

2007

*Holiday
Catalog*





Bordeaux

Bordeaux produces some of the finest, most age-worthy wines to be found the world over. Unlike in many warmer regions, the weather in Bordeaux clearly stamps its imprimatur on each vintage. Many recent years have had extra-warm growing seasons and their wines have offered up luxurious fruit. While they have been delicious, some lack a bit of depth and complexity, and the sheer wealth of fruit tends to obscure that intangible element of terroir that makes each wine unique and expressive. If you are looking for one of the finest expressions of place to come out of Bordeaux in

recent memory, look no further. The 2002 Chateau Latour is the product of a warm growing season that, combined with intelligent vineyard management, produced very low yields. All of this yielded a powerful wine full of sweet, ripe tannins that will allow for extended aging but will not preclude early enjoyment. This is a classic Latour from a vintage lost between the highly acclaimed 2000 and 2003 vintages – meaning that it represents one of the finest buys on the market today.

Like the 2002 Latour, many Bordeaux from 1999 offer a great opportunity to capitalize on a vintage that gets lost in the hype surrounding others. Dismissed and forgotten in the mad scramble over the profound 2000 vintage, 1999 offers up a great opportunity to experience the character of mature Bordeaux with having to pay for a so-called “great year.” 1999 was faulted on release because, in comparison to the greatest vintages, it lacked the stuffing and structure that allow for long-term aging. This, amazingly, has turned out to be its greatest strength. The world is awash in great Bordeaux, yet very little of it is truly ready to drink. The less age-worthy 1999s have already developed the silky texture of mature Bordeaux, yet they retain the bright fruit of young wines, yielding lovely, elegant Bordeaux: delicious today and priced exceptionally well. We urge you to try some of our favorites.

1981 Ch. Branaire-Ducru
#93213 \$149.99/btl \$1619.89/cs

1989 Ch. Du Tertre
#93234 \$79.99/btl \$863.89/cs

1997 Ch. Ausone
#39816 \$199.99/btl \$2159.78/cs

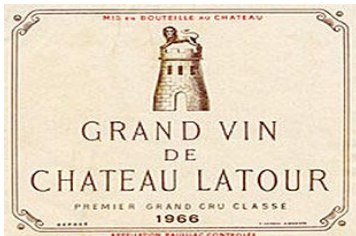
1998 Ch. Camensac
#94241 \$29.99/btl \$323.89/cs

1998 Ch. Deyrem Valentin
#14677 \$44.99/btls \$485.89/cs

1999 Ch. Haut-Marbuzet
#30102 \$69.99/cs \$755.89/cs

1999 Ch. Latour - Big and lush for a 1999, this bottling combines the classic Pauillac elements of blackcurrant, cedar, and spice box.
#91033 \$369.99/btl \$3995.89/cs

1999 Ch. Cheval Blanc – This St.-Émilion blend combines the trademark Merlot notes of mocha and plum with the redder fruits and minty edge of Cabernet Franc, all in a satiny, seamless package
#10305 \$299.99/btl



1999 Ch. La Conseillante - This Merlot-based Pomerol blend has an elegant, mid-weight mouthfeel and is brimming with dark berry fruits and hints of roasted herbs.
#31274 \$99.99/btl \$1079.89/cs

1999 Ch. Trotanoy - This Pomerol captivates with its rare purity and ethereal nuances of cocoa and earth caressing delicate red berry fruit.
#18140 \$59.99/btl \$647.89/cs

2000 Ch. Cos d'Estournel
#91066 \$149.99/btl \$1619.89/cs

2000 Ch. Gruaud Larose
#11874 \$129.99/btl \$1403.89/cs

2000 Ch. Noaillac
#12527 \$18.99/btl \$205.09/cs

2001 Ch. Léoville-Barton
#39826 \$64.99 \$701.89/cs

Offerings



While 1999 offers some exceptional finds in ready-to-drink, classified growth Bordeaux, there are opportunities that allow one to experience the greatest vintages without having to wait forever or break the bank. The finest of the so-called Cru Bourgeois estates consistently produce grand wine at modest prices. These châteaux frequently share turf in the same communes with their more famous brethren, or they sit at the very top of the hierarchy in neighboring villages – but all produce classic Bordeaux. In particular, the “petites châteaux” of the communes of St.-Estèphe and Moulis are producing wines that retain the rugged, structured character of their villages, yet, because of increased proportions of Merlot in the blends, recent releases have offered a more voluptuous mouthfeel with greater depth of fruit and more juicy, immediate appeal.

2002 Ch. Cantenac-Brown
#14650 \$37.99/btl \$410.29/cs

2002 Ch. d'Armailhac
#14651 \$41.99/btl \$453.49/cs

2003 Ch. Ducru Beaucaillou
#35714 \$179.99/btl \$1946.89/cs

2003 Ch. Greysac
#34934 \$16.99/btl \$183.49/cs

2004 Ch. Lanessan
#17878 \$19.99/btl \$239.88/cs

2005 Ch. l'Ermitage Bel-Air
#17719 \$24.99/btl \$269.89/cs

2004 Ch. Poujeaux - Still very youthful, this Moulis shows traits of warmer vintages, as it offers up a mouthful of rich matte plum fruit.
#30013 \$29.99/btl \$323.89/cs

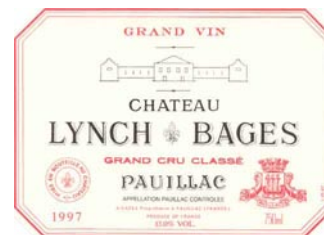
2004 Ch. Labegorce – Margaux produces the most aromatic wines in Bordeaux, and this Cabernet Sauvignon-based blend offers up a smoky bouquet with classic scents of violets and dark fruits that offer early appeal.
#17877 \$34.99/btl \$377.89/cs

2004 Ch. de Pez - With fine balance and ample tannins and acidity, this wine harkens back to the St.-Estèphes of years past, yet the structure is wrapped in perfumy fruit redolent of plums with hints of menthol and minerals.
#33305 \$29.99/btl \$323.89/cs

2000 Ch. Fourcas-Hosten – Coming from Listrac, next to Moulis, this wine offers a rich mouthful of traditionally styled Bordeaux. It is full of gamey flavors of leather and earth around a core of dark cassis notes.
#30494 \$25.99 /btl \$280.69/cs

2003 Patache d'Aux - This Médoc has the telltale richness of the 2003 vintage with its chewy cassis fruit which wears its nuanced notes of oaky spice well. A splendid offering from one of our favorite smaller châteaux.
#17823 \$21.99/btl \$237.49/cs

Cellar Treasures



1978 Ch. Lynch-Bages - A lovely bottle of aged Bordeaux exhibiting the classic tertiary notes of leather, mushroom and tobacco in a muscular style rarely encountered today.
#30001 \$199.99/btl

1982 Ch. Lagrange - Coming from one of the most profound vintages of the past 50 years, this wine exhibits deep notes of earth and olive but retains its flamboyant red berry fruit and exquisite balance. At its peak right now.
#30184 \$199.99/btl

1985 Ch. Prieuré-Lichine - Combining the elegance of Margaux with the delicate nature of the 1985, this wine is perfumed and gentle, rich in notes of tobacco and cherry with a seductive mouthfeel that caresses the palate.
#16185 \$99.99/btl

1988 Ch. Léoville-Poyferré - Coming from one of the last “old school” vintages, this bottle is a reminder of how Bordeaux was once done. Structured yet elegant, with an uncanny balance of savory and fruity accented by sweet notes of vanillin and oak spice. A classic.
#30105 \$119.99/btl



Barolo

Barolo producer Giacomo Conterno has remained a constant for nearly one hundred years. Now in the able hands of Roberto Conterno, this cantina continues to produce only two Baroli: the “Normale” bottling from the Cascina Francia monopole, and the iconic Monfortino Riserva. Produced since 1974 from the family-owned Cascina Francia vineyard, both bottlings embody the essence of traditional Barolo. The colors tend to be pale and imbued with shades of bronze and copper. The explosive aromatics are layered and complex, with typical notes of macerated cherries, menthol, black minerals, and salty, herby nuances. On the palate the wines are always endowed with copious amounts of alcohol supported by strong veins of acidity and tannin that require extended time to tame. But in the end, a mature bottle of Giacomo Conterno Barolo is the benchmark by which all Baroli may be judged.

1998 Monfortino Riserva
#14985 \$264.99/btl \$2861.89/cs
1999 Monfortino Riserva
#17081 \$324.99/btl \$3899.88/cs

While the Monfortino Riserva bottling remains one of the finest expressions of Barolo it is both expensive and requires extended cellaring to reveal its full potential. Giacomo Conterno has always given the same care and attention to his Normale bottling which has few peers in the world of aged Barolo. We are always on the lookout for properly stored examples of the finest vintages and are happy to be able to offer several examples of perfectly mature Barolo that can give insight into the Monfortino style while still being within the realm of affordability. These wines possess all the complexity and depth of their Riserva counterparts, but lack some of their power and ageability. While Monfortini drink well past the half-century mark, the regular bottlings peak at about age 25 and remain at their expressive plateau for about another 20 years. Also available now is our final allocation of the recently released vintages of Cascina Francia.

1971 Barale
#16173 \$119.99/btl
1974 Francesco Rinaldi
#16174 \$109.99/btl
1993 Ciabot Mentin Genestra, Clerico Domenico
#16177 \$119.99/btl \$1295.89/cs
1993 A. Conterno Colonnello
#44724 \$119.99/btl \$1295.89/cs
1999 G. Mascarello Monprivato
#13386 \$74.99/btl \$809.89/cs
2000 Abbona Terla Revera
#17758 \$44.99/btl \$485.89/cs
1958 G. Conterno Barolo
#17248 \$394.99/btl
1961 G. Conterno Barolo
#17243 \$324.99/btl
1964 G. Conterno Barolo
#17242 \$324.99/btl
1967 G. Conterno Barolo
#17240 \$247.99/btl
1970 G. Conterno Barolo
#16150 \$299.99/btl
1999 G. Conterno Cascina Francia
#15173 \$98.99/btl \$1069.09/cs
2000 G. Conterno Cascina Francia
#15137 \$93.99/btl \$1015.09/cs
2001 G. Conterno Cascina Francia
#14432 \$84.99/btl \$917.89/cs



2001 Vietti
Brunate
#14265 \$98.99/btl \$1069.10/cs
Rocche
#14264 \$98.99/btl \$1069.10/cs

Lazzarito – It is impossible to pigeon-hole the Baroli from Vietti, as each one receives a distinct and unique upbringing. This bottling from the commune of Serralunga, which is famed for powerful, austere wines, sees some time in new barriques. The intensity of the fruit provides ample material to balance the subtle perfume of the new oak.
14266 \$98.99/btl \$1069.10/cs

2001 Giuseppe Rinaldi
Brunate Le Coste
#15123 \$98.99/btl \$1069.09/cs
Cannubi
#15110 \$98.99/btl \$1069.09/cs

2001 Brovia
Garblet Sue
#16252 \$64.99/btl 701.89/cs
Rocche
#16253 \$64.99/btl \$701.89/cs

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Selection

2001 Barolo

After an unprecedented string of fine vintages running from 1995 through 2001, the wines of Barolo have achieved a prominence and popularity that has eluded them for decades. Generally produced in very small quantities, individual bottlings typically range from several hundred to several thousand cases. Blessed with a brawny nature that requires time to relax and tame, it has taken this series of great vintages and the kinder, gentler nature of some warmer years to convert an unconvinced public into true believers. While many fine Baroli were produced between 2002 and 2004, each vintage had major challenges and the remaining stocks of 2001 offer the consumer a far superior product at prices that are equal to or even lower than the vintages that followed.

2001 Burlotto
Monvigliero
#17859 \$41.99/btl \$453.49/cs
Cannubi
#17860 \$54.99/btl \$593.89/cs

2001 Fratelli Alessandria
#17340 \$37.99/btl \$410.29/cs

2001 Giacosa
Rocche Riserva
#17750 \$324.99/btl \$3509.89/cs

2001 Sandrone
Cannubi Boschis
#48154 \$159.99/btl

2001 Bartolo Mascarello – The last of the Mohicans, Bartolo sadly passed away in 2004 yet his eponymous cantina continues its traditional ways under the watchful eye of his daughter Maria Theresa. An anomaly today, this Barolo – the only one produced at Cantina Mascarello – is a blend of vineyard sites, as opposed to the current fashion of single-cru bottlings.
#16123 \$86.99/btl \$939.49/cs

2001 Giuseppe Mascarello
Santo Stefano di Perno – This single-vineyard bottling is actually produced by the current proprietor Mauro Mascarello (not to be confused with Bartolo). It is a unique expression of Nebbiolo that shows a cooler, herb-tinged, elegant side of Barolo.
#15257 \$64.99/btl \$701.89/cs

2001 Massolino Parafada – This wine strikes quite a different chord, with toasty oak notes complementing the classic cherry and menthol fruit. This wine packs a punch, and deserves a long sleep to allow all of its structural elements to integrate.
#13696 \$74.99/btl \$809.89/cs



Much like the wines of Conterno, the Baroli from the famed house of Giacomo Borgogno serve as a benchmark for what was achieved in the past century, and endure as a testament to the traditional style of Barolo. These two venerable houses have vied for greatness and continued to serve as beacons of traditional winemaking in the postwar era, as Piemonte underwent a sea change of winemaking styles that has just begun to ebb. These rare gems are truly the last of their kind, sourced from dwindling stocks in cold European cellars.

1958 G. Borgogno Riserva
– From one of the finest, most powerful vintages of the last century. A benchmark.
#17236 \$236.99/btl

1964 G. Borgogno Riserva –
A wonderfully Burgundian expression of Nebbiolo with a delicate, floral personality.
#17239 \$199.99/btl

1974 G. Borgogno Riserva –
Austere and stern in its youth, this has developed a lovely autumnal character.
#13955 \$159.99/btl

1989 G. Borgogno Riserva
The current release.
#13953 \$134.99/btl \$1457.89/cs

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Sauvignon

When we think of Sauvignon Blanc, two things usually jump to mind. The first is the fact that Sauvignon Blanc produces some of the prettiest, most refreshing, most food-friendly whites around. The second is that Sauvignon Blanc is produced in most of the world's major wine-producing countries, and in each region produces unique and compelling wines.

France is the home of Sauvignon Blanc and continues to produce some of the most distinctive examples, particularly those hailing from the Loire valley. These brisk, well-mineraled wines feature crisp fruit built upon a great frame of ripe, mouthwatering acidity. They are, of course, the perfect match for the tang of young goat cheese and work especially well as apéritif wines.

Loire Valley

2004 Chavignol Sancerre “Les Montes Damnés,” Pascal Cotat

Oh, to have the space to relay the story of the Cotat brothers to you. For now, this will have to suffice: these are as idiosyncratic as wine can get. Late-harvested fruit, barrel-fermented (in old neutral wood, of course) using natural yeasts, neither fined nor filtered. The results? You must try for yourself to believe the piercing limes and apples fruit, suspended over wet stones. All that Sancerre should be.

#13945 \$38.99/btl \$421.09/cs

2004 Chavignol Sancerre
“La Grande Côte,” Pascal Cotat
#13944 \$38.99/bt \$421.09/cs



2004 Blanc Pouilly de Fumé
Dider Dagueneau
#15913 \$48.99/btl \$529.09/cs

2005 Sancerre
“Mélodie de Vieilles Vignes,” Vincent Gaudry
#17694 \$21.99 \$237.49/cs



New Zealand

While Sauvignon Blanc is, for good reason, associated with the Loire most of the time, we cannot deny the grand appeal of the flamboyant offerings coming from (far) south of the (French) border.

New Zealand's burgeoning wine industry was given a huge shot in the arm when the world discovered these intensely grassy, tropical fruit-scented wines, with their mouth-filling textures that play bass to the Loire's treble. Better suited to rich seafood preparations, these wines have firmly established themselves as major players in the world of Sauvignon Blanc.

2006 Cloudy Bay – The granddaddy of them all: always imitated, never equaled, Cloudy Bay continues as benchmark Sauv Blanc, with bright gooseberry, passion fruit and lychee flavors over notes of mown grass and mineral, with exemplary depth and breadth.

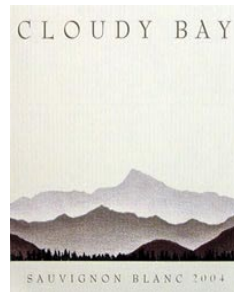
#53214 \$26.99/btl \$291.49/cs

2005 Craggy Range – Exhibiting classic tropical fruit notes in both the mouth and nose, this fine bottling offers a more restrained style of Sauvignon Blanc with subtle notes of mineral and grass on a round, medium-bodied frame.

#00120 \$21.99/btl \$237.49/cs

2006 Whitehaven – A cool-climate version of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc with white cranberry and crisp citrus notes rounding out the classic aromatics. Light and delicate in the mouth with excellent balance and refreshing acidity.

#14855 \$16.99/btl \$183.49/cs



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Blanc

South Africa

South Africa is roaring back to its well-deserved place of reverence as one of the greatest wine-producing regions on earth. The unique combination of moderate coastal climates and unusually complex soil compositions gives it raw materials that are unmatched the world over.

The new generation of winemakers was unencumbered by tradition, and benefited from decades of advances in the world of wine. Once they got their hands on the incredible raw material that South Africa offered, they quickly positioned the nascent South African wine industry as a world leader.

The remarkable wines of South Africa combine the complexity and delicacy of the finest Old World wines with the sweet and rich fruit of the New World. The result is a unique marriage of the old and the new, in a synthesis that is utterly compelling.



2005 Constantia Glen - This is the maiden vintage of the Constantia Glen, made by the renowned winemaker of Steenberg. The grapes are grown on the mountainous slopes of Constantia, yielding a balanced and crisp Sauvignon Blanc.
#17277 \$29.99/btl \$323.89/cs

2006 Mulderbosch - A world-class Sauvignon Blanc. It's very crisp, with layers of delicious ripe melon and mineral flavors. Serve with a simple fish dish to let this beautiful wine shine.
#77184 \$19.99/btl \$215.90/cs

2004 Delaire - Stellenbosch has long produced South Africa's most esteemed Sauvignon Blancs: full of lemon, grassiness, and refreshing acidity, this wine loves shellfish dishes.
#88802 \$17.99/btl \$194.29/cs

2005 Buitenverwachting - Made from some plantings over 80 years old, with a mix of younger vines. On the palate, aromas of crisp fresh flowers, peppers and minerals appear.
#14547 \$14.99/btl \$161.89/cs

California

Any serious discussion of Sauvignon Blanc has to include some of the world-class examples produced right here in the States.

2004 Chalk Hill - A rich, round and well-oaked style of Sauvignon Blanc. Aromas of tropical and stone fruits enhance the minerality that shines through from the soil in which it is grown.
#65224 \$34.99/btl \$377.89/cs

2005 Nalle Hopkins Ranch - Nalle has produced this creamy white wine by blending Sauvignon Blanc with a touch of Semillon and Chardonnay. Light grassy and mineral notes on the nose, with a hint of underripe peaches; zesty acidity in the mouth stays clean through the mid-palate, with lovely ripe Meyer lemon on the long finish.
#17213 \$24.99/btl \$269.89/cs

2005 Silverado Miller Ranch – Silverado's family-owned estate vineyards are in Napa's Stags Leap area. Notes of grapefruit, fresh green apple, and tangerine linger on the palate. A balanced acidity and a long finish make this a wine to keep coming back to.
#18160 \$17.99/btl \$194.29/cs

Other Favorites

2004 Dipoli Voglar - This Sauvignon Blanc is made from vines planted at high elevations in Northern Italy on chalk-based soils. This exposure shines through in this wine's crisp acidity and mineral-driven citrus and yellow fruits.
#17992 \$31.99/btl \$345.49/cs

2005 Weinert Carrascal There's an exotic edge to this bottling that makes it not quite typical for a Mendoza wine. Maybe it's the influence of the European winemaker. This endearing white is made from Sauvignon Blanc, and is full of pears, juicy acidity and a touch of vanilla bean. A great white-meat wine.
#17346 \$12.99/btl \$140.29/c

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López de Heredia

The wines of Spain have undergone a transformation over the last two decades that has simultaneously revitalized and diversified the selection offered to the consumer in the U.S. While this is certainly a positive development, many of the newer wines arriving in the marketplace are modern creations, stressing very ripe fruit married to toasty French oak (as opposed to the traditionally favored American oak). A few producers continue to produce traditional wines with beguiling balance and a flavor profile that is uniquely Iberian.

López de Heredia has an unparalleled track record, and through the unique and extensive reissuing of library release bottlings, this estate offers the consumer the rare experience of sampling mature bottlings of Spain’s greatest Riojas that have benefited from ideal cellaring. The red Gran Reserva bottlings spend up to nine years aging in oak vessels before being bottled. Surprisingly, this also holds true for the whites and rosés, which are as intriguingly complex as any wine being produced and offer exceptional food pairing possibilities. At the same time, they represent an unparalleled wine experience for the amateur. Any of these would be a great introduction to the house style.

While choosing between López de Heredia’s two single-vineyard bottlings can be challenging, the rule of thumb is that if you like Burgundy, you may prefer the Bosconia, with its higher acidity and lower alcohol. This is due to the vineyard’s higher elevation and a smaller percentage of Garnacha in the blend. The Tondonia tends to be riper and more opulent, but has a shorter aging curve. Whichever bottling you choose, you’ll get a superlative drinking experience, a look at how things were once done, and, with any luck, a look at how they will continue to be done in little oases of tradition like the Bodega of López de Heredia.

Viña Bosconia Gran Reserva

1981- So young, yet so complex, with a stunning array of floral, spice and mineral notes supporting slightly roasted red fruits.

#55589 \$79.99/btl

1978 – Known for its well-balanced and fruit-driven character, this wine has amazing depth, with notes of earth, mushroom and black cherry.

#17685 \$114.99/btl

1970 – Showing the remarkable integration that can come with age, this has satiny-textured red fruits accented with notes of balsam, licorice and mineral.

#55588 \$199.99/btl

Viña Tondonia Gran Reserva

1978 – Defined by smoky, earthy complexity, this wine has bright acidity and leather-scented cherry fruit.

#17678 \$109.99/btl

1976 – A large-scale wine, with a powerful core of dark fruits accented with cocoa, orange oil and caramel. Unusually long and fine in the mouth with exceptional aging potential.

#55590 \$114.99/btl

1968 - Light and delicate in its age, but exceptionally complex and layered: earth, oak and tobacco support the berry fruit.

#55595 \$249.99/btl

Viña Tondonia Blanco Reserva

1989 – Delicate and almost tender with the classic nut, toast, and steely fruit notes of young white Tondonia.

#14983 \$36.99/btl

Viña Tondonia Blanco Gran Reserva

1981 – Similar to the 1989, adding rich and earthy apricot and citrus fruit to the classic core notes.

#55584 \$81.99/btl

1964 – Fully mature and revealing all of its dried citrus and pit fruit notes in a blaze of glory, with lingering roasted nuts and honey.

#55581 \$299.99/btl

1999 Viña Bosconia Reserva

Shows fascinating nuances of strawberry, blood orange, pomegranate, coconut and exotic spices. Aged for three years in American oak.

#14147 \$31.99/btl

1996 Gravonia Blanco

The current vintage of López de Heredia’s “young” white featuring toffee and dried fruits in the classic house style.

#11424 \$22.99/btl

1997 Viña Tondonia Rosado

A mesmerizing, ever-changing nose of orange, cinnamon and tobacco, with complex flavors of apricot, pomegranate, cinnamon and butterscotch.

#10562 \$22.99/btl

Classic

Rioja



While López de Heredia may be regarded as the archetype of traditional Rioja, many other producers offer up exceptional products that range from fully traditional, with extended barrel aging regimens, to fully modern, with robust ripe fruit emphasized over the nuance that comes with extended aging. The uniquely Riojana practice of offering a range of wines that span a broad age spectrum allows wine drinkers to find the combination of fruit and aged complexity that best suits them, making Rioja a particularly consumer-friendly wine region. It pays to get to know Rioja, for its broad appeal and exceptional wine values.

La Rioja Alta, CVNE, and Bodegas Bujanda’s Conde de Valdemar are three producers that have adapted their style somewhat over the years to offer a range of wines that blur the stylistic line between traditional and modern. Each of these three venerable firms, all of which were founded in the latter half of the 19th century, offers a rare opportunity to contrast and compare their old classics – still occasionally released – with their more modern counterparts.

La Rioja Alta

2000 Viña Alberdi – Mostly Tempranillo with a hint of Mazuelo. This is very traditional in style, exhibiting classic roasted coffee bean, plum, and leathery notes.

#50004 \$17.99/btl

Gran Reserva 904 - This Gran Reserva bottling is only produced in the finest vintages and commemorates the 1904 acquisition of the Bodegas Ardanza estate by La Rioja Alta, giving them access to what many consider some of the finest vineyards in the Rioja Alta region. Always an exceptional expression of traditional Rioja.

1995 #11558 \$101.99/(1.5L)

1982 #51084 \$184.99

CVNE

2004 Viña Real Crianza – A true Rioja, characterized by bright cherry flavors, balanced acidity, and notes of vanilla on the finish.

#50242 \$15.99/btl

1996 Viña Real Gran Reserva – Shows a floral nose, with flavors of coffee foam and plum. This could age for many years to come.

#58002 \$44.99/btl

2001 Viña Real Pagos - This single-vineyard bottling combines classic Rioja cherry and plum fruit with the vanilla and spice notes imparted by aging in new French barriques.

#14549 \$99.99/btl

Conde de Valdemar

2003 Crianza - Embodying a more modern ethos, this youthful expression of Tempranillo is bursting with bold berry fruit.

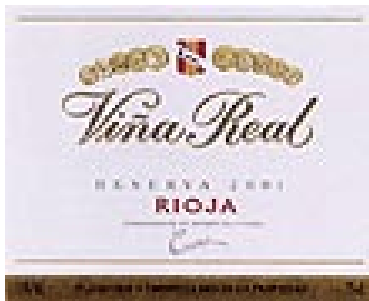
#50754 \$10.99/btl

2001 Reserva - Astonishing complexity and elegance at this price. Medium-bodied and dry, this has subtle hints of cranberry, earth, and spice.

#51004 \$16.99/btl

1997 Gran Reserva - Bright, focused cherry fruit notes lead to a mid-palate that has gained the meaty, spiced notes that can come with careful aging. Velvety and impeccably well balanced.

#50974 \$26.99/btl





Iberian

Ribera del Duero lies just to the southwest of Rioja. Though smaller in size, Ribera del Duero produces some of Spain's most famous and sought-after wines. Its high-altitude vineyards are blessed with warm days and cool nights, and are relatively free of the strict regulations like those found in Rioja. This has fostered a spirit of innovation that keeps Ribera del Duero at the forefront of Spanish winemaking. The wines are usually based on the Tempranillo variety, but they tend to be more powerful than Rioja wines.

Vega Sicilia

Created in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Vega Sicilia's Unico has stood the test of time and continues to be one of the world's handful of benchmark wines. Pioneering the inclusion of a touch of Cabernet Sauvignon in the blend while continuing the tradition of extensive barrel aging, this wine is a singular example of what Ribera del Duero is all about.

1995 Unico	
#17184	\$329.99/btl
1996 Unico	
#18096	\$374.99/btl

Much like Ribera del Duero in the past, Priorat is dominated by progressive young vintners drawn to the exceptional old-vine vineyards planted on highly coveted hillsides throughout this remote province. In just over two decades, the region has challenged the supremacy of Rioja and Ribera del Duero with wines of extraordinary power, depth, and complexity.

2003 Clos Martinet - Old-vine Cariñena and Garnacha dominate this age-worthy blend, which has peppery espresso and graphite aromas adding complexity to the dark fruits. #15093 \$74.99/btl

2004 Mas Doix, Salanques - Planted in extremely mineral-rich soils, this blend of Garnacha and Cariñena offers lovely blackberry fruit contrasting with striking minerality. #17360 \$41.99/btl

2004 Galena - Coming from a high-altitude vineyard, this blend of mostly Cariñena and Garnacha is very approachable, with soft tannins and notes of dark chocolate and currants. #18108 \$28.99/btl

2005 Conreria d'Scala Dei - This white does not see any barrel aging, yet it is rich, complex, and full of minerality, with flavors of baked orchard fruits and a touch of anise. #14398 \$28.99/btl

Peninsula

Virtually unknown just a few short years ago, regions such as Montsant, Costa Brava, and Sardon de Duero are now on the cutting edge of Spanish wine. They represent a terrific opportunity for enthusiasts to experience the next wave of Spanish innovation. Many of the wines from these regions are enlightened classics, benefiting from the advances of the past few decades while retaining the classic qualities that allowed them to survive virtually unaltered for years. Others are entirely modern, using the grapes that have thrived in these regions but creating a new frame of reference within which they may be judged. They are all, however, more than deserving of the attention of enthusiasts and connoisseurs.

2005 Can Blau - This blend from Montsant is characterized by plush, black, brambly fruit and sharp mineral notes that recall the best of Priorat. Big and bold, this is clearly a product of the modern era, yet it never comes across as ponderous or overdone. #15116 \$16.99/btl

2003 Capçanes Cabrida – From 80- to 100-year-old Grenache vines, this Montsant is packed with dark plum, bittersweet chocolate, and orange peel. It shows incredible freshness and balance, as well as an irresistible velvet texture. #14148 \$62.99/btl

Danish winemaker Peter Sisseck caused a worldwide sensation in 1995 when he released Pingus. Coming from the oldest vines in the Ribera de Duero region, Pingus became an instant and nearly unattainable classic. Building on his initial success, Peter used the same formula in 2002 to produce Quinta Sardonía, destined to join the ranks of Spain's finest. Using some of the finest fruit from the Sardon de Duero, he blends Tinto Fino (Tempranillo) with Bordeaux varieties to produce a wine layered with rich blackberry and blueberry fruit, bright acidity, and smoky, cigar-box aromatics that are sure to please.

2003 Quinta Sardonía
#17645 \$62.99

2004 Quinta Sardonía
#15341 \$62.99

While the Iberian Peninsula is dominated by Spain, wine drinkers ignore Portugal at their own peril. One of the indisputable kings of dessert wine production, benefiting from centuries of winemaking experience, Portugal is poised to challenge the dominance of Spain with its own brand of homegrown ingenuity and indigenous grape varieties. Scores of uniquely Portuguese wines combine powerfully endowed grapes with climate and soil in a way that recalls the greatest wines of the past.

2001 Grantom Tinto Reserva - Mostly Cabernet Sauvignon blended with two indigenous Portuguese varieties: Touriga Nacional and Touriga Franca. Well-integrated notes of cassis, tobacco, redcurrant and vanilla. #17446 \$36.98

2001 Luis Pato Vinha Pan - Made entirely from the Baga grape variety, grown on vines whose chalk-based soils add an unmistakable mineral edge to this well-structured wine. Full of dark, roasted fruits and showing intense concentration on the palate. #18217 \$28.99

2001 Evel Grand Eschola - A blend of Tempranillo and Touriga Nacional. Made in a more modern style, this is clean and richly extracted, with notes of berries and spice in a soft, round package. #16042 \$24.99

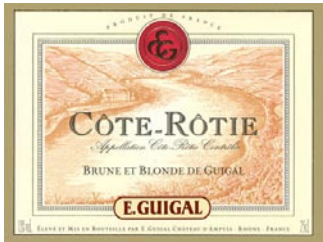




Château d’Ampuis

Acquired only in 1995 by the Guigal family, this recent addition to their Côte-Rôtie lineup has emerged as an instant classic with its traditional blend of 95% Syrah and 5% Viognier, aged with intelligent élevage in new oak. A worthy sibling to the famous “La-La” bottlings.

2001 (#10019)	\$173.99/btl
1997 (#26001)	\$109.99/btl
1996 (#26002)	\$179.99/btl
1995 (#26003)	\$119.99/btl



Guigal

Through decades of hard work and commitment to excellence, the Guigal family has become synonymous with great Rhône Valley wines. While they produce wines from a staggering array of vineyards across this broad region, they are best known for their incredible single-vineyard Côte-Rôties. These wines deserve all the accolades they have received: the magic of Guigal should be missed. With the d’Ampuis bottling comes a wine that reaches very close to the heights of the famed “La-Las,” and is made in the same modern, voluptuous style.

2003 La Landonne – This 100% Syrah cuvée boasts the rich, caressingly cashmere texture that is the trademark of this vintage. Powerful, tannic, and sauvage, this is a wine for the ages.
#17826 \$799.99/btl

2003 La Turque – Just 7% Viognier in the blend adds an intriguing dimension to the nose, balancing the dark notes of coffee and cocoa that are so typical of this vintage. Bold black cherry fruit seeps through the powerful structure and begs for additional time in the cellar so that it can fully reveal itself.
#17828 \$799.99/btl

2003 La Mouline – The presence of 11% Viognier here brightens the fruit, bringing it to the super-ripe end of the red fruits spectrum. Great raspberry fruit balances out the intensely smoky, bacony character that defines superior Syrah.
#17827 \$799.99/btl

Rostaing

If anyone can be considered a true Côte-Rôtie specialist, it is the inimitable René Rostaing. A relative newcomer to the region, he started out there in 1971, but quickly expanded his holdings to include some of the most highly prized old-vine plots in Côte-Rôtie. In particular, his holdings in La Landonne, consisting of vines averaging over 50 years old, are second to none. His Landonne is consistently a star of the vintage, with its deep earthy core and roasted herbs redolent of the vines’ hillside home. Eschewing excessive new oak, Rostaing’s wines demand some time in the bottle, but when aged show the blazing purity of Syrah in all its rich, black-fruited, olive-scented glory. The Côte Blond bottling has a more gentle character derived from the Viognier that is planted along with the ancient Syrah vines. The Cuvée Classique is Rene’s entry-level offering, ready to go over the midterm and filled with all the classic Côte-Rôtie notes (though in a slightly lower register). This bottle offers a precious glimpse of the style of this gifted producer.

2004 La Landonne #16332	\$119.99/btl	2004 Côte Blond #16329	\$99.99/btl
2001 La Landonne #14759	\$89.99/btl	2004 Cuvée Classique #16330	\$49.99/btl
		2001 Cuvée Classique #14758	\$59.99/btl

Rhône

Valley



St.-Joseph

While Côte-Rôtie produces the most elegant and perfumed examples of Syrah in the Rhône, many neighboring hillsides yield equally compelling wines. From the granite and gravel slopes of Hermitage and Cornas come more masculine expressions of Syrah: rich in sanguine minerality, peppery spice, and dark black fruits. St.-Joseph shares these steep granite slopes, producing more approachable versions of these tar- and mineral-scented wines that satisfy the urge for that deep blackberry Syrah fruit, yet need less time to mature.

2001 St.-Joseph “Serines” Cuilleron – Drinking well now and within the next few years, this is a full-bodied Syrah with notes of tar and smoke, blackberry fruit, and silky-textured tannins.
#23116 \$54.99/btl

2004 St.-Joseph J.L. Chave – Renowned for his Hermitage, J.L. Chave has turned his attention to St.-Joseph and now produces one of the finest versions. A very traditional, classic St.-Joseph, this is big and full-bodied with a great dose of game, and an earthy quality to the rich berried fruit.
#20016 \$51.99/btl

2003 St.-Joseph “Les Jouvencelles,” Pierre Finon – We’ll be honest about the earthy and gamey aromas of this hearty red wine. They are off-putting for those who aren’t used to traditionally styled wines from the Northern Rhône. For those who know and love that style, however, this wine is nothing short of blissful.
#15180 \$18.99/btl

Beaucastel

No other Châteauneuf estate is as highly regarded as Beaucastel. The Perrin brothers consistently produce exceptional wines that show the classic traits of the region, but even beyond that, they offer unparalleled expressions of vintage. These wines tend towards the structured, burly end of the spectrum, but have no equal in terms of complexity or depth.

1999 - Coming from a cooler vintage, this wine expresses the chewy cherry character of ripe Grenache, with less of the meaty, smoky aspect that one typically finds in riper vintages. Highly structured, yet showing great integration, this is just entering maturity.
#14789 \$84.99/btl

2001 - Notes of dark fruit, black pepper, and truffles mingle for an intense experience on the dense, layered mid-palate. Packed with fruit, yet still somewhat reticent today, this will join the ranks of benchmark Beaucastels in a few years.
#26414 \$89.99/btl

2004 - Incredibly rich, with tremendous spice, licorice, blackberry, and black pepper flavors on the palate, this full-bodied wine has velvety-smooth tannins and great structure.
#18023 \$94.99/btl



Tuscan

Sassicaia

When one looks to the origins of the Super Tusan phenomenon in Italy, one is inevitably drawn to the Bolgheri estate of Sassicaia. Their eponymous wine was produced by the estate’s patron to satisfy his desire for an exceptional Tuscan wine that stood apart from the lighter, stringently regulated wines that dominated the region.

2001 - This was a year of perfect proportions. The best years for Sassicaia combine sweet black fruits with all the violet and mint nuances that perfectly ripe Cabernet Franc can add, with nuanced spice from barrel aging. This bottle is showing impeccable balance, and has decades of positive improvement ahead of it.

#48044 \$299.99/btl

When it was discovered that the Bordeaux variety Cabernet Sauvignon grew well in the warm maritime climate of Tuscany, it seemed natural to make it the basis for this revolutionary wine. Later, 15% of Cabernet Franc was added to the vineyard, creating an added dimension in the final wine. Produced only for in-house consumption until 1968, Sassicaia has in the intervening years become one of the world’s benchmark Cabernets and a shining example of the Tuscan urge toward innovation and excellence. While approachable in its youth, Sassicaia truly rewards patient cellaring and can hold it own against the finest Bordeaux.

1997 - A legend in the making. 1997 was an excellent vintage in Tuscany and Sassicaia took full advantage of the warm growing season to produce this flamboyant wine. Redolent of warm berries and savory baking spices, it is decadent in the mouth with a soft structure and a plush mouthfeel.

#16448 \$424.99/btl

1992 - Coming from a cooler vintage, this Sassicaia exhibits classic Cabernet Sauvignon notes on the nose: green herbs and juicy cassis fruit. It is lean and focused in the mouth, with a rich, savory, earthy core.

#16445 \$199.99/btl

While varietal Cabernet Sauvignon has developed a cult following in Tuscany, one of the grape’s highest callings is to be an ingredient in red blends. To the vibrant, floral-scented wines produced from Tuscany’s famous Sangiovese grape, Cabernet Sauvignon adds power, depth and complexity.

2001 Querciabella Camartina – This blend epitomizes the Tuscan winemaking style: potent, yet preserving a sense of balance and finesse. Wild-edged fruit floats over a rich, elegant structure.

#17106 \$81.99/btl

2000 Capezzana Ghiaie Della Furba - Dark and mysterious, with a smoky, meaty character in a velvety package. It retains the dusty tannins and ripe acidity that are so typical of Sangiovese.

#11889 \$44.99

2001 Badia di Morrona N’Antia - This expressive bottling captures the powerful essence of its vintage with dark fruits and black olive notes. This is a smooth and approachable wine with just the right contrasting oak tones.

#14936 \$27.99/btl

2004 Ciacci Piccolomini Ateo – A wine of marvelous complexity, with a seamless character that melds the bright fruit of Sangiovese with the dark, brooding notes of perfectly ripe Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot.

#17971 \$22.99/btl

Supplies of featured wines are limited. Vintages and prices subject to change without notice. For up-to-date pricing information, call Astor at (212) 674-7500 or visit www.astorwines.com. Not responsible for typographical errors.

Superstars

Montevertine

While Tuscany has realized great benefits from the regional revolution that introduced exotic foreign grape varieties, there is much to be said for the stalwart winemakers who have persevered with traditional blends relying on the homegrown Sangiovese grape. No producer has captured the essence of the grape and the spirit of the region more than the Montevertine estate. More than 40 years ago, in a departure from the status quo, Sergio Manetti chose to bottle his wines under proprietary names, since it had become obvious to him that the DOC regulations being implemented at the time were more about preserving businesses than producing exceptional wines.

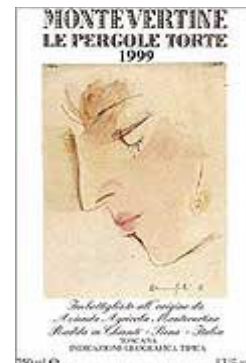
Since then, these elegant, layered, and thoroughly traditional wines have continued to confound the experts with their beguiling personalities – derived not from the darling grape du jour but rather from the local workhorse varieties more commonly associated with Chianti.

1995 Il Sodaccio – A blend of 90% Sangiovese and 10% Canaiolo that has achieved a lilting texture with age, yet preserves vibrant notes of black cherries and blackberries at its core. Complex, elegant, classic Montevertine. A limited number of magnums are also available.

#16334 \$59.99/Btl

1998 Le Pergole Torte – Montevertine’s flagship 100% Sangiovese bottling never fails to deliver the essence of this fine grape, with its gentle notes of violets and almond skins on the nose and deep earthy berry fruit supported by zesty acidity. This vintage rendered particularly dark and opulent juice, and this has just entered its peak drinking window.

#10546 \$54.99/btl



2002 Rosso di Toscana – Like many quality-minded producers, Montevertine practices strict declassification in lesser vintages. While 2002 was problematic, and thus no proprietary wines were produced, it was a successful year for lighter, transparently styled Sangiovese. This wine reveals its sense of place as its gentle raspberry fruit is buttressed by lovely mineral notes and lithe, ripe tannins.

#17628 \$32.99

2005 Pian di Ciampolo - This blend, Sangiovese with a couple of dollops of Colorino and Canaiolo, is unusually dark and rugged. perfect with rustic Tuscan cuisine.

#12229 \$21.99/btl

San Guisto a Rentenanno’s Percarlo – One of the most successful Tuscan wines of every vintage. This powerful Sangiovese flexes its sinewy muscles with a rich mouthfeel married to lush fruit, studded with notes of toasty oak.

2003 Percarlo
(#14648) \$69.99/btl

Fattoria di Rodano has enjoyed decades of success with their Monna Claudia blend, 50% Sangiovese and 50% Cabernet Sauvignon. These wines represent a synthesis of styles, preserving the delicacy of traditional Tuscan wine while embracing the power and depth that the modernists have achieved.

1988 (#14835) \$54.99/btl 1995 (#14837) \$46.99/btl
1990 (#14836) \$49.99/btl 1996 (#14839) \$44.99/btl

1988 “Fabrizio Bianchi” Monsanto – Monsanto is renowned as one of the finest producers of Chianti. Yet few realize that as early as 1974 they were also quietly producing a stunning 100% Sangiovese, aged in new French barriques. The 1988 is full of dark forest floor and tobacco aromatics, yet retains lots of vibrant cherry fruit.

#14850 \$49.99/btl

Fattoria Montellori has been learning lessons for over 50 years. The 2004 “Moro” blend, primarily Sangiovese, has a bit of Malvazia Nera and Cabernet Sauvignon to create depth and complexity. It is an exceptional entry point to the realm of the Super Tuscans.

(#13899) \$19.99/btl

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Tuscany

Mastrojanni

No producer has remained as true to the traditional ideal of Brunello than Mastrojanni. Bucking the trend towards fruitier and more powerful wines, this family-owned winery has never failed to produce elegant, silky wines from their knoll of clay and gravel.



2001 Brunello di Montalcino - This product of a warmer vintage offers immediate accessibility and a particularly dark rendition of Mastrojanni Brunello; classic spicy soil tones play against dark cherry fruit.
#12111 \$39.97/btl

2003 Rosso di Montalcino - Elegant in style and showing the true character of traditional Tuscan wines, this has violets, tobacco and red cherry fruit on the palate, leading to a distinct clay mineral note on the finish.
#10547 \$24.99/btl

1998 San Pio - A blend of Cabernet Sauvignon and Sangiovese. Dark fruit aromas – black cherries and berries – with herbs, leather and peppercorn. This has moderately firm tannins and is best enjoyed with rich meat-based meals such as roasts or stews.
#14616 \$28.99/btl

Pianrosso Brunello di Montalcino - Year in and year out, this bottling represents one of the finest expressions of Brunello in all its traditional glory. Often mistaken for a modern producer, Ciacci Piccolomini has a lineup that includes several wines that have a modern feel about them. Their non-interventionist, traditional approach reveals layers of soil, spice and fruit in an exceptional and age-worthy package. Cask aging rounds out the already supple tannins, while the wines exhibit notes of dark berries, dried herbs, and smoke on the finish. With age, the texture resolves to luxurious richness, while the palate tends to offer delicate notes of sappy red fruits layered over an array of autumnal aromatics.

1993 (#16179) \$99.99/btl

1995 (#16180) \$89.99/btl

Ciacci Piccolomini

2005 Rosso di Montalcino - A cool, crisp expression of Sangiovese that exhibits bright berried fruit on the palate with the classic spicy, floral aromatics and a nuance of coffee.
#18091 \$22.99/btl

2001 Brunello Riserva - The highest expression of Brunello is the rarely produced Riserva. In a vintage like 2001, it exhibits incredible power and depth and offers a full panoply of fruity and savory elements, all melded together to form a finely wrought whole.

#17972 \$104.99/btl

The 2001 Vintage

2001 has produced such a uniformly fine crop of Tuscan wines that it is already viewed as a modern-day counterpart to the 1990 vintage. Never before have so many wineries performed at such a high level, producing wines that combine the power and finesse that perfectly ripe fruit can produce. Because of their exquisite balance, many of these wines are delicious today, but they will continue to improve with additional bottle age.

2001 Brunello Riserva “Vigna Paretaiio,” Talenti - Made from a very careful selection of grapes from the Paretaiio vineyard, and only in outstanding vintages. This wine offers intense red fruit with aromas of Morello cherries.
#17636 \$74.99/btl

2001 Brunello di Montalcino, Collosorbo - Silky and well defined, this exhibits the spectacular ripeness of the 2001 vintage, yet retains a great sense of terroir with its darkly spicy core of minerals and cocoa.
#18101 \$46.99/btl

2001 Brunello Di Montalcino Riserva, Collosorbo – From vineyards just across from Ciacci, this enlightened traditionalist’s wine has spicy red fruits that caress the palate with lovely insinuated notes of coffee, cola, and spice that linger on the finish.
#17973 \$74.99/btl

2001 Brunello di Montalcino, La Palazzetta - Flavio Fanti, owner of the family estate La Palazzetta, represents one of Montalcino’s elite sources of limited-production Brunello. His ten acres of Sangiovese Grosso are home to several of the zone’s finest parcels. This is full-bodied and delicious.
#16670 \$40.99/btl



Revisited

2004 Chianti Classico

After a couple of difficult years, Tuscany enjoyed its return to a temperate growing season in 2004. These wines offer classic aromas with crisp, slightly austere structures that will work wonderfully on the dinner table and bode well for several years of positive development in the cellar.

2004 Cennatoio – Wonderfully fresh with ripe berries and subtle spice notes, this bottle delivers a round, silky, classic Chianti experience.
#44479 on sale for \$12.99/btl

2004 Castello della Paneretta – With lovely floral notes on the nose, this captures the bright character of the vintage with its sour-cherry fruit and zesty finish.
#17989 \$22.99/btl

2004 Castello di Cacchiano - The brilliant, deep cherry fruit in this seductive bottling caresses the palate with its velvety, seamless texture.
#10975 \$19.99/btl

Val delle Corti is a relatively new producer intent on producing the finest traditionally styled Chianti possible.

2004 Chianti Classico - The vineyards and cellars at Val delle Corti are designed to produce a pure expression of Chianti. Their 2004 Chianti Classico is full of sweet fruit and contrasting herb and spice notes.
#18324 \$18.99/btl

2004 Chianti Classico Riserva - The Riserva bottling has added layers of richness and structure, perfect for hearty fare and suitable for aging.
#18325 \$28.99/btl

Vino Nobile di Montepulciano

Primarily made from the Sangiovese grape, traditionally blended with other grapes (Mammolo in particular) to add lushness and floral aromatics. These wines offer exceptional value, with a powerful yet earthy character that straddles the divide in intensity between Chianti and Brunello.



2003 Avignonesi – From one of Italy’s oldest cellars, this benchmark Vino Nobile di Montepulciano marries spicy clay tones to deep, leathery berry fruit, and offers uncommon richness with seamless integration. This is for lovers of powerful Sangiovese.
#49300 \$22.99/btl

2003 Bindella – Full-bodied, with a modern edge of smoky, overtly spicy notes, in an open, easy style.
#11102 \$19.99/btl



Venerable

Working with a wide range of grapes, primarily Corvina, Rondinella, and Molinara, producers in the Veneto have come up with techniques that allow them to produce all manner of wines. There is the simple Valpolicella; the Valpolicella Ripasso, which has been allowed to rest on the lees of Amarone to add a bit of power, dried fruit character and a touch of additional alcohol; and then there is Amarone. Produced from grapes that have been air-dried for up to four months, Amarone makes rich, chewy, powerful wines that warm the soul through the cold winter months. Typically fermented dry, there is the occasional Amarone with a touch of residual sugar and of course there is the Recioto of Amarone, a dessert wine of medium sweetness which pairs well with its relatively modest alcohol, to produce one of the most well-balanced dessert wines found anywhere.



Quintarelli

Simultaneously the most unusual and the most traditional – unusual in that his tenacious grip on producing traditional wines has left him far outside the mainstream – Giuseppe Quintarelli is universally recognized as one of the true masters of the Veneto. His wines confound expectations: while ethereal and deceptively light, they are nonetheless packed with flavor and persistence. These should be on every wine drinker’s must-try list.

1997 Quintarelli Amarone – This has a delightfully rustic edge that adds complexity to the explosive aromatics. It is still quite young and deserves a few additional years to fully reveal itself.

#14687 \$349.99/btl

1995 Amarone Riserva – Arguably the crowning achievement from Quintarelli, this is released in tiny quantities and represents Amarone as it used to be, with a subtle touch of sweetness and high-toned aromatics. With its fetching, beguiling, wily complexity, words cannot do this wine justice.

#17637 \$599.99/btl

Dal Forno Romano

If Quintarelli represents the old guard, Dal Forno Romano has emerged as the leader of a quality revolution for the wines of the Veneto. Matching highly extracted, unctuous wines with the aromatic complexities of new French oak, Dal Forno’s wines have redefined the landscape and created a new genre that defies tidy definitions.

2001 Valpolicella - This offers extraordinary richness and depth, with strong notes of graphite, coffee, and toast, all married perfectly to deep, slightly roasted plum fruit. More akin to a great Bordeaux, this will drink well for a decade.

#10187 \$104.99/btl

2000 Amarone - A Schwarzenegger of a wine, this is pure, unbridled power. Layers of fruit are barely restrained by copious soft tannins and a vibrant spine of acidity that will carry this wine well for years, over which time the gorgeously ripe flavors will emerge even more powerfully as the toasty oak integrates.

#47022 \$399.99/btl

1997 Alzero - Made mostly from Cabernet Franc (90% in this vintage), exactly as his Amarone is made (the only difference is in the grape varieties). An intense, unctuous red that sees about 30% new Slavonian oak, this is spectacular today.

#17166 \$334.99/btl

1995 Recioto - Just a knockout of a wine, with a gentle sweetness giving lift to floral-scented dark cherry fruits, with a touch of tannin adding tension and dimension.

(375 mL)
#14688 \$169.97/btl

Veneto



Trabucchi

The estate of Trabucchi represents the culmination of two decades of research and development in the Veneto. Vines here exist in harmony with ancient olive groves and cypress trees, in soil rich in limestone that produces unusually refined wines that perform in a slightly higher register. Traditional techniques and a deep belief in wine as an accompaniment for food yield a lineup that is not to be missed.

2003 Valpolicella - Aromas of violets, thyme, and clove, along with blackberry fruit on the palate, make this a red wine well worth trying alongside aged cheeses, salami, and more. Having undergone a partial drying of the grapes, this is a richer, more powerful style.

#12110 \$17.99

2002 Amarone - Completely captivating. Aged in new barriques, this is redolent of baking spices, yet remains full of floral red fruits with notes of cherry, berry, and almond. Not as dense as many Amarone, this is a fine addition to any holiday table: it is exceedingly food-friendly.

#16915 \$41.99/btl

2003 Recioto – A red dessert wine that is a touch sweet and still has all the complexities of a great, rich, dry red wine. Aromas of violets, fresh thyme, delicious blackberries and black pepper.

(500 mL)
#12471 \$39.99/btl

Corte Sant’Alda

Corte Sant’Alda is a family-run winery that has made the choice not to stick to a specific “school” of winemaking. Instead, they produce both traditional and modern wines; in both cases, production begins with meticulous attention to detail, all the way down to painstaking soil analysis on the family’s properties. While they do produce some modern wines, their methods rely on the age-old philosophy of allowing the vineyards to tell their story as clearly as possible.

2005 Valpolicella Ca’ Fiui - A clear and clean expression of Valpolicella with fleshy dark berries, cherry, and notes of cedar and spice. It’s friendly and medium-bodied, with a mineral echo on the long finish.

#15990 \$18.99/btl

2000 Amarone - The dry, brooding style of this wine combines refreshing minerality with deep plum, blackberry, and cocoa notes. Its fine balance gives it unusual finesse, and while this will age exceptionally well, it is perfect for immediate consumption.

#12138 \$89.99

2001 Amarone Mithas – Aged in French oak for six years before release. The use of oak turns out to be surprisingly judicious and blends well with the precise red berry fruit. This can be enjoyed at all stages: upon release or with decades of age.

#16879 \$154.99/btl

Up-and-Coming Amarone



2001 Le Ragose - Vivid red berries, exquisite ripe acidity, and perfect balance give this wine longevity. Elegance in Amarone is hard to find; this one is absolutely exemplary.

#47719 \$64.99/btl

2003 Marion - Dense, dark, and juicy on the palate with licorice, freshly-crushed blackberries, coffee grounds, and vanilla bean. This is a hearty, full-bodied red wine that’s a natural with meats, aged cheeses, mushroom risotto, or just about any hearty fare.

#16969 \$89.99/btl

2000 Tenuta Sant’Antonio Campo dei Gigli - Not your typical Amarone. This is packed full of blackberries, dried cherry, licorice and dark chocolate aromas. Full-bodied and smooth, with firm oak notes on the finish.

#16897 \$74.99/btl

2000 Rocolo Grassi - This is a more modern Amarone but still shows the finesse you only see at the best estates. Think of this as a concentrated, full-bodied, dry red wine that still retains its elegance.

#15925 \$104.99/btl



Portugal is quickly becoming renowned for its dry table wines, but those will have a tough time competing with several centuries of historic dessert wines that have established Portugal as the king of sweets. Among the plethora of astounding fortified wines coming from this strip of the Iberian Peninsula, none are more deserving of their fame than the luscious dessert wines coming from the city of Oporto. Port, as these wines have been colloquially known for centuries, is based on the regal Touriga Nacional grape and is available in a range of styles sure to please every palate.

The youngest, most rough-and-ready type is undoubtedly **Ruby** port, which undergoes a few years’ aging in neutral vessels, frequently in the warmest reaches of the quintas, or estates. This style retains the full force of youthful fruit, but never attains the heights of delicacy and nuance that age can bring. **Proprietary** ports, frequently labeled **“Special Reserve,”** tend to be blends of older Ruby ports that have mellowed with age and offer an added level of complexity. **Late Bottled Vintage** ports are similar to the Special Reserve bottlings, usually containing comparably old wine from a single vintage. With these ports one can begin to discern the character of a vintage without the cost and patience that may be involved with true **Vintage Port**. This is the crème de la crème, consisting entirely of the fruit from a single harvest in a declared year. Only produced in the finest vintages, these strapping wines are bottled after two years’ aging and boast massive fruit, along with a structure that can be unyielding in youth. These frequently require decades of cellaring before they soften to reveal all the glorious complexity they are known for.

Vintage port from lesser years is frequently bottled as **Single Quinta** port. (Most vintage ports are a blend of the produce of several quintas.) In lesser years, the best quintas’ output is bottled as a Vintage Port and offers great value in an approachable style. Another excellent option is the family of **Tawny Ports**, often labeled with the approximate age of the blend: 10, 20, 30 or 40 year tawny. These wines allow the consumer to experience the progression of flavors that great ports undergo over the years, from fruity through nutty and toffeed. Finally, tawnies produced in a single vintage are known as **Colheitas**; these combine the character of single-vintage port with the style of wood-aged tawnies, and make exceptional gifts for special occasions.

Quinta do Noval

A truly historic estate and the innovator behind Colheita ports, this producer is most famous for its tiny 300-case output of Nacional, the only port produced from ungrafted vines.

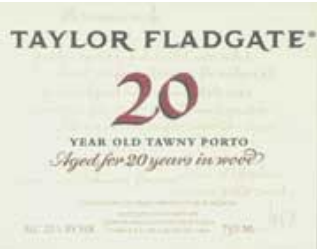
1997 Nacional	
#57642	\$799.99/btl
1996 Nacional	
#58084	\$414.99/btl
2000 Vintage	
#14634	\$98.99/btl
20 Yr. Tawny	
#57884	\$64.99/btl
10 Yr. Tawny	
#57874	\$28.99/btl

Taylor Fladgate

Perhaps the most venerable name in Vintage Port, and the force behind the Late Bottled Vintage style. Still family-owned, they continue to produce benchmark vintage ports. Don’t overlook the great tawnies, however, particularly the 20-year-old, which offers fantastic value for such a rich and complex bottling.

2000 Vintage	
#57976	\$94.99/btl
1997 Vintage	
#57975	\$84.99/btl
2001 Vargellas Single Quinta	
#12780	\$48.99
20 Yr. Reserve Tawny	
#58464	\$47.99/btl
10 Yr. Reserve Tawny	
#58454	\$26.99/btl
First Estate	
#57684	\$15.99/btl

Port



Sampler



Warre’s

Warre’s is currently owned by the same group that owns Graham’s, yet the house style at Warre’s is a bit more peppery and spicy. Of particular note is their 10 year tawny, Otima: produced in a fresh and cool style, it stands apart from typical tawnies of similar age.

1997 Vintage	
#50144	\$67.99/btl
Otima Tawny	
#52891	\$19.99/btl
Warrior Special Reserve	
#50154	\$14.99/btl

Graham’s

Graham’s has always produced unusually concentrated ports that age exceptionally well. The ageability of their wines shows especially in their great older tawnies.

2003	
#14481	\$49.99/(375 mL)
1980 Vintage	
#18322	\$114.99/btl
20 Yr. Tawny	
#58114	\$54.99/btl
10 Yr. Tawny	
#58164	\$29.99/btl
Six Grapes	
#57614	\$19.99/btl

Quinta do Infantado

Quinta do Infantado continues to produce vintage port in the most traditional way, foot-treading the grapes and fermenting the musts in stone lagares (specially designed troughs) to produce wines of uncommon balance and depth. The fact that Infantado’s vineyards are among the best, and their style a bit drier than most, allows them to produce wines with less added alcohol, which truly lets the terroir and purity of fruit shine.

2003 Vintage	
#57534	\$49.99/btl
2000 Late Bottled Vintage	
#51003	\$24.99
Tawny	
#50504	\$14.99/btl
Ruby	
#57855	\$14.99/btl

Madeira

Madeira vies with port for dessert wine supremacy in Portugal, yet it is such a completely different animal that the two shouldn’t really be compared. Actually produced on the Island of Madeira off the coast of Africa, these wines are completely unique. They spend months literally cooking in estufas (heating tanks) at temperatures above 100 degrees. The process mimics the conditions of the tropical sea voyages on which madeira was first (accidentally) produced, transforming the young, highly acidic wines into deep, layered and complex wines that offer a unique array of flavor characteristics. Though the wines are aged and appealing from the day they are released, their texture softens slowly over time until they become velvety and dense, with telltale saline notes caressing the citrus and toffee tones that these wines are famous for.

Madeira is produced from a small selection of grapes, each imparting a unique stamp on the resultant wine. The very dry style of **Sercial** exhibits the acidity Madeira is famous for, while offering a glimpse of the mineral notes that can make the sweeter styles remain refreshing and balanced. **Verdelho** generally offers an experience similar to Sercial, yet with a touch softer acidity and a bit of sweetness accentuating the nutty notes. **Boal** or **Bual** produces sweeter wines with more intense, fruitier flavors that offer great contrast to the strong caramel tones the aging process imparts to these wines. The star of the lineup is generally considered to be the **Malmsey** or **Malvasia** grape, which adds a spectacular array of aromatics to the style of the sweet Boal. This is truly the grape that made madeira famous. Rare bottles of Bastardo, Terrantez, and Moscatel appear from time to time and are treasured for their uniqueness as well as their scarcity.

Barbeito

1948 Malvasia	
#15864	\$259.99
1954 Malvasia	
#11474	\$229.99

D’Oliveira

1912 Verdelho	
#18970	\$426.99
1966 Verdelho	
#15866	\$149.99
1968 Bual	
#12911	\$129.99
1987 Malmsey	
#13075	\$89.99

Blandy’s

1977 Bual	
#18612	\$131.99
5 yr. Malmsey	
#57174	\$21.99



Domaine de la Romanée-Conti

No other producer in Burgundy elicits the excitement produced by the wine of the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti. Famed for their portfolio of biodynamically farmed Grand Cru vineyards in the heart of the Côte de Nuits, this slice of land running from Vosne-Romanée to Flagey-Échézeaux is home to some of the finest vineyards in Burgundy. Low production, meticulous attention to detail, and decades of experience make these wines the stars of every vintage, and the jewels in the crowns of many collections.

Échézeaux – Serving as an entry point for the DRC lineup, Échézeaux’s relatively young vines and flat site on the lower slopes give wines that are a bit obvious compared to the rest of the DRC pantheon, with richly sweet fruit and substantial tannins, yet not all of the polish or depth that the finest wines show.

2003 (#15465)	\$499.99/btl
2004 (#17711)	\$349.99/btl

Grands-Échézeaux – From older vines (second only to the vines of Romanée-Conti in age) and a more favorable position farther up the hillside, these wines offer sweeter tannins and less overt fruitiness than those from the Grands-Échézeaux with a classic dark and dusty character. 2004 (#17716) \$599.99/btl

Romanée-St.-Vivant - Coming now into Vosne proper, we find a wine that offers a contrast to the Échézeaux. Though it comes from a similarly situated site, this is a lighter wine with bright fruit woven by a round tannic structure into a juicy, velvety whole.

2003 (#15466)	\$999.99
2004 (#17718)	\$699.99

Richebourg – These wines offer up a deep and spicy profile with a restrained texture. Cellaring will allow for the rich, powerful style to release the classic scents of ripe red fruits and forest floor.

2003 (#15467)	\$1299.99/btl
2004 (#17720)	\$699.99/btl

La Tâche – DRC’s largest and most consistent holding produces wines with deep, musky, spicy tones and a texture that is complete, round and long, with impeccable balance. 2004 (#17722) \$899.99/btl

Romanée-Conti - The crowning glory of the lineup with a creamy texture and a subtlety that can only come from vines this old. This is grace in a bottle: elegant and poised, with terroir-driven mineral spiciness. 2004 (#17723) \$3999.99/btl

Montrachet – DRC’s white is produced in such small quantities it is rarely ever seen. Still an absolute infant, the 2004 will be one of the great Montrachets with time, and is already a highly coveted collectible. 2004 (#17724) \$2499.99/btl

Burgundy’s

2002 Dom. F. Lamarche Grande Rue – Coming from a strip of vineyard hemmed in by the famous tracts of La Tâche, Romanée-Conti, and Romanée-St.-Vivant, this wine is produced in a powerful style with deep soil tones and massive structure for long aging. #12113 \$199.99/btl

2005 Vosne-Romanée Dom. Lamarche – This village-level wine projects unusual depth and power due to the exceptional growing conditions of 2005. It is a perfect introduction to Lamarche as well as to the quality of 2005 Vosne. #17958 \$56.99/btl

2002 Jean-Claude Boisset Échézeaux - Produced in a rich, age-worthy style with new oak to match with the powerful meaty, black fruit coming from the exceptional 2002 vintage and entering its peak drinking window. #13971 \$126.99/btl

2003 Confuron-Cotetidot Vosne-Romanée – Coming from a warm vintage, this wine’s sweet primary fruit is supported by great structure and reveals deep Vosne spiciness on the mid-palate. #12449 \$51.99/btl

Marchand Gevrey-Chambertin Clos Prieur – This elegant bottle balances the rich Gevrey soil tones with bold 2005 fruit. #18359 \$34.99/btl

Best

2005 is truly a special vintage. It offers perfect ripeness, balancing out with luxurious tannins and round acidity – but even more importantly in this fickle part of the world, it offers consistency. Never before have so many great wines been produced in Burgundy from top to bottom. In fact, one could argue that 2005 is most special for the wines it produced at the lower end of the price spectrum.

2005 Dureuil-Janthial Rully “En Rosey” – Coming from the very north of the Côte Chalonnaise, just south of the Côte de Beaune, this wine offers great purity with rhubarb and pomegranate fruit in a racy, energetic style. #18182 \$27.99/btl

2005 Taupenot-Merme Auxey-Duresses “Les Duresses” – Coming from the southwest of the Côte de Beaune and melding dark ripe fruit over the typical, slightly rustic character, this is a rich and boisterous wine that will benefit from a few years in the cellar. #17965 \$41.99/btl

2005 Prince de Merode Ladoix Chailots – Wines here have improved with each passing vintage, as smaller yields and less intervention produce more detailed flavors. The Chaillots bottling shows exceptional elegance for this often overlooked village of the Côte de Beaune. #18572 \$25.99/btl

2005 Dom. Rapet Savigny-lès-Beaune – From grapes grown in iron-rich soils, this wine offers up a very approachable palate, with ripe berried fruit and an overlay of lovely fresh floral scents that make this perfect for enjoying soon. #17962 \$32.99/btl

2005 Paul Pernot “Clos du Dessus des Marconnets” – Coming from the edge of Savigny-lès-Beaune, this bottle offers up rich earthy notes that accent the bright berry fruit typical of the northern Beaune. Great ripe structure supports round tannins. #17915 \$29.99

Chandon de Briailles

Chandon de Briailles has long been one of the top producers of Savigny, close to the border between the Côtes de Beaune and Nuits. Biodynamically farmed vines and winemaking without fining or filtration allow for the most unencumbered expression of each vintage and vineyard.

2005 Savigny-lès-Beaune - A lighter-style offering that captures the rich, deep fruit of the vintage with purity. #17905 \$39.99/btl

2005 Pernand-Vergelesses – Two offerings that offer layers of aromatic complexity and chewy depth while remaining elegant and balanced. The Île des Vergelesses has soil rich in limestone and clay, adding more mineral depth and complexity in the mouth. Les Vergelesses (#17906) \$35.99/btl
Île des Vergelesses (#24214) \$45.99/btl

2005 Corton Les Bressandes – Coming from the southern slope of the hill of Corton, this wine exhibits all the power of the vintage and the exquisite, fabulously ripe structure of classic Corton. #18292 \$84.99/btl

Philippe Pacalet

Philippe Pacalet produces unusually pure Burgundies. He makes his wines naturally, allowing them to ferment at the natural yeasts’ own leisurely pace, and without the use of new oak barrels. Simply put, these are as pure an expression of terroir as can be found today. His Pommard from plots in the Côte de Beaune is more richly fruited, showing all the ripeness that comes from its more southerly location. Typically for a Pommard, this is sweetly fruited on the palate, yet it is extraordinarily ethereal. 2002 (#15804) \$59.99/btl
2001 (#10667) \$44.99/btl

On the other hand, Pacalet’s Gevrey-Chambertin, from the heart of the Côte de Nuits, offers up more typical mineral notes in a leaner package, reflecting its cooler climate: the resulting wine is graceful and delicate. 2002 (#15803) \$58.99/btl
2001 (#15191) \$44.99/btl





California

Sea Smoke

Sea Smoke is one of the must-have Santa Barbara Pinot Noirs in each vintage. Using the varied microclimates of this strip of the Santa Rita Hills and planting several Pinot Noir clones, they produce uniquely expressive wines that exemplify the character of the region.



2005 Botella – Recognized as the most richly fruited of the three offerings, this exudes chewy, sunny fruit.
#14041 \$99.99/btl

2005 Southing – Decidedly firmer and more precise than the Botella, with a more layered texture and added subtleties. This will improve with short-term cellaring.
#12432 \$99.99/btl

2005 Ten – A blend of all the clones grown on the property, this is dense and structured, with a muscular, masculine, dark fruit character in a tightly structured package.
#16130 \$139.99/btl

Alcina

In just six short years, Alcina Cellars has established itself as a top producer of great California Pinot Noirs. While many producers strive for a Burgundian style of Pinot Noir, and at least as many overshoot the other end of the spectrum (producing what has been derisively termed “Zinot Noir”), Alcina draws exuberant yet balanced fruit character from their vineyard holdings, mostly in the cooler regions of Sonoma Valley.

2005 Sonoma Coast – Lush and solid, this offers classic bright cherry and spice notes on a finely balanced medium frame.
#17413 \$44.99/btl

2005 San Giacomo – Low yields from this cool Sonoma County site produce focused, deep, structured wines with bright cherry and cranberry fruit accented with spicy notes of cigar box and mulling spice.
#17323 \$51.99/btl

2005 Ramondo - Full of red fruits and spices, with a note of warm anise and a rich earthy core, this gains some added weight and depth from its warmer microclimate, yet remains lithe, poised, and decadently rich.
#17370 \$52.99/btl

Roessler

Still an insider’s wine after seven years, Roessler produces just a few thousand cases of cool-climate Pinot Noirs from several of the finest sites in California. These are wines that are made to be shared around the dinner table and pair well with all sorts of cuisines, owing to their balance and gentle nature that never sacrifices intensity of flavor. By scouring the state for the finest cool-climate vineyards, they have developed a line of wines that are varied yet remain true to their mission.

2004 La Brisa - Coming from several plots on the Sonoma Coast, this offers up a delicate, earthy core of lush red fruit with notes that recall mushrooms on the long finish. Elegant and perfect for dinner tonight.
#18137 \$49.99/btl

2005 Widdoes – Fewer than 100 cases were produced, and we were lucky enough to snag a few from this terrific vintage. Deep aromas of herbs and baking spices, followed by bright, exotic well-balanced, fruit.
#18138 \$54.99/btl

2005 Adler Springs – This Pinot Noir comes from the Adler Springs vineyard, located in northern Mendocino. It shows generous spice notes, dark berry flavors, and velvety-laden tannins. Bright acidity lingers on the palate.
#19096 \$44.99/btl

Supplies of featured wines are limited. Vintages and prices subject to change without notice. For up-to-date pricing information, call Astor at (212) 674-7500 or visit www.astorwines.com. Not responsible for typographical errors.



Pinot Noir

While Pinot Noir grown in California has distinctively ripe fruit, it is sometimes tough to control its exuberance. There is a school of winemaking thought that draws from the techniques honed over centuries in the much cooler climes of Burgundy. This Burgundian approach attempts to tone down the raucous fruit found in many vineyards and emphasize the spice and soil tones in the wines, creating a product that is more complex while being lighter and more agile on the palate. Even though Burgundian techniques are used to make these wines, they are at heart unabashedly Californian.

2004 Dutton Estate Thomas Road – This bold Pinot Noir comes from rocky soils in the cool Green Valley region of Sonoma’s Russian River Valley. The strong structure of this wine is enmeshed with rich, dark fruits that are bursting with notes of caramel, baking spices, and vanilla.
#16841 \$46.99/btl

2006 Copain L’Automne –. This year’s “Autumn” Pinot Noir from cool Mendocino county is classically produced: the winemakers used partial whole-cluster fermentation, natural yeasts, and they neither fined nor filtered the wine. The results speak for themselves, as subtle balsam notes play off the earthy, dusty, sweet cherry fruit.
#14195 \$23.99/btl

2004 Domaine Alfred “Morrito” - Coming from Edna valley, this powerful Pinot Noir is full of creamy, toasty oak notes supporting dark brambly fruit. Ripe tannins and solid acidity will let it age extremely well.
#18344 \$88.99/btl

Emerging Oregonians

Dick Ponzi is one of Oregon’s original transplants from California, founding his winery almost 40 years ago. Over time, Dick and his crew have honed their skills and understanding of their terroir, and they continue to produce some of the finest examples in the state. Their wines show lush dark berry fruit framed by intriguing notes of black spice, floral tones, and exotic woods. 2005 Ponzi Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley
#66374 \$34.99/btl

Bergström has rapidly emerged as a pivotal producer in Oregon, expanding to capitalize on the region’s unique microclimates and biodynamically producing wines that are concentrated and deep, offering the essence of Oregon. The Cumberland Reserve is from a blend of vineyards and is an exemplary Oregon Pinot Noir, with its lush dark cherry fruit, loamy soil tones, and chewy texture that will allow it to age well.
#17889 \$49.99/btl

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Uniquely

California has proven a hospitable climate to virtually every grape imaginable. The rich selection of soils and ample sun and water nurtures countless generations of vines until their ideal homes can be identified. This is certainly the case with Zinfandel and Petite Sirah, two transplants from Europe that have achieved greatness in their adopted home. Zinfandel, coming from mysterious Croatian roots, has become the grape of California, emblematic of the ripeness and richness that characterizes the state's wines. Made in a great variety of styles, from light and fruity to dark and brooding, Zin has justly achieved great acclaim for its intense bramble fruit and wonderfully ripe tannins.



2004 Nalle – Doug Nalle makes wine to please his own palate and has been producing this singular Zinfandel for over 20 years. Styles have changed over that time, but this particular wine has always remained true to its roots. Exceeding 14% alcohol only once over the past two decades, this is Zinfandel tamed for the dinner table. With its intelligent use of French oak framing the ripe yet not jammy strawberry and raspberry fruit, and with a dustiness that is vintage Dry Creek Valley, this is more akin to a great Bordeaux than a typical Zin. Capable of aging gracefully for years.

#61284 \$28.99/btl

2004 Howell Mountain Vineyards Black Sears – While Zin has gradually been pushed out of Napa Valley in favor of more lucrative varieties, there are regions where Zin remains king. One such plot is 2400 feet up on Howell Mountain. Ultra-traditional organic practices, including head pruning and dry farming, in conjunction with the vagaries of growing vines in this harsh location, produce small, tough grapes that yield one of the most distinctive and exotic examples of Zinfandel. Full of bright, spicy red fruits with unusually intense complicating notes of ginger, smoke, and pepper, along with some spice from French oak barrels.

#13911 \$39.99/btl

Bucklin

2005 Bucklin Old Hill Ranch is one of California's iconic Zinfandel-based blends. A true field blend, from a vineyard originally planted around 1850, this classic wine is mostly Zinfandel, but is well-seasoned by the 19 other grape varieties included in the blend. With intense old-vine creaminess and layers of flavor, and bold spice notes derived from the blend of grapes, soil, and barrels, this is quintessential old-school Sonoma wine.

#17517 \$36.99/btl

2005 Klinker Brick Old Vines – Coming from the drier reaches of Lodi, where long hang times allow for complete and even ripening of the grapes, this blend of old-vine plots offers typical dark berry fruits with spicy notes of clove and cinnamon from the wine's sojourn in barrel.

#18161 \$16.99/btl

2005 Farleigh – In classic California tradition, this is blended Zinfandel combining fruit from Amador and Mendocino counties in a classic, fresh, unoaked bottling. Full, rich fruit takes center stage, with ripe black cherry fruit ably supported by a hint of eucalyptus and lush tannins.

#18219 \$13.99/btl

2004 Bucklin Mixed Blacks –

The name refers to how field-blended grapes were purchased in the past, but this single-vineyard bottling, from right next door to the Old Hill Ranch, is the Bucklin family's wine of the future. As production in that hallowed old field slowly ends, this younger block of eight-year-old Zinfandel, Petite Sirah, Alicante Bouschet, and Grenache vines will pick up the slack. The fruit of this vintage comes in a lighter, lithier package that adds red-toned flavors to the typical blackberry. Less spicy than Old Hill, yet more floral, this is ready to impress.

#17518 \$24.99/btl

Californian



Petite Sirah

Petite Sirah (known as Durif in France) may not achieve the heights or consistency that Zinfandel is able to maintain, yet every so often, this grape – known for its dusky, plummy fruit and rustic tannins – transcends its reputation and produces a bottle that enters the pantheon of great California wines.

The 2005 Jaffurs Petite Sirah, Thompson Vineyard is just such an example. This opaque, nearly black wine is absolutely massive, with powerful yet bright boysenberry fruit. It's inky on the palate with an exceptionally long finish and brilliant balance that will allow it to age effortlessly for decades. All a Petite Sirah should be.

#17598 \$32.99/btl

2003 Thackrey Sirius Petite Sirah – Sean Thackrey has made a name for himself by mastering Rhône varieties. This product of the famed Eaglepoint Ranch in cool Mendocino County is a monster of a wine, with palate-staining flavors of blueberries and candied boysenberries, exotic floral notes, and a top note of spicy white pepper on the nose. This demands extended decanting (or a decade of cellaring), as well as your close attention. Don't wear white.

#17332 \$69.99/btl

Syrah

While California can't claim Syrah as its own, it is rapidly becoming a source for world-class versions. From bold warm-climate examples to unique cooler-climate models, California offers up a broad array of styles that accentuate the rich blackberry fruit inherent in the grape. In the best examples, the terroir also plays a role in highlighting the grape's savory nuances, ranging from spicy pepper notes to intense floral aromas to deep roasted meat notes.

2003 Lagier Meredith Mount Veeder – Perched high on Mount Veeder in southern Napa Valley, the Lagier Meredith vineyard is home to warm days, cool nights and poor, thin soils – in short, perfect Syrah weather. For a producer to make only one wine, and a Syrah at that, is unusual these days, but one taste should convince you that these folks are onto something. Produced with little intervention and aged only in used barrels, this deceptively silky wine offers up classic Northern Rhône scents of raspberry and cracked pepper, as well as notes of anise and violets that envelop the palate in a pure, lush style that must be tried.

#17061 \$54.99/btl

2003 Hill Climber Pilgrimage – From Robert Biale, whose belief is that the rugged hillside vineyards that ring Napa and Sonoma resemble the famous slopes of the Rhône Valley. This is borne out by the character and quality of their wines. This blend has all the rich currant and berry fruit you could ask for, with classic Northern Rhône elements of bacon, cocoa, and dark spices, in a pure, focused package.

#16705 \$44.99/btl

2004 Broc Cellars Dry Stack

Chris Brockway is convinced that this cool microclimate in Sonoma Valley offers the perfect blend of soil and climate for producing subtle, layered wines with an elegance that transcends typical California style. This wine contains a dollop of Petite Sirah and Grenache, and is hand-harvested and aged in Burgundian barrels. It has masses of red berried fruit, with floral nuances over the zingy acidity.

#17780 \$29.99/btl

Miscellaneous

MV Thackrey Pleiades XV – This is Sean's 15th vintage for this heady multi-vintage blend of Syrah, Mourvèdre, Carignane, Barbera, Petite Sirah, and Viognier. Sean allows the wines to make themselves, and, unlike many winemakers, strives to let each cuvée express its own character – as opposed to shooting for consistency from year to year. While this approach produces unique wines, their exotic, on-the-fringe nature makes them not for everyone. This version of the Pleiades is richly aromatic, with floral, barnyard, and spice tones vying for your attention on the nose while the midweight palate offers up an unusual spicy/savory character recalling sassafras, damp woods, and red currants.

#67864 \$33.99/btl



For

Hidden away for almost four decades, the family of Hungarian dessert wines sold as Tokaji has for centuries been revered as exceptional, and at times has even been purported to have supernatural recuperative powers. The Czars of Ancient Russia were known to send troops to guard the stocks of these precious wines in times of turmoil. The classification of these wines comes from the historic technique of adding buckets, or puttony, of crushed botrytis-infected grapes to the must of the grapes that formed the base of these elixirs. The more puttonyos that were added, the sweeter, more complex, and intense the finished wines turned out. While this technique is no longer in use, the nomenclature has remained; today, however, it refers to the finished wines' levels of sweetness and richness. Today, a Tokaji might range from 3 to 6 puttonyos, with a classification of Aszu-Eszencia representing a wine made only from the juice of noble rot-infected grapes. The most famous of all Tokaji is the ultimate classification, Eczenzia, produced from the juice that seeps from these botrytis-infected grapes as they are harvested in buckets. This unpressed juice is then slowly fermented for several years, producing wines that resemble honey more than wine with their incredible viscous nature and haunting intensity of flavor. It is not surprising that these wines were thought of as elixirs, since their ability to age forever and their resistance to fermentation seem almost magical even today. Eczenzias remain incredibly rare today and are only produced when conditions allow; perhaps three times a decade.



Royal Tokaji Wine Company

The Royal Tokaji Wine Company continues the centuries-long tradition that established this elixir as one of the world's greatest dessert wines. Their strict adherence to the time-tested way of doing things allows them to produce uncommonly complex wines, with the quality of the hand-selected fruit gently enhanced by the subtle oxidative qualities that these techniques allow for. These remain among the most complex and compelling dessert wines produced anywhere, with such concentrated flavors that even a small portion can be savored: these wines will make the end of any meal more memorable.

2003 Tokaji Aszú 5 Puttonyos Red Label - A great introduction to the house style, this wine is sweet and lush, with deep apricot and peach flavors, yet its bright acidity makes this a perfect partner for foie gras and strong blue cheeses. #13172 (500 mL) \$41.99/btl

1995 Aszú Esszencia - This viscous, honeyed wine has intense inner-mouth perfume and incredible depth of dried fruits on the palate that will make you want to savor it on its own – but if you like, serve it with very light sweet cakes and cookies. #15967 (500 mL) \$179.99/btl

1999 Esszencia – This bottling of pure free-run juice comes in a presentation case with a traditional sipping spoon that will allow you to share this incredibly rare treasure with 32 of your closest friends. #16226 (500 mL) \$549.99/btl

Dessert



Királyudvar

Királyudvar is a joint venture between the famous Tokaji winemaker István Szepsy and Anthony Hwang, an American businessman (and lover of all things dessert, as evidenced by his ownership of the world-renowned Loire Valley producer Huet). The property, literally the “royal court” was rescued from disrepair and is once again producing wines worthy of this regal association. Winemaking here combines innovative ways of preserving purity and nuance with a spotless winemaking facility and careful barrel aging in the ancient cellars. The results are Tokaji wines of unparalleled finesse, complexity, and balance, worthy of investigation by any lover of dessert wines.

2002 Tokaji Aszú Muscotály – This unusual bottling is made of 100% Muscadelle grapes, yielding a lighter style of dessert wine than is typical of this region. Full of crisp yellow fruits and ripe pineapple notes. #17322 (375 mL) \$84.99

1999 Lapis 6 Puttonyos – This single-vineyard bottling not only represents classic Tokaji – the sweet apricot notes, the complicating nuance of botrytis – but also the deep and refreshing minerality that comes from the soil of Lapis. #16657 (500 mL) \$124.99/btl

1999 Esszencia – This shows exceptional purity in its melon, honey and orange blossom flavors. A rich, creamy texture makes this breathtakingly deep and offers a uniquely pure expression of Esszencia. #16653 (500 mL) \$474.99/btl

Pajzos

1993 Pajzos Esszencia – From one of the greatest Esszencia vintages of the 20th century, this nectar is now available in miniature 100 mL bottles, offering a unique opportunity to try one of the world's great wines without committing to a larger bottle. The 100 mL size yields four ample tastes. #72082 (500 mL) \$409.99/btl #17138 (100 mL) \$76.99/btl

Hétszölő

The imperial Domaine of Hétszölő offers up a full range of Aszú wines, but their basic late harvest wine and the middle-of-the-range 3 Puttonyos wines allow the brilliant winemaking and exceptional terroir to shine through. With roots going back over 500 years, this is one of the vineyards that first made Tokaji famous. 2005 Late Harvest Tokaji #16554 (750 mL) \$14.99/btl

1999 3 Puttonyos #17721 (500 mL) \$21.99/btl

Domaine Huet

France's Loire Valley is home to a tight cluster of appellations that are famous for their sweet versions of the dynamic Chenin Blanc grape. Made from both botrytis-infected and clean fruit, these white dessert wines have proven themselves to be absolutely world-class, benefiting greatly from extended cellaring. The best seem to have the capability to age effortlessly for decades, a trait that is aided by their vibrant acidity. With their rich flavors of quince and waxy yellow fruit, these offer a different take on dessert wines and deserve serious attention.

Domaine Huet's roots in the Vouvray appellation go back to 1928; the brand and their prime vineyard parcels have been lovingly tended by the Huet family for almost its entire existence. The inestimable Gaston Huet, son of the founder, took over the reins after he walked across France at the conclusion of World War II. This grit and determination are evident in his wines, which have endured as shining examples that illuminate the path a truly great wine can take over the course of its life. Gaston's son in law, Noel Pinquet, continues to leave his mark on the estate as well, converting the property to Biodynamic farming methods in 1990 and taking on the famed Tokaji maker István Szepsy and his partner Anthony Hwang as financial backers, allowing him to retain control of the winemaking and make investments in his region-defining property.

2002 Le Mont Moëlleux – Coming from an 8-hectare vineyard acquired in 1957, this wonderfully delicate wine of moderate sweetness is from Huet's more elegant vineyard, and it offers early drinkability – though it will only gain depth with aging. #14680 (750 mL) \$39.99/btl

1997 Le Mont Moëlleux – With the added age on this bottle, one can already begin to feel its texture unfurling as the expansive flavors encompass the softer quality of the wine. #16663 (750 mL) \$99.99/btl

Cuvée Constance – This is Huet's finest wine, a selection of the clusters of grapes affected by botrytis cinerea, or noble rot. Not only does this infection concentrate the flavors and sugars in these powerfully sweet and boldly structured wines but it adds unique and intriguing notes of smoke and dried apricot. These are among the true immortals of the wine world. 1997 Cuvée Constance #17339 (500 mL) \$229.99/btl

2003 Cuvée Constance #16664 (500 mL) \$139.99/btl



Sweet

Château d'Yquem

Just the mention of this hallowed estate's name conjures up romantic images of deep cellars holding centuries of treasures. These ethereal wines are painstakingly harvested in repeated passes through the picturesque vineyards full of Sémillon and Sauvignon Blanc grapes infected with noble rot. This unusual blend is mostly Sémillon, which brings richness and structure to the final wines, complemented by a bit of Sauvignon Blanc, which permeates the final wine with exceptional and exotic aromas. In the blessed years when noble rot concentrates the sugars and flavors of the grapes that grow on this famed plot of land, the result is one of the most decadent, nuanced and just plain delicious dessert wines known to man.

1994 - A subtle vintage for Yquem that was the result of exceptionally strict passes through the vineyard. This Yquem stresses finesse and balance and thus is particularly suited for the dining table.
#10311 \$199.99/btl

1995 – A stunning example of powerful d'Yquem with intense apricot, smoke, and almond notes. This botrytized gem is just showing some evolution as it exits adolescence, and is best served on its own so that none of its facets are obscured.
#18299 \$134.99/375 mL
#38772 \$249.99/btl

1997 - A very powerful wine in the flush of youth, showing many elemental notes that reveal its origins. Mineral, vanilla, menthol and spice notes take turns at center stage as the wine integrates.
#12313 \$450.00/1.5 L

2000 - Yields from this vintage were only a fifth of the total crop, reflecting the strict selection with its concentrated fruit supported by bright acidity. This has mouth-filling volume and a round, sweet character; while it is seductively approachable today, this bottle will be legendary in due time.
#91038 \$329.99/btl

More Celebrated Sauternes

2001 L'Extravagant de Doisy Daëne Sauternes – As Yquem represents the heights Sémillon reaches, this micro-cuvée of around 100 cases represents the essence of heavily botrytized Sauvignon Blanc. Select bunches are left on the vine, concentrating their sugars and flavors to unheard-of levels and imparting the unique signature of botrytis. Truly an extravagant and rare indulgence.
#16684 \$399.99/375 mL

Cru d'Arche Pugneau “Trie Exceptionnelle” Sauternes - This selection, or trie, is made only in the finest vintages and represents the greatest wines coming from the Daney family, proprietors here since 1923. Assembled from only the finest berries found in prime vineyard plots that skirt the Yquem property to the south-east, this is rich, velvety, and a great introduction to Sauternes.
1999 (#15675) \$31.98/375 mL
1996 (#14625) \$55.99/btl

Discover Barsac

1999 Barréjats Barsac – Just to the northwest of Sauternes lies the equally renowned appellation of Barsac. Though without a consistent standard-bearer, the wines of this smaller sibling to Sauternes continue to be an insider's secret. Its classic Sauternes blends coming from old vines planted in clay and limestone soils exhibit all the unctuous qualities of their more famous neighbor, yet retain a touch more acidity and are thus easier to pair with food. This bottling is an exquisite expression, derived from traditionally farmed grapes vinified in classic style, yielding a brisk wine redolent of figs, apricots, and exotic citrus notes.
#12044 \$61.99/500 mL

2002 Coutet Barsac - This large and historic property, one of only two premier cru properties in Barsac, offers great value. Production here combines modern technology, which preserves the clarity of the fruit, with traditional practices that add depth of flavor and a creamy texture to this immediately approachable sweetie.
#30109 \$46.99/btl

Supplies of featured wines are limited. Vintages and prices subject to change without notice. For up-to-date pricing information, call Astor at (212) 674-7500 or visit www.astorwines.com. Not responsible for typographical errors.

Classics

Alsace

Each region of Europe seems to have a dessert wine to call its own. The ridges and valleys of Alsace have a long history as a territory that has alternated between German and French control. While the nomenclature used on Alsatian wine labels is decidedly French, the climate and terroir are more akin to the lovely river valleys of Germany – so it's no surprise that we find the beguiling Gewürztraminer grape here, where it produces dessert wines that rival the most spectacular anywhere.

1994 Blanck Furstentum SGN
– This “Sélection de Grains Nobles” is akin to Germany's TBA, with its selection of botrytis-infected berries yielding a fat dense wine streamlined by aging with rich date and spice flavors.
#15950 \$199.99/btl

2001 Schoffit Rangen de Thann VT
- This late-harvest bottling possesses impeccable balance with an ethereal feel to its raisin, toast, and spice flavors and lengthy finish.
#16586 \$89.99/btl

2004 Weinbach Alten VT - This late harvest (or “Vendanges Tardive”) bottling has great acidity to back up its richly sweet core of spicy nectarine fruit.
#18020 \$89.99/375 mL

Vintages & Styles

2004 and 2005 yielded some great introductions to the world of German dessert wines. These two vintages perfectly illustrate the vast range of styles that can be achieved across the varied landscape that is Germany. In 2004, the long, perfectly warm growing season allowed for the production of wonderfully perfumed wines with ripe acidity backing up sweet yet remarkably fresh fruit. 2005, on the other hand, was a year of unrelenting sunshine and warmth, which filled the grapes early with high sugar levels and softer acidities, yielding some of the ripest, richest wines ever produced. For the purposes of dessert wines, the rigid classification regarding style and sweetness begins with Auslese, literally

For the purposes of dessert wines, the rigid classification regarding style and sweetness begins with **Auslese**, literally translated as “select-picked,” which refers to the winemaker's selection of grapes with higher sugar levels. These wines are noticeably sweet, but they are at the lower end of sweetness as far as dessert wines go. **Beerenauslese** refers to wines made from select over-ripe berries, and are produced in an unctuous style that is rich yet retains the sapid acidity so typical of Riesling. **Trockenbeerenauslese** is made from selected berries that are over-ripe and rasined, frequently infected with noble rot, and make the most honeyed of the German dessert wines. Once in a great while, conditions allow for the production of **Eiswein**, which is produced from grapes that have actually frozen on the vine. Made from grapes that have achieved at least the ripeness of Beerenauslese, these wines offer up an electric experience, featuring vivid acidity that supports and frames the richness of these ethereal, almost otherworldly wines.

2004

Wittman Westhofener Morstein Riesling
TBA
#15263 \$139.99/375 mL

Selbach-Oster Bernkasteler Badsube
Riesling Eiswein
#15271 \$108.99/375 mL

J.J. Christoffel Ürziger Würzgarten
Riesling Eiswein
#16731 \$99.99/375 mL

Gunderloch Nackenheimer Rothenberg
Riesling Auslese
#14111 \$46.99/btl

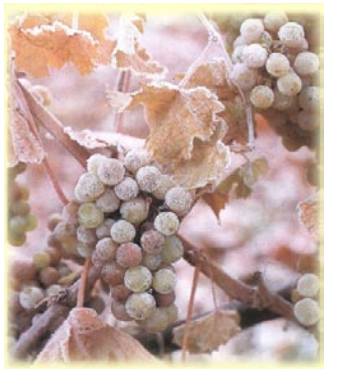
2005

Zilliken Saarburger Rausch Riesling TBA
#16784 \$379.99/375 mL

Willi Schaeffer Graacher Domprobst
Riesling BA
#89005 \$124.99/375 mL

Hexamer Meddersheim Rheingrafen
Riesling BA
#16967 \$69.99/375 mL

Graff Ürziger Würtzgarten Riesling
Auslese
#18268 \$21.99/btl



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California

Ridge

The long drive up the road that winds up the Santa Cruz Mountains to Ridge Vineyards is just one sign that the founders of this remarkable label were trailblazers. These pioneers chose this rugged hillside vineyard over land in one of the more obvious choices –such as Napa or Sonoma – not only because of the long history associated with these old vines, but also because they knew that the cool climate and limestone-rich soils of this plot would let them produce one of California’s most distinctive and original Cabernet Sauvignons. They called it Ridge Montebello. This commitment to a sense of place is evident in each of the distinctive and storied bottlings from Ridge. The Ridge philosophy is rooted in the vineyard, with meticulous viticultural practices and minimal intervention in the cellar. The results speak for themselves, as Ridge celebrates 55 years of leading the way.

2004 Montebello	
#65324	\$139.99/btl
2005 Lytton Springs	
#63264	\$33.99/btl

Eberle

Gary Eberle didn’t just found his eponymous winery; he is also responsible for founding the Paso Robles appellation. Through his dogged dedication to the cause, Eberle has achieved recognition for this Central Coast region with his exquisite wines. While in the minds of many it is still in the shadow of Napa and Sonoma, Paso Robles is actually an ideal location for the production of warm-weather grape varieties.

Unsurprisingly, Paso is now California’s fastest-growing wine region. The great climate, with its warm days and acidity-retaining cool nights, allows consistent ripening of grapes to produce a big, rich, burly style of wine that captures the exuberance and bold character of the region. The great climate, with its warm days and acidity-retaining cool nights, allows consistent ripening of grapes to produce a big, rich, burly style of wine that captures the exuberance and bold character of the region. The climate and the variety of soil types – ranging from calcareous shale to volcanic and sedimentary rock – allow for the cultivation of an unusually wide variety of grapes. In Paso Robles, the adventuresome spirit of experimentation drives the winemakers, whose treasures are often compared to those of northern Italy or southern France.

After over 25 pioneering years, Eberle is proud to be known as one of California’s most often honored wineries, ranking among the top ten gold medal award-winning wineries in the country. This unique combination of climate, soil and man can’t remain a secret for much longer, so reward yourself by exploring Eberle wines.

2002 Eberle Estate Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon – Rich cassis fruit with restrained of toasty oak that doesn’t obscure the dusty terroir.	2005 Eberle Vineyard Select Cabernet Sauvignon – Full of lush ripe berry fruit, this bold bottling has just the right structure for early enjoyment.	2004 Eberle Steinbeck Syrah – Rich notes of blueberry and cherry enhanced by peppery nuances. Perfect with hearty meat dishes.	2005 Eberle Sangiovese – Racy acidity and crisp tannins give this perfect varietal typicity: very enticing.
#18448	#18447	#18481	#18452
\$64.99/btl	\$14.99/btl	\$14.99/btl	\$19.99/btl

2005 Eberle Barbera – This wine benefits from decanting, which releases its earthy core of raspberry fruit supported by bright acidity.
#18451
\$19.99/btl

2006 Eberle Viognier – This is that rare California Viognier that retains good acidity and a full mid-palate, with classic notes of peach and ginger.
#18450
\$17.99/btl

2006 Eberle Estate Chardonnay - Simply put, all you could ask for in a fresh, layered, classic California Chardonnay.
#18449
\$13.99/btl

Style

Saxon Brown

Saxon Brown is the quintessential family winery, and it came about through Jeff and Terisa Gaffner’s determination to preserve and highlight the character of traditional field blends. Their great success comes from the humble notion that great vineyards make great wines. Jeff’s own Santinamaria vineyard, passed down from his maternal grandfather, is a case in point. Gnarled vines, still planted as a traditional field blend, produce concentrated fruit as different varieties bring unique traits to the table, producing a blend that is truly greater than the sum of its parts. This classic Sonoma Valley bottling has moved from strength to strength with each passing vintage as Jeff reinvests each lesson he has learned over his 25 years in the business, striving to perfect this singular expression.

While Saxon Brown’s roots lie in these field blends, the concept of great wine coming from great vineyards has extended to some of the finest sites in California. Jeff has sourced Syrah from cool-climate sites in the Parmalee Hill vineyard and from the Flora Ranch on Chalk Hill to produce excitingly different Syrahs that speak of the lands from whence they came. Whereas Syrah speaks, Pinot Noir – the ultimate terroir grape – positively shouts of its origins. No mater which wine you are interested in from Saxon Brown, be assured that it has undergone a nice slow fermentation and has been handled as gently as possible. These are truly artisanal wines, produced by traditional methods and lovingly tended until they are fully expressive and elegantly integrated. Much like the man who makes them, these wines don’t go by anyone else’s schedule in their pursuit of the perfect expression of these awe-inspiring vineyard sites.

2006 Parmalee Hill Pinot Noir	2005 Flora Ranch Syrah
#17216	#17215
\$41.99/btl	\$34.99/btl
2002 Casa Santinamaria Zinfandel	2004 Parmalee Hill Syrah
#17218	#17217
\$34.99/btl	\$34.99/btl

Black Kite

This extremely exciting project unites three generations of the Green family, a small piece of Anderson Valley, and the talented winemaker from Saxon Brown, Jeff Gaffner. The Anderson Valley (in northern California’s Mendocino County) has long been regarded as a perfect place for the production of sparkling wine. In this cool climate, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir grapes would be allowed to ripen in the shadows of the towering evergreen trees, preserving the subtleties of the fruit and producing some of America’s top bubbly. Slowly but surely, the word spread that the Pinot Noir fruit growing in these hinterlands offered the fragrance, delicacy, and texture that many felt was all too lacking in the typical warm-climate Pinot Noirs coming from the major Californian wine-growing regions.

Enter the Green family, who fell in love with California after moving to Sonoma in 1987, and later decided to move to Anderson Valley to establish Black Kite on land they bought from their in-laws – a real family story. This tiny 12-acre parcel consists of three distinct plots, one along the Navarro River and the other two stretching up the rocky, north-facing hillside above the river. The land is farmed sustainably, showing the proper respect for the land and its legacy. These carefully tended vineyards yield small crops of intensely flavored grapes that produce still wines with near-Burgundian finesse. You will not regret trying a Black Kite wine – but you may very well regret missing this rare opportunity.

2006 Black Kite Pinot Noir, Kite’s Rest
#18553
\$44.99/btl





Family

Edmunds St. John

Edmunds St. John is the joint venture started by Steve Edmunds and his wife in 1985. Remaining true to the goal of producing world-class European-style wines from ideal terroirs in California, ESJ specializes in wines made from southern French varieties. Their rich reds not only reveal their inherent fruit character; Steve's gentle traditional techniques also coax out the unique character of each piece of land and each vintage. While the wines are consistently good, and improve in the cellar just like the best California has to offer, consistency is not what these wines are all about. Rather, the belief that each harvest has something unique and intriguing to offer flows from each bottle.

2005 Wylie Fenaughty Syrah – A wine intimately associated with ESJ, being a blend that combines the perfumed juice from the Fenaughty vineyard with the power of the Wylie site to produce a Syrah that offers a classic Northern Rhône perfume of violets, pepper, and smoke.
#14520 \$28.99/btl

2004 Rocks and Gravel – This southern Rhône-style blend of Grenache, Mourvèdre, and Syrah is full of smoky, roasted notes and bright, ripe red fruits that scream for hearty grilled fare.
#11071 \$14.99/btl

2005 Shell and Bone White – A blend of Roussanne and Marsanne from the hills west of Paso Robles. The aromatics jump from the glass, offering up a full range of exotic spices couched in rich apricot and honey notes that are supported in the mouth by vibrant minerality.
#17557 \$19.99/btl

2002 The Shadow Syrah – Coming from a difficult year for Syrah, this declassified single-vineyard juice is full of plummy fruit and earth.
#16837 \$11.99/btl

Holdredge

John Holdredge's eponymous winery has begun producing limited quantities of what can best be described as transparent expressions of their Sonoma County vineyards. Non-interventionist methods make it a simple matter to differentiate between the vineyards and really learn the character of each plot.

2005 Wren Hop Pinot Noir
Plush and round with classic Russian River spices, this offers excellent depth and persistence of floral notes.
#17212 \$36.99/btl

2005 Russian River Pinot Noir – An ethereal bottling with straightforwardly earthy fruit.
#17211 \$33.99/btl

2005 Alexander Valley Zinfandel – With typically brambly, blackberry fruit, accented with smoke and cocoa notes, this is a classic.
#17206 \$24.99/btl

Sobon

In sleepy Amador county, famous for its "Mother Lode" region, a quiet revolution is taking place. Small wineries are moving away from the large-scale commercial farming practices of the past and are returning to the practices that originally helped to establish the Shenandoah Valley as a source of fine wine. The Sobon family chose to go the organic route all the way back in 1989, and they now farm their entire estate without the use of fungicides, pesticides, or chemical fertilizers. Treat yourself to one of this family's gems.

2005 Hillside Estate Zinfandel – Offering up classic old-vine richness with Amador's unique dusty tannins, this find is loaded with rich berried fruit and cocoa notes.
#16976 \$9.99/btl

Classics





Phelps

Joseph Phelps has a long and storied history producing some of California’s benchmark Cabernet Sauvignons. The long legacy of their flagship bottling, Insignia, is built on years of producing legendary wines from some of the most well-regarded vineyards in the land. Names like Eisele and Backus are famous because the care and attention put into these wines by the staff at Phelps has allowed them to develop into complex classics, revealing their terroir and the bold, rich fruit California is so famous for.

Insignia, California’s original Meritage, has consistently won the praise of those who seek out its Bordeaux-like structure and velvety depth of cassis fruit. A classic magnum!

2003 Insignia	
(#84264)	\$299.99/1.5 L

Shafer

Shafer Cabernet Sauvignon Hillside Select has achieved fame for its incredibly flamboyant palate. It’s densely packed with flavor and the uniquely velvety tannins that are the trademark of the Stags Leap District, where the Shafer team practices sustainable vineyard techniques for the production of this rare crown jewel of California Cabernet.

2002 (#14271)	\$399.99/btl
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Dominus

Pioneered by Bordeaux’s Christian Mouiex, the well-known producer of Ch. Petrus, Dominus has become synonymous with refined California Cabernet. Since 1983, the fruit from the historic vineyard that once produced the fabled Inglenook Cask Selections has been transformed into Dominus. Always seamless and impeccably balanced.

2003 (#14250)	\$119.99/btl
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Silver Oak

Silver Oak has risen to the top of the Cabernet hierarchy by pursuing a simple goal for over 30 years. Give wine enthusiasts a bottle that is richly flavored, well made, representative of its origins, and ready to drink the day it is released. With this simple recipe and two fantastic vineyards, Silver Oak has consistently delivered great values for Cabernet drinkers. The red-fruited character of the Alexander Valley bottling and the dark notes of the Napa Valley cuvée are each rich with the spice and savory tones that set Silver Oak apart.

2003 Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley	
#61615	\$66.99/btl
2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley	
#96029	\$99.99/btl

Montelena

Montelena has been an integral part of the history of Napa Valley since its founding in 1882. No other producer has attained such a flawless track record of producing coveted age-worthy Cabernets, consistently delivering the classic, rich, structured experience wine aficionados crave. These represent the pinnacle of Napa Valley Cabernet production.

2003 Montelena Estate	
#83614	\$99.99/btl

Bryant

Bryant Family Vineyards produces one of the few true California cult Cabs. These wines are almost impossible to source, but we have secured a tiny allocation just in time for the holidays. These are the rarest of the rare and will quickly be scooped up by the cognoscenti; as always, it’s first come, first served.

2000 (#86495)	\$389.99/btl	2003 (#16481)	\$449.99/btl
2001 (#84694)	\$489.99/btl	2004 (#17773)	\$599.99/btl

Opus One

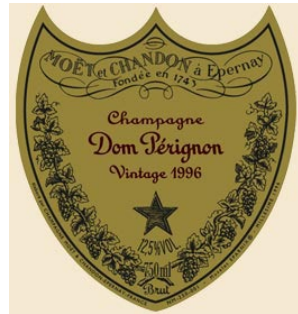
Opus One, the joint venture between the iconic Mondavi and Rothschild families has always sought to bridge the gap that separates Bordeaux from California by highlighting the soft rich fruit and texture that California provides while emphasizing the mineral and savory notes from soil and barrel aging that distinguish the finest Bordeaux.

2004 (#67004)	\$148.99/btl
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Champagne

Champagne is so intimately entwined with celebration that it scarcely feels like a holiday without a bottle of bubbly on the table. Today’s marketplace has seen an explosion of brands and styles burst onto the scene, so to help you select the wine that’s right for you, we present our **Simple Champagne Guide**.



On offer are both the traditional blends made by the large Champagne houses as well as the limited offerings coming from Grower-Producers. These artisanal producers can be distinguished by small codes on the bottle labels that start with two-letter prefixes:

NM (négociant-manipulant) is code for the big houses buying in wine; **RM (récoltant-manipulant)** refers to a Grower-Producer.

Knowing a bit more about the wine’s style also makes selection easier. The following label designations are listed in ascending order of sweetness:

Extra Brut/Brut Nature
Brut
Extra dry
Sec
Demi-sec

Dom Pérignon

No brand is as closely associated with fine Champagne as that of Dom Pérignon, once considered the creator of the original Champagne, and now credited with bottling the original Champagne, during the late 17th century. Whatever the truth may be, the fact remains that Dom Pérignon still produces the benchmark cuvée by which other Champagnes are judged. Always precise and balanced, never too toasty or fruity, it is one guilty pleasure you deserve to indulge in.

1999 Dom Pérignon – Opulent and youthful, yet coy and mysterious, with elusive smoky and peppery nuances to the crisp minerality and subtle spice.
#17384 \$149.99/750 mL
#17257 \$329.99/1.5 L

1996 Dom Pérignon Rosé Based on the power of Pinot Noir, this rich and creamy wine is bursting with strawberry fruit gently brushed with notes of forest floor and dried roses.
#16630 \$379.99/btl

Dom Pérignon maintains a selection of back vintages which are periodically released under the Oenothèque Label. These rare gems are perfectly matured Champagnes from the finest vintages. Quantities are very limited, so call soon.

1993 Oenothèque – Vibrant and fresh, this has just shed the flush of youth and is beginning to reveal deep notes of brioche and toasted raisins, with a mineral vein that runs through the weightless core of this near-perfect bottling.
#11472 \$279.99/btl

Moët & Chandon

Moët & Chandon produces the world’s most popular Champagnes. Always elegant, yet full-flavored, the wines tend toward the fruitier end of the spectrum with an opulence on the palate that is simply irresistible.

NV White Star Extra Dry is Moët’s flagship bottling and a consistent bestseller. Richly endowed with notes of orchard fruits and subtle tones of spice and soil, this is a classic Champagne for toasts, but it’s so flexible you can’t ignore its appeal throughout an entire meal.
#17402 \$18.99/375 mL
#17404 \$33.99/btl
#17407 \$64.99/1.5 L

NV Moët Brut Rosé – Rich and fleshy with unmatched balance, bright fruit, peppery minerality, and a long lingering finale of smoke and cherries, this is one to share all night long.
#10207 \$43.99/btl

1999 Moët Brut Imperial – With delicate notes that can only be drawn out of the wine through extended barrel aging, this nuanced example of vintage brut is enchanting.
#17424 \$37.99/btl

NV Moët Nectar Imperial – Full of sweet and beguiling tropical fruits with nuances of honeyed toast, this is decadent drinking.
#17414 \$37.99/btl

Guide



Krug

Krug may not be a household name, but fans of Champagne know it very well indeed. Everything from the small plots of choice vineyards to the painstaking and expensive practice of barrel aging to the final blending – everything is done each year by a member of the Krug family. All of this is in pursuit of the goal of offering the absolute best Champagne money can buy.



MV Brut – Krug’s flagship is their Multi-Vintage Brut. Expertly blended each year from dozens of lots to achieve the highest level of quality, it is powerful yet full of finesse, with lovely notes of cashmere-textured, spiced, toasty dried fruit to entice the palate.
#15524 \$119.99/btl
#15522 \$64.99/375 mL

1995 Krug – A bottling that preserves the essence of the season: in this case, a fresh and crisp character, perfectly captured in the vivid floral and grapefruit notes on the nose, caressed in the Krug style to reveal deep melon and gingerbread flavors.
#16631 \$199.99/btl

NV Brut Rosé – A recent introduction to the lineup, this cuvée relies on the red berry and dried rose notes of Pinot Noir for its strength, adding delicate spice tones to become a classic Krug.
#16404 \$319.99/btl

1995 Clos du Mesnil – An anomaly for Krug, this is a vintage-dated, single-vineyard wine, made only from Chardonnay. Perfection!
#15514 \$699.99/btl

Laurent-Perrier

Laurent-Perrier offers a complete range of Champagnes that are elegant and sensuous, yet remain compellingly complex and richly flavored. These wines are well suited to the dining table, yet never a bore to drink, with fine mousse and silken textures. The LP style is sure to please every palate

NV Brut – Impressively rich, with a high proportion of Pinot Noir and long aging on the lees – each contributing a layer to the depth that is highlighted by the crisp style.
#10016 \$29.99/btl

NV Ultra Brut – When conditions are right and the fruit is very ripe, this dry, airy cuvée is produced. It is perfect for caviar, with freshness and delicacy that are revealed through floral and mineral notes.
#15395 \$39.99/btl

NV Rosé Brut Cuvée – Supple and round, with an incredible depth of cherry and strawberry fruit seducing the palate. This wine never wavers from its goal: to refresh you and leave you prepared for more.
#10036 \$64.99/btl

MV Grand Siècle – A blend from 100% Grand Cru vineyards epitomizing the house style with delicate yet assertive notes of hazelnuts, marzipan, and honey, all in a round and savory package.
#10026 \$69.99/btl

Gardet

Georges Gardet has quickly emerged as a top producer of Champagne priced for everyday drinking. With access to over seven hectares of their own family holdings, as well as reputable growers in Champagne’s top vineyards, it is no surprise that there is a consistency and a broad house style that speaks to the quality of these vines. Done in a traditional style and with a well-developed sense of restraint, these are wines to linger over.

NV Cuvée Saint Flavy Brut – This is the house’s base bottling, with trademark harmony on the palate and long, lingering orchard fruits playing against classic tones of honey and spices on the zesty finish.
#15941 \$24.99/btl

2001 Brut Rosé de Saignée – Remains true to the house’s elegant style and commitment to expressing terroir, with its rich core of earthy Pinot Noir fruit and lovely structure. This appeals to the Burgundy lover in al of us.
#17121 \$56.99/btl



Brilliant

Boulard

Raymond Boulard is now operated by the fifth generation to work this precious land. Cognizant of their treasured sites, they have chosen to farm organically and work tirelessly in the vineyard to keep yields down and the vines thriving. All the wines are fermented with their natural yeasts to fully express the distinctiveness of these vines. The style remains quite dry as well, to keep the flavors transparent and light.

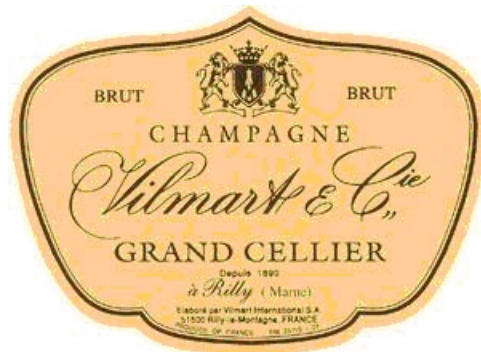
NV Mailly Brut Nature – Coming from the Grand Cru Mailly vineyard, this austere, crisp wine is a natural match for oysters and caviar with its airy mineral demeanor and nearly saline expression.
#16242 \$31.99/btl

NV Brut Rosé de Saignée – A rare blend of 50% Pinot Noir and 50% Pinot Meunier, the juice for this rich, assertive wine is “bled” off the skins as it ferments. Full of brooding dark berries.
#16246 \$34.99/btl

NV Cuvée Petraea – Having been barrel aged in some 30% new oak, this is a fine, creamy Champagne with the character of fine Burgundy, married to the subtle nuttiness and savory notes that make mature Champagne irresistible.
#16245 \$38.99/btl

Vilmart & Cie

Vilmart & Cie have been quietly producing exceptional and age-worthy Champagnes for well over 100 years. Done in the finest styles, easily competing with the likes of Krug and Bollinger, this house remains the quintessential insider’s secret of the Champagne world, as their modest production is quickly swept away into the cellars of aficionados all over the world. These fine Champagnes receive upbringings fit for the finest white Burgundies – from the new barrels used for the top cuvées to their prime, organically farmed vineyards. No element is ignored or left to chance in the production of these complex and age-worthy bottlings that consistently surpass expectations. Simply put, Vilmart is brilliant Champagne.



MV Grand Cellier Brut – A blend of the fruit and power of young wine and mature reserve wines that contribute a nuttiness and a silkiness on the palate. This is truly grand Champagne, as suitable for apéritifs as it is for Sunday caviar brunches.
#15018 \$47.99/btl
#17163 \$359.99/ 3L

NV Cuvée Rubis Rosé – With beguilingly fragrant notes of roses, red berries, and sappy herbs, this expresses a purity of Pinot character that entices the palate with its gentle bead and languid texture.
#14373 \$54.99/btl

1999 Grand Cellier Cuvée Rubis Brut Rosé – Raises the bar for rosé Champagne with added depth and richness coming from this powerfully ripe vintage. Fit for any feast.
#10195 \$74.99/btl

Voirin-Jumel

Voirin-Jumel is a récoltant-manipulant based in the Grand Cru vineyards of Cramant. For four generations, the family has tended the white chalk and limestone soils of these vineyards to produce Chardonnay fruit with uncommon verve and minerality. These wines possess an energy and a dynamic character in the mouth that sets them apart from virtually all other producers. This tiny estate is a hidden gem and well worth watching out for.

NV Grand Cru “Cramant” Blanc de Blancs – With the full force of youthful Chardonnay cut by impressive chalk minerality, this wine is dry, rich, and full-bodied.
#17836 \$29.98/btl

NV Blanc de Blanc 1er Cru – A blend of fruit from two Premier Cru sites that reveals a lush, precocious, ingratiating quality. Gentle notes of mineral and yeast frame bright orchard fruit.
#16241 \$31.99/btl

NV Voirin-Jumel Grand Cru 555 – With richness derived from barrel aging, this is weighty and authoritative on the palate, with a nimble yet evolved character that unfolds gradually.
#16244 \$39.99/btl

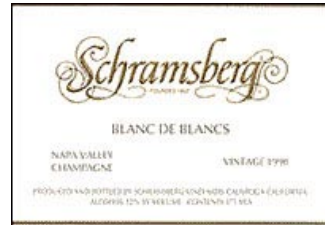
2000 Cramant Brut – This captures all the richness and power of the vintage, allowing the cut and verve inherent in the vineyard to balance the fruit, yielding a poised, seamless package.
#16243 \$36.99/btl

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Bubbly



Schramsberg



Schramsberg is synonymous with fine American sparkling wine. Long before the debate over American terroir began, Jack and Jamie Davies purchased the Schramsberg vineyard property in Napa Valley and embarked on an adventure. It took them from producing the first commercially available American sparkling Chardonnay, the 1965 Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs, to the present, when they are America’s premier producer of sparkling wines.

2003 Blanc de Blancs – With its inviting, open-knit quality and its citrus and tropical fruit aromas wed to a subtle framework of vanilla and toasty spice notes, this is simply irresistible.
#17714 \$29.99/btl

2004 Blanc de Noirs – Bright and lively, this vivacious sparkler can barely contain the berry and candied citrus aromas that soar from the glass. Creamy-textured flavors of crisp stone fruits and subtle vanilla.
#15771 \$31.99/btl

2003 Brut Rosé – Dry and crisply refreshing, with bright notes of citrus and tart cranberry enlivened by zesty, acid-driven notes of orchard fruit and roasted pineapple.
#17704 \$31.99/btl

Gruet

Gruet has one of those stories you might have to hear from a few different sources before you believe it. In 1983, the Gruet family, successful winemakers in Champagne since 1952, took a chance and planted an experimental vineyard 4300 feet up in the hills of New Mexico. The results were nothing short of spectacular. While New Mexican sparkling wine has yet to have much cachet attached to it, the wines speak for themselves and are consistently ranked among the finest domestic sparkling wines made. Take a chance – just like Gilbert Gruet did. You won’t regret it.

NV Gruet Brut – Defines Gruet’s house style with its full body and toasty richness from two years of aging on the lees. The full apple and citrus flavors are perfectly balanced, so drink it on its own or as an accompaniment to a wide range of cuisines.
#16934 \$12.99/btl

NV Gruet Blanc de Noirs – Shares the creamy texture and deep flavors of the NV Brut, yet in a different register: subtle toast and spice support brilliant raspberry notes through the long finish.
#17524 \$12.99/btl

J. Schram

J. Schram represents a minuscule portion of each year’s harvest and the culmination of over 40 years’ experience. With pear and crisp apple fruit buffered by buttery notes of fresh pastry, this is prepared to face off with the finest tête de cuvée.
#13144 \$84.99/btl

Italian Bubbly

NV Col Vektoraz Prosecco – This exceptional Prosecco is dry and crisp with trademark pear and peach flavors that make Prosecco so appealing. The vineyards are on rugged terrain which imbues this wine with a lovely, nervy mineral edge and nuanced floral notes.
#12957 \$13.99/btl
#17271 \$29.99/1.5 L

NV Vanzini Pinot Nero Extra Dry – With a suggestion of sweetness enhancing the rich Pinot fruit – suggestive of strawberry and cherry – this is a natural for casual parties, romantic brunches, and holiday celebrations.
#18301 \$18.99/btl

NV Ferrari Brut – This venerable firm continues a century-old tradition of producing Champagne-style wines from the foothills of the Dolomites. The wine is aged on the lees for exceptional richness, a full body, and layered complexity.
#18277 \$19.99/btl

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Chablis

2002 Louis Michel Grenouilles – This Grand Cru offers up a complex array of smoky and mineral aromatics highlighting the pea-shoot and stone fruit nuances of the fruit. Lush and showing just a touch of peppery spice, this still has baby fat to spare, covering its vibrantly structured core.
#14771 \$59.99/btl

Meursault

Meursault, in the heart of the Côte de Beaune, is perfectly situated to grow Chardonnay grapes. Its climate and soils yield open, giving wines that retain perfectly balanced acidity and minerality. Lively on the palate and perfect for aging. With its trademark hazelnut aromas, Meursault offers up a quintessential Chardonnay experience.

1996 F. Gaunoux La Goutte d’Or – A mature Meursault from such an exalted vintage is a rare find. Absolutely at its peak and needing a bit of time in decanter to fully open up, this has developed a luxurious texture and honeyed richness in the mouth. Supremely decadent.
#16302 \$99.99/btl

Chablis

A singular expression of Chardonnay coming from the northernmost reaches of Burgundy. In many ways, Chablis is more similar to Champagne than to most other white Burgundies. Austere – even severe – in their youth, with subtle and clean citrus notes on the bracing palate, Chablis is frequently free of the strong flavors of new oak. This is Chardonnay pure and simple, unencumbered and expressing its cool climate and chalky soils with precision. Within Chablis there is a hierarchy, Petit Chablis being (not surprisingly, given its name) the base bottling, followed by Chablis, Grand Cru, and finally Premier Cru, the highest expression to be found in this distinct corner of the world devoted to Chardonnay.

2002 Raveneau Monts Mains – There is no finer producer of Chablis than Raveneau, and this 1er Cru bottling exhibits all the pedigree and power one expects from Mont Mains, with just a touch of honey rounding out the steely palate. Pithy fruit is joined by notes of flint and anise to show a wine just breaking out of the slumber of youth.
#15906 \$104.99/btl

2005 Billaud-Simon Chablis – Subtly complicated, with notes of vanilla, tarragon and mineral. These flavors enhance the round peach character that falls seamlessly across the palate, expressing the ripeness of the vintage without excess weight.
#18418 \$22.99/btl

Chassagne-Montrachet

2002 Louis Michel Grenouilles – This Grand Cru offers up a complex array of smoky and mineral aromatics highlighting the pea-shoot and stone fruit nuances of the fruit. Lush and showing just a touch of peppery spice, this still has baby fat to spare, covering its vibrantly structured core.
#14771 \$59.99/btl

2005 Domaine d’Ardhuy Les Pellans – This was an excellent vintage for Meursault, as evidenced by this wine’s classic nose of roasted hazelnut and orchard fruits that rises from the glass. It’s fat and juicy. Exceptional energy in the mouth, however, prevents this voluptuous wine from becoming tiring or clumsy. A classic in the making.
#17712 \$64.99/btl

2001 Dauvissat Les Preuses – This cru always offers some smoky tones, and has a portion aged in new oak, so it’s not surprising to find this complicating element on the nose joined by rich anise-tinged pear fruit. With cut and verve to spare, this has entered its drinking window and begs to be paired with wild salmon in tarragon cream sauce.
#20784 \$74.99/btl

2006 Brocard Petit Chablis Dom. Ste. Claire – Clean, crisp, and uncomplicated, this is just right for a casual dinner or as an apéritif at a party. Round fruit and a crisp edge of minerality offer a glimpse of the greatness of Chablis in a friendly package.
#23692 \$14.99/btl

Puligny-Montrachet

2002 Louis Michel Grenouilles – This Grand Cru offers up a complex array of smoky and mineral aromatics highlighting the pea-shoot and stone fruit nuances of the fruit. Lush and showing just a touch of peppery spice, this still has baby fat to spare, covering its vibrantly structured core.
#14771 \$59.99/btl

2002 Jean-Marc Pillot Tillet –Though he uses the best of traditional and modern techniques, a reliance on intuition and improvisation has proven very successful for Pillot. Still enjoying the vibrancy of youth, this marries opulent ripe fruit with tight new oak, producing a wine that is both bold and layered.
#16184 \$58.99/btl

Burgundy

Corton-Charlemagne

The wines from the southerly slopes of the hillside of Corton benefit from the captured heat of the sun in the limestone-rich soil. Frequently compared to Montrachet, these wines recall Meursault with their rich, nutty character. The best combine opulent Chardonnay fruit with almonds, cinnamon, honey and oak. Stunningly complex, dynamic, and worth it.

2004 Jean-Claude Belland – This tiny cuvée from a minuscule plot of Grand Cru vineyards yields wines that consistently exceed expectations. Lifting notes of citrus blossoms on the nose call to mind top Montrachets; rich hazelnut and honey notes mimic the finest Meursault; flint and lemon peel on the long, spectacular finish put it in a league with the best Chablis. This is all tightly knit together with baking spice and smoky notes from barrel aging. One of the most complete white burgundies in years, this is simply phenomenal.
#16529 \$89.99/btl

Chassagne-Montrachet

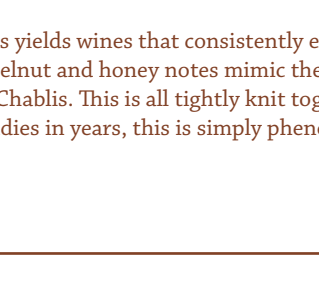
Located in the southern reaches of the Côte de Beaune, is home to some of the finest vineyards on earth, which produce some of the most complex and age-worthy whites in existence. The position allows for ample sunshine, while the soil, a bit richer in water-retaining clay, puts a touch less stress on the vines. The results are perfectly balanced wines with rich fruit, distinctive yet integrated minerality, and bright, linear fruit with a nuance of almond.

2005 Philippe Colin Clos St. Jean – Capturing the essence of Chassagne with rich aromatic notes of tangerine peel, yellow plum, almonds and white flowers. These set the stage for a fat, lushly textured wine, showing ripe pear and smoky buckwheat honey on the palate. Long, spicy, and dense on the finish, this is a powerhouse fit for any cellar.
#18005 \$69.99/btl

Puligny-Montrachet

Located in the southern reaches of the Côte de Beaune, is home to some of the finest vineyards on earth, which produce some of the most complex and age-worthy whites in existence. The position allows for ample sunshine, while the soil, a bit richer in water-retaining clay, puts a touch less stress on the vines. The results are perfectly balanced wines with rich fruit, distinctive yet integrated minerality, and bright, linear fruit with a nuance of almond.

1999 Puligny-Montrachet Drouhin – Coming directly from the domaine’s cellars, this is an approachable Puligny that has achieved maturity and is expressing classic notes of marzipan, tropical fruits, and a suggestions of balsamic vinegar. Round and open, this entices with its texture as well as its flavor profile.
#18239 \$34.99



Chablis

2000 Ramonet Chaumée –Ramonet is one of the masters of Chassagne, prizing the distinctive terroir contributions of each of these single-vineyard bottlings. The Chaumée expresses its dusty soil tones gently in a round and elegant wine that is nonetheless unfussy and easy to enjoy on its own.
#22405 \$51.99/btl

Chassagne-Montrachet

2002 Louis Michel Grenouilles – This Grand Cru offers up a complex array of smoky and mineral aromatics highlighting the pea-shoot and stone fruit nuances of the fruit. Lush and showing just a touch of peppery spice, this still has baby fat to spare, covering its vibrantly structured core.
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#17712 \$64.99/btl



Variations on

More Burgundian Delights

Great white Burgundy need not come from Corton or Chassagne. Many areas, particularly in the Côte de Beaune, quietly guard their limited production of wonderful Chardonnay. These are excellent regions for intrepid wine drinkers to explore: the quality in these small villages is skyrocketing as the next generation of winemakers comes on board and works to improve quality in this ever more competitive field.

2004 Domaine d'Ardhuy Savigny lès Beaune Blanc Clos des Godeaux – Exhibits the precise and bright nature of a wonderful vintage for white Burgundy. This is crisp and direct, with crystalline fruit, elegant balance, and a long, lingering finish.

#17587 \$31.99/btl

2005 Philippe Colin St.-Aubin Blanc Combes – Sharing exposition with the slopes of the Montrachets to the south, this wine is richly expressive, with zingy fruit buttressed by subtle spice and mineral notes that play bass to Chardonnay's brassy horns. Rich and ripe, this would be perfect with a traditional turkey dinner.

#18003 \$39.99/btl

2003 Pillot Saint-Romain Blanc La Perrière – Coming from the aberrantly hot 2003 vintage, this offers up delectable tropical fruit on the palate with deep mango and pineapple notes. Slight inflections of crystallized ginger and vanilla complete the experience. A stunning example of the influence of the vintage on this prime parcel just west of Meursault.

#13096 \$35.99/btl

Napa

Napa Valley is the heart of the American wine industry. Over the years, wine empires have been established, questioned, and replaced in the vineyards that blanket this long, craggy valley. One thing that has remained constant is the warm weather that contributes to the luxurious growth that the vines enjoy. While these conditions allow for grapes to reach levels of ripeness that are unheard of in most of Europe, at one time they posed certain problems for the winemakers hoping to compete with the finest European wines. One solution that has proven wildly successful was to barrel-ferment and age Chardonnay in new oak barrels. The smoky, toasty, spicy notes imparted by the barrels marry perfectly with the sweet and opulent tropical fruit that is so typical of warm-climate Chardonnay. Thus, a classic was born.

2004 Ramey Hyde Vineyard – Coming from the cooler reaches of Napa's Carneros district, this matches juicy apple and peach fruit with a light overlay of restrained oak that lifts the fruit and adds length. Subtly spicy with a distinct mineral twang on the finish, this is as good as it gets.

#74007 \$59.99/btl

2005 Rombauer – A textbook California Chardonnay bursting with sweet, tropical fruit well-balanced by integrated acidity. This is all complemented by subtle shadings of lightly toasted oak, adding vanilla and spice notes in just the right places.

#16488 \$31.99/btl

2005 Far Niente – Big and rich in the classic style, with ripe melon and fig flavors and subtle nut and spice notes. These are enhanced by the sweet and toasty oak notes binding the fruit, yielding a round, voluptuous experience.

#66534 \$54.99/btl

2006 St. Supéry Unoaked –Ever wondered where the Chardonnay stopped and the oak began? Look no further: your search for pure, unadulterated, ripe Chardonnay is over. St. Supéry now offers this clean, crisp example – a tasty mélange of Asian pear, peach, and melon flavors that remain fresh and unencumbered by the assertive notes barrel aging can impart.

#61954 \$18.99/btl

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Chardonnay

Sonoma

Sonoma Valley presents ample opportunities for exploring various styles of winemaking with its myriad cooler climates. Winemakers striving for a more complex product have gravitated to Sonoma's cool valleys, where the Burgundian methods of winemaking have produced subtle expressions of Chardonnay, some more akin to those found in Burgundy than in neighboring Napa Valley.

2004 Freeman Ryo-Fu – Full-bodied and richly endowed with flavors of tropical fruit, burnt butter, and toasted nuts. This is a complex, rich, large-scale wine, but it is never overpowering. Pairs well with rich dishes and buttery sauces.

#15836 \$59.99/btl

2005 Triple Overtime – Coming from famed hockey play Igor Larionov, this fine Russian River Chardonnay is actually produced by Miner Family Vineyards. In their classic, full-throttle style, this wine pulls no punches with its rich, sweet oak laid over chewy, fat and lush Chardonnay fruit.

#16885 \$44.99/btl

2006 Lioco Durell Vineyard – Firmly convinced of the quality and desirability of unoaked Chardonnay, the talented folks at Lioco continue to make a name for themselves as they expand their lineup to include some of the premier vineyards in California. The young Durell vineyard is full of Chablis-like citrus notes, with vibrant minerality that begs for a fine meal of oysters and caviar. A winery to watch, and a paradigm shift in the making.

#18155 \$45.99/btl

2006 Lioco Chardonnay, Sonoma County – Sharing the same upbringing as its big brother, this unoaked chardonnay is a touch softer and more accessible – making it the perfect choice for a holiday gathering or a simple weekday dinner when something purely refreshing is called for.

#18154 \$17.99/btl

2005 DuMol Russian River – This is classic Russian River Chardonnay, realized with the finest Burgundian techniques, which here have yielded a rich yet poised wine redolent of wet rocks and citrus oils. In the mouth, there is an explosion of ripe tropical fruits, all underpinned with subtle notes from barrel aging. Still a touch tight, this is exceptional wine that will only improve with further cellaring.

#16084 \$56.99/btl

South Africa

South Africa is doubly blessed: not only does it have some of the finest growing conditions on earth, great soils, and perfect temperate weather; it is also home to some of the most skilled, knowledgeable, and artistic winemakers on the planet. Taking cues from such disparate regions as California, Burgundy and Germany, they now produce unique and challenging Chardonnay in many styles.

2007 Danie de Wet “Limestone Hill” – So unusual that it really requires a try. Crisp and dry, with bright acidity balancing pure, unoaked fruit, this is subtle and vibrant with deep citrus fruit that will satisfy any aficionado who isn't already a convert to South African wine.

#16616 \$14.99/btl

Finally, In a Class by Itself:

The huge range of California wines and wine styles means that there will inevitably be wines that defy description and easy categorization. Some, like this wonderful Diatom bottling, nonetheless deserve attention.

2005 Diatom Huber Vineyard Chardonnay – Hailing from the Santa Rita Hills, this unoaked Chardonnay is grown in soils that are rich in limestone. While big and powerful, it has phenomenal focus with such deep saline minerality that it almost dances across the palate, leaving enchanting echoes of salted lemons and preserved mango on the long finish. Absolutely unique and so rare that it's a must-buy when you can find it.

#16487 \$48.99/btl

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