

Wine Spectator Insider

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FRANCE REIGNS SUPREME IN THIS WEEK'S *WINE SPECTATOR INSIDER*, jam-packed with stellar releases from Burgundy, Champagne and the Loire, up to 97 points, while noteworthy bottles from Napa and Washington represent the best of the New World. This is a report of the most exciting wines our editors have discovered in the tasting room in recent weeks.

Harmonious white Burgundy from masters Domaine Faiveley and Jean Chartron goes toe-to-toe with luxurious vintage Champagne courtesy of Moët & Chandon and Vilmart. Succulent dessert releases from the Loire show yet another side of France. Napa's 2013 Cabernet vintage continues to win accolades, with flavorful versions here from Bond, Schrader, Hall, Realm and more. Red picks from Washington round out this selection. Nine great-value wines rate 90-plus points and cost \$40 or less. Turn to page 4 for the six Hot Wines.

CALIFORNIA

BOND

Vecina Napa Valley 2013

94 points | \$NA | 460 cases made | Red

Remarkably complex, focused and structured, with a rich, fruity entry supported by fine-grained tannins and seductively creamy, mocha-tinged oak. Taken as a whole this is an enticingly complex and ageworthy effort. Drink now through 2030.—*J.L.*

SCHRADER CELLARS

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley CCS Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard 2013

94 points | \$175 | 520 cases made | Red

A robust and rustic youngster, undeniably powerful and deep, yet tightly wound and begging for cellaring and decanting. The dark red and black fruit is zesty, with minerally acidity, fine-grained tannins and a sense of refinement and elegance. Drink now through 2023.—*J.L.*

HALL

Cabernet Sauvignon Diamond Mountain District 2013

93 points | \$160 | 1,252 cases made | Red

Offers tiers of zesty wild berry and blackberry flavors, shaded by spicy oak, anise, black licorice and currant notes. The ending is plush and layered, maintaining focus and gaining persistence. Drink now through 2029.—*J.L.*

REALM

Farella Vineyard Napa Valley 2013

93 points | \$135 | 475 cases made | Red

A taut, muscle-bound mix of extracted dark berry, licorice, gravel, graphite and cedary oak flavors, all balanced in terms of weight and proportion. The tannins take hold and hang on. Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2020 through 2032.—*J.L.*

B CELLARS

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Blend 26 2013

92 points | \$90 | 295 cases made | Red

Deftly balanced, supple and graceful, with a lively, rich core of blackberry, licorice, black cherry and blueberry, making for a delightful fruit-bowl mix. The tannins are firm, but ripe and integrated. Drink now through 2028.—*J.L.*

BERINGER

Chardonnay Napa Valley Private Reserve 2014

92 points | \$44 | 11,200 cases made | White

The fruit is ripe and juicy, seemingly sweet and shaded by spicy, toasty oak, allowing tiers of flavors to unfold in a graceful, elegant and understated manner. Drink now.—*J.L.*

CARTER

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Weitz Vineyard 2013
92 points | \$150 | 120 cases made | Red

Tight, dense and chewy, with a wealth of gritty blackberry, wild berry, green and black olive, dried herb and savory flavors, framed by cedary oak. Begs for time in the cellar, so hands off until 2018. Best from 2018 through 2030.—*J.L.*

DAKOTA SHY

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Atlas 2014
92 points | \$175 | 250 cases made | Red

Flexes tannic muscle in a pleasing way, showing form, shape and density to the sinewy blackberry, currant, raspberry and blueberry flavors. Stretches the range of berry fruit while maintaining a sense of elegance and refinement. Drink now through 2030.—*J.L.*

FAR NIENTE

Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville 2013
92 points | \$155 | 11,575 cases made | Red

A refreshingly crisp and lively youngster, with snappy cherry, currant, plum and raspberry flavors at the core, showing shades of anise, crushed rock and oak. Impressively light-footed for Cabernet. Drink now through 2032.—*J.L.*

FRANCE

Burgundy

JEAN CHARTRON

Montrachet 2014
95 points | \$712 | 5 cases imported | White

This lip-smacking white reveals buttery lemon, peach and apple flavors, with a light dusting of spices. Creamy and underscored by lively acidity. Best from 2018 through 2032.—*B.S.*

LOUIS LATOUR

Corton-Charlemagne 2014
95 points | \$175 | 3,100 cases made | White

A charming, broad white, featuring lemon, baked apple, vanilla, clove and nutmeg flavors, with fine concentration and length. Shows a bright structure and chalky intensity on the slightly tannic finish. Best from 2019 through 2032.—*B.S.*

LOUIS LATOUR

Montrachet 2014
95 points | \$630 | 190 cases made | White

Rich, with vibrant acidity driving the lemon cake, peach and spice flavors. Harmonious and long, showing buttered pastry details and leaving a mouthwatering impression on the finish. Best from 2019 through 2032.—*B.S.*

FRANCE

Champagne

PIERRE PÉTERS

Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Les Chétilons Cuvée Spéciale 2008
95 points | \$140 | 100 cases imported | Sparkling

This harmonious Champagne offers fine interplay between power and finesse, with ripe poached apricot, rich lemon meringue pie and spun honey flavors married to chalky minerality and focused acidity. The overall impression is elegant and fresh. Drink now through 2030.—*A.N.*

BÉRÊCHE & FILS

Champagne Les Monts Fournois 2012
94 points | \$112 | 142 cases made | Sparkling

There's a vibrancy to this mouthwatering Champagne, with the lacy, almost buoyant mousse carrying well-spiced layers of crushed yellow plum, chalk, baked pear and lemon curd. Disgorged November 2015. Drink now through 2027.—*A.N.*

ALFRED GRATIEN

Brut Champagne NV
93 points | \$50 | 1,500 cases imported | Sparkling

Rich, with hints of brioche and honey accenting the patisserie apple, mandarin orange peel and candied ginger flavors. Shows vibrancy throughout. Drink now through 2020.—*A.N.*

LAURENT-PERRIER

Brut Champagne Grand Siècle Grande Cuvée NV
93 points | \$150 | 400 cases imported | Sparkling

Offers hints of toasted brioche and roasted walnut, layering a bright frame of acidity with a satiny texture and flavors of crushed plum, cassis, honey and ginger. Drink now through 2021.—*A.N.*

A.R. LENOBLE

Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Gentilhomme 2009
93 points | \$75 | 250 cases imported | Sparkling

Well-spiced and creamy, with a mouthwatering mix of baked pineapple, apple blossom, black cherry and mandarin orange peel. Fine and balanced. Drink now through 2028.—*A.N.*

PHILIPPONNAT

Brut Blanc de Noirs Champagne 2009
93 points | \$70 | 1,000 cases imported | Sparkling

Leesy on the nose, this firm Champagne is tightly knit, layering flavors of crushed white cherry, pastry dough, kumquat and spice with a chalky underpinning. Disgorged February 2016. Best from 2019 through 2030.—*A.N.*

POL ROGER

Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne 2008
93 points | \$140 | 100 cases imported | Sparkling

A mouthwatering Champagne, featuring a lively, lacy mousse and well-meshed flavors of baked peach, lemon curd and slivered almond. Drink now through 2028.—*A.N.*

FRANCE

Loire

DOMAINE DES BAUMARD

Quarts de Chaume 2014

94 points | \$50 | 80 cases imported | Dessert

Unctuous, with a gorgeously creamy feel that lets pear, peach, green melon and fig flavors drape beautifully, energized by a bright mirabelle plum note that develops steadily through the finish. Best from 2020 through 2035.—*J.M.*

MOULIN TOUCHAIS

Coteaux du Layon 2005

94 points | \$45 | 1,500 cases made | Dessert

Ripe and unctuous in feel, featuring creamed peach, mango and guava notes gliding throughout. Stays bright and defined thanks to well-inlaid chamomile and salted butter accents. Drink now through 2040.—*J.M.*

DOMAINE DES BAUMARD

Coteaux du Layon Clos de Ste.-Catherine 2014

93 points | \$55 | 30 cases imported | Dessert

Intense, with a racy, focused core of anise, yellow apple, white ginger and honeysuckle notes, stretching out with precision and tension. Best from 2018 through 2027.—*J.M.*

MOULIN TOUCHAIS

Coteaux du Layon 2002

93 points | \$40 | 50 cases imported | Dessert

This is hitting its stride now, with bright chamomile and quinine notes leading to a ripe, creamy core of peach, papaya and melon flavors. Drink now through 2027.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU DE LA ROULERIE

Coteaux du Layon 2015

93 points | \$22 | 700 cases imported | Dessert

Ripe and layered, with a mix of fig, pear, red apple and peach flavors giving this ample range. A lively ginger thread helps extend everything through the finish. Best from 2020 through 2030.—*J.M.*

WASHINGTON

ALEXANDRIA NICOLE

Cabernet Sauvignon Horse Heaven Hills Alderdale Destiny Ridge Vineyards 2013

94 points | \$42 | 427 cases made | Red

Broad and generous, layered with blueberry, plum, slate and sweet spice flavors, wrapping the long finish in prickly tannins that don't keep the flavors from singing. Best from 2018 through 2023.—*H.S.*

BETZ

Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Père de Famille 2013

92 points | \$75 | 1,000 cases made | Red

Firm and juicy, with spicy blueberry and currant flavors playing against a prickly texture. The bright flavors linger effectively and persistently. Best from 2017 through 2023.—*H.S.*

CADENCE

Bel Canto Cara Mia Vineyard Red Mountain 2013

92 points | \$60 | 225 cases made | Red

Firm in texture, with focused cherry and currant flavors set on a medium-weight frame, pointing into a long finish. Cabernet Franc and Merlot. Best from 2017 through 2023.—*H.S.*

L'ECOLE NO. 41

Cabernet Sauvignon Walla Walla Valley 2013

92 points | \$40 | 2,200 cases made | Red

Broad and open-textured, brimming with cherry, blackberry, floral and licorice flavors. The finish gains lift and momentum against buffed, fine-grained tannins. Best from 2018 through 2023.—*H.S.*

TWO VINTNERS

Lola Walla Walla Valley 2013

92 points | \$30 | 200 cases made | Red

Broad and complex, layering orange peel, black tea and meaty flavors with dried blueberry and licorice notes. Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2023.—*H.S.*

CANOE RIDGE

Cherry Street Reserve Horse Heaven Hills 2013

91 points | \$25 | 2,000 cases made | Red

Broad and expressive, with balance to the open-textured blueberry, plum and white pepper flavors, lingering on the finish. Syrah, Merlot, Grenache and Cinsault. Drink now through 2020.—*H.S.*

MERCER

Malbec Horse Heaven Hills 2014

91 points | \$20 | 862 cases made | Red

Rich and expressive, deep and open-textured, with a smoky, toasty streak underlying the ripe plum and blackberry fruit, lingering harmoniously on the finish. Drink now through 2020.—*H.S.*

NOVELTY HILL

Merlot Columbia Valley 2013

91 points | \$23 | 2,936 cases made | Red

Polished, focused, multilayered and compelling, with coffee-accented black cherry and floral flavors, hinting at apricot as the finish persists. Dances deftly. Drink now through 2022.—*H.S.*

PURPLE STAR

Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley 2013

91 points | \$19 | 1,200 cases made | Red

Sleek and expressive, with currant, cherry and floral flavors, dancing deftly into a long and harmonious finish. Has presence and grace. Drink now through 2023.—*H.S.*

SPARKMAN

Riesling Columbia Valley Birdie 2015

91 points | \$18 | 621 cases made | White

Fresh and tangy, with zingy, mineral flavors and acidity set against pear and spice aromas. Finishes dry and focused. Drink now through 2023.—*H.S.*

HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in *Wine Spectator Insider*. They are high-scoring wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

DOMAINE FAIVELEY

Bienvenues-Bâtard-Montrachet 2014
97 points | \$476 | 30 cases imported | White

Offers power and grace, showcasing lemon oil, peach, apple and white flower aromas and flavors. Harmonious, lulling you with elegance and a gossamer texture until the afterburners kick in on the superb finish. Latent mineral notes should emerge with time. Best from 2019 through 2034. *From France.—B.S.*

JEAN CHARTRON

Chevalier-Montrachet Clos des Chevaliers 2014
96 points | \$312 | 6 cases imported | White

An effusive white, featuring aromas and flavors of toasted baking spices, butterscotch, lemon and apple. Balanced and refreshing, with a spice- and mineral-inflected aftertaste. Feels approachable now, but should be better in a year or two. Best from 2018 through 2030. *From France.—B.S.*

DOMAINE FAIVELEY

Corton-Charlemagne 2014
96 points | \$333 | 50 cases imported | White

A fresh white, exuding lemon tart, apple, peach and toasted spice flavors. Elegant and racy, firming up on the stony finish and echoing notes of citrus and spice. Shows terrific focus and precision on the long aftertaste. Best from 2019 through 2032. *From France.—B.S.*

MOËT & CHANDON

Brut Champagne Dom Pérignon Plénitude P2 1998
96 points | \$350 | NA cases made | Sparkling

This vibrant Champagne is tightly knit up front, with a dense core of smoky minerality and ripe dried apricot and white cherry flavors. Expands on the satiny palate, revealing accents of pastry cream, toast, singed orange peel and toasted coconut that echo on the persistent finish. Drink now through 2028. *From France.—A.N.*

MOULIN TOUCHAIS

Coteaux du Layon 1997
95 points | \$49 | 25 cases imported | Dessert

Shows the power and depth of this great vintage, with a core of still-youthful mango, guava and creamed peach flavors streaming along, backed by light heather, honeysuckle and quince notes. The long finish is creamy and pure, displaying a lovely lining of brioche and lemon curd. Drink now through 2037. *From France.—J.M.*

VILMART

Brut Champagne Coeur de Cuvée 2007
95 points | \$150 | 150 cases imported | Sparkling

This expressive version offers a rich tapestry of baked currant, ground anise, clove, kumquat, fruitcake and toasted coconut flavors, framed by fine, crystalline acidity. Shows lovely definition and harmony, with a long, creamy finish. Disgorged April 2014. Drink now through 2029. *From France.—A.N.*

WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

Wine Spectator's tasting staff includes 16 tasters and tasting coordinators in two offices. They work together to review nearly 20,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our nine senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

We always taste wine blind, in our offices in Napa and New York. This is your guarantee that our reviews are fair and objective, and that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; initials appended to the review identify the taster of each wine. We score wines using the 100-point scale (see green box).

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1981. Tasting beat: California

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: Australia, Oregon, Washington

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Tim Fish Senior editor, Napa
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2001. Tasting beat: California

Gillian Sciaretta Tasting coordinator, New York
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2012. Tasting beat: France

Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

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|--------|-----------------|
| 95-100 | Classic |
| 90-94 | Outstanding |
| 85-89 | Very good |
| 80-84 | Good |
| 75-79 | Mediocre |
| 50-74 | Not recommended |