

Wine Spectator Insider

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CLASSIC-SCORING BOTTLINGS FROM ACROSS THE WORLD dominate this week's *Wine Spectator Insider*, with top achievers from California, Oregon, France, Italy and Portugal, up to 99 points. This is a report of the most exciting wines our editors have discovered in the tasting room in recent weeks.

Towering reds from Golden State luminaries Saxum, Hall, Pruet and Pete Seghesio's new San Lorenzo label contrast with elegant Oregon Pinot Noirs from Ken Wright and Antica Terra. Chablis from Billaud-Simon offers refined refreshment, while bold Italian reds from Piedmont and Tuscany, including the latest release of Antinori's famed Solaia bottling, deliver depth and power suited to the cellar. Two spectacular Ports, one containing wine dating to 1867, come in just shy of perfect scores. A stunning 18 wines here scored 95-plus points. Turn to page 4 for the six Hot Wines.

CALIFORNIA

HALL

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Jack's Masterpiece 2013
95 points | \$125 | 3,919 cases made | Red

A brilliant effort, rich and layered, capturing tiers of espresso-laced dark berry flavors, mocha-scented oak and notes of blackberry, licorice, hazelnut and brownie. Maintains focus, with a long, persistent finish that echoes the core flavor themes. Drink now through 2032.—*J.L.*

PRUETT

Syrah Sierra Foothills Taylor's Reserve 2014
95 points | \$46 | 110 cases made | Red

Rich, complex and expressive, with bold and floral blueberry and melted licorice aromas and mouthcoating flavors of blackberry, smoky beef and river stone that linger toward big, ripe tannins. Drink now through 2028.—*T.F.*

ROAR

Syrah Santa Lucia Highlands Rosella's Vineyard 2014
95 points | \$42 | 110 cases made | Red

Offering striking depth and polish, this Syrah is irresistible now but will improve in the cellar. Floral blackberry and smoky pepper aromas open to rich, plush flavors of tapenade, cured meat and blueberry that linger. Drink now through 2028.—*T.F.*

SAN LORENZO

The Pearl Old Vine Alexander Valley 2014
95 points | \$70 | 108 cases made | Red

Combines structure and polish with a distinctive personality. Licorice, clove and smoked pepper aromas open to ripe but refined flavors that layer blackberry, spicy cinnamon and bay leaf. Tannins focus the finish. Zinfandel, Carignane, Alicante Bouschet, Grand Noir, Negrette and Petite Sirah. Drink now through 2021.—*T.F.*

ADOBE ROAD

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beckstoffer Vineyard Georges III A1-Block 2013
94 points | \$175 | 228 cases made | Red

Amazingly sleek and refined, with a pure, rich, juicy core of blackberry, raspberry, anise, cedar and black licorice flavors. Walks a tightrope between intensity and grace, finesse and authority. Long and persistent on the aftertaste. Drink now through 2032.—*J.L.*

LAGIER MEREDITH

Syrah Mount Veeder 2014
94 points | \$48 | 450 cases made | Red

Achieves an agile balance between plump fruit and great structure. Blueberry, dark chocolate and orange zest aromas lead to rich, complex flavors of boysenberry and peppered beef. Minerally tannins ease in on the finish. Drink now through 2028.—*T.F.*

SAXUM

G2 Vineyard Paso Robles Willow Creek District 2014
94 points | \$98 | 625 cases made | Red

Distinctive, combining polish with appealing earthiness. Aromas of raspberry, mineral and smoky meat lead to structured and focused flavors of dried cherry, licorice and ground ginger. Finishes with refined tannins. Mourvèdre and Grenache. Drink now through 2028.—*T.F.*

TORRIN

The Banshee Central Coast 2013
94 points | \$70 | 276 cases made | Red

Deep and structured, with rich and supple fruit, offering aromas of black raspberry and violet backed by blackberry, smoky pepper and herb flavors that linger toward big, ripe tannins. Syrah, Grenache and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2028.—*T.F.*

FRANCE

BILLAUD-SIMON

Chablis Fourchaume 2014
94 points | \$57 | 50 cases imported | White

A clean, understated version, this shows an essence of lemon and stone, with hints of lanolin and white flowers. Beautifully integrated and long, this continues with elements of citrus and mineral long into the aftertaste. Drink now through 2028.—*B.S.*

BILLAUD-SIMON

Chablis Les Preuses 2014
93 points | \$109 | 50 cases imported | White

A bracing sea breeze of a white, whose brine, green fruit and mineral flavors show a mouthpuckering intensity. Finishes tight and flinty, with a mouthwatering sensation. Think oysters or scallops. Best from 2018 through 2028.—*B.S.*

BILLAUD-SIMON

Chablis Montée de Tonnerre 2014
93 points | \$57 | 150 cases imported | White

This is crisp, with apple, plum and lemon flavors, accented by floral and mineral notes. Delicate, finishing with fine harmony and length. Drink now through 2026.—*B.S.*

DOMAINE COURBIS

Cornas La Sabarotte 2014
93 points | \$90 | 15 cases imported | Red

Solidly ripe, with a fleshy core of currant preserves and plum compote, enlivened by notes of bay, sweet tapenade and singed mesquite. Shows some polish through the finish, revealing a mineral detail. Best from 2018 through 2024.—*J.M.*

PIERRE GAILLARD

Condrieu L'Octroi 2012
93 points | \$83 | 3 cases imported | White

On the tropical side, offering papaya, melon and mango notes. This late-release is still fresh, with honeysuckle, star fruit and orange blossom details filling in on the lively finish. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

ITALY

CASTELLO DI AMA

Chianti Classico La Casuccia 2011
95 points | \$435 | 56 cases imported | Red

Ample black cherry flavors put this red in the modern camp, with elements of earth, wild herb, tobacco and tea that shout Sangiovese. This is underscored by a mineral streak, leading to a long finish. Best from 2018 through 2028.—*B.S.*

ANTINORI

Toscana Solaia 2013
95 points | \$325 | 500 cases imported | Red

Offers weight and presence, with black currant, plum and black cherry aromas and flavors. The structure is vibrant and harmonious. Herb, earth and spice accents complete the profile, accompanied by a lingering, savory finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Sangiovese and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2018 through 2033.—*B.S.*

CA' MARCANDA

Bolgheri Camarcanda 2013
95 points | \$145 | 800 cases imported | Red

Very Bordeaux-like, this red offers plum, cherry, coffee, green olive and spice aromas and flavors. Taut and dense, with a long, fresh finish that exudes cedar, sandalwood and green olive notes. Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2018 through 2030.—*B.S.*

CAVALLOTTO

Barolo Vignolo Riserva 2010
95 points | \$120 | 510 cases made | Red

Sweet cherry and currant fruit combines with eucalyptus, tobacco, leather and tar flavors in this firm, sinewy red. In the traditional style, with plenty of underbrush, saline and tannic components, finishing long and savory. Best from 2019 through 2035.—*B.S.*

GIUSEPPE QUINTARELLI

Amarone della Valpolicella Classico 2007
95 points | \$300 | NA cases made | Red

This finely tuned version hits a sweet spot, offering an integration of creamy tannins, lightly juicy acidity and an ample range of flavor, with baked currant, rich, smoky mineral and wild herb notes. Drink now through 2032.—*A.N.*

CASTELLO DI AMA

Chianti Classico Bellavista 2011
94 points | \$218 | 56 cases imported | Red

Leads off with blackberry and black cherry aromas and flavors, compounded by floral and new leather accents. Bright, gaining elegance by the long aftertaste. Best from 2018 through 2030.—*B.S.*

CIGLIUTI

Barbaresco Serraboella 2012
94 points | \$75 | 100 cases imported | Red

Elegant and intense, revealing cherry, strawberry, floral and mineral flavors fused to a firm structure. Harmonious, with everything in the right proportion. Best from 2019 through 2033.—*B.S.*

POGGIO AL TESORO

Bolgheri Superiore Dedicato a Walter 2011
94 points | \$99 | 100 cases imported | Red

Black currant, violet, black cherry and wild thyme aromas and flavors are the hallmarks of this sleek, intense red. Vibrant, with pebbly tannins. Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2023.—*B.S.*

ALBINO ROCCA

Barbaresco Ronchi Riserva 2011
94 points | \$122 | 42 cases imported | Red

A fresh, expressive, elegant style, bursting with rose, cherry, strawberry, mineral and spice flavors. Has tremendous length for the airy texture. Best from 2018 through 2035.—*B.S.*

LUCIANO SANDRONE

Barolo Cannubi Boschis 2012
94 points | \$155 | 380 cases imported | Red

With a core of cherry flavors and assertive tannins, this Barolo is right out of central casting. Accents of mint, tar, tobacco and tea add dimension. Best from 2020 through 2035.—*B.S.*

TEDESCHI

Amarone della Valpolicella Classico
La Fabriseria Riserva 2011
94 points | \$325 | 20 cases imported | Red

A rich, racehorse of a red, with a sense of finesse to the integration of dense and sculpted elements. Offers a rich streak of smoky mineral and forest floor. Drink now through 2031.—*A.N.*

OREGON

KEN WRIGHT

Pinot Noir Yamhill-Carlton District
Abbott Claim Vineyard 2014
94 points | \$63 | 400 cases made | Red

Sleek and focused, restrained in style but presenting ripe blueberry, plum and floral flavors that glide into a long, lithe finish. Sleek and deep, lingering with harmony. Drink now through 2024.—*H.S.*

ANTICA TERRA

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Ceras 2014
93 points | \$90 | 294 cases made | Red

Broad and expressive, focusing the blackberry and cherry flavors into an open-textured, transparent beam of red fruit and floral flavors. Best from 2018 through 2024.—*H.S.*

DOMAINE ROY & FILS

Pinot Noir Dundee Hills Iron Filbert Vineyard 2015
93 points | \$115 | 265 cases made | Red

Broad and supple, deftly wrought to show vivid cherry and plum flavors on a sleek frame, playing against beef carpaccio notes and powdery tannins. Drink now through 2022.—*H.S.*

NORTH VALLEY

Pinot Noir Ribbon Ridge Origins 2014
93 points | \$50 | 450 cases made | Red

Firmly tannic, with ripe blueberry and blackberry flavors rising up against the texture and prevailing on a long, pointed finish. Has presence and persistence. Best from 2018 through 2024.—*H.S.*

PANTHER CREEK

Pinot Noir Dundee Hills De Ponte Vineyard 2014
93 points | \$45 | 247 cases made | Red

Supple and lithe, with polish to the raspberry-accented cherry, black tea and floral notes, veiled by nubby tannins that let the flavors sing through the long finish. Drink now through 2024.—*H.S.*

SHEA

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Block 23 Shea Vineyard 2014
93 points | \$66 | 245 cases made | Red

Supple and open-textured, letting the clove-accented cherry and raspberry flavors rise effortlessly against refined tannins, finishing with presence and harmony. Best from 2018 through 2024.—*H.S.*

PORTUGAL Port

LEMOS & VAN ZELLER

Vintage Port Quinta Vale D. Maria 2007
95 points | \$50 | 100 cases imported | Dessert

Intense, with a charcoal frame around the core of well-steeped plum and blackberry fruit. Bramble and warm tar elements course through the finish. Best from 2022 through 2042.—*J.M.*

LEMOS & VAN ZELLER

Vintage Port Quinta Vale D. Maria 2001
95 points | \$45 | 100 cases imported | Dessert

Intense, with smoldering charcoal nuances and a serious graphite edge framing the core of dense fig, blackberry and black currant confiture notes. Best from 2020 through 2040.—*J.M.*

POÇAS JUNIOR

Tawny Port 40 Years Old NV
95 points | \$175 | 50 cases imported | Dessert

Starts out with a floral hint. White ginger and orange blossom flavors lead off, with bitter orange, hazelnut oil and white sesame notes quickly filling in behind. Drink now.—*J.M.*

LEMOS & VAN ZELLER

Vintage Port Quinta Vale D. Maria 2003
94 points | \$45 | 100 cases imported | Dessert

Shows the heat of the vintage, with steeped plum, rhubarb, blackberry and boysenberry confiture notes, laced with licorice, plum cake and anise accents. Best from 2021 through 2037.—*J.M.*

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.

QUINTA DAS CARVALHAS

Tawny Port Very Old NV

99 points | \$3,000 | 6 cases imported | Dessert

Intense, with walnut and hazelnut husk notes streaking through, followed quickly by racy dried orange peel, date, brown sugar, powdered ginger and green tea flavors. The long finish has terrific tension and drive, with a twinge of iodine adding lift and cut. Exotic and beautiful. Contains a majority of wine from 1867, blended with 7 percent wine from 1900. Drink now. *From Portugal.*—J.M.

QUINTA DO NOVAL

Vintage Port Nacional 2001

99 points | \$595 | 40 cases imported | Dessert

This sports serious heft, with a core of brooding fig jam, ganache, Christmas pudding and pastis-soaked black currant notes, followed by a powerhouse finish of smoldering charcoal and tar. The feel is remarkably velvety and rounded overall, with a mouthwatering licorice root element adding to the already considerable length. Best from 2026 through 2056. *From Portugal.*—J.M.

AVIGNONESI

Vin Santo di Montepulciano Occhio di Pernice 2001

98 points | \$280/375ml | 35 cases imported | Dessert

Intense and ethereal at once, this concentrated sweet white saturates the palate, with caramel, espresso, roasted almond, fig and cacao aromas and flavors. A very clean style of Vin Santo, showing impressive harmony and complexity. Drink now through 2030. *From Italy.*—B.S.

SAXUM

James Berry Vineyard Paso Robles

Willow Creek District 2014

97 points | \$98 | 1,400 cases made | Red

A dramatic wine that weds power and opulence, maintaining impeccable balance along the way. Brooding dark berry and loamy mineral aromas lead to rich flavors of currant, licorice, dried sage and smoky pepper. Ripe tannins frame the finish. Grenache, Mourvèdre, Syrah, Counoise and Roussanne. Best from 2018 through 2028. *From California.*—T.F.

MASSOLINO

Barolo Vigna Rionda Riserva 2010

96 points | \$150 | 100 cases imported | Red

This is very savory, featuring tobacco, cedar, saline and tar notes swirling around a core of cherry and licorice flavors. Harmonious, if still youthful, with a balanced feel until the assertive tannins weigh in on the finish. Shows understated power. Best from 2020 through 2038. *From Italy.*—B.S.

TRIMBACH

Riesling Alsace Clos Ste.-Hune 2008

95 points | \$239 | 250 cases imported | White

A classic Alsace Riesling in a steely style, this offers lovely integration and accessibility. Dense midpalate, with a creamy texture, this carries flavors of white peach, crushed pine and beeswax. A pronounced streak of petrol-accented minerality echoes on the long, focused finish. Drink now through 2033. *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).

James Laube Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: California

Harvey Steiman Editor at large, San Francisco

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1984. Tasting beat: Australia, Oregon, Washington

Kim Marcus Managing editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Argentina, Austria, Chile, Germany, Portugal

Thomas Matthews Executive editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Spain

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1993. Tasting beat: Burgundy, Italy

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: Bordeaux, Loire Valley, Rhône Valley, South Africa

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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

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