

In each issue, The Tasting Panel's Publisher and Editorial Director 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.

Publisher's PICKS

PHOTO: JEREMY BALL



WINES



Palazzo 2016 Master Blend Series Left Bank Red Cuvée, Napa Valley

(\$50) Primarily Cabernet Sauvignon with Merlot and Cab Franc added, this wine is perfumed with ripe blue and black fruit. Dark chocolate comes in initially, melding with sweet-tobacco tannins and a deluxe texture. Blue flowers dazzle on the finish. **94**



Château Minuty Cuvée 281 Rosé, Côtes de Provence, France

(\$79) Cultivated from a clonal selection of 25-year-old Grenache vines, it offers up a nose of fresh berries and fennel root. Heightened acidity paves the way for notes of raspberry and a kiss of caramel apple alongside peaches and salted brioche. **95**



TREASURY WINE ESTATES



DAOU Vineyards 2017 Reserve Chardonnay, Willow Creek District, Paso Robles

(\$46) Aromas of honeyed pear and tangerine introduce this rich, mouth-filling white. The flavor profile speaks to charred marshmallow, lemon drops, and crème brûlée. Decadently good. **93**



Folie à Deux 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley

(\$23) Red fruit is unleashed in a bath of violets, creating a perfume that persists through the palate. High-toned acidity shows youthfulness, but in a bold, mineral-driven expression, as graphite and leather waltz in mid-palate. Elegance reigns—and overdelivers—in this red. **92**



TRINCHERO FAMILY ESTATES



Pomelo 2017 Sauvignon Blanc, California

(\$14) Light and ripe, this Sauv Blanc is energetic and bright. White grapefruit and a line of minerality keep it geared up while making it a magical pairing with seafood and appetizers. White peach is perky on the finish. **90**



TRINCHERO FAMILY ESTATES



Louis Jadot 2016 Pommard, Côte-d'Or, Burgundy

(\$67) Pinot Noir grown on high-clay/calcareous soils underwent a long maceration and aged ten months in French oak and stainless steel followed by six months in bottle. Aromas of sage, herbs, and forest leaves create a savory nose while notes of spiced cranberry, cherry, and coffee emerge under an earthy tonality. A generously endowed red with big, dry tannins. **94**



KOBRAND WINE & SPIRITS

Worthy of a smooch.

French-style double bizou.

Wildly infatuated.

Seriously smitten.

Head over heels in love.



St. Huberts 2016 The Stag Cabernet Sauvignon, North Coast (\$25)

A blend of grapes (82% Cabernet Sauvignon, 9% Merlot, 6% Petite Sirah, and 3% Tannat) is sourced throughout California's fine wine regions, primarily Red Hills and High Valley in Lake County. Matured in American oak and stainless steel, this full-bodied red engages with aromas of earthy chocolate and cedar. Its depth of character shows through a lush mouthfeel as structured yet supple tannins glide alongside flavors of coffee, sage, and violets. **92**



TREASURY WINE ESTATES



LVE 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley (\$85)

Anise and slate are divided by a luxe blackberry perfume. The flavors mirror the aromas of this dark and shadowy red, which is blanketed in a sensual, earthy mouthfeel. Notes of violets, boysenberry, and caramelized fig become juicier as the wine opens up, and elegance ensues. **94**



BOISSET COLLECTION



Gehricke 2015 Pinot Noir, Los Carneros, Sonoma (\$32)

This small-production Pinot Noir aged 20 months in French oak, which shows through in the nose and palate, rounding them out and caressing them with vanilla bean and cinnamon stick. Cherry-cobbler notes accent a savory mid-palate reminiscent of clove-scented orange peel. **93**



3 BADGE BEVERAGE



Bogle Non-Vintage Reserve Petite Sirah, Quick Ranch Vineyard, Clarksburg, California (\$42)

The largest producer of Petite Sirah in the world, Bogle commemorates its 50th anniversary with this release: The family planted their first red grapes in 1968. The big rush of creamy boysenberry and blue floral notes is generous and rich, creating a dramatically textured palate and fragrance that endures through the finish of caramel and cedar. **92**



Cedar + Salmon 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon, Horse Heaven Hills, Columbia Valley, Washington (\$25)

A voluptuous nose of tilled soil and redwood further enhances the lush mouthfeel of creamy mocha, spiced black cherry, and blueberry silk. Interweaving with the fruit, mocha-covered figs are a treat mid-palate. This is a textural dream. **92**



3 BADGE BEVERAGE



Chamisal Vineyards 2016 Chardonnay, Monterey County (\$24)

Winds from the appropriately named Mistral Vineyard in the Salinas Valley funnel through from the Monterey Bay and show in the bountiful nature of this wine. Lush notes of apple pie and honeyed lemon greet the nose as caramel apple and crème brûlée accented by croissants, Italian herbs, and cinnamon intertwine with a fine acidity, hailing this region as a prime locale for this variety. **93**

CRIMSON WINE GROUP



Lignum Red Blend, Terre Siciliane IGT, Italy (\$16)

A blend of 40% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 30% Shiraz makes this "super" Sicilian wine one to notice. Translated from ancient Latin, "Lignum" means wood, and, accordingly, this uniquely authentic, wood-crafted label is embellished with cut-outs. Texturally alluring and complex layers of dark chocolate and sandalwood are preceded by aromas of earth and graphite that merge well with the flavor profile. Grainy, melting mocha and a swathe of blackberry plumpness fill the mid-palate and stride through the long finish. This overdelivers on value. **91**



ENOVATION BRANDS



Louis Jadot 2016 Gevrey-Chambertin, Côte de Nuits-Villages, Burgundy (\$72)

Showing the energy and powerful "grace" of the commune, this 100% Pinot Noir is steely and edgy with teeth-gripping chalkiness. High-toned blueberry and rhubarb take on sturdy tannins, but the wine's juicy nature and top-of-palate acidity keeps everything in check. **95**



KOBRAND WINE & SPIRITS



Finca Decero 2015 The Owl & The Dust Devil, Remolinos Vineyard, Agrelo, Mendoza, Argentina (\$33)

A single-vineyard blend of 39% Cabernet Sauvignon, 32% Malbec, 19% Petit Verdot, and 10% Tannat aged 18 months in French oak (40% new). The name refers to the dust devils that keep the vineyard dry and the predatory owls that protect the vines. Aromas of iron, grilled meat, and cherry cola lead to a plush, pretty palate of fennel and red flowers with fruity tones of raspberry and plum. **91**



VINTUS



Domaine Rütz 2016 Cabernet Sauvignon, Morisoli Vineyard, Rutherford Bench, Napa Valley (\$150)

Black-purple inkiness shows in the power of this 100% Cab aged 19 months in new French oak. Decanting is suggested for this big wine, which features a nose of blueberry cobbler and black tea. The palate shows notable acidity, finely grained tannins, and chewy notes of leather, slate, and espresso chocolate before finishing with sweet cooking spices and earthy oak. **94**



Shafer 2016 TD-9, Napa Valley (\$60)

Our favorite "tractor" wine, this proprietary blend of 58% Merlot, 26% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 16% Malbec was named for John Shafer's transition from commuter train to farm vehicle. This is the second vintage, and we think it's even better than the first. Aromas of ripe strawberry and cinnamon rolls launch exuberantly from the glass as meaty notes and dry, dusty tannins emphasize flavors of sassafras, spearmint, licorice, and plum. Lean acidity shows in the structured, upright body. **94**



Buena Vista 2016 Pinot Noir, Carneros (\$25)

Aged 13 months in French and Hungarian oak, this Pinot Noir opens up with aromas of cranberry, mushroom, and heather. Its forest-floor nature comes through on the first sip with dried roses, jasmine tea, and white pepper following through to the finish. **92**



BOISSET COLLECTION