

The Classics Collection November 2007

Tasting notes

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Classics Collection November 2007

France Red Wines - November 2007

Bordeaux

CHÂTEAU LA MISSION HAUT-BRION 2004

Pessac-Léognan Cru Classé

669663 (XD) 750 mL \$195

TASTING NOTE: Deep red-ruby. Bright aromas of dark fruits, licorice, rocks and leather, lifted by a light peppery nuance. Dense and broad, with a creamy, seamless mid-palate texture and a restrained sweetness. Finishes with fine, broad tannins and noteworthy persistence. With its very fresh style, this comes across as a bit more delineated today than the 2005 Haut-Brion. An excellent showing. Score - **91**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, May/June 2007)

CHÂTEAU L'EVANGILE 2004

Pomerol

670216 (XD) 750 mL \$169

TASTING NOTE: A stunning example of the vintage, the 2004 l'Evangile is not far off the pace of their brilliant 2005. A blend of 89% Merlot and 11% Cabernet Franc (3,000+ cases produced), it exhibits a deep ruby/plum color, superb ripeness, and sweet blackberry, truffle, acacia flower, licorice, and toasty oak aromas. This knock-out effort is surprisingly rich, opulent, and fruity with good glycerin, medium to full body, and a stunning finish. It should drink beautifully young yet age for 15 or more years. Score - **93**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, June 2007)

CHÂTEAU MARGAUX 2004

Margaux, 1^{er} Cru

670000 (XD) 750 mL \$369

TASTING NOTE: The supple-textured 2004 Chateau Margaux is reminiscent of the 2001 or 1999. It exhibits a superb blue/ purple color to the rim as well as sweet aromas of flowers, blueberries, creme de cassis, licorice, and smoke, superb fruit intensity, medium body, classic elegance, and silky, sweet tannin in the long finish. This beauty can be drunk now or cellared for two decades or more. Score - **93**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*)

PAVILLON ROUGE DU CHÂTEAU MARGAUX 2004

Margaux, Second Wine of Château Margaux

509976 (XD) 750 mL \$99

TASTING NOTE: Margaux's second wine, the 2004 Pavillon Rouge du Chateau Margaux, may turn out to be outstanding. Its deep ruby/purple hue is accompanied by fleshy notes of black currants, cherries, smoke, earth, and spring flowers. Lovely, ripe, and opulent, it is best consumed during its first 10-15 years of life. Score - **89**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, June 2007)

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC 2003

St-Émilion 1^{er} Grand Cru Classé (A)

595819 (XD) 750 mL \$525

TASTING NOTE: Blackberry, mineral and lightly toasted oak. Subtle and complex. Full-bodied, with wonderfully sweet fruit character and ultrarefined tannins. Goes on and on. Gorgeous and seductive. Best after 2009. Score - **96**. (James Suckling, *www.winespectator.com*, March 31, 2006)

CHÂTEAU DUCRU-BEAUCAILLOU 2003

St-Julien, 2^e Cru

596460 (XD) 750 mL \$193

Robert Parker gave this wine **96** points.

TASTING NOTE: Intense aromas of blackberry, currant and cherry. Full-bodied, with masses of big, velvety tannins and a finish that lasts for minutes. A blockbuster. A classic big, juicy claret. Best after 2012. Score - **97**. (James Suckling, *www.winespectator.com*, March 31, 2006)

CHÂTEAU MARGAUX 2003
Margaux, 1^{er} Cru

508903 (XD) 750 mL \$1099

TASTING NOTE: Am I being too stingy with the 2003 Chateau Margaux? A wine of extraordinary complexity and intensity, it reveals a deep purple color, a style not unlike the 1990 Margaux (possibly even more concentrated), a velvety texture, and notes of spring flowers interwoven with camphor, melted licorice, creme de cassis, and pain grille. Not a blockbuster, it offers extraordinary intensity as well as a surreal delicacy/lightness. There is riveting freshness to this offering, which tips the scales at a lofty (for this estate) 13.5% alcohol, as well as an alluring sweetness and accessibility. It probably will tighten up over the next few years. Nevertheless, it is a profound Chateau Margaux that brings to mind a hypothetical blend of the 1982 and 1990. Anticipated maturity: 2011-2035. Score - **99**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, April 2006)

CHÂTEAU L'EGLISE-CLINET 2002
Pomerol

925032 (XD) 750 mL \$175

Stephen Tanzer of *International Wine Cellar* also awarded this wine a score of **90**.

TASTING NOTE: Blackberry and dark chocolate aromas follow through to a medium-bodied palate, with silky tannins and a pretty, delicate finish. Very nice texture and refinement to this wine. I thought this would have evolved even better in barrel. Best after 2008. Score - **90**. (James Suckling, *www.winespectator.com*, March 31, 2005)

CHÂTEAU MONTROSE 2001

St-Estèphe, 2^e Cru

45336 (XD) 750 mL \$149

TASTING NOTE: Sweet notes of earth, compost, and thick, juicy black currant as well as cherry characteristics jump from the glass of this dense purple-colored 2001. Medium-bodied and rich, with moderately high tannin as well as surprising power and density, it is the most backward St.-Estèphe of the vintage. A blend of 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, and the rest Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc, it requires 5-6 years of cellaring, and should drink well for 15-16. Score - **91**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, June 2004)

CHÂTEAU PALMER 2001

Margaux, 3^e Cru

731513 (XD) 750 mL \$229

TASTING NOTE: A virile, muscular effort for this estate, the 2001 Palmer (a blend of 51% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot, and 5% Petit Verdot) exhibits a saturated purple color to the rim. Although closed and backward, it is surprisingly powerful, layered, and formidably endowed, revealing hints of charcoal, black fruits, earth, and underbrush. There is a lot going on in this offering, but it needs 5-7 years of cellaring to resolve its high tannin. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2022. Score - **90**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, June 2004)

CHÂTEAU PAVIE 2001

St-Émilion, 1^{er} Grand Cru Classé (B)

5835 (XD) 750 mL \$283

TASTING NOTE: One of the candidates for wine of the vintage ... again, the 2001 Pavie, from a magnificent south-facing vineyard planted primarily on limestone soil, is a blend of 70% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Franc, and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. After a six week maceration, it spent nearly 24 months in new oak prior to being bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. Some Bordeaux brokers think it might be even better than the 2000 Pavie, but I do not agree. The inky/ruby/purple-colored 2001 exhibits a tight but promising nose of crushed stones, a liqueur of blackberries, cherries, and black currants, and subtle smoke and licorice in the background. Powerful, with impressive elegance, fine harmony among its elements, a multi-layered texture, it has a finish that lasts for 50+ seconds. There is considerable tannin, but it is well-integrated. Give it 3-4 years, and drink it over the next two decades. A profound effort for the vintage, it is an example of a perfectionist proprietor pushing the envelope of quality. Score - **96**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, June 2004)

CHÂTEAU BAHANS HAUT-BRION 2000

Pessac-Léognan, Second wine of Château Haut-Brion

935718 (XD) 750 mL \$130

TASTING NOTE: The dark ruby/purple- colored, deep, rich, medium-bodied 2000 Bahans Haut-Brion exhibits scents of graphite, black cherry liqueur, cassis, and minerals. This second wine has a lot in common with its bigger sibling, displaying impressive volume, depth, and complexity. Anticipated maturity: 2005-2016. Score - **90**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, April 2003)

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC 2000

St-Émilion, 1^{er} Grand Cru Classé (A)

8482 (XD) 750 mL \$1769

TASTING NOTE: This closed, backward blend of 53% Merlot and 47% Cabernet Franc boasts a saturated purple color along with a reticent but striking bouquet of blackberries, blueberries, truffles, and mocha. In spite of its tightness, aeration reveals scents of licorice, menthol, and saddle leather. Opulent and full-bodied, with low acidity, sweet tannin, and a 60-second finish, it is unquestionably as profound as the 1990 and 1982. I still believe the 2000 has the potential to be the most compelling Cheval Blanc since the mythical 1947 and 1949, but patience is required. It should merit a three digit score in 7-10 years, but it is closed at present. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2030+. Note: The original score for this wine was **98** in *The Wine Advocate* but it is changed to **100** per Mr. Parker as of August, 2006. Score - **100**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, April 2003)

CHÂTEAU LATOUR 2000

Pauillac, 1^{er} Cru

682161 (XD) 750 mL \$1135

Robert Parker gave this wine **98** points.

TASTING NOTE: A young wine that electrifies every taste bud in your mouth. Compacted aromas of crushed currants and minerals, with roses and lilacs. Full-bodied, with masses of silky, refined tannins and a finish that lasts for minutes. Stunning. Best Latour since 1990. Best after 2012. Score - **100**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, March 31, 2003)

CHÂTEAU MALESCOT ST. EXUPÉRY 2000

Margaux, Grand Cru Classé

948380 (XD) 1500 mL \$297

TASTING NOTE: This estate has been making fine wine for over a decade but never receives the attention it deserves. A great effort, the 2000 Malescot St.-Exupery exhibits a deep ruby/ purple color along with a sweet nose of high quality oak, minerals, tobacco, black currants, and intriguing floral and anise notes. A wine of great purity, flavor concentration, and uncanny depth that seems to build in the mouth, this is a classic example of a quintessentially elegant, medium to full-bodied Bordeaux that is light on its feet, and impressively nuanced, yet concentrated. Gorgeous! Anticipated maturity: 2007-2022. Score - **92**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, April 2003)

CHÂTEAU LA CROIX ST. GEORGES 1999
Pomerol

10017 (XD) 750 mL \$129

TASTING NOTE: The debut vintage, La Croix St.-Georges' 1999 is even better than I anticipated. It is an amazingly opaque purple-colored wine with extraordinary fat and richness, concentrated, jammy blackberry and cherry fruit, and liqueur-like intensity. The wine is multi-layered, extremely generous, and sumptuous on the palate, with a remarkable finish. It is a star of the vintage. Wow! Anticipated maturity: 2004-2020. Score - **93**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, April 2002)

CHÂTEAU MONTROSE 1999
St-Estèphe, 2^e Cru

593707 (XD) 750 mL \$155

TASTING NOTE: Very fine indeed, offering complex aromas of berries, grilled meat and tobacco, with racy tannins and a long finish. Medium- to full-bodied. Better than from barrel. Best after 2005. Score - **90**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, March 31, 2002)

CHÂTEAU MOUTON ROTHSCHILD 1999
Pauillac, 1^{er} Cru

607671 (XD) 750 mL \$360

TASTING NOTE: The beautiful 1999 Mouton Rothschild may be a modern day clone of their 1962 or 1985. Its saturated ruby/purple color is followed by sumptuous aromas of cedar wood, creme de cassis, wood smoke, coffee, and dried herbs. The wine is forward, lush, and full-bodied. It is already complex as well as succulent, fleshy, and long. Tannin in the finish suggests more nuances will emerge in 4-5 years. It is a complex, classic Mouton. Anticipated maturity: 2005-2030. Score - **93**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, April 2002)

CHÂTEAU GRAND MAYNE 1998

St-Émilion, Grand Cru Classé

686485 (XD) 750 mL \$133

TASTING NOTE: The 1998 has continued to gain weight, richness, and volume. Even better from bottle than it was from barrel, this may be the most concentrated and powerful Grand Mayne yet produced. A saturated purple color is accompanied by a phenomenal nose of licorice, smoke, graphite, and cassis aromas (reminiscent of dry vintage port). This huge, massive effort is low in acidity, highly extracted, with an unctuous texture, gobs of glycerin, and a multidimensional, chewy, long finish. A dazzling wine, it is undoubtedly a sleeper of the vintage. Anticipated maturity: 2003-2020. Score - **93**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, April 2001)

CHÂTEAU PICHON-LONGUEVILLE BARON 1998

Pauillac

45260 (XD) 750 mL \$137

TASTING NOTE: A definitive Pauillac, the dense purple-colored 1998 Pichon-Baron offers up a sweet bouquet of licorice, smoke, asphalt, blackberries, and creme de cassis. In the mouth, the wine is elegant rather than full-blown, with medium body, sweet fruit, nice texture on the attack and mid-palate, and moderate tannin in the long finish. No, this is not as profound as the 1996, 1990 or 1989, but it is an outstanding effort. Anticipated maturity: 2006-2020. Score - **90**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, April 2001)

CHÂTEAU CHEVAL BLANC 1996

St-Émilion, 1er Grand Cru Classé (A)

658757 (XD) 750 mL \$459

TASTING NOTE: The elegant, moderately weighted 1996 Cheval Blanc reveals a deep garnet/plum, evolved color. Quintessentially elegant, with a complex nose of black fruits, coconut, smoke, and pain grille, this medium-bodied wine exhibits sweet fruit on the attack, substantial complexity, and a lush, velvety-textured finish. It is very soft and evolved for a 1996.

Anticipated maturity: 2000-2015. Score - **90**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.robertparker.com, April 1999)

CHÂTEAU HAUT-BAGES LIBÉRAL 1996
Pauillac, 5e Cru

45328 (XD) 750 mL \$112

TASTING NOTE: A rather discreet style, with understated currant and berry aromas and flavors. Medium-bodied, with firm tannins and a silky, fruity aftertaste. Needs time to open a bit. Best after 2003. Score - **88**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, Jan. 31, 1999)

CHÂTEAU PALMER 1996
Margaux, 3e Cru

929968 (XD) 750 mL \$229

TASTING NOTE: This wine, a blend of 55% Cabernet Sauvignon, 40% Merlot, and 5% Petit Verdot, is performing well after its July, 1998 bottling. It boasts an impressively saturated purple color, in addition to a backward yet intense nose of black plums, currants, licorice, and smoke. Following terrific fruit on the attack, the wine's structure and tannin take over. There is plenty of sweet fruit, and the tannin is well-integrated, but the wine requires 7-8 years of cellaring. Anticipated maturity: 2007-2028. Score - **91**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.robertparker.com, April 1999)

CHÂTEAU LATOUR 1995
Pauillac, 1er Cru

578765 (XD) 750 mL \$655

TASTING NOTE: A beauty, the opaque dense purple-colored 1995 exhibits jammy cassis, vanillin, and minerals in its fragrant but still youthful aromatics. Medium to full-bodied, with exceptional purity, superb concentration, and a long, intense, ripe, 40-second finish, this is a magnificent example of Latour. As the wine sat in the glass, scents of roasted espresso and toasty new oak emerged. This classic will require considerable cellaring. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2050. Score - **96**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, June 2000)

CHÂTEAU PALMER 1995
Margaux, 3e Cru

905083 (XD) 750 mL \$259

TASTING NOTE: Bottled in July, 1997, this wine includes an extremely high percentage of Merlot (about 43%). It is a gloriously opulent, low acid, fleshy Palmer that will be attractive early and keep well. Dark ruby/ purple-colored, with smoky, toasty new oak intertwined with gobs of jammy cherry fruit, and floral and chocolate nuances, this medium to full-bodied, plump yet elegant wine is impressive. Anticipated maturity: 2002-2020. Score - **90**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 1998)

CHÂTEAU LATOUR 1988
Pauillac, 1er Cru

682252 (XD) 750 mL \$495

TASTING NOTE: The best showing yet for a wine from this under-rated vintage, the dark garnet-colored 1988 Latour reveals slight amber at the edge. A bouquet of melted tar, plums, black currants, cedar, and underbrush is followed by a sweet entry, with medium to full body, excellent ripeness, and mature tannin. It is a classic, elegant Latour with more meaty, vegetable-like flavors than are found in a riper year, such as 1989 and 1990. The 1988 has just begun to enter its plateau of maturity, where it should remain for 25 years. Anticipated maturity: now-2025. Score - **91**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, June 2000)

CHÂTEAU PETIT VILLAGE 1982
Pomerol

5819 (XD) 750 mL \$335

TASTING NOTE: Good full red with a hint of amber at the rim. Superripe aromas of redcurrant, cherry, roast coffee and menthol; nearly liqueur-like jammy sweetness on the nose. Rich, fleshy and deep, with berry and chocolate flavors along with a faint green note. Rather Burgundian in character. Finishes with slightly dry-edged tannins. Drink over the next eight to ten years. Score - **89**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, July/Aug. 2002)

France White Wines - November 2007

Bordeaux

CHÂTEAU LAVILLE HAUT-BRION 2004 Pessac-Léognan

670976 (XD) 750 mL \$285

TASTING NOTE: La Mission-Haut-Brion's white wine offering, the 2004 Laville Haut-Brion, exhibits waxy notes of honeyed citrus and orange rind in an opulent, medium to full-bodied style with lovely fruit and acidity, a striking minerality, and a long finish displaying notions of brioche and smoky wood. It will be drinkable young, but should keep for 20-25 years. Score - **91**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, June 2006)

DOMAINE DE CHEVALIER BLANC 2004 Pessac-Léognan, Grand Cru Classé

45443 (XD) 750 mL \$133

TASTING NOTE: (88% sauvignon blanc and 12% semillon) Very pale color. Pungent, high-toned aromas of pineapple, grapefruit, quinine, ginger, mint, minerals and flowers. Densely packed and succulent, with refreshing, sharply delineated flavors of lime, grapefruit, mint and minerals. Offers a compelling sweetness buffered by bright acidity. At once supple and gripping, and very long and lively on the back end. This is 13% alcohol without any chaptalization. A great early showing. Score - **(92-94)**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, May/June 2005)

CHÂTEAU SMITH HAUT LAFITE BLANC 2003
Pessac-Léognan

45427 (XD) 750 mL \$99

TASTING NOTE: Apple, honey and lemon character. Full-bodied, with ripe fruit and an aftertaste of lemon rind, spice and honey. Needs some time to open. Excellent. Best after 2007. Score - **93**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, Feb. 28, 2007)

CHÂTEAU D'YQUEM 2001
Sauternes, 1^{er} Cru Supérieur

682518 (S) 375 mL \$480

503870 (S) 750 mL \$969

The 2001 Château d'Yquem also received a perfect score of **100** points from the *Wine Spectator*.

TASTING NOTE: The 2001 Yquem reveals a hint of green in its light gold color. While somewhat reticent aromatically, with airing, it offers up honeyed tropical fruit, orange marmalade, pineapple, sweet creme brulee, and buttered nut-like scents. In the mouth, it is full-bodied with gorgeously refreshing acidity as well as massive concentration and unctuousness. Everything is uplifted and given laser-like focus by refreshing acidity. This large-scaled, youthful Yquem appears set to take its place among the most legendary vintages of the past, and will age effortlessly for 75+ years. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2100+. Score - **100**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, April 2005)

France Red Wines - November 2007

Burgundy - Côte de Nuits

BOUCHARD PÈre et fils CLOS-VOUGEOT 2005
Grand Cru

46540 (XD) 750 mL \$190

TASTING NOTE: Deep ruby-red. Knockout nose offers black cherry, violet, truffle, minerals and dark chocolate. Suave on entry, then quite backward in the middle following the expressive nose, and dominated by its firm tannic spine. The very unevolved flavors of black cherry, minerals and spices need more elevage But this should be strong. Score - **91-94**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, March/April 2007)

DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI ÉCHÉZEAUX 2004
Grand Cru

723122 (XD) 750 mL \$239

TASTING NOTE: In a vintage that produced many lighter wines, this wine is anything but. It is ripe, rich, fat and fuller bodied than most other reds from the area. Yet, its layered aromas and flavors combine red cherries, spices, violets and roasted bread. Showing a bit of varietal velvet in texture, the wine shows a slight tilt to leanness at the back of the palate that adds to the wine's overall sense of elegance and restraint. Score - **91**. (*Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wines*, May 2007)

DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI GRANDS ÉCHEZEAUX 2004
Grand Cru

721316 (XD) 750 mL \$389

TASTING NOTE: Good medium red. Much less forthcoming on the nose than the Echezeaux, hinting at black cherry, flowers and mint; the only one of these 2004s to show a slight vegetal peppery quality. Then sweet, primary and young on the palate, with very good definition and grip to the black fruit and pepper flavors. Finishes with firm, complex tannins. This rather austere but elegant wine needs a good six to eight years of cellaring. The team removed about 30% to 40% of the stems in 2004. Score - **91 (+?)**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, March/April 2007)

DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI LA TÂCHE 2004
Grand Cru

721654 (XD) 750 mL \$675

TASTING NOTE: Good bright, deep red. Wonderfully perfumed, nuanced nose offers raspberry, smoke, earth, white truffle and this vineyard's typical cocktail of Oriental spices. Compellingly silky-sweet and suave on the palate, with great aromatic lift to the red fruit, spice and mineral flavors. This offers a rare combination of high and low tones on the nose and palate. Taut and sharply focused wine, finishing with superb, palate-saturating mineral persistence and great finesse of tannins. A great 2004. Score - **94**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, March/April 2007)

DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI RICHEBOURG 2004
Grand Cru

737379 (D) 750 mL \$589

TASTING NOTE: We are about to commit a heresy. This wine is about as close to a California Pinot as one sees in this group, and while it is clearly not from California, it is the most solid of the group and, perhaps a bit less elegant. Yet, if one is looking for power with nuance, this is the wine for you. And us. Score - **94**. (*Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wines*, May 2007)

DOMAINE DE LA ROMANÉE-CONTI ROMANÉE ST. VIVANT 2004
Grand Cru

721399 (D) 750 mL \$555

TASTING NOTE: Medium red. Aromas of red cherry and Oriental spices, with a liqueur-like aspect. Sweet, aromatic and penetrating, with lovely acidity giving shape and life to the silky, slowly mounting flavors. In a distinctly feminine style, and more expressive in the mouth today than the Grands-Echezeaux. A supple, suave, sappy wine with a light touch. Finishes long, with dusty tannins. Score - **92**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, March/April 2007)

DOMAINE FAIVELEY CHAMBERTIN CLOS DE BÈZE 2004
Grand Cru

722132 (XD) 750 mL \$185

TASTING NOTE: An almost improbably elegant and pure nose of redcurrant, leather, kirsch, plum and tea and leather hints lead to explosively spicy, powerful and linear full-bodied flavors that culminate in a kaleidoscopic finish of breathtaking proportions. The only nit on this beauty is a hint of warmth though this may diminish with time as the flavors take on more weight and depth. A beauty in the making and one that will age for more than 2 decades. Drink: 2016+. Score - **91-94**. (Allen Meadows, *www.burghound.com*, Jan. 2006)

DOMAINE FRANÇOIS LAMARCHE LA GRANDE RUE 2004
Grand Cru, Monopole

6841 (XD) 750 mL \$217

La Grand Rue vineyard is sandwiched between La Tache and La Romanée Conti, sharing the same soil and aspect as its illustrious neighbours.

TASTING NOTE: (aged in 80% new oak) Medium red. Sappy aromas of red cherry, rose petal, minerals and coffee. Fat, supple and full, with impressive mid-palate breadth. Pepper and spice notes add complexity. This one is dry in a positive way. The longest of these '04s, finishing with fine tannins and lingering spice character. Score - **89-92**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, March/April 2006)

DOMAINE HENRI GOUGES NUITS-ST-GEORGES CLOS DES PORRETS ST-GEORGES 2004

1^{er} Cru

693606 (XD) 750 mL \$72

TASTING NOTE: Firm and tight now, with a beam of black cherry, floral and mineral notes. Has a sappy intensity and a sweetness to the fruit that lingers on the spicy finish. Best from 2008 through 2015. Score - **92**. (Bruce Sanderson, *www.winespectator.com*, May 15, 2007)

DOMAINE ROBERT ARNOUX VOSNE-ROMANÉE LES SUCHOTS 2004

1^{er} Cru

22434 (XD) 750 mL \$199

TASTING NOTE: Arnoux is consistently the reference standard for Suchots and the 2004 is a most impressive effort featuring a nose of violet and floral aromas generously laced with spice and tea notes followed by textured, sweet, sappy and mineral-infused medium full flavors that offer a gorgeously seductive mouth feel and stunning length. This is classy juice and while it's not quite in the league of the RSV [Romanée-St-Vivant], it's not far off. One of the best 1ers of the vintage. Drink: 2014+. Score - **92-94**. (Allen Meadows, www.burghound.com, Jan. 2006)

FAIVELEY ÉCHÉZEAUX 2004
Grand Cru

721613 (XD) 750 mL \$112

TASTING NOTE: A ripe, spicy and serious nose of earthy black pinot fruit with a hint of espresso merges into supple, sweet, rich and mouth coating flavors that offer real volume and are forward, fine and generous yet there is real sense of class and grace here. This is unusually refined for Echézeaux yet it will be capable of at least two decades of age. Drink: 2014+. Score - **90-92**. (Allen Meadows, www.burghound.com, Jan. 2006)

FAIVELEY MAZIS-CHAMBERTIN 2004
Grand Cru

736009 (XD) 750 mL \$135

TASTING NOTE: This isn't nearly as refined or elegant but there is an intensely savage, even animale character plus serious aromatic complexity to the earthy red fruit nose that continues onto the powerful, deep and expansive flavors that are solidly structured but not hard, culminating in a mouth coating and exceptionally long finish. Drink: 2014+. Score - **91-93**. (Allen Meadows, www.burghound.com, Jan. 2006)

LOUIS JADOT GEVREY-CHAMBERTIN CLOS SAINT-JACQUES 2004
1^{er} Cru

944116 (XD) 750 mL \$105

TASTING NOTE: Medium bright red. Initially reticent nose showed raspberry, bitter cherry, red licorice, flowers and minerals with extended aeration. Broad, ripe and sweet but unforthcoming and much less expressive today than the Estournelles. Strong material here but a bit youthfully disorganized, with an edge of acidity. But the sweet tannins and long finish suggest that this will round into form with five or six years of aging. Score - **91(+?)**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, March/April 2007)

DOMAINE BERTAGNA NUITS ST. GEORGES LES MURGERS 2003

1^{er}Cru

38158 (D) 750 mL \$119

TASTING NOTE: Superb aromas of minerals drenched in black fruits can be found in the nose of the 2003 Nuits-St.-Georges Les Murgers. Packed with fleshy sweet blueberries and assorted dark fruits, this powerful, medium-bodied effort is highly expressive, forward, and admirably structured by ripe tannin. Anticipated maturity: 2008-2015. Score - **92**. (Pierre Rovani, *www.erobertparker.com*, Aug. 2005)

JEAN-CLAUDE BOISSET CLOS DE VOUGEOT 2003

Grand Cru

47092 (XD) 750 mL \$175

TASTING NOTE: Bold flavors of plum, licorice and sweet spices highlight this no-holds-barred Pinot Noir. It shows the excesses of the vintage - burly tannins and some heat on the finish - but also loads of character. It just needs some time to knit. Best from 2008 through 2022. 35 cases made. Score - **93**. (Bruce Sanderson, *www.winespectator.com*, Nov. 30, 2005)

LABOURÉ-ROI CLOS DE LA ROCHE 2003

Grand Cru

45757 (XD) 750 mL \$119

Clos de la Roche's name lets you know what kind of soil it possesses: 'roche' means rock and the vineyard is situated on the limestone typical of Burgundy. The rocky soil is very difficult to cultivate anything but grapes, and the notoriously difficult Pinot Noir absolutely thrives here. Known as the biggest and best Grand Cru in Morey-Saint-Denis, the vineyard produces wines celebrated for their richness, full body, elegance, intensity, and longevity.

LABOURÉ-ROI CLOS DE VOUGEOT 2003

Grand Cru

45740 (XD) 750 mL \$119

TASTING NOTE: Unevolved, this has density of both fruit and tannins, plus a freshness that bodes well for the future. Black cherry, blackberry and mineral flavors abound and it's silky, ending with a long aftertaste of blackberry. Best from 2009 through 2025. 50 cases made. Score - **93**. (Bruce Sanderson, *www.winespectator.com*, May 31, 2006)

REMOISSENET GRANDS-ÉCHEZEAUX 2002

Grand Cru

36087 (XD) 750 mL \$99

Grands-Échézeaux, about 9 ha in size, is located in the commune of Flagey-Echezeaux. It has been called 'one of the most reliable, rewarding grand crus in Burgundy' by wine critic Matt Kramer. The wines are concentrated, elegant and multi-layered, revealing a rich variety of flavours on the palate.

REMOISSENET RICHEBOURG 2002

Grand Cru

36103 (XD) 750 mL \$139

Richebourg and Remoissenet are top-of-the-line vineyard and producer names in Burgundy. The great grand cru vineyard of Richebourg is celebrated for its rich, vibrant, spicy and flavourful premium wines. Remoissenet is a producer avidly sought by collectors. Fairly tannic in their youth, these wines benefit from at least ten years of ageing. But they're definitely worth the wait.

DOMAINE HENRI GOUGES NUITS-ST-GEORGES CLOS DES PORRETS ST-GEORGES 2001

1^{er} Cru

693747 (XD) 750 mL \$80

TASTING NOTE: There is already the barest hint of secondary aromas blending in with the earthy, rich and nicely complex earthy pinot fruit that gives way to bright and sweet, firmly structured flavors that explode on the finish. This will require patience. Score - **89**. (Allen Meadows, *www.burghound.com*, Jan. 2005)

LABOURÉ-ROI ÉCHÉZEAUX 2000

Grand Cru

45765 (XD) 750 mL \$119

Run since 1974 by former silk merchant Armand Cottin (joined by his brother Louis ten years later), négociant Labouré-Roi is now the world's third largest supplier of Burgundian wines. The Cottins combine innovation and tradition in their approach: the latest state-of-the-art equipment and a wine cellar over 300 years old. Ninety-three acres in size, located beside Vosne-Romanée, the Échézeaux appellation is known for wines that are silky in texture and age-worthy. Cellar this wine another 4-5 years or try it with herb-roasted stuffed chicken or soft cheeses such as brie.

REMOISSENET VOSNE-ROMANÉE LES CHAUMES 1985

1^{er} Cru

36129 (XD) 750 mL \$129

Remoissenet Pere et Fils is one of Beaune's wealthiest domaines, with a 14th century property within the walls of the town and 2.5ha which includes Beaune Premier Cru, Maconnais, Bressandes and Beaune Greves. It also produces an entire range as negociant. From its own holdings and around the same amount of bought-in grapes, Remoissenet produces about 200,000 bottles a year. (Adam Lechmere, *Decanter*, June 14, 2005) The company is known for specializing in older vintage wines.

France Red Wines - November 2007

Burgundy - Côte de Beaune

BOUCHARD pÈre et fils LE CORTON 2005

Grand Cru

973834 (XD) 750 mL \$119

TASTING NOTE: A brooding nose with almost no discernable wood influence of very ripe and moderately earthy aromas where the earth continues onto the rich, ripe and impressively dense flavors that also are textured and palate drenching supported by buried yet relatively fine tannins that are rendered almost completely invisible by the superb level of dry extract. This is a big bad boy fashioned in classic old school Corton style with huge aging potential. Score - **93-95**. (Allen Meadows, *www.burghound.com*, April 1, 2007)

DOMAINE PARENT CORTON LES RENARDES 2005

Grand Cru

925883 (XD) 750 mL \$95

The 2005 seems at first simple to describe. It is a rich, full vintage with luscious tannins, which is also fresh and elegant. Easy. But mull a bit longer and one realises that there are many elements that combine in a balanced and harmonious manner to define the style of this vintage. Is this the sign of a great vintage? ... The tannins provide the sensual texture of 2005, be it silk, satin or velvet, airy and flowing or rippling, toned and muscular, this texture is an essential part of fine red Burgundy. (Sarah Marsh, *www.sarahmarsh.com*, Winter 2006/2007)

FAIVELEY CLOS DES CORTON 2004

Grand Cru

722249 (XD) 750 mL \$109

Allen Meadows of *Burghound* gave a barrel sample of this wine a score of **90-92**.

TASTING NOTE: Pure and focused, with a firm spine of tannins. Cherry and mineral flavors are locked in. This will take some time to integrate and show its true potential. Fine length. Best from 2009 through 2018. Score - **91**. (Bruce Sanderson, *www.winespectator.com*, May 31, 2007)

France White Wines - November 2007

Burgundy - Chablis

SIMONNET-FEBVRE CHABLIS LES CLOS 2005

Grand Cru

46599 (XD) 750 mL \$70

TASTING NOTE: 100% in 2-3 year old oak. This is quite a lot bigger, headier and richer on the palate [than their other offerings]. The fruit is certainly compact and although the wood does seem to dominate now, the fruit comes back on the finish. Glossy and more substantial, but not so elegant [as some of their other wines]. Fine. From 2009/10. (Sarah Marsh, *www.sarahmarsh.com*, July/Aug. 2006)

DOMAINE LAROCHE LES BLANCHOTS RÉSERVE DE L' OBEDIENCE CHABLIS 2002

Grand Cru

40477 (XD) 750 mL \$140

TASTING NOTE: Less oaky than it usually is but compared to the prior wines, here the oak completely dominates the fruit with vanilla, wood spice and toast. The big, robust, sappy and very ripe flavors have an interesting tactile sensation to them and this comes across as succulent yet chewy with huge length. Stylistically different from the prior wines and the oak seems almost deliberately dialed up because even though there is terrific underlying material, it's still more than it can gracefully support; very much Côte d'Or in style and as such, I doubt this will please those who are searching for classically styled Chablis. Drink: 2007+. Score - **89**. (Allen Meadows, *www.burghound.com*, Oct. 1, 2004)

DOMAINE LAROCHE LES BLANCHOTS RESERVE DE L'OBEDIENCE CHABLIS 2000
Grand Cru

40451 (XD) 750 mL \$140

TASTING NOTE: Gorgeous. Spicy and lush, with loads of pear, toast and mineral flavors to boot, all on an airy texture, supported by vibrant acidity. It's flashy, but with time the mineral and pear flavors should emerge. Best from 2004 through 2008. Score - **91**. (Bruce Sanderson, *www.winespectator.com*, Dec. 31, 2002)

France White Wines - November 2007

Burgundy - Cote D'Or

MARC COLIN CHASSAGNE-MONTRACHET LES VIDES-BOURSES 2005
1^{er} Cru

25874 (D) 750 mL \$95

TASTING NOTE: A moderately if not aggressively toasty nose serves as a backdrop for the ripe, expressive and complex aromas of peach, pear and rosemary oil that complements well the nicely powerful medium to full-bodied flavors that are not especially elegant but pack a real punch on the intense and mouth coating finish blessed with ample dry extract that confers an almost chewy quality to the backend. They don't call this a "mini-Bâtard" for no reason! Drink: 2010+. Score - **91**. (Allen Meadows, *www.burghound.com*, July 1, 2007)

BOUCHARD PÈre et fils CHEVALIER-MONTRACHET 2004
Grand Cru

14969 (D) 750 mL \$269

TASTING NOTE: As it almost always is, this is notably more elegant aromatically with its airy white flower, spice and limestone aromas that precede textured, pure and defined flavors that possess an utterly different texture and mouth feel, all wrapped in a brilliantly focused and mouth coating finish. Score - **92-95**. (Allen Meadows, www.burghound.com, July 1, 2006)

BOUCHARD PÈre et fils CORTON CHARLEMAGNE 2004
Grand Cru

974758 (XD) 750 mL \$139

TASTING NOTE: Green apple, white pear and hint of crushed herb are framed by gentle notes of pain grillé that combine with huge and unbelievably intense flavors blessed with phenomenal power and length. This has that "wow" factor as the flavors are both palate staining and almost painfully intense and the finale is like a block of stone. Score - **93-95**. (Allen Meadows, www.burghound.com, July 1, 2006)

HENRI BOILLOT MEURSAULT LE PORUZOTS 2004
1^{er} Cru

626846 (XD) 750 mL \$109

TASTING NOTE: Subtle pain grillé notes set off the slightly reduced but unusually elegant green fruit nose though the big and sleekly muscled flavors are much more typical, particularly on the driving finish that drenches the palate in dry extract, which imparts an almost chewy quality. This is a really lovely effort and one that should age well. Decant. Drink: 2012+. Score - **91**. (Allen Meadows, www.burghound.com, July 2007)

JEAN-MARC PILLOT CHASSAGNE-MONTRACHET LES CAILLERETS 2004
1^{er} Cru

25916 750 mL \$95

TASTING NOTE: Perfumed, minerally aromas of cold wet stone, flint, white truffle and gentian. Dense, bracing and penetrating, with very pure flavors of lemon, flowers and stone. Conveys a strong impression of soil character, but the wine's elements still need a good four or five years to harmonize. Finishes very long and stony. Offers impressive potential, and will likely merit a higher score with bottle aging. Score - **91(+?)**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, Sept./Oct. 2006)

MARC COLIN CHASSAGNE-MONTRACHET LES CHAMPS GAIN 2004

1^{er} Cru

25866 (D) 750 mL \$95

TASTING NOTE: A slightly brighter and fresher nose featuring green fruit, spice and acacia blossom aromas precedes detailed, minerally and punch middle weight flavors that deliver good richness and excellent persistence on the powerful and focused finish. This is a really lovely effort and I particularly like the vibrancy here. Score - **91**. (Allen Meadows, *www.burghound.com*, July 1, 2006)

DEUX MONTILLE PULIGNY-MONTRACHET LA GARENNE 2003

1^{er} Cru

23713 (XD) 750 mL \$95

The hot 2003 vintage made for rich, earlier drinking whites in Burgundy.

TASTING NOTE: Broad and sweet. Scented. Flattering. Forward. Drink 2006-2011. Score - **17**. (Jancis Robinson M.W., *www.jancisrobinson.com*, Jan. 28, 2005)

JEAN-CLAUDE BOISSET BÂTARD-MONTRACHET 2002

Grand Cru

47050 (XD) 750 mL \$270

The retooling of an image cannot have been accomplished any more abruptly or dramatically than that done by Jean-Claude Boisset ... the father of Jean-Charles and Nathalie, who are two of the principals behind the change in attitude. They constantly speak of the renewal of Jean-Claude Boisset and date it to 2002. "It was a lot to move from being a négoce to being a vinifier. But at the same time, it wasn't too great a stretch because of the focus on quality we've had," notes Nathalie Bergès-Boisset, who directs public relations for the house. Or, as more succinctly put by Jean-Claude Boisset's winemaker, the dynamic Grégory Patriat, "Listen, 2002 is the first vintage of the renewal. Forget the past. When Jean-Charles spoke to me [about our new direction] he gave me carte blanche to raise the quality ... I can't think of any other big brand in Burgundy that has tried to raise the level this way ... " ... Jean-Claude Boisset is producing an enviable range of wines, including grands crus such as Bâtard-Montrachet ... but it's being done in a decidedly different way ...(Todd M. Wernstrom, *The Wine News*, April 17, 2006)

DOMAINE HUBERT DE MONTILLE PULIGNY-MONTRACHET LES CAILLERETS 2001
1^{er} Cru

23671 (XD) 750 mL \$139

TASTING NOTE: Wonderfully expressive with rich, open, elegant grapefruit and peach aromas that already display some mature fruit notes are followed by full-bodied, intense, pure flavors underpinned by an intense minerality and fine finishing intensity. There is good depth of extract and solid power and the only nit is that this does not appear, at least not at present, to have the superb fruit/acid balance of the 2002. A very pretty wine built for the medium term though it will be approachable early, at least by the standards of this wine. Drink: 2005+. Score - **90**. (Allen Meadows, *www.burghound.com*, July 2004)

DOMAINE FONTAINE-GAGNARD CRIOTS-BÂTARD-MONTRACHET 2000
Grand Cru

581801 (XD) 750 mL \$179

TASTING NOTE: Aromatically distinctive relative to the prior wines as this is very floral in character and not as ripe though it is extremely rich, full, indeed even opulent with amazing intensity, complexity and outstanding persistence on the long, penetrating backend. This is quite focused and while not nearly as big as the Bâtard or Montrachet, this is clearly a cut above the 1ers as it is more powerful and certainly more multifaceted. Drink: 2007-12. Score - **91**. (Allen Meadows, *www.burghound.com*, July 2002)

REMOISSENET CORTON-CHARLEMAGNE DIAMOND JUBILEE 2000 Grand Cru

36160 (XD) 750 mL \$105

New York financier and Burgundy collector Edward Millstein purchased (with Louis Jadot as a smaller shareholder) Remoissenet in 2005, bringing in Jadot's former co-director Bernard Repolt (known, according to Margaret Swaine, as the Bad Boy of Beaune) as managing director. The domaine, one of the wealthiest in Beaune and respected for holding its stocks of wines until they are at optimum drinkability, has 2.5 ha of vineyards and also produces as a negociant. Located in the sunniest spot on the hill of Corton, this vineyard produces powerful, multi-flavoured and long-finishing whites.

France Red Wines - November 2007

Rhône – Northern Rhône

ALAIN VOGÉ CORNAS VIEILLES VIGNES 2004

8177 (XD) 750 mL \$64

TASTING NOTE: Really zesty, with lots of red currant and bramble notes bouncing ahead of dark olive and sage flavors. The structure is briary on the finish, with an encore of red fruit and mouthwatering acidity. Drink now through 2017. Score - **93**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, Aug. 31, 2007)

France Red Wines - November 2007

Rhône – Southern Rhône

BOISRENARD CHATEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE 2004

964585 (XD) 750 mL \$72

TASTING NOTE: The 2004 Boisrenard, their luxury cuvee, always shows some evidence of new oak barrique but doesn't lose its Chateauneuf du Pape soul. In most vintages it is a very long-lived wine, as the 1990 is just now hitting its stride. This is the more up-front style in 2004 with plenty of sexy, chocolatey pain grille notes interwoven with blackberry and cassis. It is layered, opulent, fleshy, and already very drinkable. Its medium to full body and lushness suggest drinking it over the next 8-10 years. Score - **90**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Feb. 2007)

France White Wines - November 2007

Rhône – Southern Rhône

M. CHAPOUTIER ERMITAGE DE L'ORÉE 2003

702076 (XD) 750 mL \$144

TASTING NOTE: Nearly perfect, one of the most prodigious dry white wines I have ever tasted is the 2003 Ermitage Cuvee de l'Oree. A 669-case cuvee fashioned from yields of 10 hectoliters per hectare, it offers aromas and flavors beyond anything I have previously tasted in a dry white. It tastes like a liqueur of licorice intermixed with a liqueur of honeysuckle, quince, and rocks. Opulent, viscous, and full-bodied, at first glance it is seemingly fragile and over the top, but it boasts extraordinary freshness and liveliness as well as monster concentration and a finish that lasts over 60 seconds. I suspect it will drink beautifully for 3-4 years, then go into a funky stage, and re-emerge two decades later. It may be a 100-year wine ... but who knows? Without question, it is a tour de force in winemaking. Drink 2004-2054. Score - **99**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Feb. 2006)

France - Champagne - November 2007

Champagne

CHAMPAGNE SALON LE MESNIL 1996

704296 (D) 750 mL \$329

TASTING NOTE: Wouldn't it be lovely if we could drink Salon Le Mesnil every day? This is an incredibly beautiful, sophisticated, lavishly appointed bubbly with an exquisite blend of aged yeast notes smelling of lightly toasted brioche layered atop scents of vanilla, Meyer lemon, chalk and minerals all in the most seamless and creamy of fashions. Its mousse is smooth but energetic and comes with appropriately pinpoint-sized bubbles. Sporting all the finesse that Blanc de Blancs can manage yet rewardingly deep and rich in flavor, this wine is easily the most impressive bottling in this go-round of world-class bubbly. Score - **97**. (*Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wines*, Dec. 2006)

France Red Wines - November 2007

Loire

PASCAL JOLIVET SANCERRE LA GRANDE CUVÉE 2003

947770 (XD) 750 mL \$55

Produced from over-50-year-old vines on a plot of land called la Prunellière in the village of Bué, Jolivet prefers to let nature take its course with their wines. Hand-picked, hand-sorted and de-stemmed, the grapes are then fermented with wild yeasts in stainless steel tanks with thermoregulation. The acid-softening malolactic fermentation occurs in barrels over a 15 month period and the wines are not filtered before bottling. Light, ripe, concentrated and fruity, this is a Pinot Parade!

France White Wines - November 2007

Loire

CLOS DE NOUYS CUVÉE DES GRAINS DORÉS VOUVRAY 2003

46854 (S) 500 mL \$63

TASTING NOTE: Rich, with succulent layers of ripe peach, honey, apricot and ginger that glide to a sweet, creamy finish. Alluring spice, graham and truffle hints skitter in the background. Drink now through 2011. Score - **92**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, Nov. 30, 2006)

Germany - White Wines - November 2007

Mosel-Saar-Ruwer

STUDERT-PRÜM WEHLENER SONNENUHR RIESLING AUSLESE 2005

673376 (S) 375 mL \$57

TASTING NOTE: The mix of lime and vanilla with a creamy texture makes this white a winner. Leaner than most auslesen in this category, with balance, intensity and a long finish. Best from 2008 through 2025. Score - **94**. (Bruce Sanderson, *www.winespectator.com*, April 30, 2007)

WEGELER BERNKASTELER DOCTOR RIESLING SPÄTLESE 2005

36137 (M) 750 mL \$65

TASTING NOTE: The Bernkasteler Doctor Spatlese is a notch above, as it always seems to be. The wine shows exotic spiciness in the nose and mouth with length and depth. Score - **94+**. (Claude Kolm, *The Fine Wine Review*, Nov. 2006)

WEGELER RIESLING BERNKASTELER DOCTOR TROCKENBEERENAUSLESE 2005

37044 (S) 375 mL \$435

TASTING NOTE: ... Here one encounters the honey, grapefruit marmalade, maracua, pralines, almond paste, musk, and brown spices that typified its predecessors, but with an even more liqueur-like intensity, more creamy texture and viscosity, more overt sweetness, and an utterly palate-coating finish. Furthermore, there is a sense of brightness and energy that reflects an enormous concentration of acidity to balance the wines opulence and sheer sweetness. Given its recent bottling and the intensity and plushness of its raw material, this may well display more of its character even in the course of 2007. After that, I would close the cellar door on it for at least a quarter century. Score - **94**. (David Schildknecht, www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2007)

WEGELER BERNKASTELER DOCTOR RIESLING SPÄTLESE 2002

727412 (M) 750 mL \$65

TASTING NOTE: There's a richness here, underscored by the vibrant structure, keeping the peach, herb and mineral flavors defined and persistent. Good, lingering finish. Drink now through 2012. 200 cases made. Score - **89**. (Bruce Sanderson, www.winespectator.com, March 31, 2004)

Germany - White Wines - November 2007

Rheingau

SCHLOSS JOHANNISBERGER RIESLING SPÄTLESE TROCKEN 2004

8961 (M) 750 mL \$45

TASTING NOTE: Lovely acid on attack and delectable sweet, honeyed, strong mouthfeel. Long length. Delicious. Drink up to 2008. Score - **** (out of 5). (www.decanter.com)

Hungary - White Wines - November 2007

ROYAL TOKAJI ESSENCIA 1999

36251 (S) 500 mL \$535

TASTING NOTE: An amazing hit of fresh apricot and fruit sauce texture signal this intensely sweet dessert wine. Starts out thick, yet finishes clean, courtesy of the bracing acidity. The finish echoes mineral salt. Impressive, but monolithic and without complexity for now. Drink now through 2050. Score - **93**. (Bruce Sanderson, *www.winespectator.com*, Oct. 15, 2006)

Italy - Red Wines - November 2007

Piedmont

GAJA BARBARESCO 2004 DOCG

715433 (XD) 750 mL \$209

TASTING NOTE: I love the balance of fruit and tannins in this wine. It shows wonderful aromas and flavors of vanilla, flowers and berries throughout, plus plenty of tar. Wow. That's Nebbiolo. Full and racy with a long finish. It's all there. Classic quality. (James Suckling, *Wine Spectator Blog*, May 22, 2007)

GAJA COSTA RUSSI BARBARESCO 2004 DOCG

705491 (XD) 750 mL \$559
745976 (XD) 1500 mL \$1229

This is truly a wine befitting celebrations of the highest order. The eleven-acre Costa Russi vineyard was acquired by the Gaja family in 1950 and today produces this universally-acclaimed, single vineyard Nebbiolo. Aged for 12 months in barriques and then 12 months in large oak casks, this wine offers a refined nose with well-integrated aromas of blackberries, violets and roasted coffee beans. Elegance and crystal purity characterize this extremely complex and densely woven wine with an ageing potential of decades.

GAJA SORÌ SAN LORENZO 2004 DOC Langhe

971093	(XD)	750 mL	\$559
746222	(XD)	1500 mL	\$1229

It is common knowledge in the world of wine that Angelo Gaja is a perfectionist. Parker's website has awarded this meticulously crafted, Nebbiolo-based wine scores in the 90s for the last eight consecutive vintages. Past vintages can also lay claim to that rarefied achievement of Three Glasses from Italy's wine bible, *Gambero Rosso*. Gaja's Sorì San Lorenzo is typically the most powerful and austere of Gaja's five single-vineyard wines, requiring a longer time to fully develop. It exhibits captivating aromatics of highly concentrated currant and black cherry fruit with a hint of coffee, in addition to notes of fine herbs, minerals and exotic spices. It's a very rich, focused wine with a long, lingering finish and refined tannins. The old adage 'patience is a virtue' is appropriate as this formidable wine clearly demonstrates excellent ageing potential.

GAJA SORÌ TILDIN 2004 **DOC Langhe**

705665	(XD)	750 mL	\$559
745851	(XD)	1500 mL	\$1229

The word Sorì means a hilltop with a southern exposure. Tildin was the nickname of Angelo Gaja's grandmother, Clothilde Rey. She was a visionary who was instrumental in acquiring some of the choicest parcels for the Gaja Estate, as well as being the inspiration behind Angelo's continuous quest to innovate. The exquisite Sorì Tildin, like Gaja's other Barbaresco crus, earns critical acclaim consistently each year. Its bouquet is detailed, nuanced and layered with aromas of toast, minerals, sour cherries, cedar and spices. Its rich body, subtle texture and fine, ripe tannins are a quintessential expression of the land and the Nebbiolo grape. While there were no reviews available for this recent release, wine critic heavyweights (Robert Parker Jr., Stephen Tanzer, and *Wine Spectator*) have all consistently awarded the Sorì Tilden scores in the mid-90s over the last several vintages. While this wine has extraordinary ageing potential, it would make an utterly magnificent wine to build a formal dinner around in the short term.

PAOLO SCAVINO BAROLO BRIC DEL FIASC 2003 **DOCG**

51342	(XD)	750 mL	\$125
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TASTING NOTE: The Bric del Fiasc is noticeably deeper and richer, with notes of sweet dark fruit, tar and scorched earth. Made in a big, bold style, this is a powerhouse of a wine that has enough fruit to balance the tannins, although it is not for the faint of heart. "As opposed to Cannubi which has loosely packed, sandy soils, at Bric del Fiasc the soils are more compact and thus retain water better, which helps give this wine a little more freshness," says [Enrico] Scavino. Score - **90-93**. (Antonio Galloni, www.erobertparker.com, Jan. 2006)

GAJA CONTEISA 2001
DOC Langhe

971192 (XD) 750 mL \$235

TASTING NOTE: The medium-bodied 2001 Conteisa is the more accessible of Gaja's wines from the Barolo zone. It shows plenty of La Morra's famed elegance and finesse, with a delicate nose of flowers and spices followed by rich flavors of sweet red fruit, dried flowers, roasted coffee beans, new oak and a long, caressing finish. Anticipated maturity: 2009-2021. Score - **92**. (Antonio Galloni, www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

GAJA SPERSS 2001
DOC Langhe

715359 (XD) 750 mL \$255

TASTING NOTE: More muscular than the Conteisa, the dark and brooding 2001 Sperss displays much Serralunga character in its complex nose of tar, licorice, underbrush and new oak. Superbly well-balanced, it offers tremendous length and purity in its sweet dark fruit, plum, prune and cassis flavors, closing with a very long, fresh finish. Anticipated maturity: 2011-2031. Score - **95**. (Antonio Galloni, www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

PAOLO SCAVINO BAROLO ROCHE DELL'ANNUNZIATA RISERVA 2001
DOCG

50815 (XD) 750 mL \$229

TASTING NOTE: ... The 2001 presents a multitude of aromas and flavors including roses, minerals, smoke, tar and sweet red fruit in a stunning display of sensual elegance. Today it comes across as open-knit and incredibly expressive. It is hard to say if it will shut down at some point or continue to offer the broad window of drinkability that is the hallmark of many wines from this vineyard. Regardless, it is a great privilege to get a glimpse of this monumental wine at such an early stage ... Score - **96**. (Antonio Galloni, *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2006)

**PAOLO SCAVINO BAROLO ROCCHIE DELL'ANNUNZIATA RISERVA 2000
DOCG**

50831 (XD) 750 mL \$229

TASTING NOTE: Saturated ruby. Intense nose of ripe to over-ripe fruit. Beautiful round and soft palate of jammy red fruit, minerals, cocoa and licorice. Very refined and elegant, this is already drinking well. A shade less complex than the superb 1999. Score - **92**. (Antonio Galloni, *www.erobertparker.com*, April 2005)

**COSTA DI BUSSIA BAROLO RISERVA 1999
DOCG**

38133 (D) 750 mL \$55

Winner of the Regional Italy Piedmont over £10 Trophy at the 2006 Decanter World Wine Awards.

**GAJA SPERSS 1999
DOC Langhe**

997635 (XD) 1500 mL \$529

TASTING NOTE: Dark ruby. The 1999 Sperrs displays much Serralunga character in its licorice, asphalt, herb, and sweet dark fruit flavors, with notable persistence on the palate and a potent personality. A rising of menthol beautifully frames the big, tannic finish. A wine that kept developing in the glass, this Sperrs offers outstanding potential for those who are patient enough to wait at least a few years. It should drink well until at least age 25. Score - **95**. (Antonio Galloni, *www.erobertparker.com*, May 2006)

**PAOLO SCAVINO BAROLO ROCCHES DELL'ANNUNZIATA RISERVA 1998
DOCG**

50823 (XD) 750 mL \$229

TASTING NOTE: The 1998 Barolo Riserva Rocche dell'Annunziata is the best of the series, very complete in its presentation of the classic range of anisette, rose petal, iris, and red fruit sensations, ample, round, and fresh in flavor, minty and lingering on the close, caressing but solid in texture. It will last another dozen years. Score - **93**. (Daniel Thomases, *www.erobertparker.com*, Aug. 2005)

**SILVIO GRASSO BAROLO CIABOT MANZONI 1998
DOCG**

50708 (XD) 750 mL \$89

TASTING NOTE: The dark ruby-colored 1998 Barolo Ciabot Manzoni offers a beautiful bouquet of sweet black cherry fruit intermixed with rose petals, tar, and new oak. It possesses fine ripeness, a fresh, lively, high-toned style, and lovely flavors. With sweet tannin, decent acidity, and a seamless style, it can be consumed now and over the next 10-15 years. Score - **90-91**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2001)

Italy - Red Wines - November 2007

Tuscany

**AVIGNONESI CORTONA DESIDERIO MERLOT 2004
DOC**

739383 (D) 750 mL \$69

TASTING NOTE: Merlot (85%), Cabernet Sauvignon (15%). Cortona Merlot Desiderio shows an intense ruby red color and nuances of garnet red, little transparency. The nose reveals intense, clean, pleasing, refined and elegant aromas that start with hints of black cherry, black currant and plum followed by aromas of blueberry, violet, vanilla, tobacco, licorice, sandal wood, cocoa, cinnamon and menthol. The mouth has good correspondence to the nose, a tannic attack and pleasing roundness, however balanced by alcohol, full body, intense flavors. The finish is persistent with flavors of black cherry, black currant and plum. A well made wine. Cortona Merlot Desiderio ages for 18 months in barrique followed by 12 months of aging in bottle. Score - **** (out of 5). (www.diwinetaste.com, April 2007)

CASTELLO DI AMA VIGNETO LA CASUCCIA CHIANTI CLASSICO 2004 DOCG

979278	(XD)	750 mL	\$207
959676	(XD)	1500 mL	\$499

TASTING NOTE: The 2004 Chianti Classico La Casuccia (80% Sangiovese, 20% Merlot) is a massive, powerful wine. It presents an open-knit, super-ripe nose followed by layers of ripe dark blueberries, violets, licorice and toasted oak flavors on a big, structured frame, with outstanding length and a lingering suggestion of sweetness on the finish. It is the more accessible of the estate's top two selections in 2004. Anticipated maturity: 2009-2019. Score - **92**. (Antonio Galloni, www.erobertparker.com, June 2007)

TUA RITA GIUSTO DI NOTRI ROSSO 2004 IGT Toscana

14886	(XD)	750 mL	\$97
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TASTING NOTE: Stunning nose of rose petal, berries, sandalwood and licorice. Full-bodied, with ripe, rich tannins and a long, long finish. All there, and very exciting. 60 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, 20 percent Merlot, 15 percent Cabernet Franc and 5 percent Petit Verdot. Best after 2007. Score - **94**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, Oct. 31, 2006)

TUA RITA REDIGAFFI ROSSO 2004
IGT Toscana

14852 (XD) 750 mL \$215

TASTING NOTE: Very complex yet subtle aromas of licorice, dark chocolate, violet and raspberry. Full-bodied, with supersilky tannins and a long, long finish. Harmonious and wonderful. Reminds me of the great 1997; even better. Merlot. Best after 2008. Score - **98**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, Oct. 31, 2006)

ANTINORI GUADO AL TASSO 2003
DOC Bolgheri Superiore

986562 (XD) 1500 mL \$199

TASTING NOTE: Beautiful aromas of blackberry, meat and light toasty oak follow through to a full-bodied palate, with fine tannins and a rich, decadent aftertaste. Opulent and stylish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and others. Best after 2007. Score - **91**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, Oct. 31, 2006)

FELSINA FONTALLORO 2003
IGT Toscana

902866 (XD) 750 mL \$59

TASTING NOTE: Very pretty blackberry and vanilla aromas follow through to a full-bodied palate, with fine tannins and a mineral and berry aftertaste. Structured. Sangiovese. Best after 2008. Score - **90**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, Oct. 31, 2006)

PETROLO GALATRONA 2003
IGT Toscana

21998 (XD) 750 mL \$96

TASTING NOTE: Fantastic aromas of black olives, meat and berries with hints of violets. Complex. Full-bodied, velvety and long. Gorgeous and powerful Merlot. Blockbuster. This could be the wine of the vintage. Best after 2008. Score - **96**. (James Suckling, *www.winespectator.com*, Oct. 31, 2005)

**BIONDI-SANTI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO RISERVA Greppo 2001
DOCG**

51979 (XD) 750 mL \$475

TASTING NOTE: Medium light, bright ruby. Captivating aromas of underripe red cherry, redcurrant, orange zest, tobacco and leather, all lifted by a lovely floral twist. Lean and penetrating on entry, then fleshier in the middle and concentrated, with enticing sour red cherry, almond and plum flavors. Bright, almost shrill acids give the flavors laser-like precision and a very clean, pure quality on the extremely long, fine-grained finish. Paradigmatic old-school Brunello but with a degree of flesh and concentration not always apparent here in recent vintages. Given my experience with these Brunellos (I recently had the 1970, 1964, and 1955, all still in fine form), I'd say this one will be around longer than you or I will. Score - **94**. (Ian D'Agata, *International Wine Cellar*, June 2007)

**CARPINETO VINO NOBILE DI MONTEPULCIANO RISERVA 2001
DOCG**

47134 (XD) 750 mL \$31

TASTING NOTE: Despite an initial touch of coconut, the nose is seductive, especially when the leather and cedar elements take over. Fine fruit carries the palate, with an emphasis on blackberry, cherry and plum flavors. Rich and internationally styled, with soft tannins and impeccable mouthfeel. Drinkable now through 2010. Score - **90**. (Michael Schachner, *Wine Enthusiast*, July 2005)

**MASTROJANNI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO SCHIENA D'ASINO 2001
DOCG**

46920 (XD) 750 mL \$73

TASTING NOTE: Medium-deep red. The beautiful, textbook Brunello aromas of violet, sour red cherry, licorice and tea leaf soar from the glass. Much more plush and silky in texture than usual from this producer, with none of the rustic notes of other vintages, this shows ripe flavors of black cherry, porcini, tar and nutmeg with noteworthy energy and vibrancy and a surprisingly round texture. Firm tannins rear their head on the long, pure finish, providing needed clarity and backbone. Cellar this for five or six years, then enjoy it for another 20 after that. Score - **93**. (Ian D'Agata, *International Wine Cellar*, June 2007)

**POGGIO SALVI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO RISERVA 2001
DOCG**

51995 (XD) 750 mL \$99

The Poggio Salvi is produced by the venerable Italian estate, Biondi Santi. Aged for 40 months in Slavonian oak barrels, this Riserva displays an intense ruby red colour with garnet tones. The bouquet is complex, with notes of cherries, sweet tobacco and tar. Full-bodied, well-structured with silky tannins, this will drink beautifully now or will reward cellaring.

**SILVIO NARDI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO MANACHIARA 2001
DOCG**

47381 (XD) 750 mL \$85
47399 (XD) 1500 mL \$180

TASTING NOTE: Readers who enjoy a full-throttle style of Brunello will delight in the 2001 Brunello di Montalcino Manachiara, the estate's top selection. Boasting a deep, intense color along with expressive, plush layers of jammy dark fruit, spice, chocolate and sweet toasted oak, it is a beautifully balanced Brunello. Expansive on the palate, it displays outstanding concentration, an engaging personality and broad, yet fine tannins. Anticipated maturity: 2009-2019. Score - **92**. (Antonio Galloni, *www.erobertparker.com*, Dec. 2006)

**BIONDI-SANTI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO GREPPO 1999
DOCG**

51961 (XD) 750 mL \$159

TASTING NOTE: Silky, with prune, cedar and fresh tobacco aromas and flavors. Medium to full body, fine tannins and a clean finish. Very good length. One of the best in a long time from here. Best after 2007. Score - **90**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, Oct. 15, 2004)

**BIONDI-SANTI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCIO RISERVA GREPPO 1999
DOCG**

955948 (XD) 750 mL \$659

TASTING NOTE: Aromas of cedar, berry and meat follow through to a full-bodied palate, with silky tannins and a leather and berry aftertaste. Slightly hard now, but should develop nicely. Solid, traditional and well-made. Best after 2006. Score - **90**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, May 31, 2005)

**MASTROJANNI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO SCHIENA D'ASINO 1999
DOCG**

46912 (XD) 750 mL \$79

TASTING NOTE: Wonderfully rich aromas of Christmas cake and ripe raspberry, with just a hint of spice and wood. Full-bodied, with a solid tannin structure and a very good core of fruit. Just slightly short. Needs bottle age to come together. Best after 2006. Score - **89**. (James Suckling, www.winespectator.com, May 15, 2005)

**CARPINETO VINO NOBILE DI MONTEPULCIANO RISERVA 1995
DOCG**

47142 (XD) 750 mL \$57

TASTING NOTE: From another Tuscan modernist comes a surprisingly unevolved, fruit driven yet taut and exciting 1995. Deep youthful ruby-purple colour. Fragrant blackberry, lavender, cedar aromas with just a little bit of leather and nougat that speaks more to Tuscan origin. Taut acidity and tannin of Vino Nobile makes it feel slim and blunt on the finish, yet quite dense fruit is packed in. Very good to excellent length. Best 2003 to 2010. Score - **89**. (www.wineaccess.ca)

**CARPINETO CHIANTI CLASSICO RISERVA 1990
DOCG**

358689 (XD) 750 mL \$109

TASTING NOTE: Still dark in color, albeit with some bricking evident, and still a bit tannic on the finish. Still, this is very good, combining earth and tobacco with plums and cherries. Big in the mouth, with a velvety feel, but also a touch of warmth from alcohol. Drink now or hold. Score - **89**. (*Wine Enthusiast*, Aug. 1, 2006)

**CARPINETO CHIANTI CLASSICO RISERVA 1988
DOCG**

47126 (XD) 750 mL \$114

TASTING NOTE: Carpineto ages their Riserva wines from 6 to 12 months longer than the minimum required by DOCG rules. Carpineto, a partnership between winemakers Giovanni Sacchet and Antonio Zaccheo, concentrates on red wine production. Founded in 1967, the winery has been part of the revolution in Chianti, bringing modern viticultural techniques to a traditional winemaking process. The results are stunning. Try a mini-vertical tasting of Carpineto's Riserva by comparing this 1988 with the 1990, also in this catalogue. Score -  (out of 3). (*Gambero Rosso Italian Wines*, 1999)

**CARPINETO VINO NOBILE DI MONTEPULCIANO RISERVA 1988
DOCG**

47175 (XD) 750 mL \$112


TASTING NOTE: Of the wines tasted, this is the one to drink now. It still shows some chewiness to its texture, but melds that with a smooth, satiny finish and flavors of earth, tobacco and soy. Just enough cherry fruit remains, but this needs to be drunk up. Score - **90**. (*Wine Enthusiast*, Aug. 2006)

Italy - Red Wines - November 2007

Veneto


**DAL FORNO VALPOLICELLA SUPERIORE 2002
DOC**

578666 (D) 750 mL \$119

TASTING NOTE: The Valpolicella Superiore is built on the same lines [as the Amarone] and has rarely been so good. Again, it needs to free itself of oakiness but then proceeds with class and determination, clearly defined fruit melding with mint and dried flowers to close with a long taut finish. Score -  (out of 3). (*Gambero Rosso Italian Wines*, 2007)

**DAL FORNO AMARONE 2001
DOC**

711440 (D) 750 mL \$389

TASTING NOTE: A bottle that needs to be opened well before tasting to free itself of oak-derived notes and liberate the fruit. Red, indeed black, it is ripe and appetizing on the seemingly endless nose in a frame of spices and minerality. The rigid palate slowly melts into a mouthfillingly confident flavour and our Three Glasses were a formality. Score -  (out of 3). (*Gambero Rosso Italian Wines*, 2007)

**DAL FORNO VALPOLICELLA SUPERIORE 1999
DOC**

47274 (D) 1500 mL \$269


TASTING NOTE: Fantastic nose, with ripe, earthy fruit and loads of smoke and grilled meat. Full-bodied, with rich fruit and violets on the palate, soft, velvety tannins and a long, long fruit and mineral finish. Very polished, with a subtle use of new French oak barrels. Best after 2004. Score - **91**. (James Suckling, *www.winespectator.com*, June 30, 2004)

Italy - Red Wines - November 2007

Umbria

CASTELLO DELLE REGINE MERLOT 2003 IGT Umbria

40295 (D) 750 mL \$69

TASTING NOTE: The nose is perfectly clean and surprisingly lively, despite the sultry year, and it first gives small wild berry fruits before becoming more citrus-like and then developing cloves-and-cinnamon spiciness. A creamy, warm palate follows that is anything but dull and has all sorts of touches of personality. The wine is so good that it risks overshadowing its stablemates. Score -  (out of 3). (*Gambero Rosso Italian Wines*, 2006)

Spain - Red Wines - November 2007

COSTERS DEL SIURANA CLOS DE L'OBAC 2004 DOC Priorat

737015 (XD) 750 mL \$77

TASTING NOTE: The purple-colored 2004 Clos de l'Obac exhibits a beautiful perfume of spice box, mineral, kirsch, red and black currants, and black cherry. Intensely fruity on the palate, it is already complex, sweet, and layered. The oak, tannin, and acidity are nicely integrated and the finish is long and pure. Give this stylish wine 3-5 years of cellaring and drink it through 2022. Score - **95**. (Jay Miller, *www.erobertparker.com*, Feb. 2007)

COSTERS DEL SIURANA MISERERE 2004 DOC Priorat

737080 (XD) 750 mL \$68

TASTING NOTE: ... Even more expressive aromatically, on the palate it offers surprising elegance, ripeness, and depth. Nearly seamless, it should deliver superb drinking with another 3-5 years of cellaring. Score - **94**. (Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2007)

COSTERS DEL SIURANA DOLC DE L'OBAC 2003
DOC Priorat

737148 (MS) 500 mL \$112

TASTING NOTE: The 2003 Dolc de l'Obac is a red dessert wine produced from a blend of Garnacha, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, and Merlot. The grapes are harvested as they are turning to raisins and the potential alcohol is 16-18%. The fermentation is interrupted by the addition of wine alcohol leaving a sweet wine of about 16% alcohol. It is aged for 12 months in French oak and bottled unfiltered. Dark ruby colored, it offers pure aromas of kirsch, blueberry, and black currants. On the palate the wine is medium sweet, complex, and has a long, pure finish. It is an excellent accompaniment for chocolate desserts. Score - **93**. (Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2007)

VEGA SICILIA VALBUENA 2002
DO Ribera del Duero

937680 (XD) 750 mL \$149
932574 (XD) 1500 mL \$349
51391 (XD) 3000 mL \$699

TASTING NOTE: The Valbuena offering is a brilliant introduction to the winery. The 2002, from a supposedly average vintage, is purple in color with an expressive nose of pain grille, earth, herbs, lead pencil, and blackberries. It offers layers of ripe fruit, excellent depth and concentration, and enough stuffing to drink well for the next 10+ years. Score - **92**. (Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2007)

VEGA SICILIA UNICO RESERVA 1996
DO Ribera del Duero

675918 (XD) 750 mL \$349

TASTING NOTE: The 1996 Unico seems more developed aromatically than the 1995 with elements of coffee and mocha but not quite the richness of fruit of the 1995. It is more supple on the palate but with less depth. It can be enjoyed now and over the next 20 years. Score - **95**. (Jay Miller, *www.erobertparker.com*, Feb. 2007)

VEGA SICILIA UNICO RESERVA 1991
DO Ribera del Duero

22947 (XD) 1500 mL \$899

TASTING NOTE: The current release of Vega Sicilia's flagship offering, the 1991 Unico Reserva, will have to satisfy lovers of this great Spanish red until the 1994 is released in 2005. The 1991 is a gorgeous, deep ruby/purple-colored, remarkably youthful effort offering sweet vanilla notes intertwined with black currants, cherry liqueur, flowers, spice box, and tobacco leaves. Full-bodied and intense, with sweet tannin, outstanding density as well as purity, and a layered mouthfeel, this unevolved 1991 needs another 3-4 years of cellaring; it should last for 20-25 years. It's a wine of great elegance as opposed to power. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, April 2004)

VEGA SICILIA UNICO RESERVA 1990
DO Ribero del Duero

50518 (XD) 3000 mL \$2489

TASTING NOTE: ... A deep opaque plum/ garnet color is accompanied by noticeable sweet toasty oak in the nose along with copious quantities of black cherry and cassis fruit. Extremely youthful, vigorous, and full-bodied, with notes of over-ripeness, low acidity, moderately high tannin, and a full-bodied, layered, concentrated personality. Give it another 3-4 years of cellaring; it should last for 25 years. Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Aug. 2001)

MARQUÉS DE CÁCERES GRAN RESERVA 1982
DOC Rioja

33324 (XD) 750 mL \$85

TASTING NOTE: Full-bodied, but not overpowering, with attractive, gamy black pepper aromas and loads of ripe cherry flavors. Lush and clean. Drinkable now. Score - **89**. *www.winespectator.com*, March 31,1992)

**MARQUÉS DE CÁCERES GRAN RESERVA 1981
DOC Rioja**

33316 (XD) 750 mL \$85

Marqués de Cáceres was established in 1970 and is now known as one of the more innovative producers in the Rioja Alta. Michel Rolland is consultant here. The winery buys all its grapes from established local growers. They only produce their Gran Reserva in the finest vintages. Ancient vines with lots of sun exposure are the source for concentrated grapes which are picked in very limited yields, pressed, fermented, and aged in oak for over two years before further bottle ageing. These wines are built to last a long time: this one is 26 years old! A traditional wine from a cutting-edge producer.

**MARQUÉS DE CÁCERES GRAN RESERVA 1975
DOC Rioja**

34967 (XD) 750 mL \$90

This 1975 Gran Reserva, along with the 1981 Gran Reserva (33316, \$85), is a great opportunity to conduct a small-vertical tasting of exceptional older Riojan wines from Marqués de Cáceres. This is a rare opportunity to try an older Rioja wine at such a reasonable price.

**VEGA SICILIA UNICO RESERVA ESPECIAL
DO Ribera del Duero**

727081 (XD) 750 mL \$375

TASTING NOTE: The non-vintage Unico Reserva Especial, scheduled for release in 2007, is a blend of the 1985, 1991, and 1996 vintages. Still purple in color, it has a fabulous nose of pain grille, smoke, spice box, blueberry, and blackberry liqueur. Layered, rich, and opulent, it should drink well for another 25-40 years. Score - **97**. (Jay Miller, www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2007)

Canada - Ontario Red Wine - November 2007

STRATUS RED 2004 VQA Niagara Peninsula

660712 (XD) 750 mL \$44



TASTING NOTE: French winemaker J-L Groulx, Niagara's most experienced crafter of Bordeaux-style red, blends six estate-grown, red grape varieties to create this one wine. It hits the palate like a river of silk, a lazy yet manicured flow of currant-raspberry fruit, vanilla, mocha custard and gently spicy flavours. Its charm and grace almost underplay its complexity and depth. Decant if serving soon; should age gracefully through 2012. Score - **96**. (David Lawrason, www.torontolife.com, March 2007)

HENRY OF PELHAM CABERNET/ MERLOT UNFILTERED 1999 VQA Niagara Peninsula

45302 (XD) 750 mL \$55



TASTING NOTE: Another fine red for the cellar is Henry of Pelham Cabernet Merlot 1999, a full-bodied Bordeaux-styled blend showing classic flavours of black currant, blackberry and herbs and a solid layer of fine tannins. (Beppi Crosariol, *The Globe and Mail*, Nov. 1, 2003)

Canada - Ontario White Wine - November 2007

HENRY OF PELHAM SPECK FAMILY RESERVE CHARDONNAY 2004 VQA Niagara Peninsula

616466 (XD) 750 mL \$39



TASTING NOTE: A rich aroma suggesting orange cream and roasted plantain serves as a stunning introduction to this beautiful Chardonnay. The medium- to full-bodied wine is intense and will grow on you with each passing sip. Drinking nicely now, this has the capacity to evolve nicely over the next three to five years. Score - **** $1/2$ (out of 5). (Zoltan Szabo, *Vines*, March/ April 2007)

STRATUS WHITE 2004
VQA Niagara Peninsula

660704 (XD) 750 mL \$44



TASTING NOTE: (a blend of Chardonnay, Gewurztraminer, Sauvignon Blanc, Semillon and Riesling given two years in oak) Deep gold colour; ripe spicy white peach, fennel and toast on the nose; full-bodied, tangerine, peach, apricot with a grassy note; lovely mouth feel, beautifully balanced with great length to a dried apricot finish. ([Winemaker] J.-L. [Groulx] says it has a seven-year ageing potential. Maybe. Certainly the best Stratus white I've tried so far.) Score - ***** (out of 5). (Tony Aspler, www.tonyaspler.com, Nov. 27, 2006)

U.S.A. - California Red Wine - November 2007

SANFORD Winery SANFORD & BENEDICT VINEYARD PINOT NOIR 2005
Santa Rita Hills, Santa Barbara County

562 (D) 750 mL \$55

The Sanford & Benedict Pinot Noir is made with fruit sourced from vines planted in 1971. Aged for 18 months in new French oak, this wine is chock full of vibrant raspberry and cherry fruit aromas with lovely wisps of lavender and white pepper. Flavours of ripe cherry fill the palate and are framed admirably by a bright acidity and supple tannins. This will age beautifully.

SANFORD LA RINCONADA PINOT NOIR 2005
Santa Rita Hills, Santa Barbara County

724104 (D) 750 mL \$53

TASTING NOTE: This is a superb vineyard and Pinots I have had from here have been outstanding and very age worthy. This wine is no exception. Fabulous aromatics of spice and bright ripe cherries, meaty flavors of toasty Pinot fruits highlighted with licorice, and a finish that leaves you asking for more. There is a certain pedigree to the fruit here (the vineyard is adjacent to Sanford & Benedict Vineyard) and this wine struts a certain charisma that is other-worldly. (Rusty Gaffney, www.princeofpinot.com www.princeofpinot.com, July 23, 2007)

CLIFF LEDE CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2004
Stags Leap District, Napa Valley

14217 (XD) 750 mL \$55

TASTING NOTE: Plush and concentrated, yet elegant and stylish, with vivid black cherry, blackberry and black currant fruit that provides a tight, ripe focus. Picks up nice loamy earth and cedary oak character on the finish, where the flavors are pure and persistent. Drink now through 2014. Score - **92**. (James Laube, www.winespectator.com, Sept. 30, 2007)

DUCKHORN THREE PALMS MERLOT 2004
Napa Valley

34785 (D) 750 mL \$99

Duckhorn's Three Palms Merlot is a Bordeaux-style blend (75% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Petit Verdot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Malbec) and a cult favourite. Aged for 20 months in French oak, this concentrated wine has a velvety texture, bright acidity, and firm, well-integrated tannins. The bouquet is layered with red fruit, dried herbs, allspice, vanilla bean, and a hint of dust. On the palate, the flavours are dominated by dark red fruits, including ripe strawberries and dried cherries, with inviting accents of toasted oak, chocolate, and spice. An obvious cellar candidate.

GOLDENEYE PINOT NOIR 2004
Anderson Valley

659854 (XD) 750 mL \$69

TASTING NOTE: Exhibits dusty berry, cola and wild raspberry flavors in a complex, well-focused style. Ripe and tannic, this shows nice fruit on the finish, where the tannins provide traction. Drink now through 2011. Score - **91**. (James Laube, *www.winespectator.com*, June 15, 2007)

JANZEN CLOUDY'S VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2004
Napa Valley

53769 (XD) 750 mL \$109

Cloudy's Vineyard sits atop the Vaca mountain range overlooking the Napa Valley. This small, two-acre vineyard gets its name from the nickname given to Claus ('head in the clouds') Janzen. As one would expect from this elevation, the wine presents a bolder, more masculine character that is typical of mountain grown fruit. Aged for 21 months in new French oak barrels, this full-bodied, very expressive Cabernet displays lovely aromas of plum, cassis, and blackberry with hints of vanilla and fresh mint that resound admirably on the palate. Enjoyable now but will reward short- to mid-term cellaring.

VON STRASSER CABERNET SAUVIGNON ESTATE VINEYARD 2004
Diamond Mountain District, Napa Valley

53751 (XD) 750 mL \$85

TASTING NOTE: Deep, rich and expansive, with mouthcoating layers of earthy currant, cedar, herb, sage and mineral. A big-shouldered wine that's firm and tannic, yet has a seam of elegance and finesse. Decant. Drink now through 2013. Score - **92**. (James Laube, *www.winespectator.com*, April 30, 2007)

CAIN FIVE 2003
Napa Valley

727925 (XD) 750 mL \$99

Cain Vineyard overlooks St. Helena from the top of Spring Mountain in the western hills of Napa Valley. The estate vineyard is planted to the five classic Bordeaux varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Malbec, and Petit Verdot. This wine is Cain's signature blend and employs all of its varietals: 45% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Petit Verdot, 19% Merlot, 15% Cabernet Franc and 1% Malbec. This is a firmly structured wine. The nose is subtle, a very pure cassis is hiding in the background, and sings a quiet, clear note all the way through to the end. The full, sweet entry fills out to a satisfying mid-palate, leading to a long, smooth finish. It will drink well now and in the next few years, and it should also show well 10 to 15 years from now.

CLIFF LEDE POETRY CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2003
Stags Leap District, Napa Valley

14209 (XD) 750 mL \$125

TASTING NOTE: Offers a mix of herb-laced currant and berry, with hints of anise, sage and cedar. Gets more complex and interesting on the finish, where the flavors fan out and show their depth. Firmly tannic. Decant. Drink now through 2012. Score - **88**. (James Laube, *www.winespectator.com*, May 15, 2007)

DUCKHORN CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2003
Napa Valley

921361 (XD) 750 mL \$119

TASTING NOTE: Medium-dark ruby; attractive, forward, intense, cedary, blackberry and black raspberry fruit aroma; full body; forward, rich, textured, cedary, slightly jammy, ripe blackberry and raspberry fruit flavors with good depth and concentration; full tannin; lingering aftertaste. Appealing to taste now though deserving several more years of bottle aging. Very highly recommended. Score - **90**. *California Grapevine*, Feb./March 2007)

DUCKHORN HOWELL MOUNTAIN MERLOT 2003
Napa Valley

733329 (XD) 750 mL \$95

This Howell Mountain bottling is well-structured, mouth-filling, with integrated tannins, and a lingering finish. The bouquet offers layered aromas of cassis, leather, dried fruit and molasses, with subtle hints of jasmine. On the palate, the flavours display rich black cherry, currant, pomegranate, and plum notes, complemented by elements of maple, vanilla, and spicy black pepper.

KEENAN CABERNET SAUVIGNON RESERVE 2003
Spring Mountain District, Napa Valley

47910 (XD) 750 mL \$109

TASTING NOTE: Notes of graphite, blackberries, blueberries, and cassis emerge from the 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve along with underlying sweet earthiness and licorice. It possesses exceptional elegance, a flowery, fragrant bouquet, and gorgeously long, concentrated, intense flavors. Drink this beauty over the next 15 years. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Dec. 2005)

KEENAN MERNET RESERVE 2003
Spring Mountain District, Napa Valley

47365 (D) 750 mL \$99

TASTING NOTE: A blend of 50% Cabernet Sauvignon and 50% Merlot, the fruity 2003 Mernet Reserve offers hints of white flowers, blueberries, licorice, cassis, espresso, and truffles. Displaying beautiful fruit on the attack, medium to full body, deep penetration as well as surprising finesse and balance, this is a superb example of high elevation Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink it over the next 12-15 plus years. Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Dec. 2005)

PAHLMAYER PROPRIETARY RED 2003
Napa Valley

739565 (XD) 750 mL \$150
50963 (XD) 1500 mL \$321

TASTING NOTE: The 2003 Proprietary Red (86.5% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Merlot, and the rest Cabernet Franc, Petit Verdot, and Malbec, aged in 100% new Taransaud barrels) is a killer. Deep ruby/purple-colored, with a big, smoky, fragrant nose of creme de cassis, smoked meats, plum, and licorice, it boasts great intensity, rich, full-bodied, powerful flavors, decent acidity, moderate tannin, and tremendous persistence. It has put on weight since I tasted it last year out of barrel, and should drink well for 15 or more years. Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Dec. 2005)

ANAKOTA HELENA DAKOTA CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2002
Knights Valley, Sonoma County

10769 (XD) 750 mL \$205

TASTING NOTE: The dark ruby/purple-tinged 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon Helena Dakota offers pretty raspberry/floral notes with a Chateau Margaux-like finesse and complexity. Medium to full-bodied with a more elegant, restrained style than its younger sibling, it possesses a Bordeaux-like structure, beautiful fruit, firm tannin, and a long finish. Anticipated maturity: 2011-2024. Score - **92**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2005)

KENWOOD CABERNET SAUVIGNON ARTIST SERIES 2002
Sonoma County

735738 (XD) 750 mL \$79

TASTING NOTE: 4% Malbec; 3% Merlot; 2% Cabernet Franc. This polished and very carefully measured working eschews exaggerated ripeness and oak in favor of proportion and clearly defined varietal fruit, and, while it may lack the bluster and drama that is the latter-day norm for high-ticket Cabernet, it wins the nod for precision, balance and grace. It is not excessively tannic, yet it is also not a wine that will want drinking soon, and its combination of depth and slight finishing hardness lead us to think in terms of five to ten years when considering age. Score - **90**. *Connoisseurs' Guide to California Wines*, April 2007)

ROBERT YOUNG SCION CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2002
Alexander Valley

670422 (XD) 750 mL \$65

TASTING NOTE: The Youngs produce a stunning Cabernet from their vineyard on the eastern benchlands of the valley. This Cab is the polar opposite of Napa, and defines the alternative possibilities. Soft, intricate and herbal-earthly, it has beautiful black cherry, cocoa, tobacco and new oak flavors, and it's thoroughly dry. Drink now through 2015. Score - **95**. (Steve Heimoff, *Wine Enthusiast*, Sept. 2006)

DUNN VINEYARDS HOWELL MOUNTAIN CABERNET SAUVIGNON 1997
Napa Valley

50880 (XD) 1500 mL \$399

TASTING NOTE: The enormous 1997 Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain is a super-powerful, fabulously-concentrated, 50-year wine. Aromas and flavors of blackberry/ cassis jam, minerals, and subtle oak are found in this extravagantly rich, gargantuan Cabernet Sauvignon that should age effortlessly for half a century. Anticipated maturity: 2015-2050. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Dec. 2000)

CHATEAU MONTELENA ESTATE CABERNET SAUVIGNON VERTICAL 5 Bottle CaSe:
1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002
Napa Valley

669234 (XD) 5 x 750 mL \$750

This vertical of Chateau Montelena includes all vintages from 1998 to 2002. Due to space constraints, we've included only Robert Parker Jr.'s scores for all the wines. The full reviews can be found on Parker's website.

1998: Anticipated maturity: 2002-2014. Score - **93**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Aug. 2002)

1999: Anticipated maturity: 2006-2030. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Aug. 2002)

2000: Anticipated maturity: 2003-2018. Score - **90**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Dec. 2003)

2001: Anticipated maturity: 2010-2025. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Feb. 2005)

2002: Anticipated maturity: 2011-2036. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*)

com, Dec. 2006)

Australia - Red Wine - November 2007

HAZYBLUR BAROOTA SHIRAZ 2005
South Australia

52126 (XD) 750 mL \$44

Hazyblur's 2005 top-range Baroota Shiraz was not reviewed at press time, but every vintage from 2000 to 2004 received a score higher than **90** by Robert Parker Jr. Expect more of the same from this respected 2005 vintage.

KALLESKE GREENOCK SHIRAZ 2005
Barossa Valley, South Australia

39040 (XD) 750 mL \$55

TASTING NOTE: The impressive 2005 Shiraz Greenock exhibits an inky/purple color, greater intensity, and additional roasted meat and gamy characteristics interwoven with pepper, creme de cassis, and blackberry liqueur. The oak treatment is identical to the 2004, but that component seems more subdued in the 2005. The 2005 should evolve and drink well for 10-15 years. Score - **94-96**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2006)

KALLESKE JOHANN GEORG SHIRAZ 2005
Barossa Valley, South Australia

53728 (XD) 750 mL \$139

TASTING NOTE: Kalleske's top wine is the 150-case cuvee of Shiraz Johann Georg Old Vine from a 129-year-old vineyard. Named after the first Kalleske, a native of Silesia who immigrated to Australia in 1838, it offers just about everything one could want in a Barossa Valley Shiraz. Aged two years in new French and American 300 liter hogsheads, and produced from yields of one ton of fruit per acre, this cuvee is extraordinarily consistent in 2004 and 2005. In fact, it's hard to choose a favorite. This wine exhibits great intensity, an inky/ purple color, and notes of creosote, camphor, blackberries, cassis, and subtle vanillin/ pain grille notes. Unbelievably unctuous and full-bodied, with stunning concentration, thrilling purity, and amazing length as well as richness, it should evolve gracefully for 15+ years. Score - **94-96**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

KALLESKE OLD VINE GRENACHE 2005

Barossa Valley, South Australia

53736 (XD) 750 mL \$69

TASTING NOTE: A beauty, the 2005 Grenache Old Vine exhibits a deep ruby/ purple color as well as a sweet perfume of black and red fruits, melted licorice, subtle dried Provencal herbs, a touch of pepper, a superb attack, an opulent mouthfeel, and a long, layered finish. This brilliant Grenache should drink well for 5-6 years. Score - **93**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

MITOLO G.A.M. SHIRAZ 2005

McLaren Vale, South Australia

41111 (XD) 375 mL \$28

TASTING NOTE: Fashioned from a McLaren Vale vineyard, the 2005 Shiraz G.A.M. (named after the Mitolo children - Gemma, Alexander, and Marco) is a deep ruby/ purple-hued effort displaying beautiful blackberry, white pepper, licorice, and toasty oak notes. Rich, full-bodied, and intense, with blueberry and blackberry flavors, sweet tannin, and excellent purity, it is a tour de force in winemaking. Enjoy it over the next decade. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

MITOLO SAVITAR SHIRAZ 2005

McLaren Vale, South Australia

659581 (XD) 750 mL \$59

TASTING NOTE: Named after a mythical monster, the 2005 Shiraz Savitar emerges from rocky, low vigor soils, and was aged for 16 months in primarily new French oak barrels. Dazzling aromas of acacia flowers, blueberries, crushed rocks, graphite, licorice, and espresso roast emerge from this tightly knit but intense, fleshy, rich effort. Its multilayered palate, huge body, sweet tannin, and "monster" finish suggest this brilliant wine will be drinkable between 2008 and 2020. It is a superb example of McLaren Vale Shiraz. Score - **96**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2006)

MITOLO SERPICO CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2005
McLaren Vale, South Australia

659599 (XD) 750 mL \$59

TASTING NOTE: The 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon Serpico (100% McLaren Vale fruit) was treated like Amarone with the grapes picked relatively underripe and green, then dried for seven weeks before they were fermented. The result is a distinctive, full-bodied Cabernet with no pruny or raisiny characteristics whatsoever. Its fresh acidity and lively backbone support a wine of enormous richness and intensity, offering up classic creme de cassis notes intermixed with white chocolate, damp forest, cedar, and toasty oak. Full-bodied, opulent, powerful, and totally dry, with a sweet, rich mid- section, it should age well for 10-15 years. Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2006)

THE COLONIAL ESTATE EXPLORATEUR SHIRAZ 2005
Barossa Valley, South Australia

18648 (XD) 750 mL \$29

TASTING NOTE: The blockbuster, inky/ruby/ purple-hued 2005 L'Explorateur Shiraz offers sweet aromas of blackberries, white pepper, licorice, and graphite. While full-bodied, powerful, and rich, it also displays striking finesse and elegance, no doubt because of its aging in French oak. It should last for 15 or more years. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2006)

BURGE FAMILY CLOCHEMERLE 2004
Barossa Valley, South Australia

39529 (XD) 750 mL \$32

TASTING NOTE: The 2004 Clochemerle, an Australian version of Chateauneuf-du-Pape, is a blend of 48% Grenache, 38% Mourvedre, 12% Shiraz, and a dollop of Cabernet Sauvignon. This extraordinarily elegant, fruity, full-bodied red offers notes of sweet cherries, licorice, and strawberry jam. Light on its feet with tremendous definition and purity as well as striking finesse and harmony, it tips the scales at only 14% alcohol, which is low for the vintage and for this area of Barossa. Consume it over the next 7-8 years. Score - **93**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

BURGE FAMILY OLIVE HILL GRENACHE/SHIRAZ/MOURVÈDRE 2004
Barossa Valley, South Australia

39511 (XD) 750 mL \$44

TASTING NOTE: The 2004 Olive Hill Red Blend is composed of 48% Shiraz, 30% Grenache, 12% Mourvedre, and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon from young 10-year-old vines. As with all of these cuvees, its personality and soul radiate from the aromas and flavors. Sweet black currant, pepper, spice box, and loamy/earthy characteristics along with beautiful structure, rich fruit, fabulous purity, and a long finish emerge from this beauty. Enjoy this riveting example of a proprietary red blend over the next 6-8 years. Score - **92**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

CASCABEL SHIRAZ 2004
Fleurieu, South Australia

38539 (D) 750 mL \$35

TASTING NOTE: The brilliant, inky/ruby/ purple-tinged 2004 Shiraz offers up gorgeous scents of blackberries, cassis, damp earth, truffles, and tar. Additional notes of white chocolate emerge in the mouth. This intense, dense, full-bodied, opulent Shiraz is a total hedonistic as well as intellectual turn-on. It spent 18 months in 500 liter French oak pungeons. Drink it over the next 7-10 years. Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

CASTAGNA GENESIS SYRAH 2004
Beechworth, Victoria

53298 (D) 750 mL \$95

TASTING NOTE: A Cornas-like shiraz of remarkable intensity and complexity. Its ethereal, exotically spicy and meaty bouquet of dark cherries, cassis and sweet oak reveals nuances of fennel and cloves, cinnamon and black pepper. Medium to full in weight, but likely to build, it's an essay in elegance and focus, with a silky palate of beautifully ripened dark fruits, spices, smoky oak and powdery tannins finishing with lingering nuances of charcuterie. Would rate even higher with more palate length. Drink 2009-2012. Score - **95**. (Jeremy Oliver, www.jeremyoliver.com.au, July 22, 2006)

J.J. HAHN 1914 SHIRAZ 2004
Barossa Valley, South Australia

39057 (D) 750 mL \$55

TASTING NOTE: The inky/ruby/purple-tinged, viscous 2004 Shiraz 1914 possesses soft acids, a voluptuous texture, and loads of creme de cassis fruit intermixed with smoky bacon fat, roasted meat, herb, and spice box characteristics. With terrific length as well as an unctuousity that fans of bigger-styled Australian Shiraz will adore, it can be drunk now and over the next 10-15 years. Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

KAY BROTHERS AMERY VINEYARD BLOCK 6 SHIRAZ 2004
McLaren Vale, South Australia

46326 (XD) 750 mL \$89

TASTING NOTE: ... The 2004 Shiraz Block 6 is the finest example of this cuvee since the 1998. It is an awesomely concentrated Shiraz with an inky/plum/garnet/purple color and a sweet nose of roasted meats, dried herbs, ground pepper, blackberries, and cassis. This intense, full-bodied effort boasts a profound depth and richness as well as layer upon layer of awesome concentration and length. While approachable, it should hit its peak in 5-6 years, and last for two decades or more. Score - **98**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

KILIKANOON COVENANT SHIRAZ 2004
Clare Valley, South Australia

674747 (XD) 750 mL \$45

TASTING NOTE: The spectacular 2004 Shiraz Covenant, essentially declassified fruit not used for the Shiraz Oracle, spent 22 months in 80% French and 20% American 300 liter hogsheads. In fact, Kilikanoon does not use any small barrels, preferring the larger 300 liter vessels. Perhaps that accounts for the glorious levels of fruit and subtle oak influence in even the more expensive cuvees that are aged in 100% new oak. The dense, plum/purple-hued, full-bodied Shiraz Covenant exhibits notes of tapenade, blackberries, asphalt, truffles, and roasted meats. With a gorgeous texture as well as good opulence, vibrancy, and definition, it can be consumed over the next 7-10 years. Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

KILIKANOON PRODIGAL GRENACHE 2004
Clare Valley, South Australia

927582 (D) 750 mL \$29

TASTING NOTE: The 2004 Grenache Prodigal possesses a dark ruby color as well as classic kirsch and licorice notes with a background resinous/earthy character. Full-bodied, supple, and deep, this mouthfilling wine should be drunk over the next 5-6 years. Score - **92**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Oct. 2006)

KILIKANOON TESTAMENT SHIRAZ 2004
Barossa Valley, South Australia

50047 (XD) 750 mL \$45

TASTING NOTE: From the Barossa sub-regions of Greenock and Vinevale, the fabulous 2004 Shiraz Testament exhibits this varietal's more scorched earth/volcanic side with blackberry liqueur, creosote, pepper, espresso roast, and singed leather characteristics. Opulent, with sensational fruit, a thick, unctuous attack and mid-palate, and a long finish of over a minute, this stunning Shiraz should be at its best in 3-4 years, and age for two decades. Score - **95**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2006)

PENFOLDS RWT SHIRAZ 2004
Barossa Valley, South Australia

564278 (XD) 750 mL \$125

TASTING NOTE: Deep ruby. Expansive, seductive bouquet of red and dark berries, with sexy vanillin oak spice, floral oils and graphite adding complexity. Lush and creamy but lively too, with energetic blackberry and mulberry flavors, exotic Asian spice accents and fine-grained, harmonious tannins. Suave mocha and candied licorice appear on the long, juicy finish. This is absolutely lovely right now, with no edginess or herbal notes, but will clearly repay a decade-plus in the cellar. Score - **93**. (Josh Reynolds, *International Wine Cellar*, July/Aug. 2007)

SUCKFIZZLE CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2004
Margaret River, South Australia

53538 (XD) 750 mL \$39

James Halliday's 2007 *Australian Wine Companion* gave this 'outstanding winery' its highest rating of *****, and awarded the previous vintage of this wine a score of **96**. For the literary types, Suckfizzle conjures up Rabelais' infamous character of the same name. For the wine expert, Suckfizzle is a Cabernet of the highest order. No reviews were available at press time, but this wine has been turning heads with its fragrant aromas of cassis, blackcurrant and red berries, and its magnificent balance and structure.

EPPALOCK RIDGE SHIRAZ 2003
Heathcote, Victoria

52738 (D) 750 mL \$45

TASTING NOTE: Dense colour; full-bodied, rich blackberry, dark chocolate and plum; ripe tannins; not extractive; carries the alcohol. Cork. Score - **94**. (James Halliday, *Australian Wine Companion*, 2007)

MT. BILLY ANTIQUITY SHIRAZ 2003
Barossa Valley, South Australia

47589 (XD) 750 mL \$59

TASTING NOTE: Rich blackberry, licorice aromas, and flavours; sweet but not dead fruit; good oak and extract; 80-109-year-old shiraz vines, open-fermented, basket-pressed, French oak. Screwcap. Score - **94**. (James Halliday, *Australian Wine Companion*, 2007)

YALUMBA MENZIES CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2003
Coonawarra, South Australia

473645 (XD) 750 mL \$43

TASTING NOTE: ... The 2003 The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon reveals gorgeous notes of creosote, blueberry liqueur, black currants, licorice, and cedar. Full-bodied with great fruit purity, real stature, wonderful sweetness (from glycerin), ripe tannin, and a long, heady finish, it can be drunk now or cellared for 15 or more years. Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2006)

PENFOLDS GRANGE SHIRAZ 2002
South Australia

336388 (XD) 750 mL \$325

TASTING NOTE: Ruby-red. Initially closed on the nose but aeration brings a complicated bouquet of raspberry, wild strawberry, creme de mure, sexy oak spices, woodsmoke, tobacco, vanilla and fresh flowers. A deep, sweet but precise midweight, with energetic flavors of red and dark berries, cherry compote, cinnamon, mocha and smoked meat, all wrapped in substantial but silky tannins. Sappy and expansive on the impressively long, velvety finish. You'd be nuts to open this any time soon. Score - **94 (+?)**. (Josh Reynolds, *International Wine Cellar*, July/Aug. 2007)

YALUMBA OCTAVIUS SHIRAZ 2001
Barossa Valley, South Australia

449017 (XD) 750 mL \$95

TASTING NOTE: A blockbuster, structured Shiraz with oodles of personality/soul, it offers a sumptuous bouquet as well as flavors of chocolate, white flowers, black-berry and cassis liqueur, prunes, figs, roasted meats, and burning embers. This full-bodied, hugely extracted, monster Shiraz has amazing balance and symmetry for its large-scaled style. It needs another 1-3 years of cellaring, and should last for 12-20 years, based on the longevity of some earlier examples ... Score - **98**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2004)

KATNOOK ESTATE ODYSSEY CABERNET SAUVIGNON 1990
Coonawarra, South Australia

46466 (XD) 750 mL \$165

Katnook Estate senior winemaker Wayne Stehbens says his aim with Odyssey is to "not only capture the essence of Coonawarra Cabernet Sauvignon but to define it". (*www.katnookestate.com.au*) Katnook's Odyssey Cabernet Sauvignon is their long-standing flagship wine, and this 1990 vintage is a great place to start exploring mature Coonawarra Cabernets.

Australia - White Wine - November 2007

MOUNT HORROCKS CORDON CUT RIESLING 2006
Clare Valley, South Australia

52555 (M) 375 mL \$30

TASTING NOTE: Floral, tea-leaf and caramel aromas of shriveled grapes, plus honey and crème brûlée notes. There is some acid firmness and a little bitterness to conclude, which helps give it a clean finish. Lively and delicious. Score - **93**. (Huon Hooke, *Gourmet Traveller Wine*, June/July 2007)

BROKENWOOD INDIGO VINEYARD VIOGNIER 2005
Beechwood, Victoria

683953 (D) 750 mL \$36

Look for typical Viognier characteristics of apricot, floral, and pear in this full-bodied southern hemisphere rival to the Rhone's Condrieu. This is full, aromatic, lengthy on the finish - and ready to drink now. Perfect for a crisp fall evening in front of a fire.

PENFOLDS YATTARNA CHARDONNAY 2004
South Australia

558643 (XD) 750 mL \$89

TASTING NOTE: Pristine aromas of tangerine, melon and grapefruit overlie slightly dusty, nutty, waxy and mineral nuances, with subliminal suggestions of wheatmeal and vanilla. Round and smooth, its juicy core of citrus and melon flavour is neatly trimmed by an underlying powdery minerality and a tangy, lemony acidity. Long, austere and shapely, finishing taut and stylish, it finishes with lingering a lemon sherbet-like aspect. Very classy, and made without a single barrel of new oak. Score - **96**. (Jeremy Oliver, *www.jeremyoliver.com.au*, Jan. 5, 2007)

YALUMBA MUSEUM RESERVE MUSCAT
Rutherglen, Victoria

963488 (S) 375 mL \$25

TASTING NOTE: The non-vintage Museum Reserve Muscat boasts a medium deep amber hue as well as stunning aromas and huge flavors oozing with glycerin, sweetness, honeyed figs, jammy berries, and notions of tea, molasses, and prunes. This wine does not improve in the bottle, but it will last for many years. Score - **96**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, Oct. 2006)

New Zealand - White Wine - November 2007

SACRED HILL RIFLEMANS CHARDONNAY 2005
Hawkes Bay, North Island

39503 (XD) 750 mL \$50

TASTING NOTE: Light gold with fragrant, nutty sweet oak aromas, this gorgeous, harmonious, sweet-fruited wine is endowed with everything that makes good chardonnay great. It's silky smooth in texture and there exactly the right amount of savoury winemaking influences to complement the delicious nectarine, stonefruit and tropical fruit. Hard to believe it has 100% new oak but that's the quality of the fruit. We tasted it three weeks ago and it was sensational in the standard XL5 tasting glass. Even better tonight in the Zerrutti tasting glass. A class act. 14% alc. (Sue Courtney, *www.wineoftheweek.com*, March 14, 2005)

South Africa - Red Wine - November 2007

BOEKENHOUTSKLOOF THE CHOCOLATE BLOCK 2005
Franschhoek, WO Western Cape

656512 (XD) 750 mL \$42

TASTING NOTE: Aptly named, given hedonistic (but serious) 05's spiced dark choc notes amongst much more. Intense, warm & sensuous, but fresh, with light touch to fully express its make up of syrah, grenache, cinsaut, cab & viognier (44 /24/14/14/4). Already irresistible but better still in 5-6 yrs. 15 mths 600L Fr oak, 40% new. Score - **** **1/2** (out of 5). (Angela Lloyd, *John Platter South African Wines*, 2007)

**GRAHAM BECK THE ANDREW CABERNET SAUVIGNON/PETIT VERDOT/
MERLOT 2005**
Barrel Selection, WO Coastal Region

52753 (XD) 750 mL \$26

First produced in 2003, Graham Beck's 'The Andrew' is the cellar's first Bordeaux-style blend and Ontario is the very first commercial market to receive this highly acclaimed wine. This brand continues the winery's tradition of naming their greatest blend wines after Graham Beck's grandsons. Made from a strict selection of their finest lots of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot and matured for 14 months in French oak, this classy, elegant red exhibits savoury flavours of cassis and spice, seamless integration, and a lengthy finish.

BOEKENHOUTSKLOOF SYRAH 2004
WO Coastal Region

52076 (XD) 750 mL \$59

TASTING NOTE: Solidly ripe, but in more of a Rhône style, with lots of grilled herb, pepper, briar and black currant aromas and flavors, with a structured, minerally finish. Drink now through 2009. Score - **91**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, May 31, 2007)

DELHEIM GRAND RESERVE 2003
Simonsberg-Stellenbosch

35394 (XD) 750 mL \$36

TASTING NOTE: 03 includes 6% merlot ... Whiffs mulberry, gentle mint, makes interesting comparison with [2004 Cabernet Sauvignon]: similarly dark berried but GR hiding much while cab more accessible. Tannins firm. Will keep 10 yrs ... 18 mths French oak, 79% new. Score - **** (out of 5). (Irina von Holdt, *John Platter South African Wines*, 2007)

BONNE NOUVELLE 2002
WO Stellenbosch

39628 (XD) 750 mL \$55

TASTING NOTE: This impressive South African offering is a blend of 58% Merlot, 25% Pinotage (a varietal I generally do not find too impressive), and 17% Cabernet Sauvignon. It exhibits a Bordeaux-like personality with notes of dried herbs, loamy soil, black cherries, and tobacco. Smoky, medium-bodied, elegant, pure, and complex, there are approximately 1500 cases of this stylish proprietary red. Drink it over the next 7-8 years. Score - **90**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, April 2004)

South Africa - White Wine - November 2007

BOEKENHOUTSKLOOF SEMILLON 2004
Franschhoek

52100 (XD) 750 mL \$35

TASTING NOTE: A subtle aroma of persimmon gives way to a ripe palate of tangerine, blood orange and almond notes backed by fine acidity. A nice waxy edge caresses the finish. Could put on some weight with modest cellaring. Drink now through 2008. Score - **90**. (James Molesworth, www.winespectator.com, May 31, 2007)

Argentina - Red Wine - November 2007

ALTO VISTA ALTO 2004
Mendoza

660654 (XD) 750 mL \$60

TASTING NOTE: Big and bold, with tar, loam and bittersweet cocoa holding the upper hand for now on a core of black currant and plum fruit. Yet plenty of ripe, imbedded tannins and fine acidity to carry through until it resolves itself fully. Flashy, and pulls it off. Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2007 through 2014. Score - **93**. (James Molesworth, www.winespectator.com, Sept. 30, 2006)

CATENA ALTA CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2004
Mendoza

959965 (XD) 750 mL \$55

The 2004 Catena Alta Cabernet presents a dark, opaque violet hue with blackish tones. The wine shows intense aromas of ripe dark fruit and hints of tobacco, cedar and fresh mint. The palate is full and rich with a concentrated core of cassis and black currant flavours with accents of clove, espresso bean, and pencil lead. The finish is well-structured, with finely grained tannins and a bright acidity.

CATENA ZAPATA NICOLÁS 2003

Mendoza

662072 (XD) 750 mL \$75

Produced only in outstanding vintage years, this is Nicolás Catena's flagship wine. Aged for 24 months in 100% new French oak, this stylish blend of Cabernet Sauvignon (72%) and Malbec (28%) displays exceptionally concentrated dark fruit flavours, a supple texture and excellent structure. The first Nicolás Catena Zapata burst onto the scene in 1997 and was compared then to the likes of Château Latour, Haut-Brion, Solaia, Caymus and Opus One in a series of blind tastings held in the USA and Europe. It placed either first or second in every tasting. While reviews were not yet available for this vintage, Robert Parker Jr. has been effusive in his praise of previous releases, bestowing scores in the mid-90s upon this iconic red.

CHEVAL DES ANDES 2002

Mendoza

8516 (XD) 750 mL \$117

Cheval des Andes is a joint effort between Cheval Blanc and Terrazas de los Andes. TASTING NOTE: This is a finely sculpted wine, with a ripe, focused core of red currant, plum and blackberry fruit balanced by vanilla bean, coffee and smoke notes. Long and plush, with fine-grained tannins carrying the finish. Tastes more like Bordeaux than Argentina though. Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2008. Score - **92**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, Dec. 31, 2004)

O. FOURNIER ALFA CRUX TEMPRANILLO/MALBEC/MERLOT 2002

Uco Valley, Mendoza

52704 (D) 750 mL \$39

86 in *Wine Spectator's* Top 100 Wines of 2006.

TASTING NOTE: A very flashy, modern-style wine, with layers of mocha and spice-infused toast leading the way for boysenberry, blackberry and fig fruit. Shows additional tar, mineral, graphite and even violet notes through the rich but racy finish. Tempranillo, Malbec and Merlot. Drink now through 2010. Score - **93**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, Oct. 15, 2006)

**POESIA 2002
Mendoza**

38463 (XD) 750 mL \$58

TASTING NOTE: Made from the usual blend of 70% Malbec and 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2002 Poesia offers elegant yet powerful aromas of black fruits, mocha, chocolate, and new oak. In the mouth, it reveals a seamless integration of acidity, wood, and tannin as well as a long, medium to full-bodied, heady finish. Score - **91**. (Robert Parker Jr., *www.erobertparker.com*, June 2005)

Argentina - White Wine - November 2007

**CATENA ALTA CHARDONNAY 2004
Mendoza**

959973 (XD) 750 mL \$42

The Catena Alta Chardonnay is made from a special lot, rows 5 through 38, of the Adrianna Vineyard. At almost 5,000 feet elevation in the Andean foothills, the Adrianna vineyard's pebble-covered soils and cool climate are ideal for growing Chardonnay, producing a purity of flavours and a minerality unlike anywhere else in Mendoza. The 2004 vintage is showing ripe, white fruit flavours with lovely, light floral notes and hints of yeasty bread. The palate shows ripe pear, apple and fig flavours with a slatey, mineral character. The finish is long and complex with a refreshing crisp acidity.

Chile - Red Wine - November 2007

ALMAVIVA 2004

740233 (XD) 750 mL \$85

TASTING NOTE: Offers nice alluring aromas of cocoa powder, cedar and currant preserve. This is admirably ripe for the vintage, with well-structured plum sauce, graphite, loam and spice flavors moving through the fine-grained finish. Cabernet Sauvignon and Carmenère. Drink now through 2013. Score - **93**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, May 31, 2007)

ALTAIR 2003

Cachapoal Valley

38430 (XD) 750 mL \$63

TASTING NOTE: Terrific Chilean red wine; seductive and succulent, with a beautiful burgundy hue matched by pure, ripe Bordeaux-like flavors. Deep and satisfying, and smooth as silk. If ever a Chilean red ranked as world class, this is it. Score - **94**. (Michael Schachner, *Wine Enthusiast*, Nov. 2005)

CONCHA Y TORO CARMÉNÈRE PEUMO CARMÍN DE PEUMO 2003

Rapel Valley/Maipo Valley

52209 (XD) 750 mL \$90

TASTING NOTE: The 2003 Carmenera "Carmin de Peumo", the flagship Carmenera, is a blend of the best parcels in the Peumo Vineyard. It spent 20 months in new French oak and was bottled unfinned and unfiltered. Black/purple colored, it offers a mammoth perfume of toasty oak, vanilla, scorched earth, leather, espresso roast, and blueberry jam. This is followed by an extravagantly rich, nearly over-ripe, slightly over-the-top, layered wine that goes on and on to its pure finish. Can there be too much of a good thing? It's a gamble but with a big up-side. Score - **97**. (Jay Miller, *www.erobertparker.com*, June 2007)

CASA LAPOSTOLLE BOROBO 2002

39263 (XD) 750 mL \$95

TASTING NOTE: Mature, but has good flesh and weight, with raisin, spice, incense, licorice and plum sauce. A raisined note lingers on the finish, but this shows nice range. Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère, Pinot Noir and Merlot. Drink now. Score - **89**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, May 12, 2007)

QUEBRADA DE MACUL DOMUS AUREA CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2002

Maipo Valley

906123 (XD) 750 mL \$42

TASTING NOTE: Beautiful aromas and flavors of loam and mint, with notes of dark currant, fig and cigar smoke. Plush texture, but with deceptive strength on the finish. Just now hitting its stride, but should develop further. A beautiful rendition of cool-climate Cabernet and a star of the vintage. Drink now through 2014. Score - **93**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, Web Only, 2006)

VIÑA CARMEN CABERNET SAUVIGNON GOLD RESERVE 2002

Maipo Valley

941609 (XD) 750 mL \$50

TASTING NOTE: Traditional style, with lilting mint and cocoa powder aromas leading the way for ripe black currant and blackberry fruit. Loamy, but with a soft texture. Fine-grained tannins provide all the support it needs. Drink now through 2012. Score - **92**. (James Molesworth, *www.winespectator.com*, Nov. 30, 2006)

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BRANDER SAUVIGNON BLANC PURISIMA MOUNTAIN 2006

Santa Ynez Valley

52712 (D) 750 mL \$33

TASTING NOTE: A Women & Wine favorite, this Sauvignon Blanc is a blend of estate fruit and the best of the varietal grown in other vineyards of the Santa Ynez Valley. We enjoy its bouquet of floral aromas and its crisp, dry flavors. This wine is a true expression of the Sauvignon Blanc grape. Order in some spicy Asian fare, open a bottle and smile. (Julie Brosterman & Sharon Boorstin, www.womenwine.com)

FAR NIENTE CHARDONNAY 2005
Napa Valley

539130 (XD) 750 mL \$63

Far Niente Chardonnays are classically structured wines that are lush and round on the palate, while displaying the typical intensity of fruit and spicy oak aromas that have become synonymous with their "house style". The 2005 vintage offers luscious aromas of ripe melon and fig, layered with notes of spice, earth, hazelnut and toasted almonds. On the palate, the wine is rich and smooth with intriguing tropical/guava notes and a touch of minerality, ending in a long, toasty finish.

MARIMAR ESTATE DON MIGUEL CHARDONNAY 2004
Russian River Valley, Sonoma

53009 (XD) 750 mL \$39

TASTING NOTE: Marimar Torres, sister of Miguel, represents the Californian outpost of the Torres wine empire, but she has chosen to avoid using the Torres name on the label of her wines: instead, they are labelled Marimar Estate ... Marimar began planting the Don Miguel vineyard on land she had owned for a while in 1986. 30 acres were planted to Chardonnay, and shortly after another 30 acres of Pinot Noir went into the ground. The location she chose was in the Russian River Valley ... By Californian standards, this is cool climate. Viticulture followed a European model, with a planting density of some four times the Californian standard, at 2000 plants per acre, on a low hanging vertical trellis. Marimar also opted for a mix of clones in pursuit of complexity. Chardonnay is Rued, Spring Mountain and See ...

ROBERT MONDAVI HUICHICA HILLS CHARDONNAY 2001
Carneros, Napa Valley

687368 (D) 750 mL \$55

TASTING NOTE: Complex nose melds white plum, spices, mint and smoke. Dense, rich, dry and flavorful, with soft citrus and orange fruit complicated by subtle baking spices. Very smooth, silky wine with impressive palate presence. Wears its new oak more gracefully than the reserve bottling. Quite harmonious on the long, resounding finish. Score - **90**. (Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*, May/June 2003)

Fortified Wines - November 2007

Sherry

LUSTAU ALMACENISTA OLOROSO ANGEL ZAMORANO

Jerez

606491 (MD) 750 mL \$44

TASTING NOTE: The outrageous non-vintage Oloroso Almacenista Angel Zamorano is believed to be between 30-40 years of age. It possesses a medium amber color, crisp acidity, dry, medium-bodied flavors of tremendous intensity offering smoke, nuts, molasses, and maple syrup, yet a dry finish. This is decadent as well as luxurious stuff that must be tasted to be believed ... Score - **94**. (Robert Parker Jr., www.erobertparker.com, Feb. 2003)

Spirits - November 2007

Scotch Whisky

BOWMORE 37 YEAR OLD ISLAY SINGLE MALT 1968

37135 750 mL \$1900

TASTING NOTE: [Nose] You can hardly see the peat for the exotic fruit, which means only one thing ...;[Taste] So juicy and non-specific fruity, except maybe some mango. The peat finally arrives like the 7th Cavalry. [Finish] Long and subtle with vanilla stratas of varying intensity; [Body] One of those casks that's past its sell-by date, yet somehow works to glorious effect. Most of the peat has been kicked out, but it's as gentle a ride as you'll find. Score - **90**. (Jim Murray, *Whisky Bible*, 2007)

GLENFIDDICH 40 YEAR OLD Speyside Single Malt

954909 700 mL \$2299

A Gold Medal 'Best in Class' winner at the prestigious International Wine and Spirit Competition in 2007. Nose: A depth of honey aromas. Beeswax. Finally, a balancing flowery dryness and faint smokiness. Palate: Very slow emergence of flavours. Firm, dryish, honey. Biscuity maltiness. A hint of bitter chocolate. A surge of soft, smokiness, with peat. Finish: Hint of anise. Satisfying. Long. Comment: Extraordinary flavour development. An astonishingly complex whisky. Gold Editors Choice Award. Score – **9 1/4**. (Michael Jackson, www.whiskymag.com)

TASTING NOTE: Nose: Curiously and attractively smoked, lots of sweet vanilla and stunning spices: remarkable and beautiful. Taste: rimming with oaky, toasty vanilla, malt punching through for silky, rich and mildly honied middle. Signs of oaky wear and tear, but do not detract from the overall beauty. Finish: Remains silky with a return of peat, mixed with cocoa. Balance: Quite brilliant for a Glenfiddich of this antiquity: rarely does it survive to this age. In fact, brilliant for any distillery. Score - **92**. (Jim Murray, *Whisky Bible*, 2006)

GLENGOYNE SINGLE CASK 29 YEAR OLD HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT 1977 Limited Edition

52175 700 mL \$865

TASTING NOTE: Nose: Fairly sweet. Orange cream, oak & vanilla. Lots of pineapple jam, some brown bread, subtle smoke, gun powder. A tad nervous (on the good end...), mashed potatoes, melted butter. Added water brings in a great vegetal sour note. Pomme de truffe, more subtle spices. Palate: As [on] the nose there's some orange skin, leather, waxy malts, hints [of] ginger syrup, malts, some honey, black pepper, spicy oak ... (Michel van Meersbergen, www.maltmaniacs.org, Dec. 1, 2006)

**GLENGOYNE SINGLE CASK 36 YEAR OLD HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT 1969
Limited Edition**

52183 700 mL \$1355

TASTING NOTE: Sour fruit and varnish some honeycomb which becomes stronger and oak gets very creamy. Some sour fruits (plums and nectarines) some oily and waxy notes - probably quite old quite classy. Finish has natural chewy caramel with some watery bitterness. Tastes like a 20+ year old Speysider. (Craig Daniels, www.maltmaniacs.org, Dec. 1, 2006)

JOHNNIE WALKER BLUE LABEL

54171 1750 mL \$599

Johnnie Walker Blue is an authentic re-creation of an original, 19th century blend that includes some 60-year-old malt whisky. In its original incarnation it was sold only to their most valued customers at the time. Each bottle has its own serial number and comes in a silk-lined box. This 1.75 litre size is made only in very limited quantities. The ideal gift for the ultimate Johnnie completionist.

**PRÀBAN NA LINNE POIT DHUBH UNCHILLFILTERED 21 YEAR OLD Scotch WHISKY
Isle of Skye**

641456 700 mL \$215

Describing the thinking behind the Praban na Linne's creation, [founder Sir Iain Noble] says: "We thought if we put Gaelic on the labels, then at least we'd sell it in the Hebrides. We did the labels in Gaelic and fairly quickly people in other parts of the Highlands where Gaelic had died out seemed to want to have the whisky. They didn't want to lose their association with their Gaelic past" ... But he is evasive about the source of the spirit in his Poit Dhubh single malt, which comes in eight, 12 and 21-year- old variants. He says: "You see Poit Dhubh means 'the black pot' and poit in in Ireland means a little pot but they both mean colloquially 'illicit still'. This is proper malt whisky but we are not confirming or denying that it comes from an illicit still. We leave people to their own judgement." (Ian Fraser, The Sunday Herald (Scotland), March 30, 2003)

ROYAL SALUTE ONE HUNDRED CASK SELECTION

50112 700 mL \$275

TASTING NOTE: Nose: Big and rich. Fruit and nut, black cherry, olde english marmalade, peat, touch of moss/fern, dried peels, black banana and caramel, some smoke. Palate: Fruit cake sweetness. A thick feel and a broad mid-palate which tapers into a dry spicy finish. Water brings out milk chocolate. Finish: Nutty and long. Comment: Sumptuous, soft and sultry. Score - **8** (out of 10). (Dave Broom, www.whiskymag.com, Oct. 3, 2005)

ROYAL SALUTE 38 YEAR OLD STONE OF DESTINY

50104 700 mL \$899

TASTING NOTE: The latest to join the pre- stigious Royal Salute whiskies in the premium blend market is the 38 Year Old 'Stone of Destiny'. Named after Scotland's historic symbol of sovereign power, the 38 Year Old offers rich notes of cedar wood and almond, with a sherried oakiness. Dried fruits linger with an assertive spiciness in the finish. (www.whiskymag.com, June 6, 2005)

THE GLENLIVET CELLAR COLLECTION 1969

50385 750 mL \$899

TASTING NOTE: The nose is soft yet voluptuous, with a range of fruits, most notably oranges, merging with spices and hazelnut. Soft and velvety on the palate, with more oranges and mixed spices, plus digestive biscuits and those floral notes that are one of The Glenlivet's hallmarks. Long, elegant and complex in the finish. Another splendid vintage offering from one of Scotland's finest distilleries. Score - *** **1/2** (out of 5). (Gavin D. Smith & Tom Cannavan, www.whisky-pages.com)

Cognac

GODET COGNAC GRANDE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE 1900 Single Vineyard

38356 750 mL \$2999

Cognac is in the Godet family veins. After 14 generations since the discovery of cognac, the Godet family still has an immense passion for cognac, and today live and work in the same place as their ancestors who founded the business. Connoisseurs from the four corners of the world appreciate the exceptional quality of their cognacs. Godet's Vintage Cognac from 1900 is a sumptuously rich and full, unblended cognac for the connoisseur. A piece of history and a cellar showpiece.

GODET GRANDE CHAMPAGNE VINTAGE COGNAC 1979

35360 750 mL \$285

Godet's Vintage Grande Champagne Cognacs come from one vintage and the fruit for its production is sourced from a single vineyard. The 1979 vintage was characterized by deep, dry cherry and vanilla aromas and flavours. An excellent present or anniversary gift.

GODET VINTAGE COGNAC 1981

35352 700 mL \$285

For the Cognac lover who is about to celebrate a birthday or an anniversary, this fine Cognac from Godet is the perfect present. If you are looking to buy it for yourself, you don't really need a reason. This simply delicious Cognac demands a fine snifter, a roaring fireplace and an evening of contemplation.

MARTELL L'OR

49791 750 mL \$2300

L'Or is a blend of 'eaux-de-vie' predominantly from the Grande Champagne area. Some of the 'eaux de vie' are drawn from the "Le Paradis" cellar, and have been aged in oak barrels for more than 60 years. This superior Cognac displays a stunning, deep golden-copper hue. Its bouquet is very intense, powerful and complex with delicious notes of blackcurrants. On the palate, it is full and dense, with rich concentrated flavours including a hint of hazelnut, and its finish is both intense and generous. The Martell L'Or comes in a beautifully hand-crafted decanter with gold-plated shoulders and closure and is presented, quite fittingly, in a jewel case-like gift box.

PRINCE HUBERT DE POLIGNAC BLUE SUN COGNAC

52696 700 mL \$899

The Blue Sun is the ultimate gift for the collector of premium Cognacs. Produced by the acclaimed Prince Hubert de Polignac house, this is the epitome of sophistication in a bottle. Its fragrant aromas of cinnamon and leather and deep flavours of green fig and exotic fruit are irresistible and its long and profound finish is worthy of its fine breeding. This precious Cognac is housed in a stunning blue crystal decanter, and is accompanied by a unique crystal stopper fashioned in the shape of a radiant blue sun, all of which are nestled in the satin bed of an impressive Royal blue and gold gift box.

PRINCE HUBERT DE POLIGNAC XO ROYAL COGNAC

660381 700 mL \$150

TASTING NOTE: A round, juicy distillate with a lovely autumnal rancio: raisins, nuts, butter, candied lemon and orange peel, cinnamon and nutmeg. A warm glow on the palate - the right cognac for a fall evening by the fire, with Christmas just around the corner. (Axel & Bibiana Behrendt, *Cognac*, 1997)

Grappa

NONINO PICOLIT CRU MONOVITIGNO GRAPPA

11353 500 mL \$175

TASTING NOTE: The Picolit Cru is a colorless, 100 proof (50% alcohol), very elegant grappa. Comes in hand-blown bottles and is very aromatic with a characteristic grappa taste. We added three Blue Mountain medium-roasted coffee beans for an outstanding result. (Manos Angelakis, www.luxuryweb.com, Aug. 2007)