



November 20, 2016

BEST WINES OF 2016

20613

Best 2006 Napa Cab: ROBERT CRAIG Affinity Big round nutty fruit, rich and wild, tahini and sesame crisps hovering over tapenade and savory tropical nuances considerably beyond the range of 'floral'. Over-ripe pineapple and dirty orange peel surround a little latex glove and strong black tea. <https://soifknows.com/2016/05/27/a-plethora-of-pinatas/>

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Best 2007 Napa Cab: TRISTANT Mirifice Calistoga Round and concentrated, beautiful vegetal and minerality shine. Graphite and polished tar translate into cedar-shavings and delectable fruit. An incredible blueberry-and-dust elixir. <https://soifknows.com/2016/03/14/mirificus-mirifici-mirifico-mirificum-mirifice/>

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Best 2008 Napa cab: LAMBORN Howell Mt. Buttered strawberry and raw beef with over-ripe banana and everything awash in a caramel. Base minerality, sharp and brilliant, toys with the wood, like rain after a forest fire. <https://soifknows.com/2016/02/27/mountain-fruit-is-best/>

Best 2009 Napa Cab: VINOCE Mt. Veeder Buttery spice rife with cacao, cola, and coriander. Fat wet gravel, rare beef and a chalky licorice tells of a wine just barely coming into drinkability. A positively chewable concoction of blackberry, thick and grainy, but light as a feather in its voluminousness. <https://soifknows.com/2015/12/21/vin-nice/>

Best 2010 Napa Cab: HESS COLLECTION Block 19 Mt. Veeder Tobacco rolls off in waves of bell pepper green olives and mushroom-bedding against perfectly ripe fruit, sharp acidity and pure mountain briar. A chalky grit and infantile, broken-root bitterness defies the super-market stereotype. <https://soifknows.com/2015/08/12/showered-and-shined-for-the-party/>

Best 2011 Napa Cab (tie): CLARK-CLAUDON Three Stones Dark dusky fruit cloaked in petrichor, scorched earth and briar. Still, enough of it peeks through-concentrated, teetering on tarry slab. Bikini-body baby fat, marzipan and eucalyptus overwhelming the pecan-meat and Concord Grape juice. <https://soifknows.com/2016/04/25/3rd-in-a-row-lookin-good/>

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Best 2011 Napa Cab (tie): WHITE ROCK VINEYARDS Napa Valley Vegetal spice, mint, eucalyptus, bell pepper. Creamy vanilla frosting fruit hangs in great layers over the tapenade, sweet mud, root beer and thick black cherry fruit, tagged-teamed all along with green, opaque tannins. <https://soifknows.com/2016/07/05/its-going-to-be-a-white-christmas/>

Best 2012 Napa Cab: OAKVILLE WINERY Oakville Buttery roasted nose, stemmy and mineralific headed out towards root-beer. Broken-stem saddle and kidskin over a lavish concoction of icing and mud with a ripeness so restrained it defies description. <https://soifknows.com/2015/12/13/oakville-winery-blow-my-mind/>

Best 2013 Napa Cab: BANSHEE Napa Valley Muskily-spiced and brooding-even a bit gloomy in its absolute iron-grip. Despite the chalk-board grasp, fruit churns out of the nose, dark, absurdly rich and velvety. Lush and ripe but miserably un-evolved-a beautiful beautiful young woman, elegant and poised and destined for greatness. <https://soifknows.com/2016/07/02/not-bashful/>

Best 2nd Label Napa Cab: 2013 CHATEAU LA GRANDE ROCHE Napa Valley I love the freedom, the assumed lack of reputation-staking concern, and of course the price of a 2nd label. Beautiful ripe-grapefruit balances a chunk of dense, black fruit, bubbling with pine-pitch and infantile tannin. <https://soifknows.com/2016/02/02/a-grande-second-label/>

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Best Napa Merlot (tie): 2011 DARIOUSH Steely in the nose, offering closely-guarded quantities of fruit, briar and oak, opulent and irascible, with unforgettable elegance-but angry with substance. Supple salted licorice drains a fat slather of syrup down your throat between the gauntlet of earth and structure. <https://soifknows.com/2015/12/26/innotrinkinganyfuckingmerlot/>

Best Napa Merlot (tie): 2009 MATERRA Oak Knoll Constantly wooing between dark & brooding and light & delicate-and everything wrapped in a beautiful patina of slight age. Constant dessert pecan pie decadence runs off of its sharp edges of acid creating an almost Perfect Storm of claret-like finesse. <https://soifknows.com/2016/10/21/hakuna-materra/>

Best RRV Pinot: 2012 JOSEPH SWAN Saralee's Explosive delicate floral, pretty and pink, backed up with generous briar, wet cardboard, horse stall and bright cinnamon. Firm and packing a whallop, green briar and nutty barnyard daring the elegant fruit lying underneath to get past. <https://soifknows.com/2016/01/07/an-ugly-duckling-to-belle-glos-fans/>

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Best SMV Pinot: 2011 FLYING GOAT Dierberg Penetrating leather funk and focused fruit laden with tropical flowers. Spicy and headily briarific, nothing much can get in front of the warm, lavish fruit and the minerality is trimmed with elegance. Effortlessly Pinot, never affronting the senses. <https://soifknows.com/2016/01/14/a-flying-opus/>

Best SBC Pinot: 2014 TATOMER Massive Luxardo cherry barnyard crisp and clean and oh so concentrated just NAILIN the fruit hardcore but condensed around unforgettable briary floral. <https://soifknows.com/2016/02/08/my-new-favorite-pinot/>

Best Sonoma Pinot: 2013 La Pitchoune Van Der Kamp Earth and barnyard on ethereal levels alongside disgustingly rich fruit equalizing everything in a Burgundian framework of equally complex structure, changing so drastically across the full dimension of just one sip it is intimidating to keep up. <https://soifknows.com/2016/09/23/a-perfect-storm-of-pinot/>

Best Sonoma Coast Pinot: 2013 WILD HOG VINEYARD Ft. Ross-Seaview Brown sugar and burnt rubber backed by wet forest weeds and bitter cherry and a crimson-ness of spirit you can't WAIT to taste. Myrrh and musk perfume ride a ripe floral wave edgy with mineral into chalky-cherry awesomeness <https://soifknows.com/2016/09/02/the-cleanest-brightest-hog-ever/>

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Best Oregon Pinot: 2014 RAYLEE Finnigan Hills Dandelion and hay-laurel, wet weedy briar, stunning match-head minerality, all reasonable and mellow and balanced and situationally-correct. Deep and sultry, while still whisper-light. <https://soifknows.com/2016/05/05/finnigans-island/>

Best 2013 Grenache: BLACK SHEEP FINDS Cafe Society Nose-clogging floral, walnut hulls and natal plum, wet firewood and raspberry jam. Transparent and thin-just a whisp of a wine. Cellar floor funk and barnyard rises up to greet the the velvet acid and decadent fruit. <https://soifknows.com/2016/01/21/you-look-happy-to-meet-me/>

Best 2014 Grenache: PRESS GANG Alisos Cinnamon asphalt and sweet oak, sour pie cherry over mascarpone and whipped cream alongside an elegant earthiness. Honey carmelizing on hot rocks create an alpine icing so full and round the rich Cola-laced and dirty-can barely keep it grounded. <https://soifknows.com/2016/09/08/gangnam-grenache/>

Best Cab Franc: 2014 HABI Santa Ynez Valley Heady bright, fresh fruit steeped in licorice, tapenade, and lovely Loire funk translating directly into the mouth, where tart candy and floral reign supreme into the delicate tannins. <https://soifknows.com/2016/02/21/youre-a-hard-habi-to-break/>

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Best Zinfandel: 2013 KENWOOD Jack London Woodsy briar and prune-free fruit play against Cinnamon Toast Crunch and parched earth. Dark leather and intense spice fade gradually in the face of BRILLIANT tannin. <https://soifknows.com/2016/07/27/20th-century-fox/>

Best Malbec: 2014 CADLE FAMILY Knight's Valley Funky and vegetal? No way. Weird and meaty? Not a trace. Bright, focused, miserably fruited-black and dense with an absolute WALL of briar and acid. <https://soifknows.com/2016/09/15/oh-so-you-hate-malbec/>

Best Weird Whatever Long-shot You Never Saw It Coming Strange Variety Magic: 2007 MILANO FAMILY Valdiguié Mendocino Eucalyptus and carrot cake churn out of the glass, thick with the pedigree of a used bookstore and plump with wet leather and licorice. <https://soifknows.com/2016/09/22/dont-harsh-my-gamay-bro/>

Best Paso Robles Wine: 2012 BELLA LUNA Estate Riserva Round briar, raw egg, burnt rubber and cream soda maintain a rich, robust concentration showing lemon peel and elegant vanilla. Bright fruit and acid heads deep into tar and briar, campfire and chopped green weeds-satisfyingly voluptuous. <https://soifknows.com/2016/03/17/a-super-super-cal-ital-paso/>

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Best Petite Sirah: 2010 SAXBY Paso Robles Staining lipstick edges. Heady oak and cassis split the briar and sandpaper evenly between volatility and obtuse fruit. Mint and edgy alcohol, scrubbed stainless-steel and petrichor make for an alignment of *black* and *bright*. <https://soifknows.com/2016/01/13/big-black-and-beautiful/>

Best Chardonnay: 2014 LIQUID FARM White Hills SRH Delicate as a perfumed kiss. Fruit evolves toward a delicate old-World willingness, crisp and clean, never bogged down with butter & oak or even petrichor. A crescendo of incredible white-hot nectarine vibrancy that never fades even into peach-pit tannin. <https://soifknows.com/2016/09/26/liquid-farming/>

Best Other White: 2013 DEUXPUNX Eldorado Suma Kaw Big dark dense earthy nose pulls up layers of butter and apple just alongside ripe cress and dense incredibly volcanic minerality. Pesto and pasta, dirt road and rain, celery-salt on popcorn. <https://soifknows.com/2016/09/18/dear-me/>

Best Bubbles: 2009 CARACCIOLI CELLARS Brut Cuvee SLH An effortless condensation of everything you love about the structure France embodies and all the joy California brings. <https://soifknows.com/2016/11/20/make-mine-a-brut/>

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Best French Wine: 2013 DOMAIN DE LA SOURCE Bellet Layers of leather and silk, tobacco over ripe cherry and integrated acids so perfectly mouth-filling and balanced. Rustic and elegant, velvet wet wood rockslide tart cherry brilliance. <https://soifknows.com/2016/11/04/nice-is-nice-wrap-up/>

Best Italian Wine: 2009 TENUTA SETTE PONTI Crognolo Wet fur and sweat exposes rich cherry fruit, focused and pure. One pure never-ending stream of classic, powerful roundness coupled with dense spice. Deep cassis and soil punctuate a certain acrid green-ness. <https://soifknows.com/2016/07/11/best-grog-you-ever-had/>

Winery Of The Year: CARDELLA WINERY Mendota San Joaquin Valley Do I write about the Sangiovese? The Barbera? The Ruby Cab? The Moscato? Never have I been so impressed with a winery's spirit, realization of dream, quality across-the-board, beautiful grounds, incredible value, and a dedication to doing things correctly now and planning for the future as I have been this past year with Cardella Winery. <https://soifknows.com/2016/07/25/not-a-candle-holder/>

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DRACAENA WINES

November 28, 2016 at 06:08

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