

# Wine Spectator Insider

Marvin R. Shanken *Editor and Publisher*

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**BRICK-HOUSE CALIFORNIA CABERNETS**, seductive Syrahs and regal red Burgundies dominate this week's *Wine Spectator Insider*, at up to 96 points. This is a selection of some favorite new releases our editors have recently tasted.

California has Napa Cabernet from top vintages and hot names such as Pine Ridge, Round Pond, Rudius and Silver Oak, but don't miss California Chardonnay and bubbly from achievers like Saxon Brown, Iron Horse and Schramsberg. For Pinot, look to Burgundy, where Claude Dugat, G. Roumier and Louis Latour ably ply *grands* and *premiers crus*.

Finally, Washington's single-vineyard Syrahs fly high, with the latest from Reynvaan, Gorman and J&J. Find great variety among our six Hot Wines on page 4.

## CALIFORNIA

### FLORA SPRINGS

**Cabernet Sauvignon Rutherford Hillside Reserve 2012**  
**92 points | \$125 | 379 cases made | Red**

A sizable offering of rich, dense, extracted dark berry, mocha, espresso, cedar and hazelnut flavors, this delivers a pleasurable mouthful of gutsy Cabernet that won't disappoint fans of the style. Drink now through 2028.—J.L.

### GRASSI

**Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2012**  
**92 points | \$75 | 725 cases made | Red**

Rich and juicy, with pure blackberry, black licorice and olive flavors, offering a supple texture that firms nicely on the graceful finish. Features firm, dusty, cedary tannins. Drink now through 2028.—J.L.

### MITHRA

**Cabernet Sauvignon Mount Veeder 2012**  
**92 points | \$190 | 250 cases made | Red**

Dense, rich and concentrated, with layers of chewy blackberry, wild berry, black licorice and fresh-turned earth, accented by cedary details. This style requires patience but may always be on the tannic side. Best from 2016 through 2030.—J.L.

### PINE RIDGE

**Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain 2012**  
**92 points | \$100 | 521 cases made | Red**

Firm and well-focused on a concentrated core of dark berry, loamy, gravelly earth, black licorice and dill-scented oak. Needs time to open up, but the way the flavors cling to the palate is impressive. Drink now through 2028.—J.L.

### ROUND POND ESTATE

**Cabernet Sauvignon Rutherford 2012**  
**92 points | \$60 | 8,700 cases made | Red**

Delivers a pure, bright, supple core of wild berry, raspberry and blackberry that is intense, focused, dense and persistent. The flavors cascade on the finish, echoing mineral and crushed rock details. Drink now through 2028.—J.L.

### RUDIUS

**Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2012**  
**92 points | \$68 | 551 cases made | Red**

Presents a riveting mix of jazzy, toasty, mocha-scented oak and firm, graceful notes of currant, dark berry, savory herb and loamy earth. Well-focused and persistent on the finish, and impressively restrained. Drink now through 2027.—J.L.

## SILVER OAK

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2010  
**92 points | \$110 | 26,000 cases made | Red**

Shows a good touch of bottle age and a notably oaky presence, marked by dill, vanilla bean and coconut notes wrapped around a rich, authoritative, full-bodied core of loamy earth, dark berry, licorice and espresso. Drink now through 2028.—*J.L.*

## RED STITCH

Chardonnay Santa Lucia Highlands  
Sierra Mar Vineyard 2013  
**92 points | \$50 | 100 cases made | White**

This is notable for the creamy, supple texture and purity of fruit, with tiers of ripe fig, pear, melon, apricot and light toasty oak folding together on the finish, where the flavors linger. Drink now.—*J.L.*

## BARNETT

Cabernet Sauvignon Spring Mountain District 2012  
**91 points | \$75 | 1,400 cases made | Red**

Well-proportioned, with a complex mix of red berry, cherry and wild berry, turning supple and subtle midpalate and ending with a tasty burst of fruit. Drink now through 2028.—*J.L.*

## IRON HORSE

Brut Green Valley of Russian River Valley  
Classic Vintage 2010  
**91 points | \$42 | 3,555 cases made | Sparkling**

Supple and richly styled, with aromas of tart apple and spiced hazelnut leading to layered flavors of Meyer lemon, brioche and zesty cinnamon. Drink now.—*T.F.*

## SCHRAMSBERG

Reserve North Coast 2006  
**90 points | \$110 | 1,570 cases made | Sparkling**

Modest apple and raspberry aromas open to rich flavors of apple pie, spiced ginger and toasted hazelnut. Drink now.—*T.F.*

# FRANCE

## Burgundy

### LÉCHENEAUT

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Pruliers 2012  
**93 points | \$140 | 17 cases imported | Red**

Offers pure aromas and flavors of blackberry, blueberry and violet, shaded by sweet spice and smoke. Balanced and on the beefy side, with grainy tannins and vanilla, toast and blackberry accents in the aftertaste. Best from 2018 through 2030.—*B.S.*

### DOMAINE DE LA VOUGERAIE

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Damodes 2012  
**93 points | \$138 | 10 cases imported | Red**

Floral, berry and spice aromas and flavors signal this elegant, racy red. Tightens up with bound tannins, but the sweet fruit persists on the lingering aftertaste. Best from 2018 through 2033.—*B.S.*

### HENRI GOUGES

Nuits-St.-Georges Clos des Porrets St.-Georges 2012  
**93 points | \$95 | 300 cases imported | Red**

Cherry and strawberry flavors override the slight reduction, led by the vibrant structure to a long, mouthwatering conclusion. Balanced, pure and focused, if compact, with a tight finish. This improves with air, so decant now or be patient. Best from 2018 through 2032.—*B.S.*

### DOMAINE DE LA VOUGERAIE

Gevrey-Chambertin La Justice 2012  
**93 points | \$65 | 6 cases imported | Red**

Well-marked by new oak, this leads off with vanilla and toast aromas. The cherry and black currant flavors lurk underneath, marshaled by vivid acidity and embedded, chalky tannins. Hangs together through the lingering aftertaste of fruit and spice. Best from 2020 through 2035.—*B.S.*

### CLAUDE DUGAT

Gevrey-Chambertin 2012  
**93 points | \$250 | 20 cases imported | Red**

Enticing aromas of ripe cherry, bilberry, floral and spice highlight this rich, supple red. There's no shortage of structure, with muscular tannins underneath. Offers an excellent cherry, smoke and mineral finish. Best from 2018 through 2028.—*B.S.*

### G. ROUMIER

Morey-St.-Denis Clos de la Bussière 2012  
**93 points | \$160 | 159 cases imported | Red**

Opulent and dense, with vivid acidity driving the black cherry, plum and spice flavors. This picks up a stony note on the long, muscular finish. Impressive, but needs time. Best from 2017 through 2030.—*B.S.*

### JEAN GRIVOT

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Charmois 2012  
**93 points | \$100 | 90 cases imported | Red**

A linear, mineral-driven style, with compact black cherry, black currant and violet flavors. This racy version turns chalky on the long, mouthwatering finish, echoing the sweet fruit. Fine harmony. Best from 2019 through 2033.—*B.S.*

### LOUIS LATOUR

Romanée St.-Vivant Les Quatre Journaux 2012  
**93 points | \$760 | 285 cases made | Red**

Rich and succulent, exhibiting sweet cherry and raspberry flavors framed by tobacco and spice accents. Elegant and beautifully balanced, finishing with a long, fruit-filled aftertaste. Best from 2019 through 2032.—*B.S.*

### LUCIEN LE MOINE

Pommard Les Epenots 2012  
**93 points | \$160 | 74 cases made | Red**

The core of saturated cherry, strawberry and spice flavors is amplified by a vibrant structure and well-integrated oak in this suave red. The finish echoes sweet fruit and spice, picking up a mineral accent. Best from 2019 through 2032.—*B.S.*

## LOUIS JADOT

Clos Vougeot 2012

**92 points | \$198 | 100 cases imported | Red**

The pure cherry and raspberry flavors are driven by vivid acidity and a firm base of tannins, keeping this lean and tense, with an innate minerality. Still a bit tight and compact on the finish, but this finds equilibrium with some sweet fruit. Best from 2019 through 2032.—*B.S.*

## TOLLOT-BEAUT

Beaune Grèves 2012

**92 points | \$100 | 45 cases imported | Red**

The cherry, strawberry and floral flavors ride a silky texture, firming up as this unfolds on the finish. Balanced in a slim way, with a fresh, lingering aftertaste. Very pure. Picks up density with air. Best from 2017 through 2027.—*B.S.*

## TOLLOT-BEAUT

Corton 2012

**92 points | \$145 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Effusive aromas and flavors of graphite, wild cherry and spice play out on the rich texture, supported by bracing acidity. The tannins are well-behaved, if on the dusty, chalky side. Best from 2019 through 2035.—*B.S.*

## DOMAINE CHEVILLON-CHEZEAUX

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Busselots 2012

**92 points | \$60 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Light in color and body, with pure, intense flavors of cherry, strawberry, currant and spice. Elegant and juicy, firmly structured and balanced in a lean, athletic way. Very persistent. Best from 2018 through 2027.—*B.S.*

## DOMAINE FAIVELEY

Beaune Clos de l'Écu 2012

**92 points | \$78 | 110 cases imported | Red**

Exhibits fine purity to the cherry, strawberry, floral and mineral notes. Aligned to a tensile frame, the flavors are stretched taut, remaining persistent through the long aftertaste. Clean and focused. Best from 2018 through 2029.—*B.S.*

## DOMAINE FAIVELEY

Chambolle-Musigny La Combe d'Orveau 2012

**92 points | \$236 | 10 cases imported | Red**

Sweet oak lends vanilla and toasty accents to the core of cherry and strawberry fruit. Linear in profile, with freshness and dusty tannins framing the candied berry notes on the long finish. Best from 2017 through 2027.—*B.S.*

## DOMAINE PERROT-MINOT

Morey-St.-Denis La Rue de Vergy 2012

**92 points | \$105 | 37 cases imported | Red**

This is bright and scented with cherry, spice and woody aromas. Well-structured, with spice and mineral notes emerging on the palate. Needs time to find balance, finishing long and with solid grip. Best from 2018 through 2030.—*B.S.*

## ALAIN MICHELOT

Nuits-St.-Georges La Richemone 2012

**92 points | \$80 | 200 cases made | Red**

The violet, black currant and blackberry flavors saturate the palate in this burly red. The dusty tannins will require some time to integrate. Though a little gruff now, this should be fine in time. The fruit returns on the finish. Best from 2018 through 2033.—*B.S.*

# WASHINGTON

## Syrah

## ADAMANT

Syrah Walla Walla Valley Artisan 2012

**93 points | \$40 | 150 cases made | Red**

Rich and ripe, with seductive aromas and flavors of plum, currant and exotic spice, coming together into a long and harmonious finish that doesn't quit. The tannins are nicely submerged. Drink now through 2020.—*H.S.*

## J&J

Syrah Walla Walla Valley Les Collines Vineyard 2012

**93 points | \$30 | 102 cases made | Red**

Focusing the black cherry, mulberry, citrus and mineral flavors into a bright beam, this plays against the polished tannins and leaps out of the glass with vividness. Has a welcome sense of spaciousness without great weight. Drink now through 2022.—*H.S.*

## REYNVAAN

Syrah Walla Walla Valley Foothills Reserve Foothills In The Sun Vineyard 2012

**92 points | \$65 | 210 cases made | Red**

Ripe and expressive, open-textured and seductive, with black olive and bacon overtones to the blackberry and spice flavors, lingering effortlessly against polished tannins. Drink now through 2022.—*H.S.*

## REYNVAAN

Syrah Walla Walla Valley The Unnamed In The Rocks Vineyard 2012

**92 points | \$65 | 450 cases made | Red**

Lithe, fresh and focused, with blueberry, plum and currant fruit picking up hints of clove and apple skin as the finish sails on against refined tannins. Has presence and persistence without great weight. Drink now through 2020.—*H.S.*

## GORMAN

Syrah Yakima Valley The Sleeping Giant Boushey Vineyard 2012

**91 points | \$75 | 110 cases made | Red**

Broad and expressive, with a juicy streak of tomato and spice running through the dark berry and currant flavors, coming together on the long, harmonious finish against a light veil of tannins. Drink now through 2019.—*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.

## REYNVAAN

Syrah Walla Walla Valley In The Hills Foothills  
In The Sun Vineyard 2012  
**96 points | \$60 | 260 cases made | Red**

Plush and expressive, dripping with blueberry, plum and cream flavors, this features a savory aromatic note of river rock and white pepper on the long, seamless finish. Not a huge wine, but fleshy and seductive. A subtle hint of mineral wakes things up on the coda. Drink now through 2022. *From Washington.—H.S.*

## CLAUDE DUGAT

Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru 2012  
**95 points | \$250 | 20 cases imported | Red**

A combination of elegance and concentration, this red exhibits black cherry, blackberry, violet, mineral and spice flavors on a firm, tensile structure. Balanced and pure, but needs time for all the components to come together. Finishes with a touch of black pepper. Best from 2020 through 2038. *From France.—B.S.*

## REYNVAAN

Syrah Walla Walla Valley The Contender  
In The Rocks Vineyard 2012  
**94 points | \$75 | 390 cases made | Red**

Multilayered, complex and inviting, this offers an open feel to the plum, blackberry, black olive and black tea flavors, lingering easily on the polished, refined finish. Drink now through 2022. *From Washington.—H.S.*

## G. ROUMIER

Chambolle-Musigny Les Cras 2012  
**94 points | \$220 | 67 cases imported | Red**

A mix of cherry, black currant, violet, licorice and sandalwood aromas and flavors signals this intense, elegant red. Firms up nicely, yet lingers on the aftertaste, revealing the potential for development. Best from 2018 through 2032. *From France.—B.S.*

## SAXON BROWN

Chardonnay Carneros Sangiacomo Vineyard  
Green Acres Hill 2012  
**93 points | \$48 | 197 cases made | White**

Presents a distinctive flavor profile, featuring clean, pure and complex scents of tangerine, nectarine and guava. Elegant, stylish, graceful and lingering on the finish. Drink now. *From California.—J.L.*

## SCHRAMSBERG

Brut Blanc de Blancs North Coast 50th Anniversary  
Late Disgorged 2004  
**93 points | \$95 | 822 cases made | Sparkling**

Luxurious and stylish, with bold aromas of apple, brioche and spiced ginger, offering layered, supple flavors of lemon and accents of hazelnut and dried fig. Drink now. *From California.—T.F.*

## 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).

**James Laube** Senior editor, Napa  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1981. Tasting beat: California

**Harvey Steiman** Editor at large, San Francisco  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat:  
Australia, Oregon, Washington

**Kim Marcus** Managing editor, New York  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat:  
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**Thomas Matthews** Executive editor, New York  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Spain

**Bruce Sanderson** Tasting director, New York  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1993. Tasting beat: Burgundy, Italy

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**Alison Napjus** Senior editor, New York  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2000. Tasting beat: Alsace, Beaujolais, Champagne, Italy

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

#### *Wine Spectator's* 100-Point Scale

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