

Wine Spectator

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**BREATHTAKING
BEAUTY**

**CHÂTEAUX AROUND
THE WORLD**

**PLUS TUSCANY
AND NEW ZEALAND
TASTING REPORTS**

**CHAMPAGNE
POMMERY**



Chianti Classico

This region at the heart of Tuscany has long been a source of value for lovers of Italian wines, especially those based on Sangiovese. The good news is that the quality is better than ever, thanks to the conscientious work of vintners and a string of excellent vintages.

CASA EMMA Chianti Classico Vignaparco Riserva 2019 (94, \$34) Elegant, steely; cherry, raspberry, red currant, floral, wild herbs, tar

ANTINORI Chianti Classico Villa Antinori Riserva 2020 (93, \$35) Cherry, strawberry, rose, earth; charming, elegant, pure

CASTELLO DI GABBIANO Chianti Classico Cavaliere d'Oro Riserva 2018 (93, \$23) Fresh, harmonious; cherry, berry, leather, loamy earth

CASTELLO DI MELETO Chianti Classico 2021 (93, \$24) Blackberry, black cherry, pomegranate, mineral, spices, cocoa powder; sleek, polished

CASTELLO DI MONSANTO Chianti Classico 2021 (93, \$20) Supple, succulent; blackberry, black cherry, violet, earth, graphite

DIEVOLE Chianti Classico Casanova 2020 (93, \$28) Black cherry, blackberry, iron, tar, wild herbs, tobacco; elegant, structured

POGGERINO Chianti Classico 2021 (93, \$26) Harmonious, elegant, pure; black cherry, blackberry, violet, mineral

ROCCA DELLE MACIE Chianti Classico Riserva 2020 (93, \$31) Cherry, blackberry, iron, earth, tomato leaf, juniper, lavender, mineral; savory

SAN FELICE Chianti Classico Il Grigio Riserva 2020 (93, \$27) Bright, fruity; cherry, strawberry, rose, tobacco, Mediterranean scrub, mineral

BINDI SERGARDI Chianti Classico Tenuta I Colli Ser Gardo 2020 (92, \$25) Cherry, raspberry, floral, iron, spices; silky, elegant

CARPINETO Chianti Classico Riserva 2019 (92, \$29) Supple, balanced; cherry, blackberry, violet, spices

CASTELLO DI VICCHIO MAGGIO Chianti Classico Agostina Petri Riserva 2020 (92, \$28) Cherry, red plum, tomato leaf, loam; broad, fleshy

PODERE IL PALAZZINO Chianti Classico Argentina 2018 (92, \$28) Intense, muscular; raspberry, cherry, iron, tobacco, oak spices

CAPRAIA Chianti Classico 2021 (91, \$22) Black cherry, blackberry, earth, iron; firm, juicy

CASTELLO DI BOSSI Chianti Classico 2020 (91, \$24) Broad, powerful; cherry, loam, leather, iron, tobacco

CASTELLO BANFI Chianti Classico Riserva 2019 (90, \$22) Open-knit; blackberry, black cherry, plum, iron, earth

Kiwi Bargains

This selection of well-priced offerings from New Zealand includes a pair of Sauvignon Blancs alongside a handful of bottlings that show there are other grapes and styles beyond this island nation's signature white.

AMISFIELD Sauvignon Blanc Central Otago 2022 (92, \$20) Effusive, intense; candied ginger, dried pineapple, apricot, oolong tea, lime zest

ANT MOORE Pinot Noir Marlborough Estate Series 2020 (91, \$17) Cranberry, strawberry, raspberry, matcha; vibrant, creamy

MCBRIDE SISTERS COLLECTION Brut Rosé Hawke's Bay NV (91, \$25) Pretty, refined; fresh strawberry, cranberry, white peach, rose petal

ASTROLABE Pinot Gris Marlborough 2022 (90, \$25) Peach, pear, yellow apple, candied orange peel, apple blossoms, wildflower honey; elegant

ANT MOORE Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough Signature Series 2022 (89, \$15) Plump, juicy; ripe melon, nectarine, citrus, makrut lime leaf

European Tour

Spain, Italy and France are featured in this group that covers several different varieties. The blends here are typical of their regions—for example, Garnatxa, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon in Priorat or Valpolicella's mix of Corvina, Rondinella and Molinara.

SCALA DEI Priorat El Tribut de Scala Dei 2021 (91, \$16) Racy, crisp; raspberry, red currant, dried fig, smoke, Earl Grey tea, mineral

TERRE DI VALTER Greco di Tufo 2021 (91, \$25) Pear, apple, vanilla, anise, toasted hazelnut, white blossoms; fresh, creamy

CHÂTEAU D'AQUÉRIA Lirac 2020 (90, \$22) Pure, alluring; black raspberry, cherry compote, lavender, graphite, black pepper

GINI Soave Classico 2022 (90, \$24) Ripe green apple, pear, honeysuckle, pickled ginger, salty mineral; fresh, chalky

HAMMEKEN CELLARS Montsant Tosalet 2021 (90, \$20) Bright, balanced; raspberry, bitter cherry, herbs, milled pepper, stone

KURTATSCH Lagrein Alto Adige 2021 (90, \$24) Blackberry crumble, licorice, forest floor, smoke, spices; bright, expressive

TOMMASI Valpolicella Classico Superiore Rafaël 2021 (90, \$23) Plump, savory; black cherry, red licorice, violet, dark chocolate, earth, balsamico, herbs, spices

VAL DE MEIGAS Albariño Rias Baixas 2022 (90, \$18) Melon, lime, nectarine, pink grapefruit zest, salty mineral; vivacious, floral, balanced

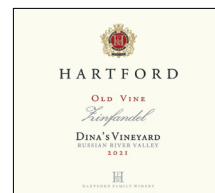
—Bruce Sanderson



CASTELLARE DI CASTELLINA Chianti Classico 2021 (92, \$22) **SMART BUY** Firm, intense; black cherry, blackberry, menthol, tar

SPECTATOR SELECTIONS

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED



95 HARTFORD FAMILY Zinfandel Russian River Valley Dina's Vineyard Old Vine 2021 \$60 CALIFORNIA

A Zin offering detail and dimension, this version features brambly yet refined raspberry and cherry flavors highlighted by roasted sage and cracked pepper, ending with polished tannins.

COLLECTIBLE



96 G.D. VAJRA Barolo Bracco delle Viole 2019 \$95 ITALY

This juicy Barolo offers vibrant acidity and a fluid profile that exudes cherry, raspberry, mown hay, mineral and eucalyptus aromas and flavors.

Tight yet long, with excellent potential.

SMART BUY



90 JOSEP MARIA RAVENTÓS I BLANC Extra Brut Vino Espumoso Blanc de Blancs 2021 \$24 SPAIN

Fresh and focused, this lacy, mineral version shows hints of smoke and stone, with a salty underpinning to the tangerine, yellow plum, almond and chamomile notes on the palate.

BEST VALUE



90 MATUA Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough 2022 \$14 NEW ZEALAND

This white delivers a fresh, lovely mix of Key lime, mango and Meyer lemon flavors, with a touch of salted ripe melon on a sleek, juicy frame, backed by a lingering hint of lemongrass.

IN THIS ISSUE'S BUYING GUIDE

You'll find **37 classic wines** and more than **450 outstanding wines** from among reviews of nearly **550 new releases**. Tasting notes and scores for those wines, along with **hundreds of additional wines** reviewed since our last issue, can be found at WineSpectator.com using the Wine Ratings search, a members-only service.

FRANCE

Rhône / Other

94 Les Alexandrins Hermitage Maison 2020 \$100 Shows impressive purity, with a beautiful beam of fresh fruit in a refined frame. Lush but not heavy, with spiced red berry, singed sage and rosemary underscored by shaved iron and elegant smokiness. This is drinking beautifully now, but has a very long life ahead in the cellar. Drink now through 2035. 2,500 cases made, 25 cases imported.—K.B.

93 Les Alexandrins Crozes-Hermitage Les Chafians Domaine 2020 \$45 Distinctive and savory, with dried sausage, toasted anise and smoked *garrigue* layered with black currant, cherry leather, licorice root and charred iron. Brooding, dark and full, the texture is creamy and mouthfilling, showing nice harmony and approachability. Reveals warm notes of mocha and bitter chocolate that linger at the end. Drink now through 2032. 2,000 cases made, 25 cases imported.—K.B.

93 Alain Jaume Gigondas La Grangette des Garrigues 2021 \$45 A polished yet honest red, with gently grippy tannins providing a solid frame for stewed plum and black cherry, coated in salty black licorice. Shows sandalwood, juniper and smoke that linger in the background, with nice concentration. Appealing. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2028. 500 cases made, 40 cases imported.—K.B.

93 François Villard St.-Joseph Reflet 2019 \$65 A serious, big-boned wine, with a deep core of winery black fruit and cassis. Becomes sanguine and savory as this opens up, revealing singed mesquite, baking spices and smoked apple wood laced with graphite. Gains lightness from pretty floral notes and vibrant acidity. Drink now through 2030. 1,159 cases made, 25 cases imported.—K.B.

93 François Villard St.-Péray Version 2020 \$36 Excellent, this lively white has a core of crushed peach, apple, herbal tea and beeswax liberally dusted in sea salt and flint shavings. Mouthfilling and pure, this deftly balances a round, ripe profile with vibrancy and focus through the persistent finish. Delicious. Marsanne and Roussanne. Drink now through 2030. 1,148 cases made, 35 cases imported.—K.B.

92 E. Guigal Crozes-Hermitage 2020 \$35 A generous, alluring red, with red currant and cassis amped up with sweet spices, tarragon and singed cedar. Reveals cured salumi notes that add earthy, animal richness to the dense palate, firmed up by savory acidity and slightly chewy tannins. Offers a spine of iron that reins in the lushness. Drink now through 2030. 45,000 cases made, 2,500 cases imported.—K.B.

91 Les Alexandrins Crozes-Hermitage Maison 2021 \$29 A fresh, expressive red, with a core of cassis, grilled *garrigue* and bacon fat overlaid with pretty violet notes. Supple and open on the palate, with mesquite, sweet clove spices and graphite lining the medium-bodied, integrated finish. Offers good energy and appeal. Drink now through 2030. 7,500 cases made, 1,500 cases imported.—K.B.

91 Alain Jaume Gigondas Terrasses de Montmirail 2021 \$46 Shows stewed plum, bitter cherry and fig flavors that are round and caressing, with fleshy richness on the palate. A slightly rustic style, with moderately grippy tannins through the finish. Offers mocha, black pepper and tapenade notes, which add to the savory, complex profile. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2030. 3,300 cases made, 70 cases imported.—K.B.

91 Alain Jaume Lirac La Grangette des Garrigues 2020 \$30 A well-crafted version, with impressive concentration to the floral, pepper-dusted cherry and crunchy plum flavors. Reveals good acidic drive that powers through, with tobacco, singed alder and smoky, dusty mineral accents adding intriguing earthy dimension. Structured and bold, this begs for food. Grenache, Syrah

and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2028. 5,680 cases made, 580 cases imported.—K.B.

90 Château d'Aquéria Lirac 2020 \$22 This red delivers a pure, alluring gush of black raspberry and cherry compote flavors, which are deftly backed by chalky minerality and suave tannins. Polished and poised, this is flecked with lavender and graphite accents that build on the fresh, black pepper-dusted finish. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2028. 2,500 cases made, 250 cases imported.—K.B.

90 Paul Jaboulet Aîné Crozes-Hermitage Domaine de Thalabert 2015 \$35 A distinctive, outlier older style, showing evolution in the balsamic reduction, tapenade and earth layered atop dried plum and mulled cherry. Supple and complex, with nice elegance and potpourri along the graceful finish. Drink now through 2027. 400 cases imported.—K.B.

FRANCE

Other

93 Château du Moulin-à-Vent Moulin-à-Vent Clos de Londres 2020 \$143 A powerful, smoldering red, with a tightly wound profile. Offers grilled mesquite, smoke and black tea notes that infuse a core of red and black fruit, with refined tannins holding everything aloft. Modern-styled with nice lift, thanks to snappy acidity and dried sage details. Best from 2024 through 2030. 40 cases made, 10 cases imported.—K.B.

91 Jean-Claude Mas Terres du Midi Astelia Le Grand Blanc 2020 \$50 Round and stylish, with inviting creamed pear notes and a tropical profile flecked with honeysuckle, white tea, toffee and earth. Buttery and creamy-textured, with good mineral energy. Reveals a bitter pithy grapefruit note that echoes on the smoky finish. Grenache Blanc, Viognier and Picpoul de Pinet. Drink now. 238 cases made, 120 cases imported.—K.B.

90 Domaine de la Chapelle Bizot Fleurie 2022 \$29 Presents pretty black and blue fruit, including black plum, layered with dusty earth and graphite shavings, which follow through on a supple, medium-bodied palate framed by fine-grained yet present tannins. Drink now through 2027. 2,000 cases made, 250 cases imported.—K.B.

90 Domaine de la Chapelle Bizot Morgon 2022 \$32 A fresh, ripe style, with a lot of stuffing and some tannic grip. Offers chalky mineral and wet earth notes, which underscore an alluring red and black berry profile and a pronounced licorice note. Harmonious and peppery, with a waft of smoke and savory acidity on the finish. Drink now through 2025. 800 cases made, 250 cases imported.—K.B.

90 Jean-Claude Mas St.-Chinian Mas des Mas 2021 \$20 See Smart Buys, page 93.

ITALY

Piedmont

96 G.D. Vajra Barolo Bricco delle Viole 2019 \$95 See Collectibles, page 92.

95 Ettore Germano Barolo Lazzarito Riserva 2016 \$110 A fresh, focused style, this red delivers ample cherry, strawberry, floral and mineral aromas and flavors backed by a vibrant structure. Reveals supple texture, terrific harmony and a complex, lingering aftertaste. This still has time to give. Best from 2025 through 2047. 430 cases made, 120 cases imported.—B.S.



SERGIO GERMANO
Owner & Winemaker

94 Damilano Barolo Cannubi 2019 \$95 A bright, solidly built red, with aromas of hay, cherry and plum leading to juicy fruit flavors complemented by wild herbs. The supple texture is offset by dense tannins, while the finish reveals sweet spices. Best from 2026 through 2043. 2,900 cases made, 1,500 cases imported.—B.S.

94 M. Marengo Barolo Bricco delle Viole 2019 \$68 A rich red, with cherry and blackberry flavors framed by toasty oak. This has hints of eucalyptus and tar that are buried for now, yet should become more expressive as time goes on. Shows lovely texture and harmony. Best from 2026 through 2043. 400 cases made, 200 cases imported.—B.S.

93 Pio Cesare Barbaresco 2019 \$85 A graceful, well-toned red, with a solid construction supporting aromas and flavors of cherry, strawberry, rose and graphite. Reveals flashes of tar and white pepper as this winds down on the resonant finish. Best from 2025 through 2043. 2,100 cases made, 800 cases imported.—B.S.

93 Ettore Germano Barolo Prapò 2019 \$75 A solidly built red, with pure cherry and strawberry fruit flavors complemented by iron, eucalyptus and oak spices. Turns firm yet remains elegant on the finish, where the fruit yields to spice accents. Best from 2026 through 2043. 500 cases made, 180 cases imported.—B.S.

93 Terre del Barolo Barolo Undicimuni Arnaldo Rivera 2019 \$45 Expressive, this version boasts pure cherry, strawberry, rose and anise flavors. Elegant, turning more structured as this winds down on the vibrant finish. Gains complexity from tar and wild herb details. Best from 2026 through 2043. 4,200 cases made, 1,650 cases imported.—B.S.

93 Giovanni Viberti Barolo Buon Padre 2019 \$57 An inviting red, delivering an appealing mix of lushness and vibrancy, with a tightly wound structure penetrated by cherry, raspberry, stony mineral and underbrush aromas and flavors. Stays long and complex on the finish. Best from 2026 through 2046. 4,500 cases made, 1,500 cases imported.—B.S.

92 Pio Cesare Barolo 2019 \$85 A savory red, displaying macerated cherry and currant fruit aligned with eucalyptus, rosemary and earth flavors. Dense and lively, ending with a solid grip of tannins. Fresh and on the austere side. Best from 2026 through 2042. 5,800 cases made, 3,500 cases imported.—B.S.

92 Damilano Barolo Lecinquevigne 2019 \$40 A taut, linear red, with macerated cherry and plum flavors augmented by hay, spices and iron. This has ample fruit and savory notes waiting to shine through once the tannic structure mellows. Best from 2026 through 2045. 5,800 cases made, 4,000 cases imported.—B.S.

92 Ettore Germano Barolo Cerretta 2019 \$78 Shows reserved aromas that hint at cherry, licorice and menthol, while the flavors express macerated cherry, plum, leather and black pepper. This red is tightly wound, with a fresh, balanced finish. Best from 2026 through 2042. 1,130 cases made, 380 cases imported.—B.S.

92 Ettore Germano Barolo del Comune di Serralunga d'Alba 2019 \$58 Taut and dense, exhibiting cherry, currant, loam, iron and tobacco flavors. Builds on the palate, gaining fruit and refined tannins that define the finish, with excellent balance. Best from 2026 through 2043. 1,300 cases made, 720 cases imported.—B.S.

92 G.D. Vajra Barolo Albe 2019 \$40 Offers a whiff of grilled beef that gives way to flavors of cherry, raspberry, rose hip and mineral. Compact, even austere, as assertive tannins emerge on the resonant finish. Best from 2026 through 2045. 6,500 cases made.—B.S.

90 Quinto Chionetti & Figlio Dogliani Briccolero 2021 \$28 A vibrant red, with lively acidity driving flavors of blackberry, black cherry and mineral. Firms up on the persistent finish. Drink now through 2027. 2,000 cases made, 800 cases imported.—B.S.