

11 Enticing California Cabernets

New reviews of 2013 and 2012 Cabernet Sauvignons from Sonoma and Napa

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Founded in 1857, the historic Buena Vista Winery is producing top-notch wines.

Tasting Highlights bring the best wines from our editors' most recent tastings to WineSpectator.com members.

The 2013 Cabernets from Sonoma and Napa are thundering out the gate. Reliable standbys pack this list, with exciting versions starting at \$24.

We were impressed by the Kendall-Jackson Vintner's Reserve. Offering elegance and depth in a supple style, it's a wine to buy by the case. Randy Ullom helms the winemaking team and casts a wide net for the grapes. He adds a splash of juice from Napa and Mendocino.

Buena Vista is an old name under a new regime. If the Private Reserve is any indication, this historic winery is on the right track.

Stonestreet's 2012 stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the 2013s. Winemaker Lisa Valteneberg achieved impressive richness, accessing 900 acres of estate vineyards dotting the valleys, peaks and ridges of the Mayacamas mountain range, overlooking Alexander Valley.

Not to be outdone, Napa makes a strong showing with releases from Orin Swift, Pine Ridge and Raymond, which is owned by the same team guiding Buena Vista and Boisset Family Estates.

BUENA VISTA Cabernet Sauvignon Sonoma County Private Reserve 2013 Score: 90 | \$75

A supple, charming style, with smooth tannins leading to a mix of gravel- and fresh earth-scented plum, blackberry, licorice and road tar notes. Ends with subtle flavor nuances of mocha and baking spices. Drink now through 2026. 400 cases made.—J.L.

RAYMOND Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Reserve Selection 2013

Score: 90 | \$40

Elegantly styled, with refined spicy oak, currant, dark berry and licorice notes. Shows an impressive integration of flavors and textural nuance. Drink now through 2024. 21,900 cases made.—*J.L.*

RAYMOND Cabernet Sauvignon Oakville District Collection 2013

Score: 90 | \$85

Offers a broad, rich array of dense flavors, centered on blackberry, licorice and oak. The tannins extend the flavors and offer more dimensions, drifting into smoke and mocha details. Best from 2018 through 2028. 130 cases made.—*J.L.*