

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Cabernet sauvignon still serves as the engine of wine sales for the country, leading in the varietal sweepstakes, beating out pinot noir this year for the pole position: More than 15 percent of all bottles on the table were cabernets or cab-based blends. Needless to say, they also represent the most expensive offerings on any given list. Two of the top brands in this year's Top 50, Stag's Leap Wine Cellars and Jordan, are both cabernet houses; six of the top 12 brands, and ten of the top 20, are brands with strong cabernet programs.

Steakhouses, now a fixture on the dining landscape, clearly lead in this trend, and the trend is California, Napa in particular. "Napa cabernet has developed a spot in the consumer's brain to where it is the perfect pairing with steak," says Bill Elsey of *Pappas Bros.*, in Houston. "It's the number one place that people associate with California wine."

But there seems to be more stylistic latitude within the category, as Maxwell Eyrise, at *Five O'Clock Steakhouse* in Milwaukee, observes. "I've noticed a lot more people asking for cabernet sauvignon with more elegance and structure, moving away from wines that are just super fruit-forward, and moving towards cabernets with some spice and a peppery bite."



CHRIS RAFTERY
Gramercy Tavern
NYC

Frog's Leap is like Kistler or Littorai: If you appreciate the Old World or the New World style of wine you can appreciate Frog's Leap. We see people asking for that, cold calling, not even opening the list. Shafer gets a lot of cold calls without opening the book. Guests will order One Point Five or Hillside Select; it moves surprisingly quickly. The One Point Five is on our list for \$275 but the Hillside Select—we go through a fair amount of it and that's on the list for \$845.

MOST POPULAR CABERNET SAUVIGNONS

Rank	Brand	Bottling	Avg. Price
1	Stag's Leap Wine Cellars	Napa Valley Artemis	\$122
2	Faust	Napa Valley	\$122
3	Jordan	Alexander Valley	\$123
4	Silver Oak Wine Cellars	Alexander Valley	\$143
5	Caymus Vineyards	Napa Valley	\$164
6	Justin	Paso Robles	\$63
7	Mt. Veeder Winery	Napa Valley	\$91
8	Heitz Wine Cellars	Napa Valley	\$126
9	Frank Family	Napa Valley	\$115
10	Chateau Montelena	Napa Valley	\$104
11	Hall	Napa Valley	\$98
12	Duckhorn Vineyards	Napa Valley	\$89
13	Shafer Vineyards	Stags Leap District One Point Five	\$184
14	Katherine Goldschmidt	Alexander Valley	\$62
15	Cain Cellars	Napa Valley Cain Cuvée	\$74
	Chappellet	Napa Valley Mountain Cuvée	\$83
17	Obsidian Ridge	Red Hills Lake County	\$61
18	Beringer Vineyards	Knights Valley	\$58
	Decoy	Sonoma County	\$55

20	Woodward Canyon	Columbia Valley	\$100
		Columbia Valley Artist's Series	\$125
		Columbia Valley Nelms Road	\$49
21	Snowden	Napa Valley The Ranch	\$109
22	Buena Vista Winery	Napa Valley	\$88
		Napa Valley Chateau Buena Vista	\$68
23	Turnbull	Napa Valley	\$80
		Oakville Estate	\$110
	Amavi	Walla Walla Valley	\$60
24	Ferrari-Carano Winery	Alexander Valley	\$81
	Odette	Napa Valley Adaptation Stags Leap District	\$114 \$190
27	Gramercy Cellars	Columbia Valley	\$112
		Columbia Valley Lower East	\$72
	Joel Gott	Napa Valley	\$32
		Napa Valley Blend No. 815	\$30
	Opus One	Napa Valley Overture	\$243
	Santa Carolina	Maipo Valley Reserva	\$32
31	J. Lohr	Paso Robles Seven Oaks	\$37
		Paso Robles Hilltop	\$62
	Pine Ridge Winery	Napa Valley	\$73
	Groth Vineyards	Oakville Napa Valley	\$139 \$112
33	Robert Mondavi Winery	Napa Valley	\$69
	Stag's Leap Winery	Napa Valley	\$102
	Cakebread Cellars	Napa Valley	\$155
36	Honig	Napa Valley	\$83
	Trefethen Vineyards	Oak Knoll District Napa Valley	\$88 \$104