

THE WASHINGTON PANEL

JUNE 2012 • 3.95

Liquid Treasure

*Captain Morgan Black
Spiced Rum Sails Into
Uncharted Waters*

Z. Michael Issakhanian, owner of
Remedy Liquor in Glendale, CA.

Publisher's PICKS

In each issue THE TASTING PANEL's Publisher and Executive Editor, Meridith May, selects her favorite wines and spirits of the month. Check here for the latest arrivals in our offices, the hottest new brands on the market and an occasional revisited classic.



PHOTO: MIKE MAGDA

Meridith May visits with Sondra Bernstein of the girl and the fig, a Sonoma restaurant that solely features Rhône varietals on its wine list. Sondra catered an all-rosé lunch for the attendees at Hospice du Rhône event in Paso Robles, CA.



WINES



Alysian 2008 Pinot Noir, Rochioli River Block, Russian River Valley (\$65) A nose of rich earth striped with plums, violets and black tea. Bright plum persists against a coffee mocha curtain. White pepper laces semi-sweet dark chocolate. Bouyant and alive with summer cherries and plumshine, with a spicy finish. **95**



STELLAR IMPORTING COMPANY



Zuccardi 2010 [Serie A] Chardonnay-Viognier, Mendoza, Argentina (\$15) The apple and melon notes are a nod to the Chardonnay but the body and unctuous quality, amid a sea of white blossoms, speaks Viognier. Honey, pineapple and chamomile follow. What a summer sipper. **90**

WINESELLERS LTD



Vine Cliff 2010 Chardonnay, Los Carneros (\$39) A love story of caramel and lemon oil, a

rendezvous of crisp and creamy. **91**



Raymond 2011 Sauvignon Blanc, Reserve Selection, Napa Valley (\$18) Gardenia and grapefruit spice from nose to palate; white tea adds depth to a weighty, up front texture. Citrus tones clear the air and form a more linear edge mid-palate but the floral influence lingers with Asian pear. Exotic and pretty. **92**

BOISSET USA



L'Objet Noir 2008 Pinot Noir, Bacigalupi Vineyard, Russian River Valley (\$42) Chocolate up front and a rhubarb back are part of a velvety crew. Raspberries and cherries are laced with and mushrooms. A nice acidity follows. Mushrooms and acid—what a concept! **90**



Smith-Madrone 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon, Spring Mountain District, Napa Valley (\$45) A big man on campus: broad shouldered (smoky), athletic (structure), rich (eucalyptus and earth) and pleasantly sweet and magnanimous (black fruit and lush plums). **95**



Shafer Vineyards 2009 Merlot, Napa Valley (\$48) Meaty, chewy and truffle-earthy with a gritty power that expresses black tea and espresso. Sounds big, huh? It's a battle of chalky will

and restraint; milk chocolate and lavender are the referees. **92**

