



WINE SPECTATOR'S Advance

A SNEAK PREVIEW OF THE BUYING GUIDE FOR THE **NOV. 15, 2021** ISSUE,
FEATURING ALL OF THE SPECTATOR SELECTIONS

Wine Spectator's Nov. 15 annual California Cabernet report includes 800 wines, with the focus on the exceptional 2018 vintage. Plus, the 40th anniversary of the Wine Experience is celebrated with a reflective piece on the history of the event, a photo gallery of memories over the years, and a section on the charitable efforts of the Wine Spectator Scholarship Foundation. Finally, an illuminating series of interviews with women leaders in California sparkling wine.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

- 97** **ELVIO COGNO** Barolo Ravera Vigna Elena Riserva 2015 • \$140
Mint, menthol and rose hip are the top notes in this elegant Barolo, followed by flavors of cherry, licorice, leather and spice. Slim, yet detailed and harmonious, with a long, warm embrace of mulled red fruit, leather, spice and tobacco elements on the long aftertaste. Best from 2024 through 2045. 335 cases made, 175 cases imported.—*B.S.*
- 97** **MOËT & CHANDON** Brut Rosé Champagne Dom Pérignon 2008 • \$329
An impeccably balanced and graceful sparkling rosé, with a plushly creamy mousse. It's hard to tell where the firm spine of well-honed acidity and the expressive range of pureed raspberry, candied ginger, tangerine and lemon thyme flavors begin or end. A rich hint of smoky toasted brioche plays on the finish. Drink now through 2033.—*A.N.*
- 95** **ALDO CONTERNO** Barolo Bussia 2016 • \$105
A fresh and elegant red, showing aromas and flavors of cut hay, strawberry, cherry, iron, eucalyptus and tar. Lithe and intense, with a long, savory aftertaste. Best from 2024 through 2045. 1,500 cases made, 500 cases imported.—*B.S.*
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COLLECTIBLES

- 99** **KRUG** Brut Champagne 2008 • \$309
There's a supernova of sensation with each sip of this powerful version, starting with the vivid streak of mouthwatering acidity that drives a rich panoply of ripe black currant, mandarin orange peel and grilled nut flavors, accented by hints of candied ginger, briny oyster shell, verbena and ground cardamom. This burns bright from start to finish, yet its fine integration and lovely, raw silk-like mousse pull it all together into a seamless, vibrant package. Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay. Disgorged autumn 2019. Drink now through 2038.—*A.N.*
- 97** **PRODUTTORI DEL BARBARESCO** Barbaresco Asili Riserva 2016 • \$81
This is pure and intense, exuding rose, cherry, strawberry, currant, mineral and wild juniper aromas and flavors, driven by the vibrant structure. The tannins are present yet refined, finishing long and resonant. A contrast of power and finesse. Best from 2025 through 2045. 1,110 cases made, 200 cases imported.—*B.S.*
- 97** **PRODUTTORI DEL BARBARESCO** Barbaresco Rabajà Riserva 2016 • \$81
There's purity and definition to the rose, cherry, strawberry and spice aromas and flavors that are draped on an elegant profile, with a terrific mineral underpinning. Harmony and finesse renders this red approachable now, yet this should improve with a few years of aging. Best from 2025 through 2047. 1,617 cases made, 300 cases imported.—*B.S.*
- 97** **CHÂTEAU DE BEUCASTEL** Châteauneuf-du-Pape Hommage à Jacques Perrin 2017 • \$660
This has an exotic bent at first, as it offers up a lovely gush of crushed plum, boysenberry and blackberry fruit flavors, laced seamlessly with sweet black licorice. Then this gains in depth and grip as it moves through the finish, showing accents of apple wood, leather and Turkish coffee and ending dark and winy in feel. Built for the cellar. Best from 2023 through 2040. 52 cases imported.—*J.M.*
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COLLECTIBLES (continued)

- 97 FALLETTO DI BRUNO GIACOSA** Barbaresco Asili Riserva 2016 • \$565
This is rich and dense, yet also racy, evoking cherry, plum, tar and eucalyptus flavors, with a thread of mineral underscoring it all. Shows fine length and intensity, and there's ample fruit to match the spine of tannins, but needs time. Best from 2025 through 2045. 185 cases imported.—*B.S.*
- 95 HEITZ** Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville Martha's Vineyard 2016 • \$250
This throws off an overt and alluring mint aroma, while sweet bay leaf, violet, damson plum, red tea and steeped *griotte* notes all glide through together, carried by remarkably fine-grained tannins. Ends with a gentle echo of mint on the finish, while a subtle minerality chimes through as well. A stylish and suave wine, with plenty of charm now, but also pristine balance for cellaring. Best from 2022 through 2038. 2,500 cases made.—*J.M.*

SMART BUYS

- 91 55 MALBEC** Cabernet Sauvignon Paraje Altamira Zaha Toko Vineyard 2018 • \$25
This robust red is filled with concentrated dark plum and blackberry flavors that turn creamy and rich-tasting midpalate. Chocolate tart accents fill the lively finish, which is backed by firm acidity and tannins. Drink now through 2025. 1,000 cases made, 1,000 cases imported.—*K.M.*
- 91 CAMBRIA** Chardonnay Santa Maria Valley Katherine's Vineyard 2019 • \$22
Plush and well-spiced, with a creamy texture to the ripe apple and peach pastry flavors. The finish is loaded with buttered toast accents that glide across the palate. Drink now through 2024. 52,000 cases made.—*K.M.*
- 91 DOMAINE BOUSQUET** Malbec Tupungato Valley Gran 2019 • \$25
This suave version features good cut, with vibrant plum tart and dark cherry flavors that turn ripe midpalate. Well-structured, with a cream- and spice-filled finish that has mineral accents. Drink now through 2024. 4,000 cases made, 2,000 cases imported.—*K.M.*
- 91 SALEM WINE CO.** Pinot Noir Eola-Amity Hills 2018 • \$24
This Pinot offers polished, structured cherry, blueberry and black tea flavors that build richness on the finish. Drink now through 2028. 1,571 cases made.—*T.F.*
- 90 TANIA & VINCENT CARÊME** Terre Brûlée Le Blanc Swartland 2020 • \$16
A light- to medium-bodied white that layers rich hints of brioche and pastry cream with lively flavors of Honeycrisp apple, yellow plum, preserved lemon and herb. A finely balanced version, both pleasingly plump yet well-cut and snappy throughout. Chenin Blanc. Drink now through 2025. 6,500 cases made, 7,027 cases imported.—*A.N.*
- 90 FUNCKENHAUSEN** Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza 2018 • \$15 / 1L
This big red is filled with concentrated dark fruit and Asian spice flavors that are well-knit and structured. Creamy midpalate, with robust dark chocolate notes on the finish. Drink now through 2024. 1,500 cases imported.—*K.M.*

BEST VALUES

- 89 FLIGHT OF THE CONDOR** Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza 2019 • \$14
Firm, savory and juicy, with good cut to the dark fruit and spice flavors, followed by dried green herbal notes on the structured finish, with underbrush accents. Drink now through 2023. 5,000 cases imported.—*K.M.*
- 89 KIRKLAND SIGNATURE** Chardonnay Russian River Valley 2019 • \$13
Well-spiced, with creamy accents to the apple tart and ripe pear flavors, which are filled with cooking spice notes. The open-textured finish has plenty of toastiness. Drink now. 9,500 cases made.—*K.M.*
- 89 BODEGAS SALENTEIN** Malbec Uco Valley Killka Collection 2019 • \$15
Structured, with graphite and white pepper notes to the blackberry tart and dark plum flavors. Accents of dried green herbal notes linger on the finish. Drink now through 2023. 82,000 cases made, 6,000 cases imported.—*K.M.*
- 89 NIK WEIS** Riesling Mosel Urban 2020 • \$13
A mixture of peach, apricot and lime flavors is fused to a backbone of brisk acidity in this steely white. Balanced on the tart side, with a mouthwatering finish. Drink now through 2027. 30,000 cases made, 10,000 cases imported.—*B.S.*

BEST VALUES (continued)

88

ALAMOS Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza 2019 • \$13

Juicy, with notes of forest floor and hints of mushroom tart to the dark fruit flavors, followed by chocolate and cream on the finish. Drink now. 40,000 cases imported.—*K.M.*

88

CLINE Viognier North Coast 2020 • \$11

Honeyed stone fruit, peach cobbler and custard flavors are smooth and ripe, with floral details and spicy notes on the juicy finish. Drink now. 11,000 cases made.—*M.W.*

86

BODEGAS BRECA Garnacha Spain de Fuego 2020 • \$11

This plump red offers juicy flavors of dark cherry and crushed red plum that are infused with anise, mocha and wild herb elements, framed by thick tannins. Drink now. 25,000 cases made, 18,000 cases imported.—*G.S.*

ABOUT THE SPECTATOR SELECTIONS

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

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

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

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

Initials at the end of each tasting note indicate the *Wine Spectator* editor who blind-tasted and scored the wine and wrote the review.

The tasters are as follows: Kim Marcus (*K.M.*); Thomas Matthews (*T.M.*); James Molesworth (*J.M.*); Bruce Sanderson (*B.S.*);

Tim Fish (*T.F.*); Alison Napjus (*A.N.*); MaryAnn Worobiec (*M.W.*); Gillian Sciaretta (*G.S.*)