

SAVOR THE GREATNESS: JAMESSUCKLING.COM'S WINE OF THE YEAR AND TOP 100 WINES OF 2018



I knew back in 2016 what would be the JamesSuckling.com Wine of the Year in 2018. Or at least, I had a pretty fair idea. I tasted 800 barrel samples in Bordeaux in March 2016, and I was blown away by the **superb quality of the 2015 vintage**. It was a superlative year producing classically structured reds with incredible beauty, structure, freshness, and finesse. They were neo-classical wines reminiscent of great young Bordeaux of my career such as 1982 and 1989. I gave potential perfect 100-point ratings to eight wines. About two years later (January this year), I tasted the 2015 Bordeaux again, and I rated 14 wines 100 points. It was the largest number of perfect wines in a single vintage of Bordeaux in my nearly four decades as a wine critic.

My favorite perfect wine of the 2015 vintage has always been St.-Emilion's **Chateau Canon**, and that's why it's our 2018 Wine of the Year. This blend of cabernet franc and merlot is an exquisite wine showing depth and intensity and superb concentration with balance. It is a wine of a lifetime.



The 2015 Chateau Canon is our wine of the year showing incredible depth, structure and finesse and rated 100 points!

The **Canon 2015** was just one of dozens of perfect wines rated by the JamesSuckling.com tasting team this year including myself, my son Jack, Nick Stock and Stuart Pigott. We tasted more than 22,000 wines in 2018 and travelled to dozens of tasting locations around the world from Napa Valley to Barossa Valley to France, Spain, Italy, Austria, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, and the United States – and back again. We visited dozens of wineries and spoke to hundreds of winemakers. We did the due diligence in tasting and reporting on the best wines of this year. And we are proud of all the hard work!

This year's top 100 is based on the best wines we tasted with a minimum production of about 300 cases. We had some other top scoring wines such as rarified trockenbeerenauslese and tiny single-vineyard

production wines, but we decided not to include them in the list since very few people in the world will ever drink them! The score was the most important factor in our ranking for the Top 100 list, but we also arranged the wines in their respective ratings level according to price whereby a wine with the same score with a lower price would be positioned higher in the list. We also only allowed one wine per winery in the list.

Bordeaux dominated the list with almost two dozen wines and rightly so considering the greatness of the 2015. I have written numerous times that "**Bordeaux is Back!**" with this wonderful vintage. And it is back in strength. Don't miss buying these wines, particularly from the Right Bank (Pomerol and St. Emilion), which are already delicious to drink but will improve with age for decades ahead.

Besides Bordeaux's **Canon (No. 1)**, **Belair-Monange (No. 2)** and **Beausejour Duffau-Lagarosse (No. 6)** being in the Top 10 of 2018, we chose a fascinating array of different wines including a dry riesling from one of Germany's greatest winemakers, the **Dönnhoff family – Dönnhoff Riesling Nahe Dellchen GG 2017 (No. 3)**. This glorious white highlights Germany's continued success with dry white winemaking and the dedication and precision of its top winemakers. At No. 4 is **Taylor's Vintage Port 2016**. Vintage Port is a lifelong favorite (I wrote my only book about it back in 1989) and the **Taylor's** is the jewel of this fantastic new vintage for Portugal's famous fortified wine.

Clos Apalta Valle de Apalta 2015 (No. 5) is the second vintage in a row from this great name of Chile to receive 100 points and it continues to amaze us with its balance, beauty and integrity. It underlines the ever growing movement to produce world class wines in Chile and the uniqueness of the various terroirs of the country. The **Ridge Vineyards Santa Cruz Mountains Monte Bello 2015** is equally unique but for its long history of quality winemaking and its adherence to maintaining its character and style in California red winemaking while so many others in the state went to high octane bottlings.

Le Macchiole Bolgheri Scio 2015 (No. 6) and **Marchesi Antinori Toscana Solaia 2015 (No. 7)** are equally harmonious and unique as the great California cabernet. They show how amazing the 2015 vintage was in Italy, particularly Tuscany. The pure syrah Scio was one of dozens of superb wines from the coast of Tuscany while Solaia 2015 is the greatest Solaia in its almost four decades history.

The **Tyrrell's Shiraz Hunter Valley Old Patch 2017 (No. 10)** is the second time this Australian icon has been in our Top 100 and we revel in the wine's uniqueness and history as it is produced from vineyards planted in 1867. This is the greatest old-vine wine in existence.

Yet this year's list of JamesSuckling.com's Top 100 Wines of 2018 has so many exceptional wines. They are wines that all of us – me, Jack, Nick and Stuart – dream about drinking again and enjoying a moment with family and friends to taste and savor their greatness. We hope you enjoy this year's Top 100 too! — *James Suckling, Editor & CEO*
JamesSuckling.com



Jack Suckling, Stuart Pigott and myself tasting in Mendoza, Argentina, this year. We found a general movement to finesse and balance from just simply power.

TASTING NOTES

1 CHÂTEAU CANON ST.-EMILION 2015

Country France

Region Bordeaux

Vintage 2015

Score

100

Seductive. The nose draws you in deep: It's like staring into a well of pristine dark cherries, dark plums, blackberries and mulberries. All the oak is perfectly subsumed. The palate's flawless with immense depth and power and it's so balanced as to appear to float. Immaculate fresh dark-berry and plum flavors. Silky and deep, ribbon-like finish. Perfect. Best from 2022.

2 CHÂTEAU BÉLAIR-MONANGE ST.-EMILION 2015

Country France

Region Bordeaux

Vintage 2015

Score

100

Blue fruits, minerals, lavender and licorice aromas are wonderful. Full body and ultra-refined tannins with an integration and refinement that make the wines seamless and beautiful. The powerful tannins hide from you at first, but what structure in the end. It goes on for minutes. Try in 2024.

3 DÖNNHOFF RIESLING NAHE DELLCHEN GG 2017

Country Germany

Region Nahe

Vintage 2017

Score

100

An enormous spectrum of fruit aromas, from peaches through grapefruit to wild strawberries and pineapple. However, that doesn't prepare you for the mind-blowing concentration and brilliance on the palate. Extremely filigree finish, in spite of the profound minerality. From organically grown grapes. Fair'n Green certification. Drink or hold. Limited production.

4 TAYLOR'S VINTAGE PORT 2016

Country Portugal

Region Douro

Vintage 2016

Score

100

OMG. This is really the most amazing young Taylor's I have ever tasted. Full-bodied and lightly sweet with super power and intensity. So racy and focused. Yet this has such muscle and intensity. Needs at least eight years to show you everything it has to offer. Drink in 2025.

5 CLOS APALTA VALLE DE APALTA 2015

Country Chile

Region Valle Central

Vintage 2015

Score

100

There is a subtle complexity on the nose with currant, berry, fresh herb and wet earth aromas. Cut fresh flowers, too. Full body, dense and powerful. Incredible character here with such purity and polish. It goes on for minutes. Formed, sculptured yet soulful. A monumental wine for Chile. Unbelievable. More powerful than the 2014 which was 100 points. A blend of 46% carmenere, 30% cabernet sauvignon, 19% merlot and 5% cabernet franc. Made from biodynamically grown grapes. Better in 2022.

6 CHÂTEAU BEAUSÉJOUR DUFFAU-LAGAROSSE ST.-EMILION 2015

Country France

Region Bordeaux

Vintage 2015

Score

100

This is extraordinary. There has never been a wine like this here since the famous 1990 or underrated 1989. Violets, flowers, stones and limestone. Oyster-shell undertones. Full-bodied, muscular and so structured. A phenomenal wine that reminds me of the great Bordeaux of the 1950s. Try in 2026.

7 RIDGE VINEYARDS SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS MONTE BELLO 2015

Country United States

Region California - Central Coast

Vintage 2015

Score

100

Stunning depth, power, purity and elegance. The blackcurrants and plums are fresh and intense on the nose with blueberries and gently herbal notes, too. The palate has a keenly articulated array of vibrant tannins that hold long, fresh and pure. It invokes a sense of wonderment at the finish. So long and so pure. This blend of 77 per cent cabernet sauvignon, 11 per cent merlot, seven per cent petit verdot and five percent cabernet franc, is just at the start of a wonderful journey. Try from 2021.

8 LE MACCHIOLE BOLGHERI SCRIO 2015

Country Italy

Region Tuscany

Vintage 2015

Score

100

A stunning syrah; the real McCoy for the variety. The depth of aroma takes your breath away with bark, tea leaves, peppermint, dried rosemary, thyme, sage, pressed violets, cedar, creme de cassis, blackcurrants and lavender. The palate is incredibly tight and yet, profound in its delivery of flavors. Full body, layer upon layer of fruit of every color on the spectrum, pinpoint acidity and a finish that seems endless. Drink in 2025 and way beyond.

9 MARCHESI ANTINORI TOSCANA SOLAIA 2015

Country Italy

Region Tuscany

Vintage 2015

Score

100

The nose to this Solaia is truly phenomenal with currants, blackberries, roses and violets. So perfumed. Full-bodied and everything is in check and harmony with polished tannins that last for minutes. Purity and focus. Is it the greatest Solaia ever? So drinkable already, but this is a wine for ages ahead.

10 TYRRELL'S SHIRAZ HUNTER VALLEY OLD PATCH 2017**Country** Australia**Region** New South Wales**Vintage** 2017

Score

100

More depth than the four acres. This old plot was planted in 1867 and it has excelled in vintage 2017. The nose carries pristine aromas of raspberries, red plums and mulberries in gently spicy repose. The palate unfurls layers and layers of lightly spiced red- and dark-fruit flavors with tannins that seem to hold endlessly on the finish. Pitch-perfect and noble. An essay in grace and charm. Akin to grand cru Burgundy and maybe Musigny too! This really ought to be left alone for a decade.

11 VIEUX CHÂTEAU CERTAN POMEROL 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

The blackberries, blueberries, oyster shell and violets are so mesmerizing. Full-bodied, focused and deep. It takes you to another space and plane. Dried flowers and dark fruit. The tannins are perfectly crafted. Keeps going as you taste it. Drink in 2023 but why wait?

12 RIPPON PINOT NOIR CENTRAL OTAGO TINKER'S FIELD 2015**Country** New Zealand**Region** Central Otago**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

A sultry, stony and savory expression, offering wild black fruit, beef stock, wet stones, woody spices and a flicker of smoldering, flinty rock. Entrancingly particular now, but there's much more to come in time. The palate cuts a strong, powerful and contained swathe of mouthwateringly taut tannins. Explosive and directional power on the palate with lustrous, dark fruit that holds deep into the chasm-like finish. From a single-vineyard parcel on a north-facing site that is home to the oldest vines on the property. Drink in 2023.

13 CHÂTEAU TROTTEVIEILLE ST.-EMILION 2015

Country France

Region Bordeaux

Vintage 2015

Score

99

Subtle and complex aromas of dried flowers, berries, blackberries and black olives. Minerals, limestone and rust to boot. Full-bodied, layered and tannic, yet the phenolic structure is all about strength with finesse. It lasts a very long time. The new classic from here... 1961 all over? Try in 2024 and behold.

14 CHRISTMANN RIESLING PFALZ IDIG GG 2017

Country Germany

Region Pfalz

Vintage 2017

Score

99

Welcome to the dry-riesling deep end. However, you'll need some patience, if you want to experience this greatness to the full. Descriptors like mirabelle and apricot only hint at what this gentle giant has to offer. Enormously long, hyper-mineral finish. From biodynamically grown grapes. Respekt certified. Better from 2019.

15 F. X. PICHLER RIESLING WACHAU UNENDLICH SMARAGD 2017

Country Austria

Region Danube

Vintage 2017

Score

100

Although this dry riesling is mind-blowingly concentrated, what makes it utterly astonishing is the extreme clarity in the nose, featuring the very essence of white peach, together with the sharply defined contours of the widescreen palate. Some may, quite possibly, find the intensity and vibrancy at the finish a bit too much right now, but just give it a year or two. Better still, a decade or more! From the great Kellerberg and Loibenberg sites.

16 ARGENTIERA BOLGHERI SUPERIORE 2015

Country Italy
Region Tuscany
Vintage 2015

Score
99

A delightful nose of creme de cassis, hot stones and crushed violets and spices. Full body, chewy and super polished tannins and a long finish, which really takes off thanks to electric acidity. An essay in balance and depth. Best ever. Puts Argentiera with the best of the best in Tuscany. A blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot and cabernet franc.

17 TOLPUDDLE PINOT NOIR COAL RIVER VALLEY COAL RIVER VALLEY 2017

Country Australia
Region Tasmania
Vintage 2017

Score
99

This 6th release of Tolpuddle Vineyard pinot noir is the finest work to date, as it shows refinement and true vineyard expression. The fruit aromas are wildly alluring with red and dark cherries, red plums, strawberries, pink grapefruit, blood oranges, peaches and pomegranate. Some light peppery notes and an array of freshly ground, hard brown spices, stony and sappy elements, crushed roses and violets. Very complex. The palate is just as impressive with a strikingly resolved mix of power and elegance. Flavors of red and dark cherries, persimmon, plums and blackberries are encased in a sleeve of helix-like tannins, which also carry long and emanate waves of fresh fruit flavor. Intense red cherries and red plums hold the finish long and pure. This is something special. Drink or hold.

18 PODERE POGGIO SCALETTE ALTA VALLE DELLA GREVE IL CARBONAIONE 2015

Country Italy
Region Tuscany
Vintage 2015

Score
99

A really exotic nose with so much dried herb character, ranging from thyme and sage to Thai basil. Then there's more familiar and equally appealing dark blackcurrants, crushed stones and lavender. Full body with very refined tannins that both coat and caress the palate. A long, chewy finish. Drink in 2022.

19 CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE 2016**Country** France**Region** Rhone Valley**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

This is a stunning Beaucastel. A classic! Has a superb array of fruit, ranging from red, through to blue, darker purple and black. Nuances of dark, stony minerals, spices, wild flowers and herbs. So fleshy. This has impeccable balance, super-silky tannins and an extraordinarily long finish. This has decades ahead of it. Drink or hold.

20 LITTORAI PINOT NOIR SONOMA COUNTY SONOMA VALLEY SONOMA COAST THE HAVEN VINEYARD 2016**Country** United States**Region** California - Sonoma County**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

The red cherries and subtle, leafy complexity, sweet spices, fresh earth and then savory notes, lead to a suave, long palate. This is seductive pinot at its very best. Super elegant and rich. Plush and luxuriant with tannins that command so gently now, but will deliver in time. Sheer pinot perfection.

21 FAMILLE HUGEL RIESLING ALSACE SCHOELHAMMER 2009**Country** France**Region** Alsace**Vintage** 2009

Score

99

Almost absurdly fresh for its age. The spicy and mineral complexity is just beginning to emerge from the cloak of ripe tree fruits. This is as graceful as it is concentrated and as pristine as it is powerful. The best vintage of this wine so far released and the shining star of the vintage. Delicious now, but probably has a couple of decades ahead of it if you can resist its fascination now.

22 FATTORIA LE PUPILLE MAREMMA TOSCANA SAFFREDI 2016

Country Italy
Region Tuscany
Vintage 2016

Score
99

Incredible aromas of dark berries, lavender, rosemary, licorice and dried flowers. Spice. Full body and fantastic tannin texture with great length. Goes on for minutes. Muscular yet wonderfully formed and refined. A glorious Saffredi. Drink in 2022.

23 TRAPICHE MALBEC CABERNET FRANC MENDOZA ISCAI 2013

Country Argentina
Region Mendoza
Vintage 2013

Score
99

A stunning and beautiful red with aromas of dark plums and orange peel, as well as peppers and wet earth. Even black truffle. Full-bodied, super velvety yet tight and plush in texture. Amazing fruit and balance at the same time. Fantastic finish. Cabernet franc is from Altamira and malbec from Gualtallary. Drink in 2022 but already a joy to taste.

24 BERINGER CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY PRIVATE RESERVE 2015

Country United States
Region California
Vintage 2015

Score
99

The spice and walnut aromas are so enticing. Undertones of blackberries and black truffles. Full-bodied, dense and layered with fantastic tension and seamless tannins. It goes on for minutes. All about classic structure and beauty. Try in 2021.

25 TENUTA SETTE PONTI TOSCANA ORENO 2016

Country Italy
Region Tuscany
Vintage 2016

Score
99

Gorgeous floral and deep, dark berry aromas with hints of spices such as cinnamon and hazelnuts. Full body and ultra-fine and strong tannins that are powerful yet so sleek and beautiful. Fantastic length and texture. Deep, dark and profound. Takes you on a long journey and shows you its true character. Better in 2025. Give it time.

26 S.C. PANNELL SHIRAZ MCLAREN VALE KOOMILYA JC BLOCK 2015**Country** Australia**Region** South Australia**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

A slightly firmer and more fragrant style to the ultra-rich DC Block bottling of the same vintage. This has impressive depth and concentration. Aromas are in the spectrum of dark, red and purple berries. There is an astutely handled, spicy oak influence courtesy of the 2700-liter French oak vats. The palate carries on with a wealth of fine, long and sleek tannins, which deliver a fresh plum-stone finish. Try from 2023.

27 GRAHAM'S VINTAGE PORT 2016**Country** Portugal**Region** Douro**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

Extremely complex aromas that show the classic Graham character of black-fruit marmalade and burnt oranges. Follows through to a full body with great grip at the finish. Lightly sweet. Chewy and powerful. Such a focus at the end.

28 SUSANA BALBO WINES VALLE DE UCO NOSOTROS SINGLE VINEYARD 2013**Country** Argentina**Region** Mendoza**Vintage** 2013

Score

99

The intense but more importantly, ethereally-fresh fruit takes your breath away. A kaleidoscope of freshly-picked blackcurrants, brambleberries, boysenberries and mulberries. Though this a late release, it tastes like they were picked yesterday. Then there's pure ink, iodine, licorice and dark plums. Full body, seamless tannins, unmitigated fruit and an incredibly long finish. So delicious now, but better in 2022 and way after that, too.

29 ULYSSES NAPA VALLEY 2016**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

Aromas of sweet berries, fresh herbs, currant bush and licorice. Terracotta. Full body, layered and soft, velvety and focused tannins. Breathtaking texture. The focus and polished is phenomenal. Harmonious. Enticing. Fascinating and thoughtful. A blend of cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc and petit verdot. Drink or hold.

30 DOMAINE ZIND HUMBRECHT RIESLING ALSACE GRAND CRU RANGEN DE THANN CLOS SAINT URBAN 2016**Country** France**Region** Alsace**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

Super smoky with enormous depth, but also incredibly precise and pristine with a salt, savory and mineral finish that doesn't want to stop. In spite of that unique personality and that there is a couple of decades of aging potential, it's so easy to enjoy right now. Made from biodynamically grown grapes.

31 DUEMANI SYRAH COSTA TOSCANA SUISASSI 2016**Country** Italy**Region** Tuscany**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

Wow. This shows amazing aromas of foie gras, game, pepper and spice with the dark fruit. Full body and soft, juicy tannins that form the wild and exotic, syrah character in the aftertaste. Love this. From biodynamically grown grapes. Demeter-certified. Drink now or hold. 4,000 bottles produced.

32 MUGA RIOJA ARO 2015**Country** Spain**Region** La Rioja**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

A more sophisticated, savory and mineral attitude on the nose with dark chocolate, plum liqueur and dark cherry that's still very primary. Violets, too. This has sexy, seductive dark plums and berries on the palate with an immaculate tannin texture and freshness. Profound, unending depth. Wow! Try this from 2023.

33 HEWITT VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY DOUBLE PLUS 2014**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2014

Score

99

This is a fabulous young wine with aromas of blackcurrants, moss wood and oyster shell. Black olives, iodine and lavender, too. Full-bodied, very tight and poised with fantastic tannin integration. Seamless texture at another level. Drink in 2022.

34 BRUNO GIACOSA BARBARESCO ASILI RISERVA 2014**Country** Italy**Region** Piedmont**Vintage** 2014

Score

99

Incredible aromas of violets, roses and blue fruits. So perfumed. Never smelled a wine like this before. Full body, perfectly integrated tannins and bright, vivid acidity. Extremely long and endless. A seamless and great one. An evocative wine that makes you think. Needs three to five years of bottle age on release. Unique red. Available in 2019.

35 CASTELLO DI AMA CHIANTI CLASSICO VIGNETO BELLAVISTA GRAN SELEZIONE 2015

Country Italy
Region Tuscany
Vintage 2015

Score
99

This awe-inspiring Chianti Classico shows blueberries, blackberries, red plums, melted chocolate, hazelnuts, violets, elderberries, heather, rose stems, ash and charcoal. Full body and a ripe yet ultra-polished sheen of tannins, which encase wonderfully rich and fresh fruit. Deep and ever so long on the finish. The silkiness is mind-boggling. Will this prove to be the greatest Chianti Classico ever made? Drink or hold.

36 REALM CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY OAKVILLE TO KALON VINEYARD 2015

Country United States
Region California
Vintage 2015

Score
100

Haunting aromas of terracotta, blackberries, plums and sweet tobacco. Very complex nose. Full body, super silky tannins, spices and ripe fruit. Ripe and compressed tannins. A reserved finish. More precise. A sensational wine. Cooler and more defined than the 2013. Try in 2021.

37 CHÂTEAU PAVIE ST.-EMILION 2015

Country France
Region Bordeaux
Vintage 2015

Score
100

This is really something. Sort of speechless when I taste it. It shows evocative aromas of wet earth, oyster shell, dust, tile, blackberries and blueberries. Full body, ultra-fine tannins and a length and intensity that is so, so fine. A wine in perfect harmony. Complete. Hard not not to drink. Energetic and balanced. Better to wait for 10 years. Try in 2028.

38 CHÂTEAU TROTANOY POMEROL 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

Breathtaking aromas of perfectly ripe fruit with blackberries, black olives, licorice, cedar and sweet tobacco. Full body, incredible depth and power, yet this is always in reserve and check. Everything is in the right place for this new legend from Trotanoy. Try it in 2026. Will age for decades in the future.

39 SPINIFEX SHIRAZ BAROSSA VALLEY SINGLE VINEYARD MOPPA 2016**Country** Australia**Region** South Australia**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

Extraordinary complexity and depth. This is something of a masterpiece for Spinifex. There's a stony, graphite-like mineral thread to the nose with hints of peppers and warm brown spices laced across dried roses, blackberries, mulberries and dark plums. The palate has dense flavors of black fruit wrapped in fine yet firm tannins. The result is a very long, seamless impression with smooth, muscular resolve. A superb wine now, better in time. Try from 2022. Screw cap.

40 CHÂTEAU L'EVANGILE POMEROL 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

Stunning aromas of blackberries, black olives, brown sugar and dried flowers. Tar. Full-bodied, dense and layered. Superfine tannins, yet this is muscular and long. An amazing wine reminiscent of the great L'Evangiles of the 1950s. Straight track. Goes on and on. Truly great wine. Try in 2024. Just a baby.

41 CHÂTEAU PAPE CLÉMENT PESSAC-LÉOGNAN 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

The clarity to this wine is impressive. Wealth of dark-plum and black-fruit essence not to mention orange citrus. Everything is dialed up to the limit here but then dialed in on the palate. Such impressive depth and suave, ripe, fluid tannins that deliver impressive length. Great wine. Such polish. Superb. Try from 2022.

42 QUINTA DO NOVAL VINTAGE PORT NACIONAL 2016**Country** Portugal**Region** Douro**Vintage** 2016

Score

100

This is austere and tannic with reserve yet polish and finesse that is hard to come by. Blackberries, blueberries and hazelnuts and some fresh currants. Full-bodied, off-dry and extremely polished and focused. Only 175 cases made. Great length. Layers of tannic power. Perfect wine again. Try in 2025.

43 CONTINUUM NAPA VALLEY SAGE MOUNTAIN VINEYARD 2015**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

This is sensational with blackberries, blueberries and mineral. Extremely floral, too. Full-bodied but so seamless and refined with polished tannins that just melts into the wine. Goes on for minutes. A subtle and glorious wine that will be a new classic for Napa Valley. An emotional red that touches your soul. Energy. 46% cabernet sauvignon, 31% cabernet franc, 17% petit verdot, and 6% merlot. Very approachable now but better in 2022.

44 CHÂTEAU CLINET POMEROL 2015

Country France

Region Bordeaux

Vintage 2015

Score

99

An immaculate wine with pristine blackberries and dark plums as well as fresh, earthy nuances and dark crushed violets. An upright palate with lightly peppery dark berries and plums. The inflection of cabernet here makes for an impressively powerful wine that still exudes Pomerol's suave, seductive charm. Chalky, seamless tannins. Super fresh. Try from 2022.

45 CHÂTEAU LA MISSION HAUT-BRION PESSAC-LÉOGNAN 2015

Country France

Region Bordeaux

Vintage 2015

Score

100

Rose petals, sandalwood and currants with some plums and fruit tea. Full-bodied, tight and focused. Incredibly straight and mineral. Toned muscles here. Tannic. Traditional and unwavering. Try in 2024.

46 CHÂTEAU PÉBY-FAUGÈRES ST.-EMILION 2015

Country France

Region Bordeaux

Vintage 2015

Score

99

A very intense yet playfully ripe and balanced expression of dark plums, dark stones and blackberries. Then wait for the dark, leafy notes of dark tea and charcoal as well as deeply integrated wood aromas of violets and cloves. The palate moves on a very energized and fluid bed of tannin that builds very smoothly into an ascending finish. Plush, impressive and very composed. Super long and focused finish. Try from 2022.

47 KÜNSTLER RIESLING RHEINGAU HÖLLE GG 2017**Country** Germany**Region** Rheingau**Vintage** 2017

Score

98

All ripe yellow fruit, but without the slightest hint of exaggeration. Great concentration, combined with power and brilliance. Gigantic finish that doesn't want to stop, but somehow it remains totally refined. From organically grown grapes. Fair'n Green certification. Drink or hold.

48 CHÂTEAU PALMER MARGAUX 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

I am breathless with the dark-berry, lavender and burnt-orange aromas. Some salt. Just so formidable and deep. Stunningly sexy on the palate with a density and power, yet it leaves things so clean and bright. You want to drink it and enjoy it now, but it has the structure to last forever. Drink in 2022.

49 CHÂTEAU LAFLEUR POMEROL 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

Very deep and dark fruits on the nose with black mushrooms and wet earth and just a hint of stones. Touch of rust. Full-bodied, tight and focused. Lots of tannins yet this is so polished under the surface of the wine. Draws you in and holds you with its unique personality. Some tile and clay character to it. Makes you think. Try in 2025.

50 CHÂTEAU SMITH-HAUT-LAFITTE PESSAC-LÉOGNAN 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

The currants and blackberries on the nose are very impressive with wet-earth and lavender undertones. Full body and super-integrated tannins that melt into the wine. The quality of the tannins is incredible with fantastic length and mouthfeel. So much concentration and balance at the same time. Such beauty. From biodynamic grapes. This is the greatest wine ever from here. Drink in 2022.

51 COCKBURN'S VINTAGE PORT 2016**Country** Portugal**Region** Douro**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

This shows fantastic graphite and dark-berry character with black-stone undertones and hints of dried roses. Full-bodied and very tight and precise. Good kick in the end. Love the polished tannins, which are totally folded into the wine. Reminds me of the 1947 Cockburn. Try in 2024.

52 CHÂTEAU MARGAUX MARGAUX 2015**Country** South Australia**Region** Australia**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

This is a haunting young wine that shows you a subtle and hidden strength on the nose with rose petals, currants, currant leaves, stones and plums. Wonderful ripeness yet brightness, too. Takes your breath away with the intensity and structure. Full-bodied, powerful and muscular, yet there's an agile undertone to the whole thing. Compact and condensed. A new legend for Margaux. The 1961 that didn't happen. Try in 2024.

53 CHÂTEAU PÉTRUS POMEROL 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

The aromas to this are a reference for Pomerol with truffles, black olives, black licorice and dark fruit. Even brown sugar. Full-bodied, layered and multi-dimensional. Chocolate underlines the character above. The perfect tannin texture, length and balance make you think you're dreaming. All about harmony and beauty. Love to taste it now but needs at least five or six years.

54 DAMILANO BAROLO CANNUBI RISERVA 1752 2010**Country** Italy**Region** Piedmont**Vintage** 2010

Score

99

The aromas of this wine are perfect with decadent and wild fragrances of sliced fresh mushrooms, truffles, blackberries. Incredible complexity. Full and balanced. Racy, refined and amazing. The spirit of Cannubi. Drink or hold. But why wait?

55 CHÂTEAU LE PIN POMEROL 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

I am lost for words to describe this young wine, but it's like walking into the best flower shop in Paris. Flowers galore with dark fruits as well. Full-bodied, very tannic and exotic. Amazing muscle and finesse at the same time. Phenomenal wine. This is half a normal harvest. Greatest ever, clearly. Wait until 2026.

56 FRANZ HIRTZBERGER RIESLING WACHAU RIED SINGERRIEDEL SMARAGD 2017**Country** Austria**Region** Danube**Vintage** 2017

Score

99

Totally pristine and refined with a weightless quality, in spite of the full, exotic-fruit aromas and enormous concentration on the palate, where the high acidity is already beautifully integrated and the wet-stone finish is extremely long and exciting. Drink or hold.

57 CAYUSE VINEYARDS SYRAH WALLA WALLA VALLEY BIONIC FROG 2014**Country** United States**Region** Washington**Vintage** 2014

Score

99

Deep fruit presence from the outset. Dark plums and purple cherries with abundant slate and graphite, dark chocolate and orange zest. The palate has impressive power and detail, superb purity and clarity. The palate glides effortlessly. A sexy finish. Drink or hold.

58 ESCARPMENT PINOT NOIR MARTINBOROUGH KUPE 2016**Country** New Zealand**Region** Martinborough**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

Exceptionally complex, spicy and ripe, this delivers profoundly concentrated and pure black cherries with plenty of sweet spice and an ethereal, undergrowth edge. Smoothly rendered and delivered in a very deep-set, black-cherry palate. Inviting and dense, this really delivers in 2016. Superb. Drink in 2022.

59 EL ENEMIGO CHARDONNAY MENDOZA 2016**Country** Argentina**Region** Mendoza**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

This is really amazing with an exotic dried-fruit character of pineapple and mangoes. Full-bodied, rich and fruity with cream, pie-crust and caramel character. Crazy chardonnay with a little Jura style and some flor undertones. It really does have flor in the barrel when aging. Love. Get it. Drink now.

60 MONTEVETRANO COLLI DI SALERNO 2016**Country** Italy**Region** Campania**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

Stunningly fresh nose of blackcurrants, blackberries and elderberries with myriad spice and herbal nuances. Breathtakingly fine tannins and great freshness packed into a sleek frame, the wine gliding over the palate gracefully as it heads out towards eternity. Delicious now, but with enormous aging potential.

61 BODEGA CHACRA PINOT NOIR PATAGONIA TREINTA Y DOS 2016**Country** Argentina**Region** Patagonia**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

Dark fruit with blackberry and blueberry aromas as well as needles and basil. Full-bodied, dense and layered with mushroom, moss and bark. A dark berry character, too. A unique expression of pinot noir from old vines in Patagonia. Needs three to five years to soften but a special wine.

62 WITTMANN RIESLING RHEINHESSEN MORSTEIN GG 2017**Country** Germany**Region** Rheinhessen**Vintage** 2017

Score

98

Anything but a fruit bomb, this has gigantic herbal intensity on the nose, then literally breathtaking concentration on the palate and a finish of crystalline purity – words more often used to describe the much sleeker wines from the Mosel. From biodynamically grown grapes. Respekt certified. Gigantic aging potential, but you can certainly drink it now.

63 CONTINO RIOJA VINA DEL OLIVA 2016**Country** Spain**Region** La Rioja**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

This is sleek and racy with a polish and beauty that is incredible. Full body, ultra-fine tannins that touch you at the beginning and take you down to a gorgeous depth of fruit. Super. A great single vineyard wine. Drink in 2022.

64 CASTELLO DI BOSSI CHIANTI CLASSICO BERARDO RISERVA 2015**Country** Italy**Region** Tuscany**Vintage** 2015

Score

98

The floral aromas are so enticing with rose petals and lavender, which follow through to a full body with beautiful density of fruit. A long and complete finish. The best Chianti Classico ever made here in living memory. Even better than the 1961. Drink or hold.

65 CATENA ZAPATA MENDOZA WHITE BONES 2016**Country** Argentina**Region** Mendoza**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

A dense and bright chardonnay that shows incredible depth and freshness with dried pineapple, licorice, aniseed and lemongrass. Full-bodied, layered and very, very long. Linear and exciting. Goes on for minutes. Release in October 2018. Drink or hold.

66 YARRA YERING YARRA VALLEY DRY RED WINE NO. 1 2016**Country** Australia**Region** Victoria**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

A very reserved, elegant and regal nose, showing subtle yet confident aromas of freshly picked blackcurrants, lead pencil, cassis, dried herbs, cedar, iodine and crushed stones. The palate is very polished and seamless with velvety tannins, a beautiful line of acidity that's wonderfully integrated and a very long finish. Hard to resist now, but better in 2025. A blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot, malbec and petit verdot.

67 CLONAKILLA SHIRAZ VIOGNIER CANBERRA DISTRICT 2017**Country** Australia**Region** New South Wales**Vintage** 2017

Score

98

One of the greatest vintages of this wine. It has a super complex array of white and black peppers, hard brown spices, leaves, flowers and fresh wet earth, as well as graphite-like dark stony notes. The palate is immaculately detailed, long and silky with flavors of blackberries, red cherries, red plums, dark cherries, blackberries and dark chocolate. The palate is delivered with steady elegance and power, showing unwavering build and a seemingly never-ending trail of fresh and spicy fruit flavors. With the most immaculate tannins, too. The real soul of this wine shines through in this perfectly simpatico vintage. Fascinating to drink now, but it is best to give it some time. Try around 2025.

68 KOSTA BROWNE PINOT NOIR SONOMA COUNTY SONOMA COAST FREESTONE 2016**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

Incredible aromas of compressed dark fruits with smoke, iron and oyster-shell undertones. Medium to full body with real Burgundian strength and abundance of fine tannins and energetic acidity. Meat, cool-fruit and mineral undertones. A fabulous Sonoma red. New from here. Drink in 2021.

69 SHAW + SMITH SHIRAZ ADELAIDE HILLS BALHANNAH VINEYARD 2015**Country** Australia**Region** South Australia**Vintage** 2015

Score

98

A decadent yet persistently fresh shiraz, showing notes of blackberry tart, hot stones, dried herbs, blueberry cake, quartz, resin and baking spices. The palate is very sophisticated in its delivery of chewy, enveloping tannins, which coat the mouth and remain lithe and velvety at the same time. A driven line of acidity runs throughout plums and cassis, and this finishes long and intense. Minerally and tight, too. Drink in 2026.

70 ALBERT MANN PINOT NOIR ALSACE GRAND P 2016**Country** France**Region** Alsace**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

A very fragrant floral pinot noir with a light touch at the front of the palate, but this is deceptive. This is because the power comes through like a tidal wave, sweeping everything before it. An astonishing long elegant finish you'll never forget. Drink or hold. Made from organically grown grapes.

71 BILANCIA SYRAH HAWKES BAY LA COLLINA 2016**Country** New Zealand**Region** Hawkes Bay**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

Super fine and alluring, aromatic syrah here. Bright and spicy with a sense of freshness and purity to the sweetly fragrant, woody spices, white pepper and distinctive edge of redder berries. The palate has a concentrated and ripe feel with youthful, spicy red-plum and red-cherry flavors, as well as fine, chalky tannins that deliver a long finish with almost pinot-like elegance. Enchanting. Long aging potential. Drink now or hold. Screw cap.

72 DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE LA CRAU 2016**Country** France**Region** Rhone Valley**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

Impressive, complex array of wild cherries, raspberries, garrigue herbs, lightly spiced pastry and stony, chalky minerals. Super-fresh florals. The palate has superb texture, roundness, completeness, depth and detail. Powerful yet elegant with powdery tannins and essence-like red fruit. Super-fleshy, supple and dense core, then strong at the edges. Layer upon layer peels away on the finish. Resounding finesse and equilibrium, showing the full potential of the plateau La Crau. Drink or hold.

73 MOUNT MARY YARRA VALLEY QUINTET 2015**Country** Australia**Region** Victoria**Vintage** 2015

Score

98

A superb wine from the very first impression, showing a lot of ripe cassis, leafy notes, chocolate and cedar. Hints of graphite, red plums, redcurrants, too. Merlot is back in the mix and it has higher percentage in the blend (30% to 44% cabernet sauvignon). The palate is silky, smooth, really slick and supple. A beautifully balanced wine here. Long, regal, suave and showy. Layered and full of interest. Drink or hold.

74 TERRAZAS DE LOS ANDES CHARDONNAY VALLE DE UCO ESPINILLO 2017**Country** Argentina**Region** Mendoza**Vintage** 2017

Score

98

An extremely complex new chardonnay. Hints of pie crust and mineral, highlighting the lemon and lightly cooked apples. Full body, bright acidity and a flavorful finish. The mineral and stone character is breathtaking. This is from a high vineyard within Gualtallary. 3,000 cases made. Drink in 2020 but already beautiful.

75 VIÑEDO CHADWICK CABERNET SAUVIGNON VALLE DE MAIPO 2016**Country** Chile**Region** Valle Central**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

The blue fruit and dark berry aromas are so attractive and catching. Black licorice and blackberry notes. Full body, chewy yet polished tannins. I like the way the wine rolls over the tongue. Beautiful finish. One of the most structured Viñedo Chadwicks ever. A great bottle. Needs four to five years to soften.

76 PETER MICHAEL WINERY CHARDONNAY SONOMA COUNTY KNIGHTS VALLEY MON PLAISIR 2015**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2015

Score

98

This is incredible with fantastic depth and richness. Aromas and flavors of cooked apples, lemons and cream. Full body, creamy texture, fabulous length and intensity. Very long finish. Very complex, too. Drink or hold.

77 TUA RITA TOSCANA REDIGAFFI 2016**Country** Italy**Region** Tuscany**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

The aromas of violets, roses and lavender are captivating. Turns to spices and hazelnuts. So complex. This full-bodied wine grows and grows on the palate, yet it remains agile and fresh. Plenty of energy in the palate. More powerful than the perfect 2015. We will see which is better in the end. Great wine. Try in 2022.

78 COLGIN CELLARS SYRAH NAPA VALLEY IX ESTATE 2015**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

Smelling this takes my breath away. Cloves, florals, metal shavings, blackberries and smoked meat. Mandarin zest, too. Full body with a perfect balance of ultra-fine tannins and great complexity. Goes on for minutes. Sets a new standard of syrah for California. Don't wait to drink this.

79 SCREAMING EAGLE NAPA VALLEY 2015**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2015

Score

100

This is a phenomenal wine on the nose with amazing aromas of mint and sage, highlighting the blackberry and slate character. Blackcurrants and wet earth. Medium to full body with incredible precision and beauty. It rolls off the palate with super fine tannins. Savory and juicy. The minerality and pureness draw you into it. A precise and sophisticated Screaming Eagle that brings you in. So drinkable now but better in 2022.

80 ARTADI ALAVA EL CARRETIL 2015**Country** Spain**Region** La Rioja**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

Real depth on the nose with dark berries, mole, dried flowers, oyster shell and hints of asphalt. Full body, with incredible depth and beauty. What is missing here? Perfect, polished tannins. Melted. Speechless. Hard not to drink now, but a wine for the future. Try in 2022.

81 CHÂTEAU LARCIS-DUCASSE ST.-EMILION 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

The aromas to this are phenomenal with oyster shell, blackberries, iodine and black truffles. Full-bodied, layered and so refined and intense. Love the texture and intensity. Chalky. Amazing. Goes on for minutes. Try in 2023.

82 ABREU NAPA VALLEY LAS POSADAS 2015**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

The aromas are perfect with black olives, blueberries, fresh mushrooms, rose petals and mint undertones, all following through to a full-bodied palate. Round yet tightly grained tannins and an incredibly persistent finish. Gorgeous. Drink in 2022.

83 CONCHA Y TORO PUENTE ALTO DON MELCHOR PUENTE ALTO VINEYARD 2015**Country** Chile**Region** Valle Central**Vintage** 2015

Score

98

The aromas of lead pencil, blackcurrant and tar are impressive with just a hint of fresh herb. Sweet tobacco. Iodine. Full body, very tight and polished with ultra-fine tannins and a refined, textured finish. 92% cabernet sauvignon, 7% cabernet franc, 1% petit verdot. Drink in 2022.

84 FORADORI TEROLDEGO VIGNETI DELLE DOLOMITI GRANATO 2016**Country** Italy**Region** Northeast**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

Phenomenal aromas of blackberries, blueberries, violets, perfume and incense. Some tar, too. Full-bodied yet so refined and polished with incredible subtlety and finesse. Lasts for minutes on the palate. Mind blowing. From biodynamically grown grapes and Demeter certified. Drink in 2020.

85 GONZALEZ BYASS JEREZ TIO PEPE CUATRO PALMAS AMONTILLADO**Country** Spain**Region** Andalucia**Vintage** No Vintage

Score

98

If you think sherry cannot excite you, then try this bottle. Very complex bouquet of toasted nuts and dried fruit, like brown, unsulphured apricots. Then staggering concentration and finesse on the palate and a finish that literally takes your breath away. Drink now. 52 years of aging before bottling.

86 BODEGA LANZAGA RIOJA LAS BEATAS 2015**Country** Spain**Region** La Rioja**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

Deep blue fruit, purple cherries, blood plums and immaculately fresh fruit. This is so silky, so delicate and so fresh. Exuberant with a sexy tannin texture, this is curvy and long with purpose and depth. Woody nutmeg spice arrives late. This has an incredibly long build and endless depth. Try from 2021.

87 CASANOVA DI NERI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO TENUTA NUOVA 2013**Country** Italy**Region** Tuscany**Vintage** 2013

Score

98

A vivid and bright red with intense blueberries and raspberries. Floral undertones and tons of citrus, too! Full-bodied, dense and layered. Polished tannins and fantastic fruit. The muscularity of the structure is what gives this wine focus and intensity. So serious for the vintage. Give it time to show its greatness. Drink in 2022.

88 BOND NAPA VALLEY ST. EDEN 2014**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2014

Score

99

The purity of fruit is fantastic with blackberries, blackcurrants, blueberries and hints of walnut shell. Full-bodied, tight and very focused. Chewy tannins and a long, flavorful finish. Needs three or four years to come together. Try in 2022.

89 EREDI FULIGNI BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO RISERVA 2012**Country** Italy**Region** Tuscany**Vintage** 2012

Score

98

There's a very complex and fresh nose with elegant red cherries, spices and light herbal nuances. Smells very fresh. The palate has beautiful focus and depth with effortless rich dark and red cherries cast amid perfectly proportioned silk-smooth tannins. Long and so focused, the finish is superb. Try from 2022.

90 DANA ESTATES NAPA VALLEY LOTUS VINEYARD 2015**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

Extremely complex aromas of iodine, dark fruit, oyster shell, forest floor and blackberries follow through to a full body. Great intensity and integrity. Tannins are chewy now. Excellent tannin quality.

91 CHÂTEAU MOUTON ROTHSCHILD PAUILLAC 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

Decadent and rich aromas of black cherries and plums with wet earth and sandalwood. Turns to dried mushrooms. Full-bodied, tight and closed with big, polished tannins, yet this is very closed and shy right now. Despite this, underneath it shows such depth and beauty. Tangy acidity. This is a combination of 2005 and 2009. Try it in 2024.

92 NEWTON CABERNET SAUVIGNON NAPA VALLEY MT. VEEDER 2016**Country** United States**Region** California**Vintage** 2016

Score

98

A very intense, perfectly ripe and seamless cabernet that delivers a wealth of dark berries, blue fruits and blackberry on the nose with attractively integrated oak spice, earth, black truffle and violet-like perfume. The palate has an extraordinary array of fine, layered tannins and a long fresh and alluringly succulent finish that holds fresh and long. Superb cabernet. Drink or hold.

93 CHÂTEAU RIEUSSEC SAUTERNES 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

OMG. This is amazing. This is the new 2001. Incredible purity of botrytis and ripeness. Full-on. So driven and precise. Full-bodied, very sweet and electrified. Pineapple jam and mangoes — endless tropical fruits. This ends very clean and is almost tannic on the finish. A truly great Sauternes. Energy. Drink or hold.

94 LOUIS ROEDERER CHAMPAGNE CRISTAL ROSÉ 2008**Country** France**Region** Champagne**Vintage** 2008

Score

99

Super fresh with all the DNA of the regular '08 Cristal. It heads on a chalky, restrained tangent of delicately spiced cherries with fine white pepper and crushed stones. The palate has a thread of silky, smooth pinot flesh that counterbalances the acidity of the chardonnay. Superb textural build, fine layers adding weight through the finish. Super long, fine and fresh red cherries, wrapped in super tight yet silky acidity. Drink in 2025.

95 CHÂTEAU PAVIE-MACQUIN ST.-EMILION 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

98

So much violet and lilac aromas to this with blackberry and blueberry character, too. Full-bodied and delivering limestone, chalk and lavender on the palate. Great structure, too. Needs four or five years to soften. Better in 2022.

96 JOSEPH DROUHIN MONTRACHET GRAND CRU MARQUIS DE LAGUICHE 2016**Country** France**Region** Burgundy**Vintage** 2016

Score

99

The complexity and sheer magnitude of Montrachet is on full show here. A powerful expression of the largest holdings in the Puligny side of the vineyard. Grilled hazelnuts, grilled peaches, grapefruit and lemon citrus, as well as a layer of spiced nougat-like aromas. There's a very long, concentrated and dense palate that starts out cloaked in flavors of rich peaches and glossy fruits. The flavors then peel away in layers as it sits on the palate, revealing a very focused, refined and essence-like citrus core with tremendous elegance and intensity. Drink or hold through the next decade. Or even longer if you desire.

97 MASSETO TOSCANA 2015**Country** Italy**Region** Tuscany**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

The aromas are profound here with a deep and vast character of black olives, cedar, chocolate and berries, as well as vanilla essence and light coffee. Flamboyant. Full-bodied, this powerful young Masseto is chewy, muscular and rich. Dusty tannins, yet wonderfully polished. A wine for the cellar. Try in 2022.

98 VASSE FELIX CABERNET SAUVIGNON MALBEC MARGARET RIVER TOM CULLITY 2014**Country** Australia**Region** Western Australia**Vintage** 2014

Score

98

A very insightful blend of predominantly cabernet sauvignon with 16% malbec and 4% petit verdot. This is a single-vineyard wine at the pinnacle of the endeavors of Vasse Felix. It opens with red fruits in the redcurrant and red-cherry zone, as well as fresh red and purple flowers with some deeper notes of blue fruit. The palate is the star though. The way that the malbec entwines itself around cabernet's linear tannins and enriches the wine without fundamentally changing its shape is genius. A supple, fresh and commanding Margaret River red. Best from 2022. Screw cap.

99 VEGA SICILIA RIBERA DEL DUERO RESERVA ESPECIAL UNICO**Country** Spain**Region** Castilla y León**Vintage** No Vintage

Score

99

Vintages blended seamlessly together. Unique to Vega Sicilia. The tobacco, spice and earthy depth here is terrific. Very complex iodine and almost oyster shell minerals. An array of red and black cherries and plums. Very complex. Very fresh. A blend of 2006, 2007 and 2009. Try in 2022.

100 CHÂTEAU LAFITE ROTHSCHILD PAUILLAC 2015**Country** France**Region** Bordeaux**Vintage** 2015

Score

99

Lead and graphite are complimented by notes of blueberries and blackberries. Blackcurrants, too. Full-bodied and focused with very round and polished tannins. Elegance with power. Very classic nature for Lafite. Try in 2022.
