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– Ratings –

Vintage Charts



United States [/vintage-charts/region/united-states]

➤ California/Cabernet/Napa

< Return to All Regions [/vintage-charts]

Vintage

Score

Drink Window

Description

[2018 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2018&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](#)

99

Hold

A wet winter provided sufficient water through the dry, warm, even-keeled season. Ripening was slow under full canopies, and the drawn-out harvest allowed producers to pick when they wanted. A spectacular year, with wines that are rich and dark, but detailed, restrained in style and very *terroir-driven*

[2017 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2017&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=2017&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

92

Drink or hold

Drought broke over the winter, with lots of vegetation and healthy vines to start the season. Good growing season turned wickedly hot in early September, with no cooling-off period, then wildfires raged in early October, raising the specter of smoke taint. Napa's most difficult season in recent memory

[2016 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2016&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](#)

98

Hold

The final drought-influenced vintage of the run since 2012, this time without serious heat spikes. Rockier soils and drier spots ripened first, while heavier soils allowed for longer hang time. Wines show intense fruit against the backdrop of their varying *terroirs*; crop still down from normal

[2015 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2015&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](#)

94

Drink or hold

The fourth drought-influenced year in a row, plus a cold spell during flowering led to significantly lower yields. The smaller crop ripened quickly, though, with picking beginning in August. Quality is high but more variable than 2016 or 2013, as sugars sometimes raced ahead of phenolics

[2014 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2014&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](#)

95

Drink or hold

Heavy rains in February and March gave the vines an early boost—though not enough to break the drought—and from there warm, dry conditions led to an early harvest. Quality is very consistent, with the wines showing power and depth, as well as extra aromatic range. A beautiful vintage with a distinct signature

[2013 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2013&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](#)

97

Drink or hold

Practically a flawless growing season, with moderate temperatures throughout and no heat spikes or rain. Earliest harvest in 25 years started in August, but Indian summer conditions allowed growers to pick blocks as they wanted through late October. Wines brim with fruit and structure. A no-brainer benchmark

[2012 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2012&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](#)

96

Drink or hold

The first of California's drought-influenced run and a welcome return to warm, dry conditions following the rain-marred 2011 season. Record-sized crop with many stars; a solid vintage across the board marked by a tannic spine that will age well

2011 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2011& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	86	Drink or hold	Rare rainy harvest proved it can happen; few sunny spots, variable quality
2010 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2010& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	96	Drink or hold	Cool, steady year; wines show exceptional quality, tight, dense and layered
2009 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2009& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	96	Drink or hold	Late, cool year yielding a surprise bounty of pure, opulent wines

2008 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2008& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	96	Drink or hold	Frost year lowered yields but not quality; unique for its depth and concentration
2007 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2007& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	97	Drink or hold	Textbook year; small crop, ideal ripening, wines defined by complexity and plush tannins
2006 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2006& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	95	Drink	A late, cool harvest produced dense, concentrated and ageworthy wines

2005 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2005& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	92	Drink	Record-size crop; best are elegant and balanced, yet many are tannic and drying out
2004 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2004& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	95	Drink	Small crop of exceptional quality; ripe, elegant, concentrated and harmonious
2003 [/wine /search?submitted=Y& vintage[]=2003& varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon& regions[]=v18:California]	85	Drink	Uneven ripeness; austere and tannic in style. More like 2000 than 2001 or 2002

[2002 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2002&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=2002&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

93

Drink

Superb in Napa;
dense and rich,
rivaling 2001 for
depth and
complexity

[2001 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2001&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=2001&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

93

Drink

Excellent weather;
many stunning
wines but also a few
disappointments

[2000 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=2000&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=2000&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

85

Drink

Mixed and a bit
green overall, but
some stellar wines
that may be
overlooked and
undervalued

[1999 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1999&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1999&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

97

Drink

Tremendous depth,
concentration and
structure from a
cool, moderate
year; ageworthy

[1998 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1998&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1998&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

84

Past peak

Cool, damp year
with mostly green,
herbal wines
marked by gritty
tannins; few
memorable bottles

[1997 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1997&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1997&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

99

Drink

Huge crop of ripe, opulent, fleshy, concentrated wines, from near-perfect weather; super in Sonoma, too

[1996 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1996&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1996&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

96

Drink

A sleeper, with a remarkable number of compelling wines; warm year with fine concentration and depth

[1995 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1995&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1995&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

97

Drink

Surprisingly fine year, with wines marked by great flavors, balance and structure

[1994 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1994&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1994&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

97

Drink

A showy year all around; ripe, complex and fleshy, with excellent depth

[1993 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1993&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1993&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

88

Drink

Just off the pace, with well-balanced, supple wines; a few stars

[1992 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1992&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1992&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

93

Drink

Fine growing season led to uniformly rich, fleshy, supple and balanced wine

[1991 \[/wine
/search?submitted=Y&
vintage\[\]=1991&
varietal\[\]=Cabernet_Sauvignon&
regions\[\]=v18:California\]](/wine/search?submitted=Y&vintage[]=1991&varietal[]=Cabernet_Sauvignon®ions[]=v18:California)

91

Drink

Big crop, ripe and complex; a star early on, only to be eclipsed by others this decade

Notable older vintages: 1987, 1986, 1985, 1984, 1978, 1974, 1970, 1968, 1958, 1951, 1941, 1936

Vintage ratings: 95-100, classic; 90-94, outstanding; 85-89, very good; 80-84,

good; 75-79, mediocre; 50-74, not recommended

A score range indicates preliminary analysis based on barrel samples and/or a limited sampling; many wines of the vintage not yet reviewed.

Drinkability: "NYR" means the vintage has not yet been released; "drink" means most of the wines of the vintage are ready to drink; "hold" means most of the ageworthy wines have yet to fully mature; "past peak" means most of the wines are declining rather than improving.

SOURCE: *WINE SPECTATOR*