

THE WASHINGTON PANEL

DECEMBER 2012 • 3.95

Lorena Vásquez, Master
Blender for Zacapa Rum.

A Passion for Perfection

*Zacapa Brings a New Wave of
Appreciation for Barrel-Aged Spirits*

**INSIDE:
OUR 2012
YEARBOOK**

CLASS OF 2012

THE MOST OUTSTANDING
WINES AND SPIRITS OF
THE YEAR

Wow. What a Year!

As another year draws to a close, we can't help but smile when we look back on all of the wonderful things we've tasted in 2012. From whiskies that wowed us, to Chards that charmed us, this year has been filled with amazing tastes!

At THE TASTING PANEL, we strive to showcase the coolest, the newest, the most special and the downright tastiest products, and we hope that you'll enjoy discovering them as much as we have. Join us as we take a look back at the new products we fell for, the old favorites we revisited in 2012, and cheers to a bright and delicious 2013!



Most **Mosel**

Bischöfliche Weingüter 2011 Scharzhofberger Riesling Spätlese, Germany (\$29)

Known for their slate-driven qualities, the Rieslings produced along Germany's famed Mosel River are among the best in the world when it comes to minerality. But the best of the best is the Scharzhofberger vineyard holding, one of the most famed along the Mosel, where elegant wines with tremendous balance burst forth from the weathered gray-slate soil.

Championing the potential of Scharzhofberger Riesling, Bischöfliche Weingüter's grapes ripen to perfection on steep south-facing slopes, resulting in a rich, ripe Riesling that's as pretty as it is powerful. With great aging potential, this complex Riesling is a majestic representation of the Mosel terroir—a true classic.

Bright and juicy with notes of peach, pineapple and minerality; sweet, tangy and pure with lovely acidity; long and balanced with lots of nerve.

SCHMITT SÖHNE



WINES

Abacela Winery 2005 Paramour, Umpqua Valley, Oregon

Alysian 2009 Chardonnay "Clone 4" Westside Farms Vineyard, Russian River Valley

Alysian 2009 Zinfandel, Bradford Mountain "Block Three," Dry Creek Valley

Alysian 2008 Rock Hill Pinot Noir, Floodgate Vineyard, Russian River Valley

Antica Terra 2010 Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley, Oregon

Baywood Cellars 2008 Syrah, Paso Robles

Benessre 2009 Old Vines Zinfandel, Holystone-Collins Vineyard, Napa Valley

Beni di Batasiolo 2004 Barolo Bofani, Italy BOISSET FAMILY ESTATES

Beringer Vineyards 2008 Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley TREASURY WINE ESTATES

Beronia 2005 Rioja Reserva Selección de 198 Barricas, Spain SAN FRANCISCO WINE EXCHANGE

Bischöfliche Weingüter 2011 Riesling Spätlese Scharzhofberger, Mosel, Germany SCHMITT SÖHNE

Bodega Cuarto Dominio 2009 Malbec, Medoza, Argentina TERLATO WINES INTERNATIONAL

Boscarelli 2008 Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, Italy EMPSON USA

Bouchaine Vineyards 2009 Estate Chardonnay, Carneros

Boyanci 2008 Inspire Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley

Brezza 2007 Barolo Sarmassa LANGDON SHIVERICK

Calera 2009 Pinot Noir, Selleck Vineyard, Mt. Harlan

Caliza Winery 2011 Kissin' Cousins, Paso Robles

The Calling 2010 Chardonnay, Dutton Ranch, Russian River Valley DEUTSCH FAMILY WINE & SPIRITS

Carte Blanche 2009 Chardonnay, Sonoma Coast

Center of Effort 2009 Estate Chardonnay, Edna Valley

Chalk Hill 2009 Syrah, Chalk Hill FOLEY FAMILY WINES

Citadelle Gin, France COGNAC FERRAND

Driest Surprise

Schloss Vollrads 2011 Riesling QbA, Rheingau, Germany (\$20)

While we in the business know better, for many consumers, German Rieslings still have quite a sweet reputation to overcome—and that can be a real challenge. Thankfully, the Schloss Vollrads Estate Manager, Dr. Rowald Hepp, is hard at work as he works to help consumers understand the full range of Riesling, from dry and minerally to fruity and to super-sweet.

Leading the way on the sweet-meets-dry end of the spectrum is the 2011 Schloss Vollrads estate Qualitätswein, a fruity/sweet offering that offers a perfect balance of acidity and natural Riesling sweetness.

Pure and tangy with a small amount of sweetness to balance the bright acidity; tangy, fresh and racy with stunning fruit flavors and a long, focused finish; vibrant and gorgeous.

SCHMITT SÖHNE



Hawk & Horse Vineyards 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon, Lake County

Inman Family Winery 2008 Pinot Noir, Olivet Grange Vineyard, Russian River Valley

Jérôme Quiot 2008 Châteauneuf-du-Pape Les Combes d'Arnevel, France DAVID MILLIGAN SELECTIONS

JCB No 3 (Pinot Noir), 60% Sebastopol Hills, Russian River Valley, California/40% Côte de Nuits, France BOISSET FAMILY ESTATES

Joseph Phelps 2010 Estate Sauvignon Blanc, St. Helena

King Family Vineyards 2008 Meritage, Monticello, Virginia

La Fenêtre 2010 Chardonnay, À Coté, Santa Barbara County

La Fenêtre 2009 Pinot Noir, Le Bon Climat Vineyard, Santa Maria Valley

Laird Family Estate 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley

Lancaster Estate 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley FOLEY FAMILY WINES

Lange Twins Wine Estates 2010 Caricature Red, California

Lanson NV Brut Rose Label Champagne, France LANSON INTERNATIONAL AMERICAS

Lapostolle 2010 Cuvée Alexandre Cabernet Sauvignon, Apalta, Colchagua Valley TERLATO WINES INTERNATIONAL

Larceny Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey, USA HEAVEN HILL DISTILLERIES

Laurel Glen 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon, Counterpoint, Sonoma Mountain

Loma Prieta Winery 2010 Pinotage, Amorosa Vineyard, Lodi

Loosen Bros. 2010 Riesling Kabinett "Blue Slate," Mosel, Germany LOOSEN BROS. USA

Lost Canyon Winery 2009 Pinot Noir, Morelli Lane Vineyard, Russian River Valley

Maison Nicolas Perrin 2009, Hermitage Blanc VINEYARD BRANDS

Malibu Sanity 2010 Single Vineyard Pinot Noir, California

MacPhail 2010 Chardonnay, Gap's Crown Vineyard, Sonoma Coast

Mariposa Agave Nectar Liqueur, USA HEAVEN HILL DISTILLERIES

Mettler Family Vineyards 2009 Epicenter Old Vine Zin, Lodi

Montes Wines 2011 Twins Red, Colchagua Valley, Chile TGIC IMPORTERS

Niner Wine Estates 2007 Fogcatcher, Bootjack Ranch, Paso Robles

Orma 2008 Toscana

Pamplin Family Winery 2008 Proprietary Red, Columbia Valley, Washington

Peju 2007 Cabernet Franc Reserve, Rutherford, Napa Valley

Pol Roger 1999 Brut, Sir Winston Churchill FREDERICK WILDMAN & SONS

Quinta Vale D. Maria 2009 Cristiano Van Zeller, Douro, Portugal ADVENTURES IN WINE

Raymond 2011 Sauvignon Blanc, Reserve Selection, Napa Valley BOISSET FAMILY ESTATES

Riondo 2006 Amarone della Valpolicella RIONDO USA

Robert Mondavi 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve, Napa Valley CONSTELLATION WINES U.S.

Samuel Billaud 2009 Chablis Premier Cru Forneaux, France LANGDON SHIVERICK

Sanford 2008 Pinot Noir, La Rinconada Vineyard, Sta. Rita Hills TERLATO WINES INTERNATIONAL

Schloss Vollrads 2011 Riesling QbA, Rheingau, Germany SCHMITT SÖHNE

Schloss Vollrads 2011 Riesling Kabinett, Rheingau, Germany SCHMITT SÖHNE

Schloss Vollrads 2011 Riesling Spätlese, Rheingau, Germany SCHMITT SÖHNE

Scopetone 2006 Brunello di Montacino, Italy MICHAEL SKURNIK WINES

Shafer Vineyards 2010 Chardonnay, Red Shoulder Ranch, Napa Valley/Carneros

Shafer Vineyards 2009 Relentless, Napa Valley

Shafer Vineyards 2009 Merlot, Napa Valley

Most Historic (European Edition)

Schloss Vollrads 2011 Riesling Spätlese, Rheingau, Germany (\$31)

When you're talking about the world's oldest wine estates, you'd be remiss not to include Schloss Vollrads in Germany's Rheingau region, where wine sales as early as 1211 have been documented, proving that this is one winery for the history books. That's a lot of time spent perfecting their craft, and the wines coming out of Schloss Vollrads today reflect a tradition of excellence.

With the entire property dedicated to the cultivation of Riesling, Vollrads has spent the better part of a millennium perfecting the varietal's expression in a line of Rieslings that have grabbed the world's attention.

Slowly fermented for 14 weeks, Schloss Vollrads 2011 Riesling Spätlese is a classically-styled sweet Spätlese that showcases the elegantly sweet potential Riesling can achieve, with crisp acidity balancing out the natural residual sugars to result in a Riesling worthy of the Rheingau's deep-rooted traditions.

Exquisite depth and complexity; sweet, floral and elegant with amazing notes of peach, raspberry, apple blossoms and honey; delicate, elegant and long.

