

US NEW RELEASES

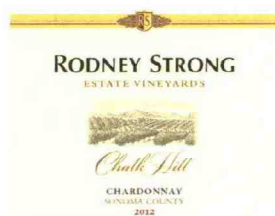
Our blind panels tasted **670** new-release US wines for this issue. Our critics rated **54** as exceptional (90+) and **43** as Best Buys. **Luke Sykora** rates and reviews the wines of California, other than Napa Valley, which is handled by **Joshua Greene**. **Patrick J. Comiskey** rates and reviews the wines from the rest of the US. Find a complete list of wines tasted and all reviews at wineandspiritsmagazine.com.

CALIFORNIA WHITE

CHARDONNAY

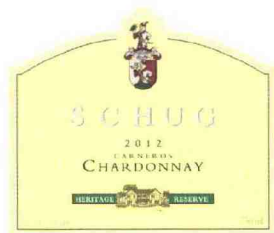
93 | Thomas Fogarty \$60
2011 Santa Cruz Mountains Damiana Vineyard Chardonnay This comes from the oldest chardonnay block on the Fogarty estate, planted in 1978 on shale and sandstone at close to 1,900 feet in elevation. It's clearly a wine of place, mouthfilling but not directly fruity, carrying aromas of dry hilltop scrub into an umami-laden crescendo of salt and earth. Bright in its acidity and resolutely firm, this has a compelling marine energy and feels poised to gain further complexity with four or five years of bottle age. (96 cases) *Thomas Fogarty Winery, Portola Valley, CA*

92 | Thomas Fogarty \$60
2011 Santa Cruz Mountains Portola Springs Vyd. Chardonnay As with the Damiana above, these vines grow on sandstone and shale ten miles from the Pacific, though this steep site, planted in 1981, is more exposed to the ocean winds. This feels locked up in lees character and pointed acidity, but it turns the corner with air, opening into a penetrating chardonnay with a refreshing green tang that suggests Granny Smith apple skin and cucumber flesh. The leanness relaxes into a nutty counterpoint that cushions the wine's sea spray pungency. Try it with razor clams steamed in sake and butter. (95 cases) *Thomas Fogarty Winery, Portola Valley, CA*

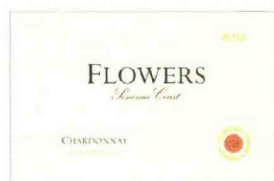


91 | Rodney Strong \$22
2012 Sonoma County Chalk Hill Estate Vineyards Chardonnay (Best Buy) This

shows a lot of oak at first in its scents of toast and coffee, but there's a pleasant glow to the fruit underneath. It feels at once burnished and bright, with creamy richness turning toward lifted aromas of chamomile flowers as it absorbs air. It's a polished chardonnay for crab. *Rodney Strong Vineyards, Healdsburg, CA*



91 | Schug \$35
2012 Carneros Heritage Reserve Chardonnay This comes mostly from two blocks of a Wente selection farmed at the Schug estate in western Carneros. Fermentation and aging in oak barrels (50 percent new) with the lees have given the fruit plenty of cushioning, but the wine feels energetic at the center, rushing across the palate with a star-fruit tang. Mouthwatering and lively, this is ready for a filet of sole. (211 cases) *Schug Carneros Estate Winery, Sonoma, CA*



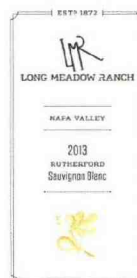
90 | Flowers \$40
2012 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay Flowers' multi-site chardonnay blend draws on their Camp Meeting Ridge estate as well as a handful of other far-coast plantings. In 2012 it's creamy and fresh, like a ripe pear bursting with juice. There's enough acidity to keep it frisky, while delicate floral aromas speak to the cool coastal sunshine that grew the vines. *Flowers Vineyard & Winery, Cazadero, CA*

88 | DeLoach \$20
2012 Russian River Valley Chardonnay (Best Buy) Decant this to allow the initial reduction to blow off. Underneath there's a sappy Russian River chardonnay with exuberant fruit ripeness, the aromas suggesting peach and apricot. It's a sunny white to serve well chilled with grilled chicken. *DeLoach Vineyards, St. Helena, CA*

GRENACHE BLANC

90 | Epiphany \$25
2012 Santa Barbara County Camp Four Vineyard Grenache Blanc (Best Buy) Supple and gentle in the mouth, this is shot through with a sneaky brightness, the fruit growing from honeysuckle scents toward more exotic aromas of passion fruit and star anise. It has a sunny glow, to serve with fried chicken on a summer evening. (1,181 cases) *Epiphany Cellars, Santa Maria, CA*

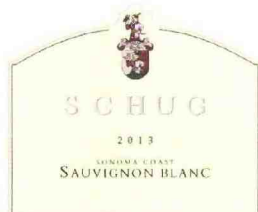
SAUVIGNON BLANC



90 | Long Meadow Ranch \$20
2013 Rutherford Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc (Best Buy) Initially flinty and tight, this estate-grown sauvignon blanc opens to the richness of orange and thyme-scented fruit, its roundness peppered with warmth. The smoky lees character makes it feel intriguing, lending the wine stature and placing it with grass-fed veal. *Long Meadow Ranch Winery, Oakville, CA*



US NEW RELEASES



90 | Schug \$20
2013 Sonoma Coast Sauvignon Blanc
 From a trio of wind-cooled vineyards in southern Sonoma, this feels refreshingly coastal, lasting on flavors of shishito pepper and grapefruit rind. Aging on the lees in neutral oak has built an appetizing fatness into the wine's texture that pulls against that green pungency. It's a zesty and satisfying sauvignon for goat cheese. (2,933 cases) *Schug Winery, Sonoma, CA*

86 | Souverain \$13
2012 North Coast Sauvignon Blanc (Best Buy) This carries heady ripeness in its meaty texture and tropical flavors, but gets traction from its earthy grip, all dust and peach skin. For grilled ahi tuna. *Souverain, Napa, CA*

VERMENTINO

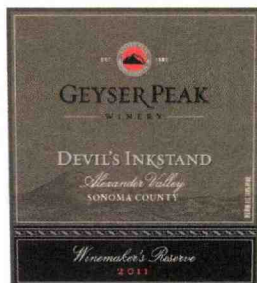
90 | Tablas Creek \$27
2013 Paso Robles Vermentino Tablas Creek's vermentino is a happy accident: The French nursery that provided the winery with budwood from Châteauneuf-du-Pape snuck vermentino cuttings into the order, thinking it would thrive in Paso's warm climate and limestone soils. If this 2013 is any indication, they were prescient. The wine flows from an appetizing scent of honeycomb into a waxy texture, with plenty of acidity to support that breadth. It's a substantial yet refreshing white, pale and discreet in its fruit flavors, perfect for crab legs. (900 cases) *Tablas Creek Vineyard, Paso Robles, CA*

WHITE BLEND

92 | Brander \$18
2013 Santa Ynez Valley Cuvée Natalie (Best Buy) Sauvignon blanc makes up only half of this blend—the rest riesling and pinot gris—but it's clearly the dominant element, showing up in ripe green flavors of kiwi and nopales. This is a powerful and tightly woven white, with bright acidity and wafts of smoke giving it a layered texture. Pour it with an intense seafood dish like grilled octopus and tomatillo salsa. (380 cases) *The Brander Vineyard, Santa Ynez, CA*

CALIFORNIA RED

BORDEAUX-STYLE BLENDS



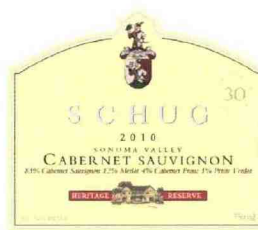
92 | Geyser Peak \$50
2011 Alexander Valley Devil's Inkstand Winemaker's Reserve Petit verdot (15 percent) infuses this cabernet-based blend with black spice tones, forming a cool, savory, classical Alexander Valley red. There's juiciness at the center of the wine that feels Californian, even in such a cool vintage, surrounded by fine tannins that fit the fruit like a tailored suit. Age it for a roast leg of lamb. (350 cases) *Geyser Peak Winery, Geyserville, CA*

92 | Mount Veeder \$80
2010 Mt. Veeder Napa Valley Reserve A powerful mountain wine (96 percent cabernet sauvignon), this has the wild blueberry and conifer forest scents of fruit grown on Mt. Veeder. It's fully ripe without excess, leaving room for the tannins to show their soil inflection, a black glint of minerality that focuses the wine's plump fruit. Suited to several years of aging, this is built for grilled lamb. (421 cases) *Mount Veeder Winery, Oakville, CA*

89 | Franciscan \$50
2010 Napa Valley Magnificat (Best Buy) Packed with fruit, arrested by tannins, this draws on oxygen for two days before those tannins soften up. It develops into a richly textured red, a simple blend of cherry and chocolate flavors. Cellar it for a year or two, then decant for roast beef. (4,051 cases) *Franciscan Estate, Oakville, CA*

88 | Conn Creek \$55
2010 Napa Valley Anthology (Best Buy) With its sweet plum jam flavors, this is a soft, cushioned blend of cabernet sauvignon (78 percent) with petit verdot, franc, merlot and malbec. It finishes warm and smoky, suited to grilled meats. (2,900 cases) *Conn Creek Winery, St. Helena, CA*

CABERNET SAUVIGNON



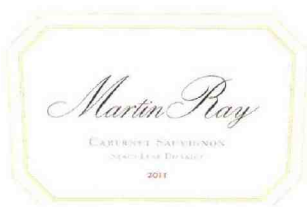
92 | Schug \$50
2010 Sonoma Valley Heritage Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon While he now focuses on pinot noir and chardonnay at his Carneros-based winery, Walter Schug spent most of the 1970s and early 1980s making cabernet at Joseph Phelps. This wine shows a sure hand with a Bordelaise cépage. Mostly from Rancho Salina—a vineyard characterized by red volcanic clay like its neighbor Monte Rosso—this is supple and satisfying, juicy as a ripe blackberry yet complex at the end, lifting elegantly on high-toned floral aromas, grounded by a baseline of fine pencil lead tannins and freshened by a hillside-grown acidity that lasts. (232 cases) *Schug Carneros Estate Winery, Sonoma, CA*



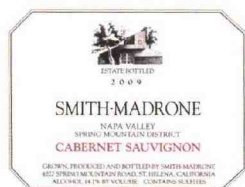
91 | Martin Ray \$50
2010 Santa Cruz Mountains Cabernet Sauvignon Most of this fruit is sourced from Fellom Ranch, a steep, terraced vineyard at 2,200 feet on the Monte Bello Ridge, the balance coming from the lower-elevation Cooper-Garrod Vineyard. It opens with classic cabernet scents of mint, loam and black currants, refreshing in its acidity and gripping in its tannins. Some of that initial intensity fades as the wine absorbs oxygen, oak taking over where the fruit leaves off. It may not be a cabernet to age for 15 years, but it would be delicious over the next five with pot roast. (1,300 cases) *Martin Ray Winery, Santa Rosa, CA*

90 | Flora Springs \$125
2011 St. Helena Napa Valley Rennie Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon This cabernet's voluptuously ripe fruit is draped in

supple cocoa-scented tannins. It grows at a three-acre block on St. Helena's southwestern border with Rutherford, where the fruit fully ripened in 2011 while maintaining a touch of mintiness. Luxurious and rich. (360 cases) *Flora Springs, St. Helena, CA*



90 | Martin Ray \$60
2011 Stags Leap District Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon This starts off dark, savory and round, with firm acidity that stands apart from the layers of tannins and their bittersweet chocolate richness. The wine's fruit comes forward with air, yielding blueberry notes that integrate the acidity and the tannins as the oak recedes. Finely balanced, this needs a few years of cellar time to show its best. (450 cases) *Martin Ray Winery, Santa Rosa, CA*



90 | Smith-Madrone \$45
2009 Spring Mountain District Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (Best Buy) A substantial wine with mountain-grown intensity in its meaty, cherry-scented fruit, this is dominated by oak for now. The fruit grows more fragrant with air, but needs bottle age to supersede the wood. Powerful and gracious, this should develop well. *Smith-Madrone, St. Helena, CA*

88 | Mount Veeder \$40
2011 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (Best Buy) Purple fruited and sweet, this is as much a dark fruit nectar as a wine. The bold, juicy flavors fill a creamy texture, checked by stony tannins. For a steak. *Mount Veeder Winery, Oakville, CA*

MERLOT

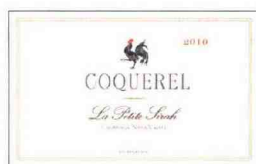


90 | Franciscan \$21
2011 Napa Valley Merlot (Best Buy) This has the full suppleness of merlot along with an herbal note of fresh thyme, a delicacy to contrast the wine's weight. The dusty blueberry and strawberry flavors will meld with roast beef. *Franciscan Estate, Oakville, CA*

MOURVEDRE

94 | Terre Rouge \$25
2011 Sierra Foothills Mourvedre Bill Easton has worked with these head-pruned vines off and on since 1992, when they were planted at 2,200 feet on a south-facing slope in Fiddletown's decomposed granitic loam. In the cool 2011 vintage, he picked the last of the mourvedre on November 16 as the lower rows were beginning to frost. That late harvest created a wine of captivating contradiction: as meaty as lamb stock, yet with a high-toned thread of acidity that refreshes the wine with bright red fruit tones while mineral Foothills tannins sharpen the wine's edges. With two days of air, it continues to develop in a heady direction, its aromas suggesting loam, pine and smoked meat, yet presenting its pungent complexity with surprising delicacy, the tannin vertical and fresh. This is a vigorous, singular expression of Foothills terroir that would be beautiful decanted with braised lamb shanks. *Domaine de la Terre Rouge, Plymouth, CA*

PETITE SIRAH

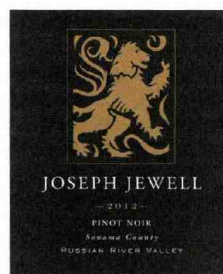


93 | Coquerel \$35
2010 Calistoga Napa Valley La Petite Sirah (Best Buy) Petite sirah loves the soils

US NEW RELEASES

and the heat of Calistoga, so it's impressive how well it did in a cool vintage like 2010. During the summer, winemaker Christine Barbe conducted three thinning passes and managed irrigation to keep the berries small. This wine's fruit has a fragrance of the earth, as black and reflective as obsidian, as succulent and plump as ripe wild blackberries. It's supple and poised to go the distance in the cellar, presenting the best kind of California sweetness of fruit, not dried but vibrant and fresh. *Coquerel Family Wine Estates, Napa, CA*

PINOT NOIR



95 | Joseph Jewell \$29
2012 Russian River Valley Pinot Noir (Best Buy) Young winemakers Micah Joseph Wirth and Adrian Jewell Manspeaker started out in a garage in 2006 and have slowly expanded, making Russian River wines that tend to emphasize discretion rather than bombast. Their even-handed approach clearly paid off in the moderate 2012 growing season, resulting in this sleek, vivid apotheosis of Russian River pinot noir. The fruit comes from two vineyards on the cooler western side of the Russian River Valley—Appian Way and the dry-farmed Hallberg Vineyard—along with Floodgate, a lower-lying vineyard in the center of the valley. There's not an ounce of undue fat on this wine, just a lively concentration of red fruit and firm berry-skin tannins. The wine's complex, delicate aromas suggest the bay laurel and redwood bark scents you might encounter on a hike in the forests above the Russian River. This gains clarity and intensity with air, suggesting that, while it's irresistible now, it will be even more captivating in five years' time. (658 cases) *Joseph Jewell Wines, Cloverdale, CA*

94 | Hirsch \$60
2011 Sonoma Coast San Andreas Fault Pinot Noir This is delicious and utterly transparent coastal juice, electric in its tones of red plum and blood orange. A cedar bark tang gives it gravitas—as if recalling the cons of redwood mulch that built the soil on the

US NEW RELEASES

uplifted marine sedimentary ridges of the Sonoma Coast. San Andreas—referencing the fault responsible for that uplift—draws on both older vines planted in the early 1990s and newer blocks planted in 2002, painting a picture of the entire Hirsch estate in a given vintage. While some Sonoma vineyards were challenged by rain prior to the 2011 harvest, winemaker Ross Cobb saw Hirsch's sunny ridges ripen pinot noir before the October storms arrived. This feels beautifully formed; its taut delicacy would be irresistible with grilled sea bass. (2,710 cases) *Hirsch Winery, Cazadero, CA*

93 | Calera \$60

2011 Mt. Harlan Reed Vineyard Pinot Noir Josh Jensen's coolest site, planted on a north-facing slope in the vineyard's deepest soil, Reed tends to come across as more discreet and savory than pinots from Mt. Harlan's other vineyard blocks. In 2011, the wine's firm, stony tannins speak to a cool season on this north slope of limestone-laced clay, but the fruit is completely ripe, with a luxurious concentration that expands across the palate like a slow flood—the flavors leaning toward black raspberry, complicated by Mt. Harlan's characteristic wild aroma of resinous chaparral. Grand but not heavy, this will reward after time in the cellar. (164 cases) *Calera Wine Co., Hollister, CA*



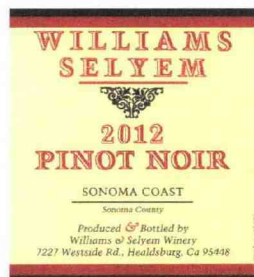
92 | Dutton-Goldfield \$58

2012 Sonoma Coast McDougall Vineyard Pinot Noir On a far-coast ridge just north of Hirsch, the McDougall Vineyard tends to produce firmly structured pinot noir like this 2012. It's concentrated and intense yet completely delicious, the fruit suggesting salted plums, with floral detail and firm, fine tannins that reminded one taster of sandstone. It becomes increasingly layered and bright as it takes on air, and should benefit from a few years of bottle age. *Dutton-Goldfield, Santa Rosa, CA*

92 | Joseph Jewell \$44

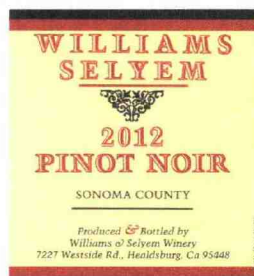
2011 Russian River Valley Hallberg Vineyard Pinot Noir (Best Buy) From a dry-farmed vineyard planted in 2000 on the Goldridge soil of a former apple orchard, this is more about power than delicacy. It's fla-

vor concentration is compelling, the ripe red cherry tone of its fruit interlaced with a complex spicy aroma that suggests garam masala. The tannins feel a bit gruff at first, but end up stitching the wine together, grounding the fruit as it absorbs oxygen and lifts into a more airy vibrancy. Decant it for herb-stuffed pork chops. (145 cases) *Joseph Jewell Wines, Cloverdale, CA*



92 | Williams Selyem \$52

2012 Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir Bob Cabral received more fruit than usual from David Hirsch's far-coast vineyard in 2012, so this wine is actually more than 20 percent Hirsch. The provenance of the fruit shows through as a delicious blast of energy, the wine lasting on a wild raspberry tang that pulls savory depth behind it, a *sous bois* undertone that speaks to the redwoods and sandstone ridges of the Sonoma Coast: direct, pristine and uncomplicated. *Williams Selyem Winery, Healdsburg, CA*



92 | Williams Selyem \$39

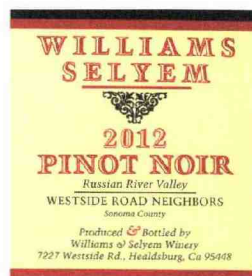
2012 Sonoma County Pinot Noir Composed mostly of Russian River fruit from young vines and vineyards that winemaker Bob Cabral is test driving, this is dark in its fruit but bright in its acidity, which gives the wine a satisfying snap. Its green edges go in a savory direction with air, turning toward a coastal sea-wrack complexity. Decant this now with roast quail, or save it for later—it has enough structure to gain from a few years in the cellar. *Williams Selyem Winery, Healdsburg, CA*

91 | Balverne \$40

2012 Russian River Valley Reserve Pinot Noir (Best Buy) Russian River's warmth delivers deliciously ripe fruit without overt alcohol in this vibrant 2012. It's succulent and sweet at first, finding its balance in firm tannins that open up into spicy complexity with air, drawing the wine into the realm of wet stones and fresh herbs as much as red fruit. Decant it to release its youthful charm. (240 cases) *Windsor Oaks Vineyards & Winery, Windsor, CA*

91 | Calera \$80

2011 Mt. Harlan Jensen Vineyard Pinot Noir One of Josh Jensen's original 1975 plantings, the Jensen vineyard has a complex array of exposures that seemed to catch plenty of sun in 2011. The wine suggests roasted cherries in its ripeness, while retaining Mt. Harlan's wild earth tones, further propelled by Jensen's use of whole cluster fermentation. The tannins remain stiff for now, but should resolve with age. A gutsy, intense wine, as much about Mt. Harlan as it is about pinot noir, this will stand up to roast lamb shoulder. (1,025 cases) *Calera Wine Company, Hollister, CA*



91 | Williams Selyem \$69

2012 Russian River Valley Westside Road Neighbors Pinot Noir Bob Cabral has been making this benchmark Russian River wine since 2002, in this vintage blending estate fruit with four nearby vineyards west of the river: Bacigalupi, Bucher, Allen and the Rochioli Riverblock. His 2012 shows a lot of warmth and oak at first, but there's a refreshing tension underneath, a crunchy cherry-skin grip that melds with the spiciness of oak to form an exuberant, satisfying Russian River classic. This would be great with sautéed mushrooms. *Williams Selyem Winery, Healdsburg, CA*

90 | Ferrari-Carano \$55

2012 Mendocino Ridge Sky High Ranch Pinot Noir This comes from a property 1,500 feet above Anderson Valley, purchased by

US NEW RELEASES

Don and Rhonda Carano in 2007. The wine's spicy, high-toned aromas of rose petals and wild herbs seem to speak to the vineyard's windblown elevation. The wine's texture is comparatively simple: sweetly silky and dangerously easy to drink, the light dusting of tannin subtle enough for rich fish dishes. *Ferrari-Carano Winery, Philo, CA*

90 | Sante Arcangeli \$36
2012 Santa Cruz Mountains Split Rail Vineyard Pinot Noir Light in color and a touch cloudy, this lively mountain pinot noir comes from a vineyard planted at 1,700 feet overlooking Monterey Bay. It's a delicious, frisky wine, with a pretty *fraises des bois* tone to its fruit that's lined with refreshingly herbal tannins. For a country pâté. (50 cases) *Sante Arcangeli Family Wines, Santa Cruz, CA*

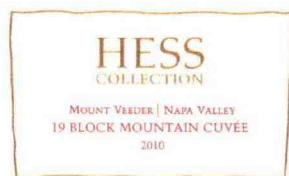
89 | Ferrari-Carano \$34
2012 Anderson Valley Pinot Noir (Best Buy) An ample Anderson Valley pinot noir with ripe black cherry tones to its fruit and fat, loamy tannins, this carries its richness with poise. It's a simple pleasure for duck breast. *Ferrari-Carano Winery, Philo, CA*

TEMPRANILLO



93 | Longoria \$36
2011 Santa Ynez Valley Tempranillo While tempranillo in California has a spotty track record, this captures the grape's nobility in its dark, meaty fruit and its cool density of structure, mouthwatering acidity stitching the wine tight. The fruit comes mostly from the Clover Creek Vineyard, a cool alluvial site near the Santa Ynez River, where Richard Longoria has sourced tempranillo since 2003. This bottling includes some syrah and merlot and—like many Riojas—was raised in American oak (45 percent new). It lasts on thick-skinned fruit tannins rather than oak, carrying refreshing tones of blueberry and mint into a long, clean, vivid finish. Bring on the lamb chops, and stash a bottle or two away to see how this might age. (240 cases) *Richard Longoria Wines, Lompoc, CA*

RED BLENDS



93 | Hess Collection \$38
2010 Mt. Veeder Napa Valley 19 Block Mountain Cuvée (Best Buy) The scent of pinesap and the cool spice of cardamom place this on Mt. Veeder. In fact, the blend is based on cabernet sauvignon from the Veeder Summit Vineyard, rising to 2,000 feet, and includes malbec, syrah, merlot and petite verdot. While the texture is as sleek as satin, the flavor complexity lies in the firm structure, lifted by peppery spice. It's a clean, rich red to decant for rack of lamb. *The Hess Collection Winery, Napa, CA*

90 | Brassfield \$18
2012 High Valley Eruption Volcano Ridge Vineyard (Best Buy) Hailing from a vineyard planted at 2,200 feet on the slope of an extinct volcano, this unconventional blend of syrah, malbec, mourvedre and petite sirah—fermented without inoculation—carries a plump and floral ripeness that's satisfying. It's girded by firm, glinting black tannins that seem to speak directly to Lake County's volcanic terroir. It's a great buy, and would sing with juicy lamb shoulder. *Brassfield Estate, Clearlake Oaks, CA*

SYRAH

93 | Terre Rouge \$35
2011 Sierra Foothills High Slopes Syrah Bill Easton makes this syrah from two vineyards planted above 3,000 feet, one on decomposed granite and one on red volcanic loam; they face each other across the Mokelumne River canyon. The wine is reduced at the outset, brooding in aromas of creosote and black pepper. With air, its taut musculature gains energy, the tannins remaining firm as the wine takes on scents of juniper and cassis, while bright acidity from a cool year gives detail and freshness. If you're going to drink it now, decant it, but this belongs in the cellar—it's a structural Foothills syrah with many years ahead of it. *Domaine de la Terre Rouge, Plymouth, CA*

90 | Terre Rouge \$90
2011 Sierra Foothills Ascent Syrah Bill Easton's *tête de cuvée*, this is a barrel selection of top syrah lots from Foothills vineyards between 1,400 and 3,200 feet in elevation. It captures the Foothills directly in its tannins, which are as coarse and firm as blasted granite. There's a cool gravitas to the fruit, a chocolaty richness that helps flesh out the wine's formidable structure, making it satisfyingly chewy—for smoked pork ribs or for the cellar. *Domaine de la Terre Rouge, Plymouth, CA*

88 | Terre Rouge \$30
2011 Sierra Foothills Monarch Mine Vineyard Syrah (Best Buy) From vines planted at 2,400 feet on the site of an old silver mine, this is a pungent syrah, tilted toward smoke, wild herbs and meat juices—sanguine, with faint glimmers of brightness. Bring it on a camping trip as a partner to a rustic stew. *Domaine de la Terre Rouge, Plymouth, CA*

ZINFANDEL

94 | Ridge \$30
2012 Paso Robles Benito Dusi Ranch Zinfandel Ridge has bottled zin from the Benito Dusi Ranch—planted in 1922 on the warm, gravelly hills south of the town of Paso Robles—since the 1967 vintage. In 2012, it's a red with both raw power and surprising detail, the aromas oscillating between cured meat, black spice and brighter floral tones. The fruit feels full to the point of bursting, yet there's sophistication to the structure, the tannins fine and mineral and alive—speaking to a resonant match of variety, site and soil amplified by vine age. It's utterly Californian, a grand and sunny red to open when you've got a good enough reason to roast a whole lamb. (3,500 cases) *Ridge Vineyards, Cupertino, CA*

92 | Masterpiece Vineyards \$14
2012 Russian River Valley Estate Grown Zinfandel (Best Buy) This bright, energetic zin is the product of an abundant year at the Windsor Oaks Vineyard in Chalk Hill, grown at two different blocks, one cooler, on valley floor soil, and one higher-elevation, on volcanic soil. The tone of the fruit falls somewhere between strawberry and sweet red cherry tomato, with a rosy lift in the aroma and some fresh, herbal details adding complexity. This is the kind of flavorful yet acid-driven table wine that's all too rare in California: a multipurpose red that could match anything from eggplant parmesan to grilled salmon. *Masterpiece Vineyards, Windsor, CA*

US NEW RELEASES

COLORADO WHITE

89 | Infinite Monkey Theorem \$20
2013 Colorado Riesling (Best Buy) This is a clean, brisk riesling made in an urban Denver winery, not far from the Rockies' baseball park. The lifted citrus scent and high-toned yellow peach flavor makes it a four-square white. Dry and assertive, it'd make a good foil for a green papaya salad. (584 cases) *Infinite Monkey Theorem, Denver, CO*

PENNSYLVANIA WHITE

87 | Galen Glen \$13
NV Pennsylvania Riesling (Best Buy) Fresh and sweet pineapple scents give way to a juicy center, marked by a lemon-lime finish. A well-balanced white for Sichuan chicken. *Galen Glen Winery, Andreas, PA*

OREGON WHITE

PINOT BLANC

89 | Spindrift \$16
2013 Willamette Valley Pinot Blanc (Best Buy) Simple and vinous, with a note of dried pear and crushed stone, this wine's lean, talc-like focus suggests pairing with a white mushroom pasta in cream sauce. (369 cases) *Spindrift Cellars, Philomath, OR*

PINOT GRIS

92 | Chehalem \$29
2012 Ribbon Ridge Ridgecrest Vineyards Pinot Gris Round and ripe, this generous white leads with scents of sourdough and lemon pith. The flavors are racy and bright, extending into a savory, whey-like richness, like ribolla gialla, the flavors long. For roast clams. (172 cases) *Chehalem, Newberg, OR*

91 | Lumos \$18
2013 Willamette Valley Rudolfo Logsdon Ridge Vineyard Pinot Gris Bright and creamy, with scents of lemon and brioche, this wine's flavors take on an impressive purity with air. It has a satisfying weight and enough drive to cut into a rich pasta dish. (975 cases) *Lumos Wine Co., McMinnville, OR*



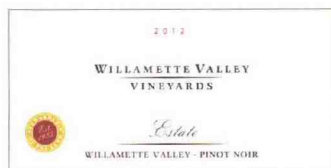
90 | Acrobat \$12
2013 Oregon Pinot Gris (Best Buy) Aromas of lemon cream and lees give a savory accent to this wine. It feels balanced, crisp and lean, with the acidity to match grilled calamari tossed with fresh herbs. A steal at the price. *King Estate Winery, Eugene, OR*

86 | A to Z \$13
2013 Oregon Pinot Gris (Best Buy) Scents of white flowers and ripe pineapple give this a florid and rich feel, finishing with pleasant bitterness. A value for summer quaffing. *A to Z Wineworks, Newberg, OR*

OREGON RED

PINOT NOIR

94 | Big Table Farm \$48
2012 Eola-Amity Hills Pelos Sandberg Vineyard Pinot Noir (Best Buy) Here's the most complete red we've tasted so far from 2012 in the Willamette Valley. Scents of tar and lavender suggest stem contact (about 30 percent, according to winemaker Brian Marcy); add to this a whiff of salted plums and black cherries. The flavors are juicy and mouthwatering, unabashedly generous and approachable, with a saturation of flavor that's deeply satisfying. (224 cases) *Big Table Farm, Amity, OR*



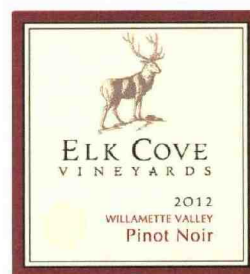
93 | Willamette Valley Vineyards \$55
2012 Willamette Valley Estate Pinot Noir An exuberant pinot noir, with scents of red cherry and a mild tinge of pipe tobacco, this is generous and inviting. With the fine grip of fruit-skin tannins, the wine has the heft and for something like duck confit. (1,973 cases) *Willamette Valley Vineyards, Turner, OR*



92 | Spindrift \$22
2012 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir (Best Buy) This wine's scents of spiced cherries are marked by a generous lashing of oak. Its flavors, with air, acquire a purple-plum depth, a ripe attack and roundness of texture that manages to retain some cool weather reticence. It has the flesh to age nicely. (970 cases) *Spindrift Cellars, Philomath, OR*

91 | St. Innocent \$24
2012 Willamette Valley Villages Cuvée Pinot Noir (Best Buy) Dark and grippy, this has a tarry note over dark purple fruit aromas, a damp earth scent that keeps the wine grounded. The wine walks a fine line between its dark fruit center and the savory elements that surround it. For braised lamb. (1,621 cases) *St. Innocent Winery, Salem, OR*

90 | Chehalem \$32
2012 Willamette Valley Three Vineyard Pinot Noir (Best Buy) A vinous pinot noir, this is quiet and mildly tense, its scents of dried cherries carried on a sleek texture. It needs some cellar time and then something delicate to match, like arctic char. (3,820 cases) *Chehalem, Newberg, OR*

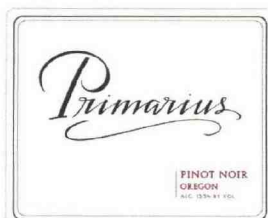


90 | Elk Cove \$29
2012 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir (Best Buy) This wine's dark cherry aromas are supported by a pronounced oak frame, as dark as bitter chocolate. It's intense and brooding, with oak playing more of a supporting role

in the texture and flavor. Cellar and let the wood settle for a year. *Elk Cove Vineyards, Gaston, OR*

90 | Elk Cove \$60
2012 Willamette Valley Clay Court Vineyard Pinot Noir Bright with a high-toned cherry aroma, this deepens to plum and spice in the middle. The finish is lean and firmly in the grip of fruit skin tannins. For braised lamb. (518 cases) *Elk Cove Vyd., Gaston, OR*

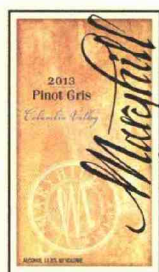
90 | Erath \$65
2010 Willamette Valley La Nuit Magique Pinot Noir Tobacco and black cherry introduce this lean-textured red, with a graham cracker sweetness to the fruit that suggests a generous oak imprint. Cellar it to integrate that oak, then serve with roast salmon. (200 cases) *Erath Vineyards, Dundee, OR*



90 | Primarius \$16
2012 Oregon Pinot Noir (Best Buy) This bright pinot has a gamay-like scent, pronounced raspberry flavors and smokiness, like lapsang souchong tea. There's an interesting tension between the fruit and savory elements, and more complexity than you'd expect to find at the price. *Primarius Winery, Dundee, OR*

88 | La Crema \$30
2012 Willamette Valley Pinot Noir (Best Buy) Fruit compote scents of plum and cherry lead in this crowd-pleasing pinot, the first from the new Jackson Family investment in Oregon vineyard land. There's plenty of oak as well, supporting all of the ripe fruit, lending a hint of chocolate in the finish. *La Crema, Dundee, OR*

WASHINGTON WHITE



88 | Maryhill \$12
2013 Columbia Valley Pinot Gris (Best Buy) Floral lemon blossom scents along with ripe apple and pear make this a classic warm-climate gris. It has the balance and the weight to pair with something meaty, like a pork chop. *Maryhill Winery, Goldendale, WA*

88 | Pacific Rim \$11
2012 Columbia Valley Chenin Blanc (Best Buy) Bright and leesy, with a lemony scent and juicy apple flavors, this persists with freshness and lift. A lot of bang for little buck. (3,000 cases) *Pacific Rim, Richland, WA*

WASHINGTON RED

BORDEAUX-STYLE BLEND

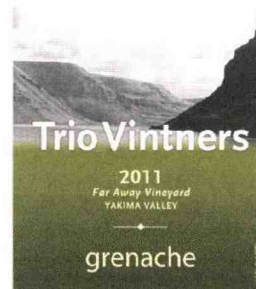
91 | aMaurice Cellars \$48
2011 Walla Walla Valley Night Owl (Best Buy) A blend of 55 percent cabernet sauvignon, 36 percent franc and 9 percent petit verdot, this cool-vintage wine takes more than a day to come into view, lying in wait behind a polished wood veneer and brickish purple fruit. Classic Walla Walla scents of cedar and tobacco emerge, the finish firm, the tannins by turns ashy and very focused and lean. It needs cellar time, or something like steak to tame its texture. (142 cases) *aMaurice Cellars, Walla Walla, WA*

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

92 | Gorman Winery \$50
2010 Red Mountain The Bully Cabernet Sauvignon Even to smell this wine, the impression is dense and brawny, with scents of tar and mocha that carry forward to the blackberry flavors. The ripe, black tannins provide a succulent intensity to the texture, a supple finish for skirt steak. (700 cases) *Gorman Winery, Woodinville, WA*

87 | Columbia Winery \$14
2012 Columbia Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (Best Buy) Dark and chocolatey, this wine's varietal fidelity comes in a dried plum character. For a rare burger. *Columbia Winery, Woodinville, WA*

GRENACHE



88 | Trio Vintners \$26
2011 Yakima Valley Far Away Vineyard Grenache (Best Buy) Meaty, with scents of wild strawberries and a catcher's mitt full of leather accents, this wine's flavors move into red cherry territory. For a country pâté. (265 cases) *Trio Vintners, Walla Walla, WA*

MERLOT

87 | Columbia Winery \$14**2012 Columbia Valley Merlot (Best Buy)**

Chocolatey and dark, this firm merlot has flavors of plums and black cherries, the tannins a little furry in their grip. *Columbia Winery, Woodinville, WA*

86 | Bridgman \$14**2012 Columbia Valley Merlot (Best Buy)**

A touch of mint graces red plum flavors in this chewy, dense barbecue wine. (1,000 cases) *W.B. Bridgman Cellars, Walla Walla, WA*

RED BLENDS

94 | Eidolon \$75**2009 Walla Walla Valley Eidolon Vineyard**

An exotic blend of equal parts syrah and cabernet sauvignon, with the balance malbec and petit verdot, this suave red has the benefit of some age leavening and integrating the fruit. Its aromas are already tending toward burnished tones, with scents of brushed leather and cedar accenting generous plum flavors. It's clear this wine went into the bottle with graceful balance, and it's still showing exquisite poise. (96 cases) *Eidolon Winery, Walla Walla, WA*

85 | Red Theory \$12**2012 Columbia Valley Winemaker's Red Blend (Best Buy)**

With sweet, plummy fruit and sweet oak, this is simple and ready to pour around the grill. (2,000 cases) *Red Theory Cellars, Walla Walla, WA*

RHONE-STYLE BLEND

88 | Northwest Cellars \$24**2011 Columbia Valley Madrigal (Best Buy)**

A blend of close to two-thirds mourvedre with the balance grenache and syrah, this has a bright strawberry scent and a mildly meaty flavor. The wine is mellow and medium bodied, with a pine-frond spiciness to the finish that suggests a pairing with something from a wood-fired oven, like a wild mushroom pizza. (506 cases) *Northwest, Grandview, WA*

WASHINGTON DESSERT

88 | Pacific Rim \$14**2012 Columbia Valley Vin de Glacière Riesling (Best Buy)**

A "frozen" wine from the Wallula Vineyard, this leads with scents of bright peach and deepens toward amber and apricot, with a hefty palate weight that contributes to its length and succulence. (3,200 cases) *Pacific Rim, Richland, WA*