$25

**91 Reid Family Vineyards 2009 Bay's Blend (Napa Valley).** This is a Bordeaux blend based on Cabernet Sauvignon, with a drop of Petite Sirah for color and tannins. It's rich and deep in blackberry, currant and dark chocolate flavors, and balanced with big-time tannins and a fine cut of acidity. Doesn't seem like an ager despite the astringency, so drink it soon with rich meats and cheeses. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$38

**90 Baldacci 2008 Four Sons Fraternity (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 10.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$40

**90 Conn Creek 2007 Anthology (Napa Valley).** For full review see page 10.  
**abv:** 14.5 **Price:** \$55

**90 Cornerstone 2009 Red Wine (Napa Valley).** Delicious, first class and possibly ageable. It's rich in blackberry pie filling, crème de cassis and sweet oak flavors, with a firm minerality that adds structural integrity. Sweet and ripe, but elegant. Will provide pleasant drinking over the next four years. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$60

**90 Epiphany 2008 Revelation (Santa Barbara County).** So sweet and ripe in raspberry, cherry and white chocolate, it's almost like a dessert wine. The sweetness nicely evaporates in a dry swirl of acids and minerals, leaving behind only the impression of honey and spice. The blend is mostly Syrah, with Grenache Noir and Petite Sirah. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$35

**90 Hess Collection 2008 19 Block Cuvée (Mount Veeder).** For full review see page 11.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$36

**90 Madrigal 2008 Sonnet #63 (Napa Valley).** Dry, smooth and delicious, a flashy wine that tastes complex. Although there are strong tannins, there's a drink-me-now richness to blackberries, blueberries, chocolate and oak. Decant for an hour or two, and enjoy. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$65

**90 Pure Cru 2007 PureCoz (Napa Valley).** This is a Bordeaux blend based on Cabernet Sauvignon, with a good chunk of Sangiovese. It's a pleasant, rich wine, tough in tannins and acids, with concentrated cherry pie, blackberry and oak flavors. Doesn't seem like an ager, so drink now with hearty foods. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$65

**90 Terlato 2007 Episode (Napa Valley).** This is Terlato's ambitious entry into the cult Cabernet lottery. Based on Cabernet Sauvignon, with Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, it's an elaborate wine, deep and long in blackberry, cherry, currant, mocha and sandalwood flavors. The tannins are impressive, yet young, giving a tough, astringent mouthfeel. But ageability is brought into question by some superripeness, in the form of raisins. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$175

**90 Volker Eisele Family Estate 2008 Terzet-to (Napa Valley).** Massively extracted blackberry, blueberry and cherry jam, chocolate and new oak flavors mark this blend of one-third each Cabernet Sauvignon, Cab Franc and Merlot. The tannins are smooth and complex. Rather direct now, it needs a couple years to settle down, but isn't a long term ager. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$75

**89 Dragonette 2009 Seven (Central Coast).** Sweet, ripe and jammy in cherries, raspberries and blackberries, this small-production Rhône blend is made from six vineyards between Santa Barbara and Paso Robles. It's a direct, forward wine for drinking now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$38

**88 Ancient Peaks 2008 Oyster Ridge (Paso Robles).** This is basically a Bordeaux blend based on Cabernet Sauvignon, with a hefty dollop of Petite Sirah. The latter brings tannic weight and dark color, but the most remarkable feature is the deep, delicious flavor. This wine floods the mouth with blackberry tart, dark chocolate, anise and sandalwood flavors. It's a bit high in alcohol, though, which shows in a hot finish. —S.H.  
**abv:** 15.1% **Price:** \$50

**88 Andrew Murray 2008 Espérance Grenache-Syrah-Mouvèdre (Central Coast).** A rich wine that flatters the palate with flashy berry, cherry cocoa and oak flavors. Andrew Murray has been one of the Central Coast's true Rhône variety pioneers. —S.H.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$30

**88 Cru Vin Dogs NV The Loyal Companion (Sonoma County).** For full review see page 14. *Best Buy.*  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$13

**88 Daou 2009 Micho (Paso Robles).** Made from Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, this wine certainly isn't shy on flavor. It's explosive in blackberries, currants, mushu plum sauce, licorice and sandalwood flavors that are frankly delicious. Could have better structure, though, as it's fairly soft and a little warm on the finish. Drink now. —S.H.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$42

**88 Epiphany 2009 Syrah-Cabernet (Santa Ynez Valley).** The Cabernet brings structure and blackberry-currant fruit, while Syrah contributes softness and a roasted meat flavor in this dry, food-

friendly wine. Drink it now with a nice steak, chop or stew. —S.H.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$35

**88 Lasseter 2008 Amoureux (Sonoma Valley).** This darkly colored wine tastes strong and sweet, like a blend of raisins, blackberries, milk chocolate and red licorice, with a little bacon thrown in for umami saltiness. Tasty and flashy, but not going anywhere, so enjoy now with a good steak. It's a Bordeaux blend based on Malbec. —S.H.

abv: 14.8%

Price: \$40

**88 Lasseter 2009 Chemin de Fer (Sonoma Valley).** It's easy to like this soft, smooth wine, with its cherry jam, blackberry liqueur, milk chocolate, sweet licorice, pepper and sandalwood flavors. It feels extravagant and seductive in the mouth, making you want another sip. The blend is Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. —S.H.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$40

**88 Lasseter 2008 Paysage (Sonoma Valley).** Lots of rich, sweet cherry, blueberry and mocha flavors in this dry red wine, which is based on Merlot. But it goes beyond mere deliciousness in the refined structure. Feels elegant and dignified in the mouth, with a long, spicy finish. It's not an ager, though, so drink soon. —S.H.

abv: 14.8%

Price: \$40

**88 Newton 2009 Red Label Claret (Napa County).** Easy to like for its rich blackberry, cherry and cassis flavors, and the lovely coating of new oak, which brings sweet notes of toast and vanilla. The price isn't bad, considering you get real Napa elegance. —S.H.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$25

**87 Buena Vista 2008 The Count Founder's Red Wine (Sonoma County).** All of the charms of this Merlot, Syrah and Zinfandel blend are on the surface, but what a pretty surface it is. Polished raspberry and cherry fruit, bacon, cream and a splendid array of flashy spices characterize the flavors. —S.H.

abv: NA

Price: \$20

**87 JR Wine 2009 The Devious Woman (Napa Valley).** Well-made and creatively blended from Zinfandel, Syrah and Petite Sirah, this is a big, tannic wine, formidable in sweet blackberry, cherry, licorice and spice flavors. It's not subtle, but it is authentic. Drink now. —S.H.

abv: 15%

Price: \$34

**87 Tamber Bey 2009 Deux Chevaux Vineyard Rabicano (Yountville).** Lots of blackberry, plum, currant and oak flavors in this classic Bordeaux blend. It's so ripe, it's almost sweet, except that the finish is thoroughly dry, with a stimulating scour of tannins and citrusy acids. Right now it's direct and not very complex, leading to the question of ageability. All indications are that it's not a wine you want to cellar, so drink up. —S.H.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$53

**86 A.S. Kiken 2009 Estate Red (Diamond Mountain).** A good but average red wine for

drinking now. Shows ripe berry, cherry, currant, licorice and spice flavors, with edgy tannins that are a little scoury. Drink up. —S.H.

abv: 13.9%

Price: \$49

**86 Carlotta 2009 AD (North Coast).** This is a spaghetti with tomato sauce wine, high in acidity, with very ripe, sweet cherry and cured tobacco flavors and firm tannins. It's kind of like an old fashioned Chianti. —S.H.

abv: 13.9%

Price: \$28

**86 Kunde 2008 202 Meritage (Sonoma Valley).** There's a tough, gritty feeling in the mouth with this dry, tannic wine. Although it has some rich flavors blackberries and blueberries, it's astringent and hard. Give it a good long decant and drink now. —S.H.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$30

**86 Longboard 2010 Point Break (North Coast).** This is a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Zinfandel, Merlot and Malbec. The grapes are entirely from Sonoma County. It's a tannic, lusty and ultimately satisfying wine, with jammy berry and spice flavors. —S.H.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$24

**85 Eagle Castle 2008 Royal Red (Paso Robles).** This Syrah-Merlot blend is a country-style wine. Bone dry, it shows California fruity ripeness and lots of savory black pepper flavors, yet with rustic tannins and acids that scour the mouth. Drink it now with Mexican food or barbecue. —S.H.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$25

**84 Cupcake 2010 Red Velvet (California).** So sweet in berry jam and mocha flavors, it's basically a dessert wine. If you like that style, it's pretty good. —S.H.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$14

**84 Dogwood 2008 Blendo (North Coast).** The blendo on this North Coast country sipper is Petite Sirah, Mourvedre, Zinfandel, Carignane and Syrah. It's rich and spicy in jammy berry flavors, and a little overripe, to judge from the raisins. Drink now. —S.H.

abv: 14%

Price: \$25

**84 Tractor Shed Red 2009 Red Wine (California).** For \$12 or less you get a fruity, clean wine, with berry, cherry and spice flavors. It's easy to drink with pizza, burgers and similar fare. —S.H.

abv: 14.3%

Price: \$12

**84 Wild Coyote 2009 House of Reds (Paso Robles).** Made from Syrah, Merlot and Zinfandel, this is a toughly tannic, rustic wine. It has berry, earth and spice flavors. —S.H.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$20

**83 Amberhill 2010 Secret Blend (California).** Made from undisclosed grape varieties, this wine is simple and candied. It tastes like red cherry jam, spread on buttered white toast and sprinkled with brown sugar and cinnamon. —S.H.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$10

**83 Eagle Castle 2007 Trinity (Paso Robles).** Harsh and rustic, with jellied berry and red pepper flavors. Feels soft, simple and sweet. The blend is Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah. —S.H.

abv: 15.6%

Price: \$25

**83 Midnight Cellars 2007 Zenith (Paso Robles).** Overripe and raisiny, with sweet, shriveled blackberry and oak flavors, leading to a hot finish. Drink now. —S.H.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$65

**83 Midnight Cellars 2006 Mare Nectaris (Paso Robles).** Made from all five classic Bordeaux varieties, this wine is overripe. Although it's dry and the tannins are fine, it's dominated by raisiny flavors. —S.H.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$44

**82 Midnight Cellars 2007 Capriccio Italien (Paso Robles).** Way too ripe, with raisined flavors, including raisin-skin bitterness and alcoholic heat on the finish. The dominant variety is Sangiovese. —S.H.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$34

## OTHER RED WINES

**91 Reverie 2009 Estate Petite Verdot (Diamond Mountain).** This wine is marked by exceptionally ripe, forward flavors of blackberry jam and black currants, with a sweet coating of smoky oak. In fact, flavor is what drives this wine, although it also shows fine, complex Diamond Mountain tannins that give it a dramatic structure. Seems best now and for the next three years. —S.H.

abv: 13.6%

Price: \$71

**91 Thomas Fogarty 2007 Gist Ranch Malbec (Santa Cruz Mountains).** One of the best Malbecs on the market. It's perfect for drinking now despite big tannins. Shows vast, deep blackberry, blueberry, dark chocolate, currant and anise flavors, with a long, spicy finish. Grill up a steak and pop the cork. —S.H.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$50

**89 Summers 2009 Villa Andriana Vineyard Charbono (Calistoga).** If you're unfamiliar with Charbono, it's kind of like Petite Sirah in its inky color, thick tannins and full-bodied mouthfeel. Summers' 2009 is a big wine, bone dry and modest in alcohol, with deep blackberry, grilled meat and black pepper flavors. It's a good barbecue wine that will probably live for 20 years. —S.H.

abv: 13.7%

Price: \$28

**88 Cline 2010 Ancient Vines Mourvèdre (Contra Costa County).** Full of dark plum and earth, a tremendous old-school California Mourvèdre from old Oakley vines that exude mushroomy soft tannins and a rounded spiciness, finished by a trace of chocolate. —V.B.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$20

**87 Cline 2010 Ancient Vines Carignane (Contra Costa County).** Intensely fruity—think boysenberry and blackberry jam—this old Cari-

gnane is also leathery tough with black pepper spice that's very savory amid the berry and cherry and bosomy tannins. Cline is among the few wineries in California to have access to these ancient Carignane vines and the winery does a nice job showing the variety's classic colors. —V.B.

**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$18

**87 Due Vigne 2007 Musso Family Vineyard Nebbiolo (El Dorado County).** Due Vigne's mountain-grown Sierra Nebbiolo is savory, embellished with olive tapenade, sour cherry, cranberry and caramel, its tannins sufficiently managed to make this wine a rich, robust red with finesse. Small percentages of Barbera and Dolcetto are blended in. —V.B.

**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$26

**87 Reverie 2009 Estate Barbera (Diamond Mountain).** It's a wonder why Reverie makes Barbera, an inferior variety and a tough sell, but they do, so you have to pay attention. This '09 is dry, big in tannins, acidic and rich in blackberry, raisin and mushu plum sauce flavors. It will probably live for decades, gradually sweetening but unlikely to ever achieve complexity. —S.H.

**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$52

**86 Due Vigne 2007 Musso Family Vineyard Dolcetto (El Dorado County).** Grown at 2,400-foot elevation from Italian budwood, this Dolcetto, so common to Piedmont but almost unheard of in California, is *my grande*, with mountainous tannins and flavors of coffee and toffee and bright notes of cranberry and cherry. —V.B.

**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$19

**82 Eagle Castle 2008 Barbera (Paso Robles).** Barbera can be made well, but this one isn't even particularly Barbera-esque. It's soft, acidic and sweetly simple, with jammy flavors that are over-ripe and pruny. —S.H.

**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$50

## DESSERT WINES

**90 Swanson NV Angelica Mission (Amador County).** Swanson employs former winemaker Marco Cappelli to make this nonvintage dessert wine, working with Mission grape vines in the Shenandoah Valley that were planted in 1856 and reside at a 1,300-foot elevation. Cappelli fortified the Mission wine with Brandy, let it all sit in barrel for six years, and used the solera system of blending in four different vintages over time. The result is delicious, a strong essence of cherry, dried fruit and molasses perfectly sippable and balanced. —V.B.

**abv:** 19% **Price:** \$140

**87 Longboard 2010 Late Harvest Sémillon (North Coast).** A very good dessert wine, whose acidity provides balance to the sweet apricot, orange, vanilla and honeysuckle flavors. A bit of tease, it would score far higher with greater intensity. —S.H.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$48/500 ml

**84 White Truck 2010 Moscato (California).** This dessert wine is sweet in honeyed orange,

mango and pear flavors. It's simple, soft and easy to drink. —S.H.

**abv:** 10% **Price:** \$12

## WASHINGTON

### CHARDONNAY

**95 Tranche 2008 Chardonnay (Columbia Gorge).** The Celilo vineyard has contributed the fruit to many outstanding Chardonnays from a who's who list of winemakers, but none better than this. Intensely concentrated and deeply extracted, it explodes with marvelously pure fruit flavors—the full range of citrus, citrus peel and crisp tree fruits. A wine with perfect virtually balance, exceptional texture and amazing length. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$30

**94 Abeja 2010 Chardonnay (Washington).** Abeja's Chardonnays are as certain to hit their target as a Kobe Bryant slam dunk, and the style remains consistent vintage after vintage. Spicy, nutty, based around stone fruits and melon, they do not shy away from the toasty flavors that derive from barrel fermentation in 40% new French oak. The underlying minerality and well-balanced acidity mark this as Washington fruit, most of it from the outstanding Conner Lee vineyard. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$36

**94 Woodward Canyon 2010 Chardonnay (Washington).** Quite young and tight, with primary apple, melon and stone-fruit flavors, this is that rare domestic Chardonnay that surely will reward cellaring. With decanting it becomes creamier, with an aromatic lift of cinnamon and a thread of vanilla running through the toasty finish. A baby, but already delicious. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$44

**92 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Cold Creek Vineyard Chardonnay (Columbia Valley).**

For full review see page 6.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$25

**91 L'Ecole No. 41 2010 Chardonnay (Columbia Valley).** From a very cool vintage, this wine takes full advantage of the flavors the year delivered. Bracing and fresh, with a lively mix of lime and citrus fruits, its vivid acidity and a wash of wet rock, give it life and length across the palate. Complex and textural, this is a lovely wine. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$20

**91 Sinclair Estate Vineyards 2010 Chardonnay (Columbia Valley).** Very much in line with SEV's fine 2009 Chardonnay, this is sourced from the Lewis Vineyard. Instantly round and fruity, it offers up a ripe mix of oranges and apricots, backed with juicy acidity. Then it brings in the butter, toast and nuts—a full-bodied, extremely generous wine. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$28

**88 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Canoe Ridge Estate Chardonnay (Horse Heaven Hills).**

This falls right in the toasty, oaky style of almost all the Chardonnays from winemaker Bob Bertheau, wrapping bright apple and citrus fruit in layers of toasty, nutty, buttery oak. A reasonable expectation is that additional bottle age will smooth it out and push the fruit more forward. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$22

**88 Preston 2009 Estate Grown Chardonnay (Columbia Valley).** A balanced, nicely rounded Chardonnay, with light flavors of citrus and melon. Oak aging adds gentle notes of toast and vanilla, and the flavors extend gracefully into a finish of moderate length. —P.G.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

**87 Cloudlift Cellars 2010 Chardonnay (Columbia Valley).** Round and fruity, with puckery lemon-lime and tangerine fruit front and center. Some sort of oak treatment is in evidence, with a streak of vanilla wafer running through the finish. —P.G.

**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$17

**87 Columbia Crest 2009 H3 Chardonnay (Horse Heaven Hills).** This popular Chardonnay gives you a generous burst of buttered nuts and toast, the flavors many consumers want in their Chardonnays. Not much going on in the fruit department—just clean, tart green apples, with a sharp, acidic edge. —P.G.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$15

## PINOT GRIS/GRIGIO

**93 Tranche 2009 Pinot Gris (Columbia Gorge).** The best yet in a series of superb vintages for this unique Washington Pinot Gris, sourced from a cool site in the Columbia Gorge. Luscious fruit cascades across the palate, filling the mouth with juicy, textural flavors of grapefruit, Meyer lemon, orange, orange peel and pear. Deeply concentrated and flat out delicious, this performs way above its price point. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$16

**91 Convergence Zone Cellars 2011 Drizzle Pinot Gris (Red Mountain).** The first Washington wine to be released from the 2011 vintage hits the ground running, with ripe, round, rich flavors of honeyed pears and peaches. Succulent and fruity, it cuts its sharp acidity with 2% residual sugar, making for a wine with fine concentration and length. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

**abv:** 12.3% **Price:** \$17

**88 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2010 Pinot Gris (Columbia Valley).** Consistent with the past couple of vintages, this lively, racy take on Pinot Gris comes with delicate spritz, dotting the edges of the glass and tickling the palate. Grapefruit and lime are showcased by bracing acidity, and a mouth-cleansing minerality. *Best Buy.* —P.G.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$13

**88 Columbia Crest 2010 Grand Estates Pinot Gris (Columbia Valley).** A pure, lively scent of fresh apricots introduces this crisply defined Pi-



not Gris. The rich, full midpalate brings in further fruit notes of apple and pear, with a vivid and bracing acid foundation. Long and refreshing. **Best Buy.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$12

**88 Milbrandt Vineyards 2010 Traditions Pinot Gris (Columbia Valley).** As with all the Milbrandt whites, this young wine retains exceptional freshness, and lifts the palate with lively acidity. Ripe pear and fig flavors are laced with streaks of vanilla bean and coconut flakes. A hint of fresh brioche gives the finish an extra dimension. **Best Buy.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$13

**87 Locati Cellars 2009 Pinot Grigio (Walla Walla Valley).** Estate grown and seeming to hint at some time in oak, this dry and lightly spicy wine features apple and pear fruit, already smooth and rounded and ready to drink. More in the style of Oregon Pinot Gris than Italian Pinot Grigio. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.7% **Price:** \$16

## RIESLING

**90 Columbia Crest 2010 Grand Estates Riesling (Columbia Valley).** This exceptional effort is packed with sweet and tart fruits, beginning with lemon-lime, then moving through peaches and apricots and on into hints of papaya. Good length and splendid acidity. **Best Buy.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$12

**90 Milbrandt Vineyards 2010 Traditions Riesling (Columbia Valley).** Though technically off-dry, this tastes tart and racy, following its lively aromatics with crisp citrus-fruit flavors of Key lime, Satsuma orange, and ripe apricots. The fruit sources—Evergreen and Wahluke Slope vineyards—are among the best in Washington for Riesling. **Best Buy.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$13

## SAUVIGNON BLANC

**93 Woodward Canyon 2010 Estate Sauvignon Blanc (Walla Walla Valley).** This rare Walla Walla-grown Sauvignon Blanc is superbly balanced, with rich, ripe, round, full-bodied fruit flavors anchored by defining acidity. From the Woodward Canyon estate vineyard, it conjures up a farmers' market of mixed stone fruits and melon, adding candied orange peel highlights to a lingering finish. **Editors' Choice.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$26

**88 Hard Row To Hoe 2010 Sauvignon Blanc (Yakima Valley).** Tart and fruity, with a lip-smacking mix of green apples, citrus, grapefruit and melon. There is a peppery kick at the heart of the wine, moving past simple varietal herbaceousness into a livelier realm. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$22

**87 Preston 2009 Estate Grown Sauvignon Blanc (Columbia Valley).** Fermentation was done in a mix of stainless steel and French oak, yielding

a soft, accessible, lightly spiced wine. Flavors mix notes of fresh cut grass and celery with melony fruit. —P.G.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

**87 Stevens 2010 AnArtisticThought Sauvignon Blanc (Yakima Valley).** Klipsun vineyard grapes are fermented in stainless steel to produce this crisp and refreshing Sauvignon Blanc. In 2010, a cool vintage even at this Red Mountain site, the grassy side of the grape is in the spotlight. A little sweatiness blows off with airing, then the lemongrass and light melon flavors come through, with plenty of acid backing. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$19

**86 Columbia Crest 2010 H3 Sauvignon Blanc (Horse Heaven Hills).** Solid and varietally correct, this brings citrus and melon fruit flavors in modest proportion to a simple, but balanced midpalate. It carries a hint of sugar in the finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$15

## VIIGNIER

**91 Ott & Murphy 2010 Viognier (Columbia Valley).** It's labeled Viognier, but the blend includes 20% Roussanne and a bit of Marsanne as well. It works terrifically, yielding a wine with a spicy mix of grapefruit, citrus rind, and Asian pear. Wonderful mouthfeel, with cut, focus and length. **Editors' Choice.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.3% **Price:** \$20

**91 Stevens 2010 Divio Viognier (Yakima Valley).** This stylish Viognier is sourced from the Dineen vineyard. A cool site in a cool vintage yields a carefully made wine with gin-like spices and penetration. Lemon, lime and raw steel give it grip and length. Fine winemaking shows the strengths of a difficult vintage. **Editors' Choice.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$21

**90 Milbrandt Vineyards 2010 The Estates Viognier (Wahluke Slope).** The Milbrandts farm over 2,000 acres in the Wahluke Slope, where their Clifton Vineyard—the source of this 100% varietal Viognier—is located. Creamy and refreshing, it's a mélange of lime rind and flesh, melon and pineapple, with the crispness of a mountain spring. The flavors build and build, with an elegant flourish as it finishes just as clean and refreshing as it began. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14% **Price:** \$20

**89 William Church 2010 Viognier (Columbia Valley).** A beguiling nose erupts into scents of rose water, hard lemon candy and fresh-sliced orange peel. The palate leans toward citrus, light but lingering, with a touch of minerality. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$22

**88 Ott & Murphy 2010 Elephant Mountain Vineyard Viognier (Rattlesnake Hills).** Tasted pre-release, this is a wine that should most definitely continue to improve as it knits together. The floral aromas are a bit like Gewürztraminer, though this is 100% Viognier. Flavors include rose water, citrus, and

a honeyed lemon note that runs through the tart, high-acid finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.1% **Price:** \$31

**87 Hard Row To Hoe 2010 Shameless Husky Viognier (Columbia Valley).** From the Lonesome Spring Ranch Vineyard, in the eastern Yakima valley, this pure varietal offering starts sharp and then quickly softens up, with creamy apple and peach fruit flavors. It turns a little hot on the finish, but overall it's a smooth, easy-drinking style. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$18

**85 Smasne Cellars 2010 Viognier (Columbia Valley).** A sweet-and-sour wine that mixes sour lemon candy with honey cough-drop elements. There is also an underlying streak of baby aspirin flavor, and the different aspects of the wine are not quite pulled together. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$18

## WHITE BLENDS

**94 Tranche 2009 Slice of Pape Blanc (Columbia Valley).** For full review see page 4. **Editors' Choice.**  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$30

**90 L'Ecole No. 41 2010 Seven Hills Vineyard Estate Luminesce (Walla Walla Valley).** This white blend, modeled after Bordeaux, is two-thirds Sémillon, one-third Sauvignon Blanc. Pretty scents of sweet apricot, peach and melon lead into a midpalate that gathers both strength and concentration. Notes of citrus rind and dusty spices continue into a full and satisfying finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$20

**88 Farm Girl 2010 Kaitlin Rayann White (Columbia Valley).** A lush Rhône-inspired blend, loaded with peach, pear and other stone-fruit goodness. It enters softly, fills out nicely, and finishes laced with streaks of lemon custard and vanilla cream. **Best Buy.** —P.G.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$13

**86 Cloudlift Cellars 2010 Updraft (Columbia Valley).** A white Bordeaux-style blend, crisp and edgy, with green fruit flavors sporting a citrusy kick. Young, tight and tart, it shows its alcohol on the angular finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$17

## OTHER WHITE WINES

**90 Ott & Murphy 2010 L'Entente Blanc Marsanne (Yakima Valley).** This is focused upon a lovely mix of ripe fruits, running from citrus to apple, smooth and lightly buttery. The grapes were sourced from Boushey and Elephant Mountain vineyards, and aged on the lees for a full year. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.3% **Price:** \$27

**90 Smasne Cellars 2010 Upland Vineyard Morio Muskat (Snipes Mountain District).** Sweetly floral, this concentrated and penetrating wine, from some special old-vine plantings on Snipes Moun-

tain, smells and tastes like fancy perfume in a wine bottle. Though not sweet, it could certainly be served as a dessert wine, given its exotic character. **Editors' Choice.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$16

**89 L'Ecole No. 41 2010 Sémillon (Columbia Valley).** This reliable producer of ripe, fleshy Sémillon has made a good, crisp version in this difficult vintage. Green apples and tart pears offer a slight hint of honeysuckle, but the juicy acidity is the main component here. Barrel fermentation adds just a touch of toast. **Best Buy.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$14

**88 Amavi Cellars 2010 Sémillon (Walla Walla Valley).** This light and fresh Sémillon is all Walla Walla Valley fruit, with 12% Sauvignon Blanc in the blend. Apples and pear-skin flavors carry a hint of cinnamon. Lighter in the mouth than previous Amavi Sémillons, this elegant wine would be a good match to light seafood and shellfish. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$20

**88 Smasne Cellars 2010 Upland Vineyard Aligoté (Snipes Mountain District).** A juicy wine, with plenty of ripe fruit bordering on being tropical. The nicely integrated natural acidity, with a strong underpinning of mineral, adds texture and length. —P.G.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$18

**86 Hard Row To Hoe 2010 Marsanne (Yakima Valley).** Waxy fruit flavors of peach, melon and banana, all a bit understated, lead through a light and pleasant quaffer with a hint of toast on the finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$18

## CABERNET SAUVIGNON

**95 Corliss Estates 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** A five-grape blend from a range of outstanding vineyards—Stillwater, Dionysus, Bacchus, Sagemoor and Weinbau. The detail and the dance between delicate nuances of vineyard and vine, and the supple berry and black fruit flavors, make this a wine to contemplate as well as savor. Can be drunk young for its vitality and superb structure, or cellared for another decade or more. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 15.1% **Price:** \$75

**95 Woodward Canyon 2009 Artist Series #18 Cabernet Sauvignon (Washington).** For full review see page 4. **Cellar Selection.**  
**abv:** 15.8% **Price:** \$49

**93 Stevens 2008 XY Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Yakima Valley).** The sixth release of this outstanding reserve holds firm to the well-established style. Bright, tart, ripe and compact red-berry fruit is set against firm, polished tannins. Still young and hard, it needs plenty of breathing time, or better yet, cellar it for a few years. Tim Stevens's reds have proven age-worthy, and this earthy, smoky, textural and well-

crafted effort should improve for a decade or more. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$42

**93 Woodward Canyon 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** It's labeled Cabernet Sauvignon, but includes both Syrah and Mourvèdre in the blend, along with Cab Franc and Petit Verdot. Unusual, but it works, creating a jammy wine with voluptuous black cherry and cassis fruit. The aging in French oak contributes Bourbon barrel highlights, and the tannins are ripe and nicely proportioned. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$44

**92 Barrister 2008 Reserve Taptail Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Red Mountain).** Sourced entirely from old vine Taptail fruit, this spent 32 months in French and American oak. It's loaded—as per usual with this winery—with generous, dark and smoky flavors of espresso, smoke and charcoal. But the fruit has the power and depth to handle it well, and as the wine breathes it smoothes out into a thoroughly luscious quaff. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 15.3% **Price:** \$43

**92 Bunchgrass 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** This full-bodied, 100% Cabernet is lightly gamy, offering a sensuous potpourri of wild herbs and brambly berries. It's subtle, lovely, distinctive, smoothly rendered and unusually textural and complex. Drink it with enjoyment now, or give it a few more years in the cellar. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$42

**92 Pepper Bridge 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** For full review see page 7. **Cellar Selection.**  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$55

**92 Tranche 2007 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** The first release for Tranche from Blue Mountain (estate) fruit, this classic Cabernet benefits from the same extended aging in barrel and bottle that sister winery Corliss gives its wines. Toasty, smoky and precisely defined dark fruit hold down the core, a muscular mix of black cherry, cassis, dried herb and leaf. Firm and compact, with well-integrated barrel flavors (two thirds were new), this balances Euro elegance with New World vitality. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$40

**91 Abeja 2008 Heather Hill Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** A limited release, first-time Cabernet from Heather Hill (estate) fruit, this is big, chewy and still locked up tight. Black cherry and cassis fruit is packed densely into a compact core, with veins of smoke, licorice and graphite. Aged in 80% new French oak, it is a wine for the cellar; the score could certainly rise with more bottle age. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$55

**91 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Ethos Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** For full review see page 9.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$38

**91 Tamarack Cellars 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** Sourced from a smorgasbord of AVAs, this well-crafted Cabernet includes small percentages of Merlot and Cab Franc. Hard, tight and firmly grounded in cassis and black fruits, it melds in streaks of mineral, graphite and a hint of herb. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$32

**90 Amavi Cellars 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** A beautifully crafted blend that includes 19% Merlot and splashes of Syrah and Cab Franc, this melds black fruits, black olives, a pleasing array of fresh herbs and a hint of mint. The mix is full and seamless, with an easy roundness that carries into a pleasing finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$29

**90 Barrister 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Red Mountain).** There is nothing shy about this wine, a pure Cabernet Sauvignon from the Artz and Klipsun vineyards. Much like the Artz Merlot from Barrister, it's a big-boned, muscular red, deeply tannic. The fruit is superripe, with scents of prune, smoke and chocolate. Blocky and powerful, done very consistently, as are all the Barrister reds, in the full-on house style. —P.G.  
**abv:** 15.4% **Price:** \$31

**90 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** For full review see page 10. **Editors' Choice.**  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$16

**90 Sineann 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** Smooth and chocolaty, this generous Cabernet brings plenty of chocolate-covered cherry flavors to the heart of the palate. Balanced and seamless, it follows the path of previous vintages. Drink it young for maximum enjoyment. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.2% **Price:** \$30

**89 Sineann 2009 Baby Poux Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** Still hard and tannic, this big-boned Cabernet from the Champoux Vineyard is bursting with the vineyard's characteristic black cherry fruit. Hints of herb and dried leaf sneak in, but the tannin and alcohol will need some years of bottle age to smooth out. —P.G.  
**abv:** 15.1% **Price:** \$48

**88 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Canoe Ridge Estate Cabernet Sauvignon (Horse Heaven Hills).** Quite young, this wine is still showing some reduced flavors, so give it plenty of breathing time. Clean and varietal black fruit and generous amounts of chocolaty oak provide the foundation. More time is needed to pull all the components together into a seamless whole. —P.G.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$28

**88 Milbrandt Vineyards 2009 Traditions Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).**

Forward and pretty, with broad blackberry, black cherry and cassis fruit, this instantly accessible Cabernet Sauvignon offers many pleasures for an affordable price. Smooth tannins taste lightly of clean earth, coffee and light herb, giving just enough grip to offset the lightness of the fruit. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$15

**88 Pondera 2008 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** Sourced from Stillwater, Conner Lee and Kiona vineyards, this 95% Cabernet and 5% Merlot blend is balanced and firm. The mixed berry and cassis fruit carries highlights of leaf and herb, plus a note of spice from barrel aging. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$45

**88 Waterbrook 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** The 2009 blend includes 22% Merlot but eliminates Syrah. Tart fruit flavors of raspberry and pie cherry are dressed up in sweet baking spices. Simple, but tasty. *Best Buy.* —P.G.

**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$12

**87 Basel Cellars 2008 Pheasant Run Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** Tart, with brambly berry fruit, and even a bit of apricot. This was a cool year in Walla Walla, and the fruit flavors reflect that. —P.G.

**abv:** NA **Price:** \$40

**87 Lujon 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Walla Walla Valley).** Broadly fruity, with a palate of mixed red berries and cherries. Light and balanced, this is well-made, of medium length, and ready to drink right away. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.8% **Price:** \$25

**87 William Church 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** Scents of bacon fat from the new French oak introduce a tight young wine. The cured meat aromas and flavors somehow suggest a splash of Syrah in the blend, though none is noted. Give it a couple more years to smooth out and let the fruit come through. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.9% **Price:** \$30

**86 Hamilton Cellars 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** This 100% Cabernet Sauvignon is clean and almost delicate, with cranberry fruit, red licorice, dry leaves and drying tannins. It fades rather quickly, but would make a nice companion to a simple skirt steak. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$28

**86 Ross Andrew 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Columbia Valley).** A firm, youthful Cabernet, with cassis and blue plum fruit accented by dried herb, graphite and asphalt. As it sat in the glass, a distinct leathery aroma emerged and the fruit quickly faded. —P.G.

**abv:** 13.8% **Price:** \$38

**85 Columbia Crest 2009 H3 Cabernet Sauvignon (Horse Heaven Hills).** Strong scents of vanilla and fresh-baked pastry inform this wine, with a floral, lightly soapy character to the aromas. It is pleasant enough, but fades quickly. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$15

## CABERNET FRANC

**93 Tranche 2008 Estate Cabernet Franc (Walla Walla Valley).** Whether or not you consider yourself a fan of varietal Cabernet Franc, this is a wine to explore and to savor. Pure fruit is set amidst generous streaks of herb and earth, framed by firm tannins. The wine opens slowly, and pretty cherry flavors emerge, along with black olive, pencil lead and complex barrel notes. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

**abv:** 15.1% **Price:** \$25

**92 Tamarack Cellars 2009 Cabernet Franc (Wahluke Slope).** This is 100% varietal, and a star in the excellent Tamarack lineup. Deep and dense, with black cherry, iron, cherry liqueur, licorice and polished tannins, this long and satisfying Cab Franc can be cellared for a decade or more. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$28

**91 Barrister 2009 Cabernet Franc (Columbia Valley).** The fruit for this excellent Cabernet Franc is sourced from wide-ranging vineyards throughout the Yakima, Columbia and Walla Walla valleys. Aged 18 months in a mix of French, American and Hungarian oak, it is the most accessible of the new red wine releases from Barrister. The tart red fruits are coated with creamy caramel and pretty toast notes, and it sails like clean silk into a long, smooth, buttery finish. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$28

**89 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Cold Creek Vineyard Cabernet Franc (Columbia Valley).** It's a pleasure to see a Cold Creek Cabernet Franc once again, here blended with 17% Cabernet Sauvignon. Forward, young and showing plenty of new oak, not yet fully integrated, it has enormous potential, based on the tight purple and black fruit that is considerably masked at the moment. Give this one some years in the cellar, and it should reward you. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$30

**89 Stevens 2009 Stevens Franc Cabernet Franc (Yakima Valley).** Tasted pre-release, but this is already showing very pretty cherry fruit at its core. Stevens is one of a handful of Washington wineries to showcase the very best central Yakima Valley vineyards exclusively, and this compact, tannic wine nicely captures the strengths of the valley, the grapes and the vintage. Details of bark and spice suggest that further bottle age will continue to improve it. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$30

**88 Basel Cellars 2008 Cabernet Franc (Columbia Valley).** A tightly wound wine with strong layers of bark and earth around tart cassis and berry fruit. There is plenty of natural acid, a sharp and tasty edge to the tannins and a promise of better things to come with a few years of bottle age. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$36

**85 DiStefano 2007 Sogno Cabernet Franc (Columbia Valley).** A late release for this vintage, it remains tannic and earthy, with muted fruit.

**abv:** NA **Price:** \$36

Some pretty tobacco scents add interest, though the rather high alcohol still burns on the finish. Drink up. —P.G.

**abv:** 15.5% **Price:** \$25

## MALBEC

**92 Stevens 2009 Timley Malbec (Yakima Valley).** Deep purple, this riveting Malbec melds dark red and blue fruits to the grip and texture of ripe Yakima Valley tannins. Think clean earth lightly dusted with chocolate, and you have the finish. A powerful wine with excellent cellar potential. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$34

**90 Castillo De Feliciano 2009 Phinny Hill Vineyard Malbec (Horse Heaven Hills).** For full review see page 10.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$38

**89 Flying Trout 2008 Mary's Block Windrow Vineyard Malbec (Walla Walla Valley).** Tarty autumnal flavors emphasize mountain berries, dried leaves and forest floor accents. A streak of vanilla, a whiff of caramel and generous, juicy acidity elevate the mouthfeel. From young vines, with great potential. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$37

**89 Pondera 2008 Reserve Malbec (Columbia Valley).** An intriguing effort, black as coal, thick and pungent, with generous aromas of loam and funk. The fruit is ripe enough, but the standout scents and flavors run to funk and loam. The wine lingers through a long finish, with tannins that call to mind herbal tea. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.5% **Price:** \$34

**89 William Church 2009 Gamache Vineyard Malbec (Columbia Valley).** Black raspberry, blueberry and black cherry fruit is at the heart of this tart, racy wine. These primary fruit flavors are presented in a clean, immaculate frame of mostly neutral oak. Good length, with just a hint of finishing heat. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.7% **Price:** \$30

**88 Beresan 2007 Malbec (Walla Walla Valley).** A bright, tart mix of fruit runs a gamut from citrus to apple to cherry. Flavors suggest young vines; clean, juicy and tasty with pure but simple fruit. A wine to enjoy while it's in the bloom of youth. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$29

**88 Hamilton Cellars 2008 Malbec (Columbia Valley).** Light and leafy, despite the substantial alcohol reading, this well-integrated, nicely-balanced wine is pure Malbec. The elements of leaf, herb and forest floor all mix well with the pretty red fruit. —P.G.

**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$30

**86 Basel Cellars 2008 Chelle den Millie Vineyard Malbec (Columbia Valley).** Herbal and tight, with a whiff of burnt rubber in front of some tart fruit. There is some concentration, and with more bottle age the wine may yet flesh out a bit. —P.G.

**abv:** NA **Price:** \$36

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## MERLOT

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### 94 Abeja 2009 Merlot (Columbia Valley).

Abeja winemaker John Abbott sources fruit for this 100% Merlot from the estate (Heather Hill) vineyard and old-vine Bacchus grapes. Lush and full across the palate, this utterly delicious wine marshals an army of pretty red and black fruit into a silky smooth flavor formation, then wraps them in a tapestry of floral, caramel, coconut, coffee and chocolate highlights. **Editors' Choice.** —P.G.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$38

### 92 Tamarack Cellars 2008 Merlot (Columbia Valley).

Tamarack blends grapes from an astonishing number of sites scattered across the length and breadth of the Columbia Valley, and yet makes wines that are distinctive, polished, generous, and focused. The 2008 Merlot includes 5% each Cabernet Sauvignon and Cab Franc. Its structure is firmly Cab-like, its fruit broadly displayed across the midpalate, a mix of ripe strawberries and cherries dusted with sweet baking spices and cocoa. It's a joyride from start to finish. **Editors' Choice.** —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$28

### 91 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Cold Creek Vineyard Merlot (Columbia Valley).

For full review see page 9. **Editors' Choice.**

abv: 15%

Price: \$28

### 91 Three Rivers 2009 Merlot (Columbia Valley).

For full review see page 10. **Editors' Choice.**

abv: 14.8%

Price: \$19

### 90 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Ethos Reserve Merlot (Columbia Valley).

For full review see page 10.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$31

### 90 Mannina Cellars 2009 Pepper Bridge Vineyard Merlot (Walla Walla Valley).

Nicely done, with plum and cherry compote anchoring the core. Ripe, almost jammy, full and fleshy, this snaps into focus with crisp acidity and gentle tannins. —P.G.

abv: 13.8%

Price: \$24

### 90 Milbrandt Vineyards 2009 The Estates Merlot (Wahluke Slope).

Dark and dusty, with streaks of metal and mineral, this complex Merlot retains the elegance so rarely found in domestic versions. Cassis and plum flavors melt into supple tannins soaked in espresso. Ready to drink now. —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$25

### 90 Pepper Bridge 2008 Merlot (Walla Walla Valley).

Sweet, rich and luscious in a palate-enveloping style, this cherry-bomb of a Merlot opens with a rush of ripe, round, fruit-liqueur flavors. Delicious as it is, it hangs there right into a slightly alcoholic finish. Some further bottle age should make for continued improvement. —P.G.

abv: 14.1%

Price: \$50

### 89 Barrister 2009 Artz Vineyard Merlot (Red Mountain).

A Port-like nose sends up scents

of raisins and prunes soaked in chocolate. The wine is thick, dark and tannic, evoking the Barrister house style and the heavier tannins of the Red Mountain vineyard site. Just a hint of green stem creeps into the finish. —P.G.

abv: 14.7%

Price: \$27

### 89 Columbia Crest 2008 Grand Estates Merlot (Columbia Valley).

Thoroughly delicious, this seamlessly integrated, palate-coating Merlot matches pretty berry fruit to impressive barrel flavors. Coffee, toffee and chocolate are there in abundance, smoothing out dusty tannins and adding a suggestion of sweetness.

**Best Buy.** —P.G.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$12

### 89 Waterbrook 2009 Merlot (Columbia Valley).

For full review see page 14. **Best Buy.**

abv: 13.3%

Price: \$12

### 88 Basel Cellars 2008 Pheasant Run Vineyard Merlot (Walla Walla Valley).

A spicy start of snappy raspberry and cherry fruit mixes with notes of dried leaf and citrusy acidity. Orange peel highlights accent the acid and bring a slight bitterness that's not unpleasant. —P.G.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$28

### 88 Forgeron 2007 Klipsun Vineyard Merlot (Red Mountain).

Released more than four years after harvest, this astringent, oaky Merlot remains in a dumb phase. Barrel flavors of bourbon and vanilla quickly take over the nose and the palate, though there is a suggestion of compact power and black fruit lurking in the background. Give it a lot of decanting time. —P.G.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$48

### 88 Woodward Canyon 2009 Merlot (Columbia Valley).

The almost-16% alcohol is difficult to ignore here, as it seems to blow away the nuances that these Woodward Canyon Merlots are usually so good at expressing. As a result, the fruit seems simple, with sweet berry and hints of oranges. It's round and concentrated, but not as textural and detailed as past vintages. —P.G.

abv: 15.8%

Price: \$44

### 87 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Canoe Ridge Estate Merlot (Horse Heaven Hills).

Pleasant, soft and smooth upon entry, this supple, almost buttery wine feels unusually light for this vineyard designate. Flavors suggest watermelon and strawberry, gently coated with a soft layer of coconut, cracker and butter cookie. Tasty, but not for long keeping. —P.G.

abv: NA

Price: \$22

### 87 Forgeron 2008 Merlot (Columbia Valley).

A cool vintage shows through in the lighter style of this Merlot. Strawberry is the dominant fruit flavor, although the time in new oak is what dominates currently. The scent and vanilla flavor of American oak, though accounting just 20% of the barrels, comes across quite powerfully. Give this one another year or two. —P.G.

abv: 14.2%

Price: \$30

### 86 Balboa 2009 Mirage Vineyard Merlot (Columbia Valley).

Pleasantly fruity, with tart raspberry fruit, this easy, accessible Merlot from a single vineyard finishes with a light lick of toast. —P.G.

abv: 14.1%

Price: \$22

### 86 Columbia Crest 2009 H3 Merlot (Horse Heaven Hills).

Vanilla and cookie dough flavors dominate. The fruit is light and simple cherry candy; the tannins are equally light. Quaffable and refreshing. —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$15

### 85 Preston 2007 Estate Grown Merlot (Columbia Valley).

A cedary, slightly chemical aroma masks the fruit, and it is barrel flavors, more than berry flavors, that flood the palate. Overall it's a smooth, modestly-proportioned Merlot that's ready for near-term drinking. —P.G.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$14

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## PETIT VERDOT

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### 94 Sineann 2009 Champoux Vineyard Petit Verdot (Columbia Valley).

As good as varietal Petit Verdot gets, this delicious effort marries ripe red and black fruit to firm tannins streaked with minerals. It has the density and length of a cellar-worthy powerhouse, yet retains the elegance and balance to drink young. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$NA

### 88 Hard Row To Hoe 2008 Burning Desire Petit Verdot (Yakima Valley).

A pretty nose topped with floral notes leads into a forward, fruity wine, with purple berries and plums dominating. Grace notes of anise and biscuit, along with a streak of vanilla, highlight the finish. —P.G.

abv: 14.2%

Price: \$35

### 87 Animale 2009 Petit Verdot (Columbia Valley).

Only one barrel was made with fruit from the Doc Stewart vineyard on the Wahluke Slope. The saturated color and a nose redolent of forest floor and dried leaves are attractive, but the fruit falls rather lightly on the palate, delivering strawberry-candy flavors. Balanced and a bit earthy. —P.G.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$28

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## BARBERA

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### 92 Tranche 2007 Barbera (Columbia Valley).

The soft but flavorful entry into a land of dark fruits, smoke and espresso barely hints at the wine to come. Give it time to breathe and it opens into a wonderfully complex, smooth and creamy wine with no rough edges. Pretty red fruit, seductive and lingering, is matched to hints of chocolate from 30 months in neutral barrels. **Editors' Choice.** —P.G.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$25

### 89 Animale 2009 Barbera (Washington).

This thick, purple-hued wine offers a rich mix of fruits, from brambly blackberry to plum and even a bit of spiced pear. The blend of ripe fruits and pep-

pery spices is intriguing, and the flavors twist and twirl through a medium-long finish. —P.G.

abv: NA Price: \$24

**88 Wind Rose 2009 Red Heaven Barbera (Red Mountain).** Dusty scents of spice and cinnamon lead into a fruity red wine with a generous wash of oak. The cherry fruit is focused and tight, with a hint of cut tobacco adding interest. —P.G.

abv: 14.5% Price: \$25

## SANGIOVESE

**88 Nine Hats 2008 Sangiovese (Columbia Valley).** It's safe to assume that the Sangiovese in this wine was originally intended for Long Shadows super Tuscan Saggi red. Classy fruit is in the forefront, bright and high toned, with sweet cherry notes. A smooth midpalate extends into a pleasing finish that's balanced and silky, with medium length. —P.G.

abv: NA Price: \$25

**87 Balboa 2008 Candy Mountain Vineyard Sangiovese (Columbia Valley).** Single vineyard, pure Sangiovese—rare in Washington—yields a compact, fruity wine with cherry and cassis flavors. There is a high-toned lift to the aromas, and plenty of supporting acidity. —P.G.

abv: 14.1% Price: \$24

**87 Mannina Cellars 2009 Seven Hills Vineyard Sangiovese (Walla Walla Valley).** A firm, somewhat muscular wine, blending in 16% Merlot and aged in neutral oak barrels. Leaf and truffle notes abound, with the distinctively acidic underpinning of Sangiovese. Light strawberry-cherry fruit gently fades through a clean finish. —P.G.

abv: 13.9% Price: \$22

## SYRAH

**94 Ross Andrew 2009 Old Block Boushey Vineyard Syrah (Columbia Valley).** The first Ross Andrew vintage for this Old Block (original planting) Boushey Syrah, it clearly displays the vineyard's defining characteristics—a powerful mix of herb, funk, game and brambly berry fruit flavors. Depth, density, complexity and nicely layered highlights make this a wine that never quits on you. It tastes like old vine fruit should—subtle, supple and balanced. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

abv: 14.2% Price: \$65

**93 Betz Family 2009 La Serenne Syrah (Yakima Valley).** The best of the new Syrah releases from Betz, this massive wine, sourced from the outstanding Boushey Vineyard, packs tart black fruit into a tight frame of licorice-soaked tannins. There are traces of clean earth, light mineral and smoked meat, while the tannins are kept in close check. There's terrific structure and poise in a wine of substantial power. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

abv: NA Price: \$55

**93 L'Ecole No. 41 2009 Seven Hills Vineyard Estate Syrah (Walla Walla Valley).** A pure varietal blend from the estate vineyard, this has every-

thing you look for in Walla Walla Syrah—black fruits, loam, graphite, balsamic—and an inviting scent of orange liqueur. Licorice, iron and a concentrated, muscular depth elevate the finish. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

abv: 15% Price: \$37

**93 Tranche 2008 Estate Syrah (Walla Walla Valley).** The first Syrah in an expanding lineup of Tranche estate wines from the Blue Mountain Vineyard, this exceptional effort hews to a European style despite its substantial alcohol. Initially dark and smoky, hinting at streaks of herb and showing compact berry fruit flavors, it broadens out and expands aromatically, weaving in highlights of cured meats, bacon and clean earth. Just a dollop of herb and stem adds further interest, in a wine that retains its elegance along with exceptional power. *Cellar Selection.* —P.G.

abv: 15.1% Price: \$35

**92 Basel Cellars 2007 Pheasant Run Vineyard Syrah (Walla Walla Valley).** Full in the mouth, rich with a mix of pastry fruits, fruitcake, baking spices, clove and coffee, this decadent pleasure is like drinking a Christmas cake. Raisins soaked in a Bourbon sauce come to mind, along with plum pudding. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

abv: 14.9% Price: \$28

**92 Ross Andrew 2009 Boushey Vineyard Syrah (Columbia Valley).** The Boushey character shines through in this elegant, complex wine. A lovely, sensual mix of loam, mushroom, tobacco and black cherry blends into a stylish wine with exceptional detail all the way through its lengthy finish. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

abv: 13.8% Price: \$34

**92 Upland Estates 2008 Syrah (Snipes Mountain District).** It's a shame that so little of this wine is made, as it is a textbook example of a powerful, beautifully balanced Syrah from this tiny AVA in the heart of the Yakima Valley. Black fruits abound, wrapped in a firm, muscular, polished package by fine-grained tannins and a dark chocolate finish. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

abv: 13.8% Price: \$28

**92 Woodinville Wine Cellars 2009 Syrah (Columbia Valley).** Stillwater Creek grapes anchor this outstanding Syrah. Rich cherry flavors, generously awash in cut tobacco and vanilla, gain extra complexity, with hints of smoke and a streak of dusty earth. It's clean, with good grip, and a long, smooth finish. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

abv: 14.8% Price: \$30

**91 Amavi Cellars 2009 Syrah (Walla Walla Valley).** Fragrant with pretty berry scents, this compact wine rewards some hours of breathing time. The tangy fruit is complemented by streaks of herb, mineral and citrus peel, all woven together into a gently fading finish that adds a lick of dark chocolate. —P.G.

abv: 14.1% Price: \$28

**91 Betz Family 2009 La Côte Patriarche Syrah (Yakima Valley).** As before, this is 100% Syrah from the Red Willow Vineyard's oldest vines. It

can seem rather light when first opened, with pretty raspberry scents that carry delicate hints of herb. Complexities emerge with airing: more subtle whiffs of earth and flower and flavors that don't overwhelm, but seem to keep adding interesting threads of blueberry, black cherry, Asian spice and game. —P.G.

abv: NA Price: \$55

**90 Beresan 2007 Syrah (Columbia Valley).** Subtle and fragrant with pretty blackberry and black cherry fruit, this carries hints of leather and earth, with polished tannins and surprising length. It needs extra hours to open fully, but will reward your patience with extended length and grace notes of plum pudding and black licorice. —P.G.

abv: 14.8% Price: \$25

**90 Forgeron 2008 Syrah (Columbia Valley).** Forgeron makes a full-bodied style of Syrah, with an almost jammy midpalate loaded with boysenberry and blueberry fruit. Veins of herb and loam lead into a generously chocolaty finish. The fruit is 100% from the Boushey Vineyard. —P.G.

abv: 14.5% Price: \$30

**90 NxNW 2008 Les Collines Syrah (Walla Walla Valley).** This classically styled Walla Walla Syrah is sourced from the excellent Les Collines Vineyard. Wreathed in smoke and suggestions of funky earth, the black fruits shine through and the tannins have grip and muscle. Solid and substantial. —P.G.

abv: 14.5% Price: \$40

**90 Stevens 2009 BlackTongue Syrah (Yakima Valley).** Coal black, this no-holds-barred Syrah is for those who love the dark side of the grape. Flavors of smoked cherries fill the palate, which is dense and tannic. At the core is a mesh of bark, earth and graphite, but the wine retains its balance with the perfect mix of ripe tannins and natural acidity. —P.G.

abv: 14.9% Price: \$30

**89 Amavi Cellars 2009 Les Collines Vineyard Syrah (Walla Walla Valley).** Scents of sweet grain run into a mélange of Syrah scents and accents—blackberry pastry, moist loam, balsamic and lead pencil—all nicely structured and balanced. This seems lighter than past vintages, with a quick fade, but it is all in proportion and offers interesting complexity. —P.G.

abv: 14.2% Price: \$34

**89 Betz Family 2009 La Côte Rousse Syrah (Red Mountain).** Sourced equally from Ciel du Cheval and Ranch at the End of the Road vineyards on Red Mountain, this offers bright, fresh berry-laden fruit flavors, leading into a black cherry core enhanced with pretty spices and a whiff of chocolate. The tannins are proportionate but relatively light for this appellation. —P.G.

abv: NA Price: \$55

**89 William Church 2009 Syrah (Columbia Valley).** A blend of grapes from two excellent Yakima Valley vineyards—Dineen and Red Willow—results in a user-friendly Syrah loaded with pretty spices and scents of fresh cut tobacco and black tea. The leafy

aromas wrap around somewhat blocky black cherry and blueberry fruit. —P.G.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$26

**88 Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Syrah (Columbia Valley).** Chunky, forward fruit—a rush of blackberries and black cherry—introduces a full-flavored wine that won't challenge you but will satisfy. The oak treatment is still a little jagged, but the light mocha flavors that wrap around the finish are hard to resist.

**Best Buy.** —P.G.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$13

**88 Columbia Crest 2008 Grand Estates Syrah (Columbia Valley).** Following on the heels of a stylistic shift in 2007, this delivers solid fruit flavors highlighted by tart boysenberry, then brings in light notes of earth, lead pencil and coffee grounds. Tannins are firm and carry the finish through a medium-long fade. **Best Buy.** —P.G.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$12

**88 Nine Hats 2008 Syrah (Columbia Valley).** The second label for the Long Shadows group, this lightly spiced Syrah is built upon a solid foundation of ripe fruit: blueberries and black cherries. There is a pleasing subtext of fresh earth, and a balanced, light finish. —P.G.

abv: NA

Price: \$25

**87 Blacksmith 2009 Syrah (Columbia Valley).** Light raspberry fruit is enhanced by generous layers of coffee and chocolate. Aromatic and inviting, especially at this price, it brings in a hint of the barnyard on the gently fading finish. —P.G.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$15

**86 NxNW 2008 Syrah (Columbia Valley).** The initial impression of young, juicy red berries carries into an astringent wine with streaks of gravel and chalk. It's pleasant, simple but quick to fade. —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$30

**86 Scarborough 2009 The Black Cask Syrah (Yakima Valley).** Grapy and tart, the light, young fruit flavors belie the almost 15% alcohol that is listed. It's dark and smoky, with a bitter, tannic espresso-flavored finish. —P.G.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$30

## RED BLENDS

**94 Corliss Estates 2006 Red (Columbia Valley).** A substantial Bordeaux blend that trips into the palate on cat's feet—a delicate touch that gradually gains mass and dimension. It's compact and balanced, with a core of red fruit, a floral top note, and complex layers of mineral and metal. Give it time to open up, and see how the spicy fruit seamlessly mingles with satiny tannins; it scales up and out without being blocky or tiring. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$65

**93 Pamplin 2008 JRG Red (Columbia Valley).** For full review see page 6. **Editors' Choice.**

abv: 14.7%

Price: \$30

**93 Pepper Bridge 2008 Seven Hills Vineyard Red (Walla Walla Valley).** For full review see page 6. **Editors' Choice.**

abv: 14.1%

Price: \$55

**92 Pamplin 2008 Proprietary Red (Columbia Valley).** This Oregon winery sources fruit for its Proprietary Red from top Washington vineyards on Red Mountain, in Walla Walla and in the Horse Heaven Hills. Mostly Cabernet Sauvignon (it could be labeled as such), it packs its rich raspberry, blueberry and black currant fruit into a precisely-defined, balanced and persistent wine with plenty of power. —P.G.

abv: 14.7%

Price: \$50

**92 Tamarack Cellars 2007 Sagemoor Vineyards Reserve (Columbia Valley).** This very limited reserve mixes old-vine fruit from the Bacchus and Weinbau vineyards (all under the Sagemoor umbrella). Berries, cherries and cassis draw you into a dusty, detailed wine with nuances of herb and earth. A lick of rich dark chocolate ends it with a flourish. —P.G.

abv: 14.8%

Price: \$50

**91 Balboa 2007 Sayulita Red (Walla Walla Valley).** All Pepper Bridge vineyard fruit—62% Cabernet Sauvignon and 38% Syrah—this is right in line with the excellent 2006 Sayulita, which came from the Lefore Vineyard. Bright fruit, tart and tangy, gives a juicy, fresh quality to the mouthfeel. Lots of high-acid berry flavors, are accented by light chocolate and caramel notes from 20 months in second and third use French oak. —P.G.

abv: 14.1%

Price: \$40

**91 Beresan 2006 TomFoolery Red (Walla Walla Valley).** Lovely and rich, drinking beautifully, this limited reserve celebrates the 10-year collaboration of Tom Waliser (grower) and Tom Glase (winemaker). Fleshy strawberry, mulberry and cherry fruit leads smoothly into a broad midpalate with notes of leaf and herb. Silky tannins wrap into a clean and delicious finish. —P.G.

abv: NA

Price: \$NA

**91 Betz Family 2009 Bésolleil (Columbia Valley).** Bésolleil remains Grenache-dominated, but this new vintage includes 14% Syrah, 10% Mourvèdre, and (for the first time) 9% Cinsault. Bright and penetrating, the brilliant raspberry fruit is the star here, tart and fresh, with the juiciness of a young Zinfandel. —P.G.

abv: NA

Price: \$45

**91 Columbia Crest 2008 Walter Clore Private Reserve Red Wine (Columbia Valley).** Possibly the best Walter Clore to date, this is firm, with substantial dark-fruit flavors swathed in swirls of loam, blood, sweet tomato and red licorice. The relative coolness of the vintage seems to have allowed extra details to emerge, and the barrel aging has been handled sensitively. **Cellar Selection.** —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$NA

**91 Pepper Bridge 2008 Trine Red (Walla Walla Valley).** A new blend for Pepper Bridge, Trine is named for the three main partners and includes

all five Bordeaux red grapes. Tannic and earthy, with a powerful core of dark fruit, this needs more bottle time to fully integrate. Layers of fruit are mixed with loam, iron, licorice and espresso, full-bodied and deep. —P.G.

abv: 14.1%

Price: \$60

**91 Tranche 2007 Slice of Pape Red (Columbia Valley).** Syrah, Grenache, Mourvèdre and Cinsault are included in this blend, along with a splash of co-fermented Roussanne. As with all the Tranche releases, the aromatics are seductive, the mouthfeel smooth and textural and the fruit immaculate. Brambly berry and plum flavors link to a finish with veins of graphite and cola. —P.G.

abv: 15.5%

Price: \$35

**90 Balboa 2008 Mith Red (Columbia Valley).** Noted only as a proprietary blend, this seems to be showing a strong Cabernet influence. It's tight and astringently tannic, with pure cassis fruit anchoring the core. Focused and closed down, but promising. —P.G.

abv: 14.3%

Price: \$NA

**90 Castillo De Feliciano 2009 Bolsa Negra Reserva Red (Horse Heaven Hills).** For full review see page 10.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$56

**90 Pondera 2008 Consensio Red (Columbia Valley).** Pondera's Sericus is based upon Merlot, while this Bordeaux-style blend is mostly Cabernet Sauvignon. Solid fruit flavors of blueberry and plum are set amid sweet spices from the barrel aging. Cinnamon, sweet black tea and fine tannins lead through a balanced, lingering finish, with good grip and weight. —P.G.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$34

**90 Sineann 2009 Abondante Red (Columbia Valley).** High-toned and fruity, the Abondante mixes cherry candy with tropical flavors. Full-bodied, robust and ready to drink. —P.G.

abv: 14.8%

Price: \$24

**90 Stevens 2008 424 Red Blend (Yakima Valley).** A five-grape Bordeaux-style blend (39% Cabernet Franc, 36% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, 7% Malbec, 3% Petit Verdot), the 424 is bright and gamy, the fruit showing pretty Bing cherry flavors in abundance. Fruity and supple with just a hint of leather, this is well-built without being too tannic, and shows no trace of its almost 15% alcohol. It was aged for 20 months in half new, half once-used French oak. —P.G.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$35

**90 Woodinville Wine Cellars 2009 Little Bear Creek Red (Columbia Valley).** This Bordeaux-style blend includes Cabernet Sauvignon, Cab Franc, Merlot and Malbec. A tasty, toasty bottle, it's loaded with ripe black fruits, notably cherry and cassis. The tannins are supple and seem soaked in Kahlua. —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$20

**89 Balboa 2008 Constrictor Red (Walla Walla Valley).** This is all Pepper Bridge fruit, a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Merlot. Nice fruit flavors of cherries and cassis roll into a lightly pep-

pery wine with a mix of barrel toast flavors and a textural midpalate. —P.G.

abv: 14.2%

Price: \$36

**89 Nine Hats 2008 Red Wine (Columbia Valley).** A Bordeaux-style blend from the extra barrels in the multi-wine Long Shadows lineup, this nicely proportioned wine includes 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 24% Merlot, and smaller amounts of Cab Franc, Petit Verdot and Malbec. Superb vineyard sources—Weinbau, Wallula, Champoux and StoneTree—along with aging in new French oak marks this as a wine with high-end aspirations. Smoky, oaky, textural and complex. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.

abv: NA

Price: \$25

**89 Pepper Bridge 2008 Pepper Bridge Vineyard Red (Walla Walla Valley).** In a cool year such as 2008, Pepper Bridge fruit gets a bit lean. This is tart and light, strawberry and cherry, amply supported with dried leaf and herb flavors. A streak of vanilla accents the hard tannins. —P.G.

abv: 14.1%

Price: \$55

**89 Pondera 2008 Sericus Red (Columbia Valley).** A Bordeaux-style blend of 63% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cab Franc and a splash of Malbec. It keeps the palate relatively light but nicely balanced, with leaf and berry flavors intertwined. It falls just a little short on the finish or the score would be higher. —P.G.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$30

**89 William Church 2008 Sur La Mer Red (Columbia Valley).** This five-grape, Bordeaux-style blend is quite flavorful, in a fruity, chunky sort of way. Big, bold cherry fruit is rolled in smoky, liquorous, almost buttery barrel flavors. Highly enjoyable, and ready to drink. —P.G.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$32

**88 Balboa 2008 Reserve Red (Columbia Valley).** A Cabernet Sauvignon, Sangiovese and Merlot blend, the reserve fills the mid-palate with a pleasing mix of red fruits. The high acids of the vintage show through clearly, lifting the flavors into an even, peppery, lightly herbal finish. —P.G.

abv: 14.1%

Price: \$30

**88 Barrister NV Rough Justice Red (Columbia Valley).** The sixth version of this nonvintage blend is delightfully rough, like an old truck with a failing muffler. Chewy, tannic, earthy and smoky, it lunges ahead with massive barrel flavors, atop sharp, tart red fruits. This blend is 40% Merlot, 25% Syrah, 22% Cab Franc and 13% Cabernet Sauvignon, and feels more acidic than previous versions. —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$21

**88 Basel Cellars 2008 Merriment Red (Walla Walla Valley).** Starts with a smoky nose with fruit notes of mixed berry and pie cherries. Light notes of baking spices weave through, into a solid, well-balanced red blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Cab Franc. —P.G.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$48

**88 Cloudlift Cellars 2009 Ascent (Columbia Valley).** This Bordeaux-style blend, one of four from this tiny winery, is almost three quarters Cabernet Franc. Raspberry and black currant fruit, tight and tart, anchors a focused young wine with nuances of dark chocolate and coffee grounds. —P.G.

abv: 13.7%

Price: \$23

**88 Cloudlift Cellars 2009 Panorama (Columbia Valley).** More than half Merlot, with the rest a mix of the two Cabs, this is spicy, toasty and firm. It's a good, all-purpose expression of Washington's basic Bordeaux blend style, clean and ready to drink. —P.G.

abv: 13.6%

Price: \$25

**88 Mannina Cellars 2009 Cali Red (Walla Walla Valley).** The 2009 Cali is half Cabernet Sauvignon, 42% Merlot, and the rest Sangiovese. An interesting wine aromatically, with sharp scents of herb, mint and pine needle, it's well-blended, smooth and balanced, with the herbal nature of the fruit on full display. —P.G.

abv: 13.8%

Price: \$18

**88 Ott & Murphy 2008 L'Entente Red (Horse Heaven Hills).** This could be labeled Syrah, with just 17% Mourvèdre and small amounts of co-fermented Viognier and Roussanne in the mix. High-toned and complex, it wraps dark fruit in highlights of dried herbs, black olives and clean earth. The barrel aging—22 months in one quarter new French oak—brings in Bourbon barrel scents. —P.G.

abv: 14.3%

Price: \$31

**87 Hamilton Cellars 2008 Bona Vita Red (Columbia Valley).** From a mix of Columbia Valley vineyards, the Bona Vita is mostly Malbec, with Cabernet Sauvignon, Cab Franc and Merlot contributing to the blend. Pretty strawberry fruit is somewhat overtaken by aggressively smoky barrel aging, or so it would seem. Charcoal and smoke components lend a slightly burnt edge to the tannins. —P.G.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$28

**87 Hightower 2009 Out of Line Red (Red Mountain).** This easy-drinking, estate-grown, Bordeaux-style blend tilts more toward Merlot than Cabernet Sauvignon in this new vintage. Medium-bodied and fully ripe, it falls just a little flat on the mid-palate, and finishes with a suggestion of alcoholic heat. —P.G.

abv: NA

Price: \$25

**87 Stevens 2009 YesOuiSi Red (Yakima Valley).** This is made from declassified barrels originally intended for Stevens 424. It's sharp-edged and spicy, not yet wellintegrated, but substantial, with wild berry flavors and slightly green tannins. A good quaffer, or pair it with a flank steak. —P.G.

abv: 14.2%

Price: \$18

**87 Tamarack Cellars 2009 Firehouse Red (Columbia Valley).** This popular blend, now up to nine grapes sourced from across the Columbia Valley, spends time in 40% new oak. This 2009 lives up to past vintages, though perhaps falling on the lighter

end of the scale, with pleasant fruit flavors and a hint of toast. —P.G.

abv: 13.9%

Price: \$18

**87 Upland Estates 2008 Teunis Red (Snipes Mountain District).** A Bordeaux-style blend, this begins with concentrated strawberry and cherry flavors, rich and liquorous. A majority of the oak was Hungarian, and a strong vanilla streak runs through the middle and on into the finish. For some palates the fruit and the oak will seem a bit mismatched, but for others this will be right on the mark. —P.G.

abv: 13.9%

Price: \$45

**87 William Church 2009 Bishop's Blend Red (Columbia Valley).** Almost half Syrah, with the rest a mix of Bordeaux grapes, this affordable red offers thick, liquorous, darkly-fruited scents and flavors. Tannins are astringent; despite the hearty entry, the wine seems to lose complexity and depth in the mid-palate. —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$20

**87 William Church 2008 2 Spires Red (Columbia Valley).** Pretty cherry fruit is at the center here, with light scents of fresh cut tobacco. The blend is two thirds Syrah, one third Cabernet Sauvignon, balanced and highlighted by a streak of cinnamon toast. —P.G.

abv: 14.9%

Price: \$28

**86 Basel Cellars 2008 Inspired Red (Columbia Valley).** Quite light, suggesting fruit that was picked at less than optimal ripeness. This thin wine has tart red fruit, a streak of caraway seed and a finish with sweet cracker highlights. —P.G.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$40

**86 Beresan 2008 The Buzz Yellow Jacket Vineyard Red (Walla Walla Valley).** Light fruit flavors run from melon into pale strawberry, with tannins that seem just on the edge of ripeness. Pleasant for the near term, but not for cellaring. —P.G.

abv: 14.4%

Price: \$19

**86 Cloudlift Cellars 2009 Cloud 2 (Columbia Valley).** Medium-light, with clean and fresh berry fruit flavors, sharp and tart. It starts out with some quick punch, then fades away in a fast finish. —P.G.

abv: 13.7%

Price: \$24

**86 Cloudlift Cellars 2009 Halcyon (Columbia Valley).** This Bordeaux-style blend, one of four from this tiny winery, is two thirds Cabernet Sauvignon. The somewhat thin cranberry and raspberry fruit, high in acid, is not quite substantial enough to completely shed its candied character. —P.G.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$24

**86 Columbia Crest 2009 H3 Les Chevaux Red (Horse Heaven Hills).** A multigrade blend that seems to be lacking focus, this tastes strongly of vanilla and butter cookies, the fruit extremely light. —P.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$15

**86 Convergence Zone Cellars 2009 Storm Front Red (Red Mountain).** A Bordeaux-

style blend, tart and fruity, with an unusual fruit flavor mix that starts with citrus and orange and runs into bright berries. Two things keep the score down—a chalky edge to the tannins, and some noticeable volatility (a whiff of nail polish) on the nose. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.6% **Price:** \$28

**86 DiStefano 2008 Meritage (Columbia Valley).** Half of this Bordeaux-style blend is Cabernet Sauvignon, the other half a blend of Merlot, Cab Franc and Petit Verdot. Pretty cherry fruit and sweet oak flavors are the two main threads here, but they have yet to meld together into a seamless whole. The wine opens with plenty of black cherry flavor, then hits a wall of tannin and astringent dried wood. —P.G.  
**abv:** 15% **Price:** \$20

**86 Ott & Murphy 2009 Double Bluff Red (Horse Heaven Hills).** This pretty, Rhône-style red blend consists of roughly equal parts Grenache, Cinsault and Syrah, with a splash of co-fermented Roussanne. It smells young and fruity, with candied scents of strawberry and raspberry. With plenty of breathing it gains a bit of midpalate weight, but the candied character remains. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$19

**86 Wind Rose 2009 Bravo Rosso (Washington).** This is Primitivo-Barbera blend with dabs of Nebbiolo and Dolcetto in the mix. It's light and youthful, with cranberry fruit and the sort of juicy acidity that freshens the palate. Not especially concentrated, but crisp and clean, with a bracing minerality. —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$18

**85 Scarborough 2009 Midnight Red (Yakima Valley).** This Rhône-style red brings Grenache and Mourvèdre from Meek Vineyard and Syrah from Lewis; good sources both. Hard and fruity, the forward flavors quickly hit a wall of tannin, with hints of dried leaf in a tart, short finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** NA **Price:** \$25

## OTHER RED WINES

**92 Animale 2009 Mourvèdre (Red Mountain).** A first for Animale, and a terrific success, despite the almost 16% alcohol. Bursting with ripe berry flavors, this complex and flat-out delicious wine goes well beyond its highly-extracted black fruit. Wet rock, chalk and mineral extend and enhance the finish, with a chocolaty kiss at the very end. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.  
**abv:** 15.8% **Price:** \$26

**92 Trio 2009 Far Away Vineyard Mourvèdre (Yakima Valley).** For full review see page 8. *Editors' Choice.*  
**abv:** 13.9% **Price:** \$26

**91 Trio 2009 Far Away Vineyard Grenache (Yakima Valley).** This is an instantly loveable Grenache, bursting with ripe, sweet raspberries and cherries. Young and fresh, it's like sucking on a really good candy; then it finishes with a flourish of toast and mocha. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.  
**abv:** 13.7% **Price:** \$26

**89 Animale 2009 Petite Sirah (Yakima Valley).** Animale's newest Petite Sirah includes 15% Cabernet Franc in the blend, a welcome addition that adds some dried herbs to the mix of bright berries and earthy tannins. It's dark, powerful red wine, from a cool site in a warm vintage. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.4% **Price:** \$26

**89 Ott & Murphy 2009 Grenache (Columbia Valley).** Dark and smoky, this rather heavy-set Grenache has a chocolaty note from start to finish. The raspberry and black cherry fruit is tight but substantial, and the barrel aging—21 months in 20% new French oak—handled just right. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.3% **Price:** \$27

**88 Trio 2009 Far Away Vineyard Zinfandel (Yakima Valley).** Spicy cranberry fruit leads, sharp-edged and tight. This remains a tightly-focused Zinfandel, clearly Washington in style rather than California, with bright acidity and hints of herb and stem in the finish. —P.G.  
**abv:** 14.1% **Price:** \$20

**87 Animale 2009 Zinfandel (Columbia Valley).** Bright and concentrated raspberry fruit is the hallmark of this Washington Zinfandel, with the acidity it needs to support almost 16% alcohol. Hightoned and juicy, the fruit shines, though the finish turns chalky. —P.G.  
**abv:** 15.9% **Price:** \$24

**86 Animale 2009 Dolcetto (Columbia Valley).** This alcoholic wine (15.9%, and you can taste it) is also tongue-scrapingly tannic. The black cherry and cassis fruit is fabulous, and quite ripe, but the alcohol starts to burn out the finish. Let the record show that some tasters will love this wine. —P.G.  
**abv:** 15.9% **Price:** \$24

## NEW YORK

### RIESLING

**90 Bloomer Creek 2010 Tanzen Dame Auten Vineyard 1st Harvest Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Buoyantly aromatic with notes of fresh wildflowers, preserved apricots and honey, this dry Riesling made from a tiny single-vineyard crop balances elegant crushed stone and stonefruit flavors with a focused acidity and stark orange peel astringency. Balanced and elegantly structured, it finishes on a long, meandering orange inflected note. —A.I.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$18

**90 Bloomer Creek 2010 Tanzen Dame Morehouse Road Vineyard 2nd Harvest VS Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Completely atypical to any other producer in the Finger Lakes, or likely, beyond, this semisweet Riesling is a fascinating study of winemaker Kim Engle's unusual style. Curiously waxy on the nose with notes of lanolin and honeycomb, caramelized sugar and potpourri, it takes a while for the palate to integrate all of the flavors and aromas that emanate. Appley and brisk with tart pink grapefruit and lemon

honey flavors, it finishes with intense focus and penetration. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$34

**90 Red Newt Cellars 2009 Davis Farms Vineyard Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Powerful and complex, with layer upon layer of smoky mineral tones, musky florals, and crisp, tart tangerine and peach fruit flavors. Just off-dry in style, Red Newt's Davis Farms Vineyard is spectacularly refreshing, full of zingy lime-juice acidity and boasts a piercing steeliness that reverberates long after each sip. —A.I.  
**abv:** 11.9% **Price:** \$20

**89 Bloomer Creek 2010 Tanzen Dame Auten Vineyard 1st Harvest VS Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Intoxicating on the nose, with super-sized fruit and floral aromatics, this slightly off-dry Riesling from Bloomer Creek is proof positive of just how ripe the 2010 Finger Lakes vintage was. Surprisingly complex on the palate, it reveals itself in layers of tea leaves and potpourri, crushed stones, and bracing orange-tinged acidity. —A.I.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$30

**89 Dr. Konstantin Frank 2010 Semi-Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** For full review see page 12.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$15

**89 Red Newt Cellars 2009 Lahoma Vineyards Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Fleishy yellow peach and honey sweet tangerine flavors are deeply concentrated in Red Newt's rich, almost velvety, Lahoma Vineyards Riesling. It's focused and clean on the palate, with a kick of freshly picked herbs and crisp fennel on the finish. —A.I.  
**abv:** 9.6% **Price:** \$20

**89 Red Newt Cellars 2009 Sawmill Creek Vineyards Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Strikingly dry, with a mouthwatering pucker of quince and lime, Red Newt's Sawmill Creek Vineyard is full of verve and focus, but also significant body and texture. Fragrant with abundant aromas of white blossoms and zesty citrus, it finishes on a deliciously steely, petrol-tinged note. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12.6% **Price:** \$20

**88 Bloomer Creek 2010 Tanzen Dame Morehouse Road Vineyard 2nd Harvest VS Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Round and rich on the palate, with an intensely floral, marmalade tone, Bloomer Creek's late October-harvested wine from Morehouse Road boasts a palate that's rich and honeyed, yet surprisingly dry in style. Curiously spiced with musky incense, it finishes long, on a delicious orange pekoe tea note. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$34

**88 Heron Hill 2009 Semi-Dry Riesling (New York).** Whispers of smoke and petrol meld into wild heather honey notes on Heron Hill's richly concentrated semidry Riesling. While abundantly floral and fruity, penetrating acidity maintains balance and struc-



ture. Finishes dry, with a deliciously bitter grapefruit-pith note. —A.I.

abv: 11.5%

Price: \$14

**88 Heron Hill 2009 Semi-Sweet Riesling (New York).** Hints of smoke and toasted brioche meld deliciously with sweet, ripe melon tones in this pristine semisweet Riesling from Heron Hill. Juicy and ripe in texture, with concentrated peach and tangerine flavors, its elegantly structured, with zippy acidity and a hint of tea leaf astringency on the finish. —A.I.

abv: 11.5%

Price: \$14

**88 Keuka Lake Vineyards 2010 Semi-Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Green floral notes and pine fronds add a foresty freshness to plump white peach flavors in this off-dry Riesling. Vivacious with sweet tangerine acidity, it's structured and focused, with a finish that lingers. —A.I.

abv: 12.8%

Price: \$18

**88 Red Newt Cellars 2010 Circle Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Struck flint and stones add dimension to abundantly fleshy melon and grapefruit notes in Red Newt's Circle Riesling. Semidry, with a hint of smoked nuts and lemony fresh acidity, it finishes on a deliciously bitter grapefruit-pith note. **Best Buy.** —A.I.

abv: 11.5%

Price: \$12

**88 Red Newt Cellars 2010 Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Verdant fennel and herb notes add freshness to concentrated honeysuckle and tangerine flavors in this fairly dry but fruity Riesling from Red Newt. Vibrant orange-tinged acidity penetrates on the palate, leading to a dry, lingering finish. —A.I.

abv: 12.1%

Price: \$16

**88 Red Newt Cellars 2010 Semi-Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Semidry in style, with penetrating peach and apricot flavors, this deeply concentrated, yet elegantly structured Riesling is an excellent representation of a certain Finger Lakes style. Bracing on the palate despite its initial sweetness, it finishes quite dry, with a whiff of smoke and subtle bite of lime pith. —A.I.

abv: 11.9%

Price: \$14

**88 Sheldrake Point 2010 Riesling (Finger Lakes).** The initially ebullient florals and sweet apricot preserves in Sheldrake Point's standard Riesling gain elegance and subtlety from a bracing shower of acidity. Fresh stone-fruit flavors penetrate deeply on the off-dry palate before trailing off with a whisper of lime oil. —A.I.

abv: 12%

Price: \$15

**88 Sheldrake Point 2010 Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Scents of tea leaves and honeysuckle add a layer of dimension to ripe, rich yellow peach and apricot notes in this densely concentrated Riesling from Sheldrake Point. Surprisingly dry on the palate despite so much sweet fruit flavor, the palate is framed with a shower of lime juice and pith that carries through to a long, mineral finish. —A.I.

abv: 11.9%

Price: \$15

**88 Thirsty Owl Wine Company 2010 Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Veins of slate and chalk add a deeply mineral tone to honeyed lime and orange peel notes on this elegantly structured Riesling. Lean in body, but with a delicious midpalate, it ends on a savory note of underripe apples, dust and smoke. —A.I.

abv: 11.1%

Price: \$15

**87 Belhurst 2010 Semi-Dry Riesling (Seneca Lake).** Almost tropical in style, with abundantly ripe mango and pineapple on the nose and palate, this semidry Riesling is irresistibly lush and fruity. Zippy tangerine acidity and a zesty orange peel note provides refreshing restraint on the finish. —A.I.

abv: 11.5%

Price: \$18

**87 Billsboro 2010 Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Quite earthy in profile with hints of smoke, petroleum and fresh green herbs, there's a distinct minerality in this off-dry Riesling that's compelling. Brisk lime-juice acidity and a hint of citrus rind bitterness accentuates the dry finish. —A.I.

abv: 11.5%

Price: \$16

**87 Chateau Lafayette Reneau 2009 Semidry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Honey and lanolin notes add an unctuous vibe to sweet, concentrated peach and honeysuckle flavors in this semidry Riesling. Its straightforward in its appeal, yet undeniably balanced. Bright acidity and a clean, dry finish make it a welcome companion to everything from veal schnitzel to Chinese takeout. —A.I.

abv: 11.5%

Price: \$15

**87 Glenora 2010 Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Fragrant white florals and concentrated flavors of juicy pink pomelo are effortlessly decadent on this semidry Riesling. While soft and supple on entry, there's a nervy edge of Meyer lemon pith accentuated by a long, mineral-laced finish. —A.I.

abv: 11%

Price: \$16

**87 Knapp 2010 Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Juicy on the nose and palate, with loads of sweet peach and melon, this semidry Riesling is balanced by brisk lime-tinged acidity and crisp starfruit flavors that shine on the midpalate. Finishes on a pleasantly drying jasmine-tea note. —A.I.

abv: 11%

Price: \$15

**87 Lamoreaux Landing 2010 Red Oak Vineyard Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Elegantly fruity, with restrained honeydew and white peach flavors, Lamoreaux Landing's Red Oak Vineyards Riesling is just off-dry with a refreshingly zingy profile. Mineral tones on the midpalate carry through to a pristine finish marked by sprightly green herbs and florals. —A.I.

abv: 12.1%

Price: \$20

**87 Lamoreaux Landing 2010 Semi-Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Lavender honey and lanolin notes are warm and enticing in this semisweet Riesling from Lamoreaux Landing. A tad sugary on the attack, it gains balance on the midpalate thanks to delicate green floral tones and ample notes of bitter lemon pith. —A.I.

abv: 12%

Price: \$13

**86 Brooklyn Oenology 2010 Friend Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Sweet and spicy on the nose, this semisweet Riesling is chock full of concentrated mango and pineapple goodness. Juicy and forward in a sunny, tropical way, it maintains an easygoing freshness with bright citrusy acidity. —A.I.

abv: 11%

Price: \$19

**86 Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards 2010 Riesling (Finger Lakes).** A veritable bouquet of lilacs and white blossoms, Hazlitt's standard Riesling is charmingly feminine with an abundance of sunny peach and quince preserve notes punctuated by musky whiffs of bergamot. Off-dry with a briskly acidic backbone, it finishes as pretty as it starts with a lovely violet scented note. —A.I.

abv: 12%

Price: \$12

**86 Hosmer Winery 2010 Dry Riesling (Cayuga Lake).** While redolent of jasmine blossoms and sweet orange marmalade, Hosmer's dry Riesling is surprisingly austere on the palate with hints of fresh fennel fronds and a gripping lemon acidity. A good match for heavier, savory fare like braised pork belly, it finishes on a pleasantly bitter citrus-pith note. —A.I.

abv: 11.7%

Price: \$13

**86 Inspire Moore 2010 Love Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Hints of bergamot add a musky elegance to tropical notes of sweet melon and tangerine in this beautifully perfumed Riesling. There's a sugariness on the midpalate, but the finish is clean and brisk, with a shower of pink grapefruit acidity. —A.I.

abv: 11%

Price: \$15

**86 McGregor 2010 Semi-Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Smoky and a bit stark with whiffs of struck flint and stone. This off-dry Riesling is piercing on the palate with nervy lime-juice and lime-skin flavors. The finish is medium long, ending on a softly floral, crushed-stone note. —A.I.

abv: 11.5%

Price: \$18

**86 Rock Stream 2009 Semi-Dry Riesling (Seneca Lake).** Fresh herbs and green florals are fresh and fragrant on the nose of this semidry Riesling. Subtly sweet flavors of hibiscus nectar and peach gain complexity with whiffs of freshly ground white pepper and an elegant dusting of chalk on the finish. —A.I.

abv: 11%

Price: \$15

**86 Swedish Hill 2010 Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Waxy citrus skins and fresh pineapple notes are dewy and fresh in this just slightly off-dry Riesling from Swedish Hill. While a bit lean in profile, brisk lemony acidity and a subtly fruited palate make it a refreshing accompaniment to even the most delicately flavored fare. —A.I.

abv: 11.9%

Price: \$16

**86 Ventosa 2010 Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Scents of smoke and sweet roasted chestnuts add a warm, rustic tone to this medium-dry Riesling. Deeply concentrated, with ripe yellow peach and apricot

cot flavors, it's brightened by a shower of lemonade acidity and a snappy lemon-rind finish. —A.I.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$17

**86 Wagner 2009 Select Riesling (Finger Lakes).** While richly concentrated, with a plump, sunny, yellow peach and sweet lemon character, Wagner's Select Riesling boasts darker tones of bitter tea and a slightly herbal aroma that runs from start to finish. It's elegant and restrained on the finish, with puckery lemon and lime pith notes. —A.I.

**abv:** 11.2% **Price:** \$13

**86 Wagner 2009 Semi Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Mysteriously smoky on the nose, with an earthy sheen of crushed stones and steel. Just off-dry and fairly lean in style, it's surprisingly penetrating on the palate, with crisp lime and white peach flavors that linger. —A.I.

**abv:** 11.1% **Price:** \$13

**85 Hosmer Winery 2010 Riesling (Cayuga Lake).** Floral and fruity, with abundantly ripe peach and melon flavors, this semidry Riesling is juicy and sweet without being cloying. Penetrating fruit flavors ease off on the midpalate on the way to a dainty, sugar-laced finish. —A.I.

**abv:** 11.6% **Price:** \$13

**85 Lakewood 2010 Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Fresh and appley, but restrained overall, with just a whisper of smoke and nuts, this semidry Riesling is refreshingly quaffable. A honeyed sweetness that lingers on the finish. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$13

**85 Rock Stream 2009 Riesling (Seneca Lake).** Whiffs of sweet curry spice and fennel are enticing on the nose of this earthy, rather savory Riesling from Rock Stream. Lean in profile and vibrantly acidic with a squeaky, lemony sheen, it's the perfect pairing for subtly spiced South Indian cuisine. —A.I.

**abv:** 11% **Price:** \$15

**85 Seneca Shore NV Amulet DeMarco Vineyards Semi-Dry Riesling (Seneca Lake).** Pungent on the nose with aromas of dried herbs and and sweet spices, there's an exotic character to this full-bodied, semidry Riesling. Flavors of dried pineapple, honey and oolong tea on the midpalate end sharply in steely acidity on the finish. —A.I.

**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$12

**85 Standing Stone 2010 Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Hints of underripe pineapple and green fennel add a clean, refreshing tone to juicy pink-grapefruit flavors on the palate of this medium-dry Riesling. Lemon acidity and a pleasantly bitter grapefruit-pith note give focus and edge on the finish. —A.I.

**abv:** 11.7% **Price:** \$14

**85 Treleven 2009 Semi-Dry Riesling (Finger Lakes).** Aromatically restrained, with hints of green herbs, underripe apple and pineapple on the nose. It's semisweet in style, but brisk and approachable with pretty apple blossom and tart, green apple-skin flavors on the palate. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

**84 Brotherhood 2010 Riesling (New York).** Stunning aromatically, with a veil of smoke and petrol that lingers over fresh, clean Honeycrisp apple aromas. Semidry in style, with a simple, slightly sugary attack, it finishes with just a tinge of green pepper in the backdrop. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$10

**83 Brotherhood 2010 Dry Riesling (New York).** Slightly vegetal on the nose and palate, with hints of green peppers, this dry Riesling gains freshness on the palate with tart apple-skin flavors accented by hints of black pepper spice. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$10

**82 Mazza Chautauqua Cellars 2010 Riesling (Lake Erie).** Fresh apple and lemon on the palate of this Lake Erie Riesling are pleasant, but overwhelmed by oddly perfumed lemon-pine and floral notes. Simple and a bit savory. Drink now. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

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## GEWÜRZTRAMINER

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**87 White Springs 2009 Gewürztraminer (Finger Lakes).** Voluptuously full on the palate, this succulent off-dry Gewürz seems to burst on the palate with sweet pink-grapefruit juice and lychee fruit flavors. A hint of bitter grapefruit pith and a spray of citrusy acidity adds balance and elegance. —A.I.

**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$15

**86 Glenora 2010 Gewürztraminer (Finger Lakes).** Sweet on the nose, with scents of pink grapefruit skin, rose petals and lychee fruit, Glenora's bottling screams classic Gewürztraminer. Waxy lanolin notes and black tea notes on the finish add a touch of complexity to this slightly off-dry sip. —A.I.

**abv:** 11% **Price:** \$15

**85 Knapp 2010 Sunrise Hill Vineyard Dry Gewürztraminer (Cayuga Lake).** While fairly subdued on the nose, this dry, rather uncharacteristic Gewürztraminer is refreshingly quaffable, with an abundance of fresh apple and fig flavors marked by snappy tangerine acidity. —A.I.

**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$15

**85 Knapp 2010 Sunrise Hill Vineyard Semi-Dry Gewürztraminer (Cayuga Lake).** There's a hint of caramelized sugar on the nose of this off-dry Gewürztraminer that gives an edge to all the succulent sweet pear nectar and apple blossoms notes that permeate the palate. Elegantly floral, it finishes with a touch of characteristic orange and clove spice. —A.I.

**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$15

**84 Standing Stone 2009 Gewürztraminer (Finger Lakes).** Savory scents of smoke and roasted nuts lend an uncharacteristic earthiness to sweet lemon and orange blossom notes on Standing Stone's Gewürztraminer. Quite lush on the palate with a slightly viscous slick, lemony acidity adds a nice, steely bite to the finish. —A.I.

**abv:** 13.3% **Price:** \$14

**84 Thousand Islands Winery 2010 Gewürztraminer (New York).** Juicy sweet on the nose and palate, this semidry Gewürztraminer is likeable for its unabashed fruit forwardness. Sweet peach and melon candy flavors finish a bit on the confected side with a swirl of perfumy florals. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

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## PINOT GRIS/GRIGIO

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**86 Hazlitt 1852 Vineyards 2010 Pinot Gris (Finger Lakes).** Hints of exotic spice—black pepper and curry leaf—accentuate concentrated floral and stone-fruit nectar notes on the nose and palate of this semidry Pinot Gris. While voluptuous in body, it's balanced by a delicately sugar-laced midpalate and a bracing hit of tea leaf astringency on the finish. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$18

**85 Atwater 2009 Pinot Gris (Finger Lakes).** Whiffs of sweet white peach and melon *agua fresca* on this unabashedly fruity Pinot Gris are a delightful reminder of warm summer days. Semidry in style, it's quite rich on the palate, with concentrated fruit flavors accented by a touch of tart lemon. Drink now. —A.I.

**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$16

**85 Billsboro 2010 Pinot Gris (Finger Lakes).** Earthy tones of smoke and hazelnuts give way to bright white peach and grapefruit notes on the nose and palate of this fruitful Pinot Gris. Off dry in style, it's a tad sugary on the midpalate, but finishes fairly dry with a refreshing shower of lemony acidity. Drink now. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$16

**85 Thirsty Owl Wine Company 2010 Pinot Gris (Finger Lakes).** While savory on the nose, with hints of mealy apple and chalk dust, the palate of this vibrant, light-bodied Pinot Gris exposes a range of delicate wildflower and lime zest notes, punctuated by snappy acidity and a brisk, clean mouthfeel. Drink now. —A.I.

**abv:** 12.3% **Price:** \$NA

**84 Mazza Chautauqua Cellars 2010 Pinot Grigio (Finger Lakes).** Tonic and refreshing, with hints of fresh florals and apple skins, this light bodied Pinot Grigio is a pleasant aperitif. Airy and brisk, with a just a touch of astringency on the finish. Drink now. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

**82 Mazza Chautauqua Cellars 2010 Reserve Pinot Grigio (Finger Lakes).** Subdued florals and apple scents have a slightly dusty, chemical edge on the nose of Mazza's Reserve Pinot Grigio. Slight in body but it finishes briskly on the palate. Drink now. —A.I.

**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$15

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## WHITE BLENDS

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**86 Atwater 2009 Riewürz White Blend (Finger Lakes).** A blend of just over one-third Riesling, Atwater's Riewürz boasts a steely precision that cuts through all of Gewürztraminer's ebullient flo-

ral and juicy fruit characteristics. Semidry on the palate, with deliciously concentrated pomelo flavors, it finishes on a zesty, candied orange-peel note. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$16

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## SPARKLING WINES

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**86 Ambition NV Gabrielle Blanc de Blancs Brut Sparkling Wine (New York).** With abundant floral and stone-fruit notes on the nose and palate, this New York sparkler is on the sweet side of brut. Brisk in acidity and surprisingly *pétillant*, this \$9 sparkler is an irresistible weeknight bubbly. **Best Buy.** —A.I.  
**abv:** 12.4% **Price:** \$9

**86 Ambition NV Gabrielle Rosé Sparkling Wine (New York).** Beautifully feminine, with a delicate cherry-blossom perfume, this off-dry rosé sparkler blends juicy cherry and strawberry flavors, with a hint of earthy, mushroom goodness. Medium sized bubbles are brisk and tonic on the finish. **Best Buy.** —A.I.  
**abv:** 12.4% **Price:** \$10

**86 Glenora 2003 Brut (Finger Lakes).** Aromas of ripe honeydew and fresh apple mingle with yeasty, biscuity notes in this 2003 vintage sparkler from Glenora. Fairly dry, with persistent froth and an elegant yet fruitful palate, this blend of Pinot Noir, Chardonnay and Pinot Blanc finishes on a nutty, sweet brioche note. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$25

**86 Swedish Hill 2003 Brut (Finger Lakes).** Enticingly nutty on the nose, with hints of smoke, yeast and apricot kernel, this 2003 vintage bottling from Swedish Hill shows promising signs of development. While fairly aggressive on the attack, it's clean and lemony on the palate, with a softly saline, sea breeze note on the finish. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$25

**85 Hosmer Winery NV Brut Rosé Pinot Noir (Cayuga Lake).** Almost garnet red in color, this off-dry Pinot Noir sparkling packs a punch with an abundance of juicy black cherry and plum flavor. Concentrated but festive and fun, with a candy-coated cherry finish. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$25

**85 Hosmer Winery NV Sparkling Wine (New York).** Made from native Cayuga grapes, this softly *pétillant* sparkler is pleasantly frothy, and features brisk, lemony acidity. Just a shade sweeter than brut, it's fruity and forward, with ample stone-fruit and blossom notes. Finishes with a dainty lacing of sugar. Drink now. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$20

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## ROSÉ

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**84 Glenora 2010 Pinot Noir Rosé (Finger Lakes).** Sweet scents of cherry blossoms and forest greenery abound in Glenora's off-dry Pinot Noir rosé. It's off-dry, with a concentration of candied, sweet

cherry flavors, bright acidity and balanced alcohol keep things restrained. Drink now. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$14

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## OTHER U.S.

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### MICHIGAN

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**85 Black Star Farms 2010 Arcturos Riesling (Michigan).** Waxy floral and lemon skin notes are elegantly subdued on this concentrated semidry Riesling. Juicy on the palate with abundant peach preserve flavors, it finishes moderately long with on a slightly drying, tea inflected note. —A.I.  
**abv:** 11% **Price:** \$16

**84 Bowers Harbor 2010 Block II Riesling (Old Mission Peninsula).** While floral notes waver a bit chemically on the nose, the palate on this Michigan Riesling is nicely concentrated, with abundant fresh apple and citrus flavors. Just slightly off-dry in style, it finishes sprightly with cut and focus. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$25

**84 Peninsula 2010 Dry Riesling (Old Mission Peninsula).** Slightly dusty, but piquant aromas of freshly pressed apple cider are pleasant in this fairly dry Michigan Riesling. Bright, apple flavors make for easy drinking, but finish with just the right hint of bitter lemon and lime pith. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$18

**83 Château Grand Traverse 2010 Dry Riesling (Old Mission Peninsula).** Subtly scented with orange rind and spice, this dry Michigan Riesling has pleasant apple and orange zest flavors accented by brisk black tea notes that leave a pronounced astringency on the palate. An easy-drinking choice from an up-and-coming wine region. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$13

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### MISSOURI

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**83 Les Bourgeois NV Pink Fox Foxy Sweet Rosé (Missouri).** Redolent of sweet plum compote, this semidry Missouri rosé made from native Catawba grapes is an interesting alternative for White Zin fans. Full bodied, with a slightly sugary palate, it finishes with a hint of that foxy Catawba musk. Drink now. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$7

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### NEW MEXICO

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**86 Blue Teal 2010 Riesling (New Mexico).** Abundant tropical fruit and honeysuckle aromas get a fine zesting of lime skin on this surprising bang-for-your-buck Riesling. Semisweet in style, almost with a deeply concentrated fruit palate, it finishes quite dry on a supple, waxy lanolin note. **Best Buy.** —A.I.  
**abv:** 11% **Price:** \$10

**84 St. Clair NV Gewürztraminer (New Mexico).** Pretty floral and white grapefruit notes on the palate scream Gewürz, but fresh apple flavors layered in smoke and a chalky, crushed stone minerality

make this unusual New Mexico bottling an interesting treat. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12% **Price:** \$12

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## OHIO

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**84 Debonné 2010 Reserve Riesling (Grand River Valley).** Softly perfumed with scents of apple and orange skins, there's also a slightly waxy tone to this rich, semidry Ohio Riesling. Densely concentrated with flavors of apple compote and sunny tropical fruit, it finishes with a touch of sugar and musky pot-pourri. —A.I.  
**abv:** 11% **Price:** \$13

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## TEXAS

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**83 Messina Hof 2010 Sophia Marie Sweet Beginnings Rosé (Texas).** Unabashedly bold, this Texas rosé hits the nose with a dose of lilac and rose perfume that lingers a bit obtrusively onto the palate. Off-dry in style, it's chunky on the palate, but finishes nicely, with a hint of tart red-plum flavors. Drink now. —A.I.  
**abv:** 12.5% **Price:** \$14

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## VIRGINIA

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**84 Albemarle 2010 Rosé (Monticello).** Sweet scents of candied cherry and plum belie a palate that's actually quite dry and refreshing. It's easy drinking, with an abundance of crisp red-plum flavors and a pretty floral tone on the finish. Drink now. —A.I.  
**abv:** 13% **Price:** \$14

**82 Boxwood 2010 Topiary Rosé (Virginia).** Muted on the nose and palate, with dusty notes of mealy apples, this full-bodied, dry blend of Cab Franc and Malbec finishes with just a whisper of dried cherry and strawberry flavors. Drink now. —A.I.  
**abv:** 13.5% **Price:** \$14

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## CANADA

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### RIESLING

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**90 Cave Spring 2009 Estate Bottled Riesling (Beamsville Bench).** Richer in profile than Cave Spring's standard label Riesling, the Estate Bottled balances densely concentrated apple and honey flavors with layers of chalk dust and petrol. Zippy acidity cuts clean on the finish, leaving just a whisper of lime skin and green florals on the palate. MGZ Associates. **Best Buy.** —A.I.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$15

**90 Cave Spring 2009 CSV Estate Bottled Riesling (Beamsville Bench).** Thoroughly dry, yet strikingly concentrated, Cave Spring's CSV marries rich apricot nectar and apple flavors with layers of lime zest, blossom and steel. Whiffs of struck flint and stones reverberate from start to finish, lingering exceptionally long on the palate. MGZ Associates. —A.I.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$25

**89** **Cave Spring 2009 Riesling (Niagara Peninsula).** While initially quite dry, almost bony on the palate, this bang for your buck Riesling intensifies on the midpalate with rich tones of white peach, fresh apple and white pepper spice. Nervy and fresh with lime inflected acidity, it calls out for a soft, creamy, cow's milk cheese. MGZ Associates. *Best Buy.* —A.I.  
**abv:** 11% **Price:** \$12

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## OTHER WHITE WINES

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**86** **Pillitteri 2009 Fusion Gewürztraminer-Riesling (Niagara-On-The-Lake).** A blend of Gewürz and Riesling with a splash of icewine added to the mix, Pillitteri's Fusion is bright on the nose and palate with freshly pressed apple and Meyer lemon undertones. Waxy lemon peel and lanolin notes on the midpalate add an extra layer of dimension. Pillitteri Estates Winery. —A.I.  
**abv:** 11.5% **Price:** \$15

## NEW GENERATION GIN

Last year, the Buying Guide featured London Dry gins, known for their crisp, juniper-forward profiles. Now, here are trevies of gins that don't fall into the London Dry category.

The flavor profiles are diverse, including the sweet Old Tom style, flavored or infused gins and even Dutch Genevers. But in addition, distillers have been rolling out new gins at a fast and ferocious clip over the past year.

Many of these newcomers have a floral cast, building on the momentum of Hendrick's Gin, the rose-petal- and cucumber-flavored grandmum of the floral gin set. Others have exotic ingredients, such as saffron (Old Raj), black

pepper or lemongrass. Meanwhile, locavores will rejoice at the influx of New American gins, which take local botanicals as their inspiration. Consider the Douglas fir, which lends its scent to the aptly-named Terroir Gin from California's St. George, or Colorado's Ridge Mountain gins—its No. 11 formulation is made with botanicals sourced within five miles of its Boulder distillery. It doesn't get much more local than that.

All these distinct flavor profiles and provenances should help lend new inspiration to your favorite gin cocktail.

*Sláinte!*

—KARA NEWMAN

**97 Aviation Gin (USA; House Spirits, Portland, OR).** For full review see page 13.  
abv: 42% Price: \$30

**95 New Amsterdam Gin (USA; New Amsterdam spirits, Modesto, CA).** For those who prefer a sweet cast to their gins, this one is a winner. The grapefruit-like, almost candy-like scent leads into pleasantly sweet and citrusy flavors, which finish with a faint floral note. Blends particularly well into lightly fruity and citrusy cocktails and gin-based punches. *Best Buy.*  
abv: 40% Price: \$14

**94 Smooth Ambler Greenbrier Gin (USA, Martin Scott Wines, Lake Success, NY).** Discovering this artisan gin distilled in West Virginia was a pleasant surprise. Though it's perfumy and pretty, it has restraint. The enticing aroma is decidedly botanical, with notes of fresh basil, white flowers and orange blossom. Though the flavors read as floral, they're balanced with cool lightness and a honey-sweet finish. Consider this one for fruity and floral spring cocktails.  
abv: 40% Price: \$45

**94 Hayman's Old Tom Gin (London; Haus Alpenz, Edina, MN).** A relative newcomer to the gin landscape, this is the proper gin to use for a Tom Collins cocktail. It intentionally leans sweet, but it's balanced with the right amount of alcohol bite, a lightly piny scent, and faint herbal and citrus peel notes. If using this 19th-century-style sweetened gin for other cocktails, be sure to hold off on adding sugar.  
abv: 40% Price: \$27

**93 Plymouth Gin (England; Pernod Ricard USA, Purchase, NY).** A soft, classic gin, ideal for Negronis and a wide range of other drinks. Overall, the flavor is neutral, but it has a touch of sweetness and complex underpinnings of pine, citrus and black pepper.

Because it's so versatile, this workhorse is recommended for anyone starting to build a bar.  
abv: 41.2% Price: \$28

**93 St. George Botanivore Gin (USA; St. George, Alameda, CA).** Bartenders will want to experiment with this lovely, lightly floral gin for spring cocktails. It has a light touch, from the citrus scent to the sweet flavor that finishes with a bouquet of rose petals, violets and honeysuckle. One of a trio of new gins from this small-batch distiller.  
abv: 45% Price: \$35

**92 Averell Damson Gin Liqueur (USA; Haus Alpenz, Edina, MN).** This gin-based liqueur made with local damson plums is unique and different. The vibrantly cherry-red spirit has a warm, fruity scent, like a cross between sweet vermouth and cherry juice. The flavor is more tart than sweet, with a lingering earthiness on the back of the tongue. Though a little too tart for straight-up sipping, it's a dynamite addition to the arsenal for adding flavor and color to gin-based cocktails, such as fizzes and punches.  
abv: 33% Price: \$30

**92 St. George Dry-Rye Gin (USA; St. George, Alameda, CA).** One of a new trio of gins from this small-batch distiller, the Dry-Rye version has a bold, warm caraway scent and assertive notes of juniper and black pepper, finishing with peppery, lingering citrus flavor. Would make for a complex G&T.  
abv: 45% Price: \$35

**92 DH Krahn Gin (USA; Haus Alpenz, Edina, MN).** Despite the bold caraway and anise aromas, this gin is light and smooth, with gentle pine and citrus notes and a clean finish. Overall, it would be a sophisticated addition to a French 75 or other cocktails. Distilled in California.  
abv: 40% Price: \$28

**92 Hendrick's Gin (Scotland; William Grant & Sons, New York, NY).** This gin has a fierce following, in part because of its quirky brand personality (see the *Monty Python*-esque website) and aggressive marketing among bartenders. But it lives up to the hype. Some might expect a more concentrated rosewater-cucumber profile, but it's relatively subtle, with just a hint of cucumber mingling with juniper in the aroma, and white pepper, citrus and floral notes on the lingering finish.  
abv: 44% Price: \$30

**91 Corsair Gin (USA; Martin Scott Wines, Lake Success, NY).** Light, warm Dutch licorice comes through on the nose and palate, lightened by cardamom and a sweet lemon zest note. Spicy and intriguing. Made in Nashville, Tennessee.  
abv: 46% Price: \$45

**91 Rob's Mtn Gin Formula No 33 (USA; Boulder Distillery and Clear Spirit Company, Boulder, CO).** This American-made gin veers close to London Dry territory, with its juniper and citrus-peel profile and powerful finish. However, it has some unusual botanicals: black pepper, basil, peppermint and kaffir lime, and would do well cooled in a tall glass of tonic. Made with Colorado and California juniper berries.  
abv: 44% Price: \$30

**90 G'Vine Floraison (France; Domaine Select Wine Estates, New York, NY).** If you're seeking a floral-tinged gin for spring cocktails, this small-batch French number should hit the spot thanks to its very sweet perfume, with lots of lime and white flowers. On the palate, look for a nice balance of citrus and light, fresh floral notes, developing into an elongated floral finish.  
abv: 40% Price: \$30

**90 Caorunn Small Batch Scottish Gin (Scotland; International Beverage, New York, NY).** A Scottish gin, you say? From the Balmenach whisky distillery in Scotland's Speyside region comes this crisp gin, with a light juniper and citrus scent and a surprisingly warm finish with a prickle of anise and alcohol. The distiller notes list a host of intriguing-sounding botanicals, including rowan berry, heather and Coul Blush apple, which unfortunately are undetectable. However, the clean, quinine-like feel suggests this would be a fine match for G&T lovers.  
abv: 41.8% Price: \$40

**89 St George Terroir Gin (USA; St. George, Alameda, CA).** One of a trio of new gins from this artisan distiller, this gin's claim to fame is that it was inspired by a hike on Mt. Tam, and the distiller describes it as akin to "drinking a martini in a pine forest." Some will find the juniper essence too strong, although it also reads as clean and bracing, and it's laced with a peppery finish. Botanicals include Douglas fir, fennel, bay laurel and sage. A portion of the profits from the gin are donated to support California wilderness.  
abv: 45% Price: \$35

**89 Cadenhead's Old Raj Dry Gin (United Kingdom; Anchor Distilling, San Diego, CA).** At 46% alcohol by volume, the saffron-spiked red label version is strong (but not as strong as the overproof blue label version). This is an intriguing, old style of gin, with a faintly yellowish tinge and light, earthy flavors that wind into a complex, spicy finish marked by hints of black pepper, anise and cassia bark. Best when served very cold.

**abv:** 46% **Price:** \$45

**89 Farmer's Botanical Small Batch Organic Gin (USA; Chatham Imports, New York, NY).** Your favorite vermouth or bitters will shine with this quiet gin as its backdrop. Neutral aroma, with a barely-there whiff of lemongrass, and a nicely round, citrusy flavor with a spicy coriander note and a clean finish. Despite the relatively high proof, this gin has a silky feel.

**abv:** 46.7% **Price:** \$30

**89 Rob's Mtn Gin Formula No 11 (USA; Boulder Distillery and Clear Spirit Company, Boulder, CO).** This special limited-edition gin (only 400 bottles were made), is made with botanicals sourced within five miles of the distillery, including basil, rosemary, lemon balm and lemon cucumbers. Pronounced anise scent and flavor, with hints of cucumber and pine. This gin would work particularly well in a cocktail with herbal notes, such as The Last Word (made with Green Chartreuse).

**abv:** 44% **Price:** \$40

**89 Genevieve Genever-Style Gin (USA; Anchor Distilling, San Diego, CA).** There's no mistaking this old-style Genever for its cousin gin—but you might be forgiven for mistaking it for moonshine. The powerful, pungent aroma, malty but fresh, smells like it rolled right off the still. Dry, warm and fairly boozy finish, with a hint of anise.

**abv:** 47.3% **Price:** \$35

**88 Brandon's Gin (USA; Rock Town Distillery, Little Rock, AR).** This small-batch American beauty has a sweet, candied lemon-peel perfume and a warm anise flavor with a long, citrusy finish. Although the alcohol level feels a little hot, just imagine cooling it down with a tall glass of lemonade, or mixing it with effervescent bitter lemon.

**abv:** 46% **Price:** \$30

**88 Cadenhead's Old Raj Dry Gin Blue Label (United Kingdom; Anchor Distilling, San Diego, CA).** The 55% abv blue label is one of the strongest and most expensive gins on the market. Look for the trademark faint yellowish-saffron tinge and herbal scent, with assertive pine and anise flavors and a tart lemony touch. Serve this overproof gin tamed with ice and lots of tonic.

**abv:** 55% **Price:** \$52

**88 The Botanist Islay Dry Gin (Scotland; Winebow, New York, NY).** Although the "Botanist" name might suggest a floral gin, instead the flavor profile veers toward herbs and spices. There's a subtle, herbal scent, with anise flavors up front, backed by coriander seed and cassia bark on the spicy finish.

Made by Bruichladdich Distillery, which is renowned for its Scotch, on a pot-still named Ugly Betty. Sold in an attractive, square-shouldered, gift-worthy bottle.

**abv:** 46% **Price:** \$35

**87 Damrak Amsterdam Original Gin (Holland; Lucas Bols USA, New York, NY).**

Boasts a clean, fresh scent, with notes of lavender and grapefruit peel. The lingering juniper flavor finishes with a sweet lemony note. Quirky old-school swing-top cap on the bottle.

**abv:** 41.8% **Price:** \$22

**85 Ridge Gin (USA; Martin Scott Wines, Lake Success, NY).**

The mild aroma gives no warning that you're about to be whacked over the head with a licorice mallet. Sweet flavor, with loads of black licorice front and center. This sambuca-like spirit would benefit from a more delicate touch, and might be balanced by more citrus flavor. Made in Kalispell, Montana.

**abv:** 44% **Price:** \$35

**84 Cardinal American Dry Gin (USA; Southern Artisan Spirits, Kings Mountain, NC).**

A resinous aroma masks what seems to be floral botanicals underneath. On the palate, look for juniper, floral and vegetal cucumber notes, with anise on the finish. Striking square bottle with bold red-and-black cardinal logo.

**abv:** 42% **Price:** \$30

## GETTING READY FOR THE SAISON

**W**e are arriving at that seasonal transition point, where it's not quite warm enough for completely light and refreshing beers but it's no longer cool enough for heavy barley wines or imperial stouts. We are in that middle period, where you're still looking for substance but might want to have more than one bottle of your favorite selection. A good style option to see you through this awkward phase: saisons.

Saison, the French word for season, was traditionally brewed in the autumn or winter for consumption by farm workers in late summer during the harvest season. The style originated in the farmhouses of Wallonia, the French-speaking region of Belgium, hence the additional style name of farmhouse ale.

While the flavor profiles, color, alcohol and

conditioning of the brews can vary, traditionally the beer was quite rustic, with the addition of a significant amount of hops and spices, moderate abv (between 5 and 8%) and some degree of bottle conditioning. The Belgian yeast strain typically used provides a distinct foundation, while flavors of wild organisms, especially *Brettanomyces*, may be present, depending on the individual brewery's style and preferred outcome as well as location.

Wonderfully complex, spicy and refreshing, there's no better way to welcome in a new season, but for those who are not big on saison's spicy and somewhat funky profile, we also included a handful of American pale ale reviews as another seasonally-appropriate alternative. *Prost!*

—LAUREN BUZZEO

## SAISON

### **98 The Bruery Saison Rue Belgian-Style Ale (Saison/Farmhouse Ale; The Bruery, CA).**

What The Bruery has done here is a perfect example of what makes the American beer scene so amazing: the fantastic creativity and ability to take a classic style and reinterpret it through another lens. Saison Rue is flavorful and complex, with notes of clove-driven spice, yeasty bread and underripe stone fruit all brought together with a tart, funky Brett streak. Crisply carbonated but smooth and lush, brimming with flavors of spicy malt, herbs, apricot and tropical fruit that transition seamlessly into the peppery finish. Balanced and nuanced, with more subtleties unfolding upon warming. Delicious now, but a sure cellar candidate.

abv: 8.5%

Price: \$12/750 ml

### **92 St. Feuillien Saison Belgian Farmhouse Ale (Saison/Farmhouse Ale; St-Feuillien Brewery, Belgium).**

A classic clean and refreshing selection, this saison pours a cloudy golden-orange color with a big, frothy head that shows good retention. Aromas and flavors of sweet citrus lead, with supporting notes of honey, malt and a light spice character. The mouthfeel is brisk and vibrant, with lifting carbonation and an appropriately tart palate keeping the finish fresh.

abv: 6.5%

Price: \$10/750 ml

### **91 Boulevard Smokestack Series Tank 7 Farmhouse Ale (Saison/Farmhouse Ale; Boulevard Brewing Company, MO).**

Bold and intense, this brew was named for the brewery's notoriously finicky fermenter #7, a tank they affectionately dubbed "the black sheep of our cellar family." So naturally it had to be in that vessel that this wild brew would come together, with a sweet clementine and pink grape-

fruit citrus core kicked up with notes of crushed white florals and whole peppercorns. It's creamy but clean and refreshing, finishing dry, with a soft hoppy bitterness.

abv: 8.0%

Price: \$9/750 ml

### **90 Nøgne Ø Saison (Saison/Farmhouse Ale; Nøgne Ø, Norway).**

You have to love the ingredient list here: Wheat and lager malt; East Kent Goldings and Crystal hops; Belgian ale yeast and local Grimstad water. And with that simple recipe, Nøgne Ø creates a crisp and very drinkable saison that shows attractive aromas and flavors of lemony citrus, white pepper and Belgian yeast. The palate is lifted and clean, but it's not overly tart and the carbonation isn't too strong. Closes dry and slightly bitter.

abv: 6.5%

Price: \$8/500 ml

### **90 Smuttynose Big Beer Series Farmhouse Ale (Saison/Farmhouse Ale; Smuttynose Brewing, NH).**

Pours a lightly golden orange color with a good haze to it and a decent head that leaves nice lacing behind. The nose immediately starts with tart and slightly funky fruit aromas, framed with notes of lemon rind, yeast and white pepper. Earth and spice flavors carry through to the mouth, which is balanced with tart flavors and medium carbonation against a warm malt core. Sweeter hints of spicy baked apple and yeast blossom upon warming.

abv: 8.2%

Price: \$8/22 oz

## PALE ALES

### **94 Deschutes Hop Trip Pale Ale (American Pale Ale; Deschutes Brewery, OR).**

Definitely a front-runner for the Pacific Northwest style, Deschutes' Hop Trip is a gorgeous pale ale that expresses telltale fresh hop character from the moment

it pours into the glass. Aromas of tropical fruit, sweet orange and grapefruit citrus, soft resinous character and a light caramel malt backbone abound and carry through to the medium-weight mouth. Balanced and smooth, with a softly bitter finish and a piny aftertaste.

abv: 5.5%

Price: \$9/12 oz 6 pack

### **90 Deschutes Red Chair NWPA (American Pale Ale; Deschutes Brewery, OR).**

A light to medium copper color, there's a richness to the bouquet of this brew with enticing scents of caramel and ripe tropical fruit framed by a sticky hop presence. The sweeter characteristics lead on the palate, but soon subside to the resinous pine and bitter hop flavors. A full body and medium carbonation flesh out the mouth, while the finish is long and appropriately dry.

abv: 6.2%

Price: \$9/12 oz 6 pack

### **88 Barrel Trolley Brewing Pale Ale No 3 (American Pale Ale; World Brews, NY).**

Not the most complex pale ale out there, but certainly an easy drinking and well-made one that makes for a good session selection. Pours a light amber color with notes of hoppy grass and citrus characters against a rich malt center. Crisp and clean on the palate, and a soft bitter flavor lingers after swallow.

abv: 5.3%

Price: \$8/12 oz 6 pack

### **86 Ass Kisser Vanilla Pale Ale (American Pale Ale; Ass Kisser Beverage Co., CA).**

This brew is a bit of a prankster, as you might expect a ton of vanilla aromas on the nose but it really just smells like a sweet pale ale. Then in the mouth... Bam! Intense notes of vanilla extract dominate the palate and give the beer a flavor like cream soda. A touch of hop character develops on the close, lifting the sweetness.

abv: 5.5%

Price: \$10/12 oz 4 pack