



## The Most Coveted Wines of 2010

BY THE EDITORS OF WINE ENTHUSIAST MAGAZINE

**E**ach year, *Wine Enthusiast's* wine tasting panel samples thousands of current releases in every style and at every price point imaginable. Striving to discover the best and most attractively priced selections, we review hundreds of wines of interest to our readers. But those chosen for The Enthusiast 100 go beyond just interest: These wines are truly exemplary, often represent the very best of their category, and should not be missed.

While the bottlings featured in this list have all received high scores from our critics, the criteria for selection extends far beyond the numbers assigned to them to include extraordinary quality-to-price ratio, immediate drinkability, and uniqueness. All offer a window into the terroir from which they come.

Another factor in selection—perhaps one less easily defined—is the wine's “it” factor. Some wines are just buzzy...they attract excitement from both consumers and the industry, and represent notable emerging or established trends in the market. Thus you'll find an Argentine Malbec in the Top 10 this year, testament to the great inroads that variety has made on the American consciousness, as well as to the intrinsic qualities of the wine itself. Our number one wine, from Piedmontese producer Renato Ratti, rewards the greatness of its 2006 Barolo Marcenasco, but also recognizes the leadership role the estate has played within Piedmont and the exceptional quality of the region's recent vintages.

We've tried to include wines that not only represent many different regions and grape varieties, but also vary in style. You'll find red, white, sparkling, dessert and fortified wines from many of the major wine-producing countries across the full spectrum of grape varieties. One of the things we value most in the wine world is diversity, and this is our way of applauding it.

1



**94 Renato Ratti 2006 Marcenasco (Barolo); \$50.** Dark in color with a modern style and velvety extraction, the gorgeous Marcenasco expression of Barolo is redolent of blackberries, cherries, spice, leather and tobacco. The finish is long and elegant but not without power and determination. Keep this wine cellared for 10 years plus. Imported by Dreyfus, Ashby & Co.

2

**96 Fess Parker 2008 Bien Nacido Vineyard Chardonnay (Santa Barbara County); \$28.** What a roll Fess Parker Winery is on with their '08 Chardonnays. Not only great wine, but priced so well. This wine, sourced from Parker's U Block in this famous Santa Maria Valley vineyard, is as rich as any Chardonnay of the vintage—just massive in pineapple, pear and buttered toast flavors. Yet it's crisp and tart, clean and bracing in its minerality. Only 115 cases produced. *Editors' Choice.*

3

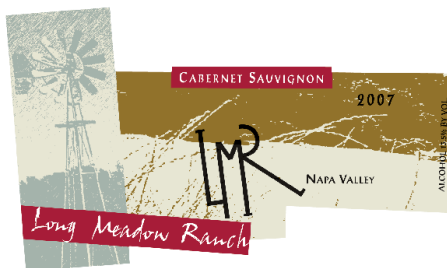
**95 Trapiche 2006 Viña Federico Villafañe Single Vineyard Malbec (La Consulta); \$50.** Probably the best value in high-end Malbec from Argentina is Trapiche's single-vineyard series, which in 2006 was led by this bottling from an Uco Valley vineyard. It's lush, perfectly ripe and full of cola, black fruit and intensity. There's nary a chink in its fiber, and the rush of fruit that hits the palate followed by layers of subtleties is impressive. Great with grilled meat; drink

now through 2015. Imported by Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. *Editors' Choice.*

4

**94 William Fèvre 2007 Montmains Premier Cru (Chablis); \$32.** A beautifully elegant wine, wearing its fresh fruit and acidity on its sleeve at the moment, but promising depth of fruit skin and toast flavors as the structure develops. There's a fine tight, final mineral edge. Imported by Henriot Inc.

5



**96 Long Meadow Ranch 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Rutherford); \$42.** An extraordinary Cabernet that stands out even in this great vintage, and among its Rutherford peers. Quite dry and tannic in youth, it shows an astringency that strongly suggests the cellar. Underneath are powerhouse flavors of blackberries, black and red cherries, spices, tea and cedar. Really defines balance and elegance in a Napa Cabernet. Decant if you drink it now, but it should develop for years to come. *Editors' Choice.*

6

**96 Byron 2008 Nielson Vineyard Pinot Noir (Santa Maria Valley); \$34.** Silky and velvety soft in the mouth, coating the palate with extraordinary raspberry and cherry flavors, enriched with sweet oak, and spiced with cloves, cinnamon and white pepper. There are even notes of cocoa and orange zest. Yet brisk acidity makes it all clean and vibrant. It's hard to imagine a California Pinot Noir tasting better than this—and what a fantastic bargain. Drink now—2014. *Editors' Choice.*

7

**95 Poet's Leap 2009 Riesling (Columbia Valley); \$20.** With residual sugar at about 1.35%, this balances the acidity without seeming sweet. Hand-picked and whole-cluster pressed, this immaculate, fresh, generous and stylish Riesling (from Long Shadows) is always at the top of the list of Washington's best. Loaded with grapefruit, citrus and stone flavors, it cleans the palate and piles on the details as it rolls into a finish that lingers for well over a full minute. *Editors' Choice.*

8

**96 Remírez de Ganuza 2005 Old Vines Unfiltered (Rioja); \$82.** Concentrated to the hilt, with molten black fruit, coconut and mint aromas. The palate is driven, tannic, pure and features dynamite flavors of black fruit, bitter chocolate and spice cake. So beautiful and big, but also showing elegance and restraint. Drinkable now but will age well for another seven years or more. Imported by Fine Estates from Spain. *Editors' Choice.*

9

**96 Rulo 2007 Syrah (Columbia Valley); \$20.** Superb fruit highlights this tight, sculpted Syrah. It's extremely dense, with deep and intense raspberry and cassis fruit flavor, augmented with coffee grounds, smoke and iron filings. Complex, detailed, balanced and deep—what more can a wine give you? This is drinking very young and surely needs to be decanted, but is already displaying amazing power.

### 20,000 BUBBLES UNDER THE SEA

Bottles recovered from shipwrecks aren't the only wines aged underwater: Chilean winemaker Viña Casanueva intentionally cellars its "Cavas Submarinas" line beneath the Pacific Ocean.

10

**96 Rusack 2008 Reserve Chardonnay (Santa Maria Valley); \$32.** Guaranteed to please the most discriminating Chardonnay fans for its dry crispness, great structure and endless opulence. Massively complex, offering waves of grilled pineapple, pear, buttered toast and smoky vanilla. The grapes came mainly from Bien Nacido Vineyard, with the balance from Sierra Madre. Only 338 cases produced. **Editors' Choice.**

11



**94 Luis Duarte 2008 Rapariga da Quinta Reserva (Alentejano); \$23.** His skills show in this rich, powerful, finely balanced wine. It has layers of black berry fruits, damsons, bitter chocolate and a good core of acidity. Give this impressive wine 3–4 years. Imported by Laurel Importers. **Editors' Choice.**

12

**95 Aia Vecchia 2007 Sorugo (Bolgheri Superiore); \$40.** Sorugo (a blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc) is nothing short of gorgeous with elegant aromas of polished mineral, cherry, chocolate, leather and brooding black fruit. It's soft and textured with a refreshing note of acidity backed by excellent density. Imported by Dalla Terra Winery Direct.

13

**97 Failla 2008 Estate Chardonnay (Sonoma Coast); \$42.** From the wildest, most remote and exotic stretch of the Sonoma Coast; you can taste the salt of the sea in this wine, as you can in a Manzanilla Sherry. It gives a tang to the lemondrop, pear and honeysuckle flavors, with their lick of cold granite. So pure and vibrant, so savory, so compelling. Grows more fascinating with every minute in the glass. **Editors' Choice.**

14



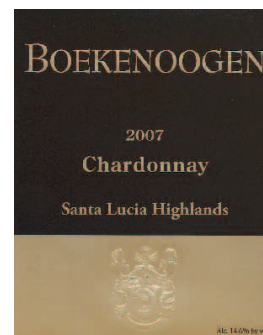
**95 Vistalba 2007 Corte A (Mendoza); \$50.** A wine that makes you take notice. The bouquet is intense, with minerality, char, huge black fruit aromas and handsome shadings of chocolate and coffee. Power and purity come on like gangbusters, and the flavors are a classic mix of blackberry, cassis and fine Swiss chocolate. Heady, smooth and impressive. My highest rated wine yet from Carlos Pulenta's Vistalba label. Drink now through 2014. A blend of 87% Malbec with Bonarda and Cabernet Sauvignon. Imported by San Francisco Wine Exchange. **Editors' Choice.**

15



**98 Vine Cliffs 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Oakville); \$75.** Pretty much as good as Napa Cabernet gets. Shows the blackberries, black currants, blueberries and spicy plums of Oakville and scads of spices, and the tannin-acid structure is, in a word, superb. The oak elaboration is just about perfect, adding a tasteful layer of smoky, buttered toast. The finish goes on and on. **Editors' Choice**

16



**96 Boekenooogen 2007 Chardonnay (Santa Lucia Highlands); \$34.** All the oaky, leesy richness is here, with buttered toast, crème brûlée and smoky buttercream, and tons of fruity ripeness, with a blast of Meyer lemon, pineapple, white peach and apricot. Yet there's also a firm, steely minerality, and, despite the dryness, maybe even a delicious touch of botrytis. The acidity is mouthwatering. **Editors' Choice.**



17

**95** **Domaine Zind-Humbrecht 2007 Wintzenheim Clos Häuserer Riesling (Alsace); \$60.** An astounding wine, the 2007 Zind Humbrecht Clos Häuserer Riesling opens with a tightly wound bouquet of petrol, gardenias and lemon skin while the dry palate is packed with dense dried fruit and pear flavor. Long, long gardenia-scented finish. Despite all the concentration, it's quite light on its feet and would pair well with Japanese cuisine. Can be drunk now (decanting recommended) but will show its best after five-plus years in the cellar. Imported by The Sorting Table.

18

**96** **Bjornstad 2007 van der Kamp Vineyard Pinot Noir (Sonoma Mountain); \$40.** It's hard to consistently get scores this high year after year, but Greg Bjornstad does because he understands Pinot Noir. Specifically, he knows how to combine power, which is easy, with finesse, which isn't. This 2007, from an esteemed vineyard, is spectacular in wild forest cherry, cola, licorice, pine cone, anise, exotic spice and sandalwood flavors, even as it's perfectly balanced with crisp acidity, fine tannins and just-right oak. Lovely and complex. Drink now–2014. *Editors' Choice.*

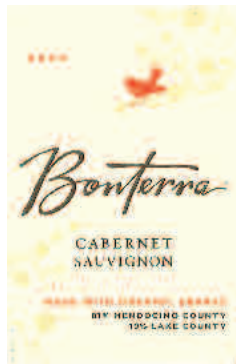
19

**95** **Prager 2009 Achleiten Riesling Smaragd (Wachau); \$65.** Ripe peaches and mango join a crisp layer of grapefruit freshness. A delicately balanced Riesling that shows just an edge of sweetness along with a vibrant mineral texture. Like all Prager wines, this needs aging. Imported by Winebow.

20

**94** **Hazyblur 2006 Shiraz (Kangaroo Island); \$29.** Perfectly manages to combine full-bodied intensity with silkiness, breadth with delineation. Peppery and meaty notes add nuance to the mixed-berry fruit, framed by hints of cedar and vanilla. Drink now–2020. Imported by Bluestone Wine Solutions. *Editors' Choice.*

21



**92** **Bonterra 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Mendocino-Lake); \$16.** A wonderful red wine, full-bodied, dry and elegant. It shows Cabernet character in the blackberries, cherries and black currants, but that's balanced with an earthiness and minerality and even some smoked meat notes that must come from a percentage of Syrah and Petite Sirah. Tasted in a flight of much more expensive Cabs, this one easily stood out. Drink now–2011. *Editors' Choice.*

22

**95** **Donnafugata 2008 Ben Ryé (Pantelleria); \$40.** Ben Ryé is always a fabulous dessert wine from Pantelleria (an island off the coast of Sicily) and this expression shows beautiful liveliness and personality. You'll get aromas of stone fruit, apricot, honey, almond paste and even a spicy touch of fresh ginger. It feels smooth, rich and totally decadent. Imported by Folio Fine Wine Partners.

23

**93** **Domaine Masson-Blondelet 2008 Villa Paulus (Pouilly-Fumé); \$18.** Villa Paulus, a reference to the Roman origins of Pouilly-sur-Loire, is an impressive wine. It has power, a rich feel, finely textured with big ripe yellow fruits, powered by a steely core. Age for 2–3 years. Imported by Grape Expectations (CA).

24

**97** **Merry Edwards 2007 Meredith Estate Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley); \$54.** A splendid, near-perfect Pinot, although it's very young and will benefit from time in the bottle. Few Pinots offer richer, more massive flavors. Just explodes on the palate with raspberries, cherries, persimmons, Dr. Pepper, mocha and cinnamon spices, yet the tannin-acid structure keeps it all balanced. A joy to drink as it warms and changes in the glass. Drink now–2014.

25

**96** **Ojai 2007 Clos Pepe Vineyard Chardonnay (Sta. Rita Hills); \$38.** Huge, rich, white Burgundy-style Chardonnay. Has a pie-filling fruity richness of pineapples, lemongrass, pears, kiwi fruit and exotic kumquats, balanced with fine, mineral acidity, and wrapped into a buttercream texture. The oak is flamboyant, but perfectly in keeping with the wine's volume. Dazzling and dramatic, from a vineyard that just keeps performing better and better.

26

**95** **Tenuta Argentiera 2007 Argentario (Bolgheri Superiore); \$60.** In terms of overall quality this is the best yet from this sea-facing estate in coastal Tuscany. The blend sees Cabernet Sauvignon enhanced by Merlot and Cabernet Franc and the overall effect is one of impressive intensity and sophistication. The finish is velvety rich and smooth. Imported by Eurobiz Inc.

27

**93** **Domaines Schlumberger 2006 Kessler Grand Cru Pinot Gris (Alsace); \$24.** Rich and sweet, very soft in texture, a wine that is beautifully ripe and broad. It has a dry core of toast, pepper, with raisins and a final hint of acidity. Imported by Maisons Marques & Domaines USA.

28

**94 Bric Cenciurio 2005 Coste di Rose (Barolo); \$43.** Coste di Rose is a gorgeous Barolo with impressive elegance and complexity. Aromas touch on delicate hints of violets, spice, cola and cedar and are beautifully unified and integrated overall. The texture is thick and dense yet the quality of the tannins is particularly polished and tight. Don't open this bottle before 2015. Imported by Italia Wine Imports.

29

**96 Woodward Canyon 2009 Chardonnay (Washington); \$39.** Luscious, rich, balanced and intensely fruity, this stunning effort may well be the best Chardonnay ever produced in Washington. Two-thirds old-vine Celilo vineyard grapes are blended with estate-grown fruit from even older vines that were planted in 1976. Candied citrus, especially Meyer lemon, lemon verbena and other fruits, herbs, stone fruits and subtle layers of caramel and toast burst from the glass. But the most amazing thing is that this wine stays fresh after being opened for literally days, much like a grand cru Burgundy. *Editors' Choice.*

30

**97 Redmon 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon (St. Helena); \$65.** Monumentally detailed, this 100% Cabernet Sauvignon is impressive for its sheer volumetrics. Offers masses of blackberries, black currants, cherries and cassis. Huge, dramatic, yet impeccably balanced and dry. Feels firm and ultrarefined in tannic structure, with graceful acidity offering a perfect counterpoint to the fruity richness. Just beautiful, and ageable for at least a decade. *Editors' Choice.*

31

**95 Emmerich Knoll 2008 Ried Schütt Riesling Smaragd (Wachau); \$70.** This is one of the great Rieslings from the Wachau, a wonderful panoply of ripe, tropical fruit, pierced with flint, spice and minerality. It is rich and opulent, while never losing sight of the

core tautness of a fine Riesling. Imported by Circo Vino.

32

**95 Joretta Saffirio 2006 Persiera (Barolo); \$70.** With a strong line of women at the helm of the winery, Joretta Saffirio is now run by the young Sara Vezza. Her Barolo Persiera is particularly impressive thanks to its bold, pulsing fruit nuances and the refined nature of its spice, tobacco and cola elements. The wine finishes with long floral flavors and polished tannins. Imported by North Berkeley Imports. *Editors' Choice.*

33



**97 Krutz 2006 Stagecoach Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley); \$70.** This is really a spectacular wine. It's hard to say why it's so superior to Krutz's 2005 bottling, but it's richer and more elegant in every respect. Combines immense power with great finesse. The refined essence of blackberries, black currants and spices thrills the palate, accented with the most beautiful coating of smoky oak. A great achievement that should develop in the bottle through 2018.

34

**94 D'Arenberg 2008 The Noble Wrinkled Riesling (McLaren Vale); \$19/375 ml.** Lovely dessert-style Riesling at an extremely attractive price. It yields dried apricot aromas, then turns to honeyed marmalade in the mouth, just loaded with orange-apricot preserves. It's weighty and viscous, with a long, sweet finish. Should last through at least 2016. Imported by Old Bridge Cellars. *Editors' Choice.*

35

**95 Au Bon Climat 2007 Los Alamos Vineyard Chardonnay (Santa Barbara County); \$25.** Massively fruity and oaky, this is an atom bomb of a Chardonnay. You either love this style or you hate it. The pineapple tart, apricot, pear, peach, crème brûlée, buttered toast, vanilla cream and cinnamon spice flavors go on and on. Beyond the utter richness is firm acidity and a bracing minerality. Defines California-style decadence, but drink now, as the wine will quickly go downhill. *Editors' Choice.*

36

**94 Franco Molino Cascina Rocca 2005 Rocche dell'Annunziata (Barolo); \$48.** The Barolo Rocche dell'Annunziata exhibits bright berry notes followed by delicate tones of violet, slate, wet earth, spice and smoke. In the mouth, this beautiful wine delivers density and concentration capped by bright acidity and drying, firm tannins. Drink after 2015. Imported by Frank Johnson Selections.

37

**95 McCrea 2008 Boushey Vineyard Sirocco Blanc (Yakima Valley); \$25.** Among McCrea's Rhône-inspired white wines, this is the most complete and complex. It's rich and dense, with honeycomb, lychee, lemon rind, pineapple and lots of stone—lovely and lingering. It seems to gain strength as it rolls through a sensational finish.

38

**96 Freeman 2008 Keefer Ranch Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley); \$47.** So pale in color, it's hard to believe it packs so much flavor. Stuns with the complexity of its cherries, raspberries and cola, with fantastically spicy notes. Hard to describe just how intricate it feels, changing by the second as the palate uncovers additional nuances. The vineyard, which is in Green Valley, is coveted among Pinot Noir winemakers. A very great Pinot Noir, defining silkiness and delicacy, and should age effortlessly for at least the next six years.

39

**95** **Domaine Michel Bouzereau 2008 Le Cailleret Premier Cru (Puligny-Montrachet); \$75.** An opulent, weighty wine, packed with lemon fruits, wood caramel sweetness and a delicious tasty character. It is lip-smacking in its ripeness and freshness, the final flavor bringing together acidity and a creamy texture. Imported by Domaine et Saveurs Collection.

40

**95** **Buty 2008 Sémillon-Sauvignon-Muscadelle (Columbia Valley); \$25.** Beautifully floral, fragrant and evocative, with lush and complex aromas of honeycomb, cracker and citrus, carrying into the mouth with rich, bright, detailed flavors. Stone and mineral elements are woven throughout, and the barrel fermentation adds hints of toast. *Editors' Choice.*

41

**94** **Alta Vista 2006 Single Vineyard Temis Malbec (Uco Valley); \$50.** This mighty Malbec opens with toasty oak, a pinch of sawdust and perfumed black fruit, vanilla and spice notes. The palate is lofty and rich, with beautiful berry and plum flavors. A smooth, sexy wine from the Uco Valley that shows that vineyard sourcing absolutely matters. Best wine from Alta Vista to date. Imported by Buena Cepa Wines. *Editors' Choice.*

**SECRET CRUSH**

To produce a single bottle of wine, some six to eight hundred grapes need to be crushed.

42

**95** **Melville 2008 Chardonnay (Sta. Rita Hills); \$26.** Massive, opulent, oozing in pineapple crème brûlée, honey, buttered toast and cinnamon spice flavors. Totally decadent, and fortunately set off with brisk, citrusy acidity. Calling all lobsters, and don't forget the drawn butter. Sheer hedonism in a glass, at a fantastic price. *Editors' Choice.*

43

**94** **Poderi Elia 2007 Serracapelli (Barbaresco); \$50.** This outlier wine sparked much controversy at the Nebbiolo blind tastings because of the thickness of its extraction and the darkness of its appearance. Serracapelli is a beautifully rich wine that doesn't necessarily highlight Barbaresco typicity. You'll get opulent aromas of black cherry, spice, leather and moist tobacco. The mouthfeel is rich, round and velvety. Imported by Small Vineyards LLC.

44

**96** **Hestan 2006 Stephanie Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley); \$50.** Classic and harmonious, a very solid 100% Napa Cabernet that's dry and firmly tannic in the mouth. Feels balanced, harmonious, ageworthy, a wine without seams or faults. Fruity, but not overly so, with the blackberries and black currants generously balanced by herbs, minerals and cedar. Very classic and noble wine, and one to cellar through at least 2018. *Editors' Choice.*

45

**93** **Niepoort 2009 Redoma Reserva (Douro); \$30.** Selected from barrel tastings, this mineral, vibrant wine demands aging. The flavors are bright white fruits, with a tropical touch, followed by a dense biting texture. Final grapefruit acidity tops this ageworthy wine. Imported by Martine's Wines.

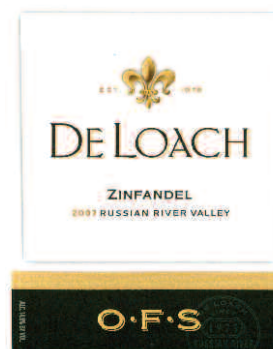
46

**93** **Bacalhôa Wines of Portugal 2008 Quinta da Bacalhôa Cabernet Sauvignon (Península de Setúbal); \$30.** This Cabernet-based wine is supremely elegant. It brings together new wood flavors, firm and dry Cabernet tannins and powerful concentration. It has great depth of flavor; very complex, the acidity promising good aging. Imported by Admiral Imports. *Editors' Choice.*

47

**96** **Dutton-Goldfield 2008 Dutton Ranch Rued Vineyard Chardonnay (Green Valley); \$45.** This vineyard has proved itself for so many years that it's practically a guarantee of greatness. This 2008 is a real stunner. It's so rich and exotic, so balanced and dry, so clean. Dazzles with pear, pineapple, lychee, roasted hazelnut, crème brûlée, buttered toast, honey and spice flavors, wrapped into a creamy smooth mouthfeel. Brilliant and compelling. Drink now.

48



**95** **De Loach 2007 O.F.S. Zinfandel (Russian River Valley); \$30.** This is De Loach's finest Zinfandel of their five new releases. In fact, it's their best Zinfandel ever, and one that defines Sonoma County cool-climate Zinfandel. It's brilliant in balance and structure, with beautifully sculpted tannins and fine acidity, and just the right touch of oak. Within that package are savory flavors of wild blackberries, picked at their peak under the summer sun. So easy to drink, yet so complex. *Editors' Choice.*

49

**94 Pago de los Capellanes 2006 Reserva (Ribera del Duero); \$54.**

Sensational RdD Reserva with dry, smoky, elegant aromas and then a super-juicy, fresh, finely etched palate with composed cola, cherry, raspberry and more. This wine exhibits merit after merit; it's complex yet easy to like. Really excellent for the money. Drink 2011–2018. Imported by Antalva Imports.

50

**95 Zaca Mesa 2007 Grenache (Santa Ynez Valley); \$32.**

This spectacular 100% Grenache is a huge success. It's so delicious, you can hardly stop drinking it. Just oozes in raspberry and red cherry purée and caramelized, smoky oak richness, yet is thoroughly dry. An amazing, unforgettable wine that establishes a new benchmark for California Grenache from this winery that was an early pioneer in Rhône varieties. *Editors' Choice.*

51

**97 Blackbird Vineyards 2007 Illustration (Napa Valley); \$90.**

A spectacular wine that gets better and better with every sip. It's dramatic from the get-go, with rich, fine tannins framing extraordinarily good flavors of blackberries, black currants, anise, dark chocolate and cedar. Superb structure, great length and finish, with perfect acidity. A joy to drink. Drink now–2016.

52

**94 Cecchi 2007 Coevo (Toscana); \$58.**

Cecchi's Coevo is a wonderful super Tuscan blend that costs half as much as the other cult wines in this elite category. The wine is rich, opulent, intense and extremely focused in terms of its aromatic delivery and the mouthfeel is long, textured and rich. Imported by Banfi Vintners. *Editors' Choice.*

53

**94 Louis Roederer 2005 Rosé Brut (Champagne); \$67.**

This is a crisp, high-wire-walking wine, just so poised. Its youthful red fruits, laced with citrus, taste so fresh, with a strawberry bite. At this stage, it is intensely enjoyable as young Champagne, but it does need to age for several years. Imported by Maisons Marques & Domaines USA.

54

**93 Tegernseerhof 2008 Weissenkirchner Zwerithaler (Wachau); \$35.**

The first release of this field blend from the Zwerithaler vineyard. It gives spice, smooth acidity, fashioned by an explosion of pineapple, tarragon and orange zest, all giving delicious freshness. Age for five years or more. Screw cap. Imported by KW Selection. *Editors' Choice.*

55

**91 Domaine Jaume 2007 Altitude 420 (Vinsobres); \$16.**

Lifted and layered nose of spicy cherry-berry jam, cinnamon, clove, savory gamey notes, sweet sausage and black olive. Full-bodied and concentrated with ripe taut tannins, and a smooth, yet lively texture. Packed with bright jammy plummy black fruit, pepper, leather and dried spices. Very long, velvety, persistent finish. Imported by Petit Pois. *Editors' Choice.*

56

**92 Van Zellers 2008 Rufo (Douro); \$16.**

A powerful, spicy, sweet-fruited wine that is rich and concentrated. Ripe plums and dark chocolate work together with a firm tannic core. A dense wine for aging. Imported by Adventures In Wine. *Editors' Choice.*

57

**95 Zichichi Family Vineyard 2007 Old Vine Estate Zinfandel (Dry Creek Valley); \$36.**

An impressive Zinfandel, notable for its complexity and charm. Exudes quintessential Zin character, with a mouthburst of red currants, black raspberry pie filling, wild cherries,

sweet charred oak and masses of freshly crushed black pepper. There's even a chocolaty richness in the finish. Production of 921 cases is decent in the old-vine Zin category. *Editors' Choice.*

58

**96 Stolpman 2007 La Croce (Santa Ynez Valley); \$66.**

This is the costliest of Stolpman's new reds and easily the best. It impresses for the depth of flavor and classic, dense structure. A co-fermented blend of Sangiovese and Syrah, it shows imposingly complex layers of dark stone fruits and berries, dark chocolate, bacon, dusty Indian spices and sweet, smoky sandalwood, wrapped into powerfully rich but gently ground tannins. Very fine, approaching the profound. Drink now–2013 before it loses freshness. *Editors' Choice.*

59

**95 Henriot 1998 Millésimé Brut (Champagne); \$95.**

Just touching maturity, this is a wonderful wine. With intense acidity, yeast, minerality and a beautiful citrus texture, this is ready to drink but will age for many years. Imported by Henriot Inc.

60

**93 Rainer Wess 2009 Loibenberg Grüner Veltliner (Wachau); \$35.**

Powerful, creamy wine with intense spice, quince and lychee flavors, the acidity coming slowly through but never very apparent. Richness, concentration, with aging potential. Imported by Russell Herman Selection.

61

**95 Massolino 2006 Parafada (Barolo); \$94.**

Massolino's Parafada Barolo is a stunningly beautiful wine with bold, confident aromas of black fruit, tobacco, cigar box, cherry cola, clove, nutmeg and vanilla bean. The mouthfeel is bright, lively, velvety and, generally speaking, the 2006 vintage represents a big jump over 2005. Imported by Domaine Select Wine Estates.



62

**94 Astrales 2007 Ribera del Duero;** \$67. Shows almost all that's great about the region: dark, smoky, floral berry and chocolate aromas followed by juicy, acid-driven boysenberry, spice, bitter chocolate and peppery flavors. An excellent effort for a tough vintage, with dynamite power and a poise. Drink 2012–2018. Imported by Grapes of Spain.

63

**95 Abeja 2008 Merlot (Columbia Valley);** \$38. This 100% Merlot is sourced from Sagemoor Farms' Bacchus and Dionysus vineyards. For the first time, there is no Cabernet Franc in the blend. Richly fruity, with loads of cherry, raspberry compote and black currant flavors, this melds in grace notes of chocolate and caramel, seamlessly. Thick and flat-out luscious, yet structured with a tannic spine that gives definition and focus all the way through. *Editor's Choice.*

64

**94 PianCornello 2004 Riserva (Brunello di Montalcino);** \$70. Here's a beautiful Brunello that offers generous tones of black fruit, plum and cherry that are filled out at the back by solid notes of spice, cola, mesquite wood and cigar box. You'll love the natural density and intensity of this gorgeous wine from Tuscany with sweet tannins and smooth texture. Imported by Chambers & Chambers.

**KEG & CASK**

Historically, a *keg* refers to an empty barrel while a *cask* refers to a full one.

65

**94 Mazzei 2007 Tenuta Belguardo (Maremma);** \$70. You'll love the tones of rich chocolate, leather, berry fruit, cassis and vanilla. All those aromas are backed by dense, rich extraction and smooth softness. Imported by Palm Bay International.

66

**94 Maurodos 2006 San Román (Toro);** \$70. Dark, tight and masculine smelling, San Román is once again one of the two or three best wines from Toro. This vintage is black, extracted and superripe, but it maintains a fine level of balance and more than adequate freshness. Flavors of coconut, vanilla and chocolate announce generous new oak, as does mocha and espresso on the finish. Heady but ready; ageable for another 5–8 years. Imported by Grapes of Spain. *Editors' Choice.*

67

**93 Bodegas Luzon 2005 Alma de Luzon (Jumilla);** \$40. Ripe, dense and powerful, with an onslaught of raisin, spice, pepper and leather on the nose. The palate is direct and pure, with clean flavors of berry, spice and chocolate leading to a long, layered finish. Beautiful wine; one of the best I've had from this region. 70% Monastrell with 20% Cabernet and 10% Syrah. Imported by Aviva Vino. *Editors' Choice.*

68

**90 Gentilini 2008 Robola (Cephalonia);** \$18. This wine showcases the native Greek variety Robola beautifully, with its crisp, clean citrus aromas and flavors and mineral/sea salt spin. The wine has a fresh quality but offers layers of lemon and orange. The finish is like a spray of the sea on the palate. Pair with seafood and light salads. Imported by Athenee Importers.

69

**95 Chalk Hill 2008 Musque Sauvignon Blanc (Chalk Hill);** \$40. Expensive, but brilliant. At the forefront of California Sauvignon Blanc. Shows bright and clean acidity framing intense tangerine, lime and honey flavors, as well as complications from oak. Yet it finishes bone dry and elegant. Delicious and compelling, this wine lifts Sauvignon Blanc into entirely new territory.

70

**95 Sineann 2008 Champoux Vineyard Cabernet Franc (Columbia Valley);** \$40. Certainly the finest Champoux vineyard Cabernet Franc yet from Sineann, this immense, concentrated wine blends a riot of dark fruits with baking spices, ground coffee, tobacco and caramel. Great concentration and depth, but drinking it now is robbing the cradle. *Editors' Choice.*

71

**94 Château Pontet-Canet 2007 Pauillac;** \$75. Slowly the potential of this impressive wine is coming out. It is rich, the new wood flavors blending with the ripe black-berry sweetness and tight tannins. Chocolate flavor power through this concentrated wine. Imported by Château Pontet-Canet. *Editors' Choice.*

72

**94 Poggio Antico 2006 Madre (Toscana);** \$80. Madre, or mother in Italian, is a feminine but sturdy blend that shows both the floral and forest berry characteristics of the Cabernet backed by the natural heft and intensity of the Sangiovese. This impressive super Tuscan blend would make a perfect partner to grilled steak or marinated pork. Imported by The Sorting Table.



73

**93 Pietro Rinaldi 2007 Vigna San Cristoforo (Barbaresco); \$45.** Here's a bold and modern Nebbiolo from the San Cristoforo cru with a rich, extracted appearance followed by intense aromas of ripe cherry, spice, black licorice, slate roof and dried tobacco leaf. The tannins are dusty and drying but give excellent structure to the wine's overall richness and opulence. Imported by VinUS Inc.

74

**93 De Toren 2007 Fusion V (Stellenbosch); \$45.** Cedar, blackberry, plum and dark chocolate aromas and flavors give this poised red blend a mysterious edge. Anise and pepper add a spicy kick, the whole package rolls out in one impressive, rich wave, ending with a spicy finish. An ageable wine with great character and poise. One of South Africa's best. Imported by Cape Classics.

75

**93 Gonzalez Byass NV Matusalem Oloroso Dulce Viejo (Jerez); \$45/375 ml.** Outstanding Sherry with complexity, richness and character. The nose has a saline zest to it, making it no wallflower, and of course there's raisin and prune. The palate is formed, sculpted and balanced, with peanut M&M's candy, roasted fruit, chocolate ice cream and more. A beauty with power and poise. Imported by San Francisco Wine Exchange.

76

**93 Massena 2006 The Eleventh Hour Shiraz (Barossa Valley); \$48.** Made by Dan Standish, this resembles the wines under his own label in its sense of elegance and proportion. It's big, but not too big, with intriguing aromas of smoke, blueberries and pepper, followed up by flavors of blueberry, cherry and spice. Drink now–2020. Imported by Epicurean Wines.

77

**95 Fielding Hills 2008 RiverBend Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (Wahluke Slope); \$42.** Though the blend includes small portions of other grapes—9% Syrah, 3% Merlot and 5% Cabernet Franc—this really champions the essential character of great Washington Cabernet Sauvignon. Its core fruit is supple, compact cassis and black cherry, with a spicy top note that resonates well into the finish. Concentrated and beautifully proportioned, with black olive and just a hint of leaf in the finish. *Editors' Choice.*

78

**100 Williams Selyem 2007 Litton Estate Vineyard Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley); \$100.** A wine of great structure, with rich acids and tannins framing grilled cherries, strawberries and raspberries, with complicating notes of cola, pomegranates, orange zest, anise, dusty Asian spices and smoky sandalwood. The vineyard, which is owned by the winery, is only 19 acres, planted to an array of newer and older clones. Best after 2013.

79

**92 Domaine Gavoty 2009 Cuvée Clarendon Rosé (Côtes de Provence); \$22.** The top wine from Gavoty, this is impressive. It has a fine structure, enveloped by rich fruits, soft apple skins and red cherry tannins and a tight layer of acidity. It could age for a year. Imported by Garber and Co.

80

**92 Henri Bourgeois 2008 Domaine Gérard Fiou (Sancerre); \$22.** An intensely mineral expression of Sauvignon Blanc, crisp, full of citrus flavors, deliciously fresh, but also complex. The wine is concentrated into a steel spring of ripeness, ready to burst from the glass. Imported by Ideal Wine and Spirits Co. Inc.

81

**93 Kilikanoon 2006 The Duke Grenache (Clare Valley); \$49.** A top-notch effort, The Duke (a single-vineyard bottling) offers lovely cherry fruit and a full body allied to a wonderfully silky texture and tremendous length. What's not to like? Drink it over the next 3–4 years. Imported by Old Bridge Cellars.

82

**94 Dowsett Family 2009 Celilo Vineyard Gewürztraminer (Columbia Gorge); \$22.** The Celilo Vineyard is arguably the finest location in Washington for growing Gewürztraminer, and over the years quite a few winemakers from both Washington and Oregon have worked with these grapes. No one does a better job than Chris Dowsett, and this new vintage is his finest to date. A thrilling wine, from the first sniff to the last lingering sip—lemon peel, sappy citrus fruits, rich minerals, perfect acidity—it's all here in spades. *Editors' Choice.*

83

**93 Finca Decero 2007 Amano Remolinos Vineyard (Agrelo); \$50.** Smoky and dark, with serious aromas of black licorice, earth and lush berry. The palate has a great feel to it along with huge flavors of cassis, blackberry, black peppercorn, coffee and sweet coconut. It's stellar from front to back, with coffee, mocha and silky tannins on the finish. Composed of 60% Malbec with 35% Cabernet Sauvignon and small parts Tannat and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2013. Imported by Vintus LLC. *Editors' Choice.*

84

**98 Viña Sastre 2005 Regina Vides (Ribera del Duero); \$195.** From vines that are between 80 and 100 years, this is a marvelous example of top-notch Spanish red wine, regardless of region and grape variety. Hails from four vineyards, and the product is dark, concentrated, sultry, masculine and impressive. Giant black fruit flavors, texture, richness, coffee and cola make it truly special. Drinkable now; best in

3–5 more years. Imported by De Maison Selections, Inc.

85

**93 Torbreck 2006 The Struie Shiraz (Barossa); \$50.** A blend of Shiraz from Eden Valley and the valley floor, this is both amply endowed and impressively complex. The creamy purée of raspberries is dusted with peppery spice and cocoa, leaving a savory impression on the lasting finish. Drink now–2015. Imported by Torbreck. *Editors' Choice.*

86

**96 Chateau St. Jean 2005 Reserve Merlot (Sonoma County); \$90.** Easily one of the greatest California Merlots ever. Notable for its complete balance. Nothing sticks out; all the parts work together. The black cherry, plum, black currant, dark chocolate and licorice fruit is big, but perfectly balanced with smoky, sweet oak, while a subtle touch of violets brings a smack of the earth. The tannin-acid structure is just beautiful. Will continue to develop bottle complexity for at least six more years.

87

**94 Emiliana 2006 Gê (Colchagua Valley); \$92.** Dark, dense, spicy and full of everything nice, including cola, berry, earth and richness. The palate has ideal ripeness and power, and the flavors are a clever mix of light herbs, spice, chocolate and blasting berry. Long and sultry on the finish, with tobacco and immense complexity. One of Chile's very best wines; a blend of Syrah, Carmenère, Cabernet and Merlot. Imported by Banfi Vintners. *Editors' Choice.*

88

**93 Poggio al Tesoro 2007 Sondaia (Bolgheri); \$50.** Merlot and Cabs Sauvignon and Franc are the base of this ripe, dense and rich Bolgheri blend. The intensity is impressive and so is the overall density and persistence of the finish. Pair this wine with hearty dishes, such as sausage and slow-cooked lentils. Imported by Winebow. —M.L.

89

**94 Dr. Loosen 2007 Riesling Eiswein (Mosel-Saar-Ruwer); \$23/187 ml.** A relative bargain in the stratospheric world of icewine, Loosen's 2007 boasts amazingly pure fruit essences resembling candied pineapple, peach, fruit cocktail and even some red berry notes. It's plump in the mouth but not oversized, with a long, mouthwatering finish. Imported by Loosen Bros. USA. *Editors' Choice.*

90

**95 Ruinart 1998 Dom Ruinart Brut (Champagne); \$150.** Now at its peak of maturity, this is a gorgeous toast and spice flavored Champagne. It has richness, refined acidity, a powerful concentration of yeasty almonds, a taut texture and a final flavor that is straight, true, perfectly balanced. Imported by Moët Hennessy USA.

91

**95 Domaine Christian Moreau Père et Fils 2007 Clos les Hospices Les Clos Grand Cru (Chablis); \$110.** From a parcel that used to belong to the Hospices in Chablis until purchased by the Moreau family. It is a beautifully fashioned wine, its steely character rounded out with delicious ripe fruits, green apples, pear skin and kiwi fruit. Impressive and for aging. Imported by Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd.

92

**93 Clarendon Hills 2007 Blewitt Springs Grenache (Clarendon); \$50.** Blewitt + Grenache + 2007 = something magical. Clarendon Hills's bottling is dense and powerful yet doesn't lose its way. Potent plum pudding and spice cake notes offer plenty of complexity and richness, without excessive weight. Long and slightly warming on the finish. Drink now–2017. Imported by Wine Brokers Unlimited. *Editors' Choice.*

93

**95 J. Bookwalter 2007 Conner Lee Vineyard Conflict (Columbia Valley); \$50.** This is a revelation. The complex and site-specific aromas suggest wild herb, lavender, lemon verbena and black olive. The tannins are supple and ripe, with no green edge at all. The fruit combines mineral-soaked black cherry, sweet raspberry compote and deep cassis. A marvelous wine, dense, detailed and seductive. *Editors' Choice.*

94

**95 Louis Latour 2008 Corton-Charlemagne; \$115.** Louis Latour has one of the largest landholdings in this famed vineyard and makes a classic, powerful Corton-Charlemagne. The acidity of 2008 gives this wine even greater complexity and a purity of line to go with the power and density. Certainly for aging. Imported by Louis Latour Inc.

95

**92 Villa Maria 2009 Taylors Pass Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$25.** This terrific Sauvignon Blanc is marked by slightly pungent notes of green tomato or crushed tomato leaf, seamlessly married to smooth, ripe, tropical fruit. It's a bit creamy in texture, almost lush, with a long, mouthcoating finish. Imported by Ste. Michelle Wine Estates. *Editors' Choice.*

96

**92 Fonseca 2005 Late Bottled Vintage Port; \$25.** A well-balanced wine, bringing both rich fruit and sweet tannins to go with dense concentration. There is ripeness from black jam and sweet jelly, followed by a good core of dryness. Imported by Kobrand. *Editors' Choice.*

97

**95 Bollinger 2000 La Grand Année Brut (Champagne); \$150.** Full, creamy and soft, this is a rich Champagne, very much a food wine. It has great ripe swathes of

peach and pineapple flavors, rounded by toast. While 2000 is not a vintage for aging, this opulent Champagne may be the exception. Imported by Terlato Wines International.

98

**92** **Domaine Grand Veneur 2009 Clos de Sixte (Lirac); \$27.** Filled with wonderfully ripe fruit, yet fresh and floral in character, this is a top example of Lirac. Black cherry fruit forms the core, supported by firm acids and tannins and accented by hints of licorice on the long finish. Drink now–2020. Imported by Kysela Père et Fils. *Editors' Choice.*

99

**92** **Markus Molitor 2008 Zeltinger Sonnenuhr Riesling Spätlese (Mosel); \$30.** Truly stunning, this white starts out with subtle talcum powder and gravel notes, then adds intense perfume and peaches in the mouth. There's a finely tuned balance and good length. Exceptional harmony and intensity suggest it will improve for 15 years or more. Imported by Weingut Markus Molitor.

100

**95** **Scott Paul 2008 Audrey Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$65.** All Maresh vineyard grapes are behind this gorgeous and feminine Pinot, with soft and evocative scents of truffle, chocolate and raspberry. Brilliant winemaking that takes all the elements of great Oregon fruit and puts them into unique focus, with winemaker Kelley Fox's trademark blend of biodynamic earthy/ fungal flavors, elegant berry/ cherry fruit, and just a touch of milk chocolate. The alcohol just reaches 13%. **WE**

**OX TUNG!**

Tradition in the German winemaking town of Varnhalt—even today—dictates the last harvest of the season be carried out by ox cart. Any other way, local lore holds that sour wine will follow.