

# Robb Report

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LUXURY WITHOUT COMPROMISE

## FAMILIA TORRES

2017 Mas de la Rosa, Vinyes Velles, Porrera, Priorat

From introducing foreign varietals in Spain's Penedès region to founding one of the first foreign wineries in Chile, and from a commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 30 percent by 2020 to boosting that to 55 percent by 2030, the five generations of Spain's Familia Torres are no strangers to innovation.

With its Mas de la Rosa Vineyard in Priorat, the winery is pushing the envelope, growing grapes on steep slopes at high elevation (1,600-plus feet). The result is a wine both opulent and bold. From low-yielding, 80-year-old vines, this blend of Garnacha (Grenache) and Cariñena (Carignane) opens with complex layers of red earth, floral aromas, dark cherry and chocolate, and hints of vanilla balanced on the savory side by tobacco, leather and espresso. Baking spices and anise pop against a backdrop of silky (but far from shy) tannins. \$409

MOST COMPLEX BLEND

## PENFOLDS

G5

Australian winemaker Peter Gago shows he's at the top of his game with this artful blend. Composed of five vintages of Grange—Penfolds' most collectible annual release and itself a blend of Shiraz from many of the Barossa Valley's best parcels—from 2018, 2016, 2014, 2012 and 2010. He put the mix back into barrel for a year, tasting it monthly, and then bottled it in April 2021. "It was hugely risky for us," he says, with Grange prices at \$850 a bottle and the worry of ruining the wine by hanging on to older barrels. "I'm phobic about oxidative pickup," he adds. It was an experiment that could have gone wrong. Except Gago is a master. The outstanding G5 is the final edition of the blended Grange series, coming on the heels of a G3 and a G4, which Gago says are already doubling their value on the secondary market. \$3,500



CHARDONNAY/  
WHITE BURGUNDY

## JEAN-CLAUDE BOISSET

2019 Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru, Burgundy, France

The word "legendary" is thrown around so much that it barely has meaning anymore. However, when applied to a Burgundy vintage said to be one of the best of the past 50 years and a Grand Cru site owned by Emperor Charlemagne in the eighth century, the term regains significance. Jean-Claude Boisset's 2019 Corton-Charlemagne Grand Cru lives up to the reputation of the vintage and the appellation. Whole-bunch pressing of Chardonnay grapes grown on the high slopes of the famed Corton hill maintains brightness that makes it stand out in a year hailed for both its ripeness and high acidity. Only 282 bottles were made of this luscious white Burgundy that offers a gorgeous texture and flavors of green apple, lychee and almond blossom. The bouquet is heady with lemons and a splendid lift of orange blossom. Although you will be tempted to drink it right away, your future self will thank you for laying it down for a few more years. \$260



## LE MACCHIOLE

2016 Messorio, Bolgheri

If one single wine can revive Merlot's distressingly poor reputation in the minds of wine drinkers, it may be Le Macchiole's 2016 Messorio from Bolgheri, the home of Super Tuscans. While many of her neighbors blend varieties native to Bordeaux to produce their iconic wines, Le Macchiole proprietor Cinzia Merli focuses on single-varietal expressions in her top-tier bottlings. Made with only Merlot, Messorio, first produced in 1994, was one of the earliest mono-varietal wines in this coastal Tuscan region. Partial fermentation in cement allows for a fuller expression of fruit, while aging for 19 months in lightly toasted oak adds structure to the Merlot, which has naturally softer tannins than Cabernet Sauvignon or Cabernet Franc. The result is a wine that shows refinement and restraint, with flavors of black cherry and dark plum and notes of roasted fennel bulb that coalesce in a graceful, lingering finish. \$300

BURGUNDY

## THIBAUT LIGER-BELAIR

2018 Richebourg Grand Cru, France

Just 1,876 standard bottles, 96 magnums and 9 jeroboams of Thibault Liger-Belair Richebourg Grand Cru were produced in 2018. Of Vosne-Romanée's six grand cru vineyards, Richebourg is just steps from neighboring Romanée-Conti. The appellation has long been known for producing opulent wines with both earthy and dense ripe red and black fruit notes. This stunning wine follows tradition with aromas of violets, baking spices and a touch of bramble brought on by the 30 percent whole clusters used in its fermentation. It's aged in 60 percent new oak barrels, which add a beautiful frame of wood and a touch of mocha and coffee that accentuate those bright fruit flavors. Tannins are silky smooth. Like our winning Bordeaux, this is a wine that will mature gracefully for three or four decades. \$760