

# Wine Spectator Insider

Marvin R. Shanken *Editor and Publisher*

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In this week's *Wine Spectator Insider*, you'll find white Burgundy, a California mix and a spotlight on Torbreck on page 3.

Torbreck is one of Barossa's most prolific producers, focusing on Rhône-style wines and old vines. Owner Pete Kight has made significant investments, and the superstar team of winemaker Ian Hongell and viticulturist Nigel Blieschke has meant the wines are on an upswing of late. The star in this lineup is RunRig, made from Shiraz from six different vineyards and a small percentage of Viognier to add some aromatic lift. The Descendant is a blend of co-fermented Shiraz and Viognier; the result is a slightly less dense but much more effusive expression. The Factor features Shiraz from three different vineyards. —*MaryAnn Worobiec*



Nigel Blieschke from Torbreck in Australia (Photo by Don Brice)

## California

### DEVIL PROOF

Malbec Rockpile Rockpile Ridge 2016  
**93 points | \$175 | 530 cases made | Red**

This elegant version is loaded with concentrated dark fruit flavors, backed by fine-grained tannins and lively acidity. Lusciously spiced midpalate, with a long finish of dark chocolate, cream and Asian spice that is quite minerally. Drink now through 2025.—*K.M.*

### DOMAINE CARNEROS

Blanc de Blancs Carneros Le Rêve 2012  
**93 points | \$115 | 260 cases made | Sparkling**

Compelling, impeccably focused and structured, with vibrant apple and Asian pear flavors, laced with brioche and roasted nut accents that glide on the long finish. Drink now through 2020.—*T.F.*

### IRON HORSE

Brut Rosé Green Valley of Russian River Valley LD 2011  
**93 points | \$110 | 400 cases made | Sparkling**

Distinctive, with a touch of age, this is hardly a typical bubbly blush. Flavors and aromas of peach and strawberry combine with notes of yeast roll, candied ginger and toasted almond. Drink now.—*T.F.*

### LIMERICK LANE

Zinfandel Russian River Valley 2017  
**93 points | \$42 | 625 cases made | Red**

Combines polish with torque, offering expressive raspberry and dark plum flavors, laced with briar, savory anise and white pepper notes. Features a rich structure and lively tannins. Drink now through 2027.—*T.F.*

### LIMERICK LANE

Zinfandel Russian River Valley 1910 Block 2017  
**93 points | \$60 | 365 cases made | Red**

Potent and deeply structured, with briary wild berry, licorice and peppery bacon flavors that march headlong toward big but balanced tannins. Drink now through 2027.—*T.F.*

### JOSEPH PHELPS

Sauvignon Blanc St. Helena 2018  
**93 points | \$45 | 1,845 cases made | White**

Succulent, with ripe peach and apricot flavors and details of marmalade, set on a smooth, lush frame. Spice and floral details, as well as a whiff of honeysuckle and nutmeg, glide along on the long, expressive and freshly juicy finish. Drink now.—*M.W.*

# FRANCE

## White Burgundy

### BLAIN-GAGNARD

**Chassagne-Montrachet Caillerets 2017**  
**95 points | \$112 | 100 cases imported | White**

A spicy version and opulent, boasting buttered brioche, vanilla, peach, mineral and citronella flavors. Its creamy texture and harmony belie its complexity, but the finish is long and satisfying. Best from 2021 through 2029.—*B.S.*

### PIERRE-YVES COLIN-MOREY

**Chassagne-Montrachet Les Caillerets 2017**  
**95 points | \$195 | 5 cases imported | White**

Featuring more bright fruit than its peers, this white exudes citrus notes of lemon, citrus blossom and citronella, along with white peach and hazelnut, underscored by toasty oak. There is intensity and purity, boosted by the racy structure. Terrific length. Best from 2021 through 2029.—*B.S.*

### PHILIPPE COLIN

**Chassagne-Montrachet Les Chaumées Clos St.-Abdon 2017**  
**95 points | \$108 | 160 cases imported | White**

A smooth, creamy texture sets the pace for peach, honey, pastry and toasty oak aromas and flavors. It's all underscored by a lemon oil, citronella intensity and vivid acidity that carries the polyphonic finish. Alluring and harmonious. Drink now through 2028.—*B.S.*

### BLAIN-GAGNARD

**Chassagne-Montrachet Clos St.-Jean 2017**  
**94 points | \$100 | 50 cases imported | White**

Lush and viscous, yet seamlessly balanced by its lively acidity, this white should bring a lot of pleasure for its peach, butter pastry, toasted vanilla and hazelnut flavors. Harmonious and long, with all its elements melding on the long aftertaste. Drink now through 2024.—*B.S.*

### PHILIPPE COLIN

**Chassagne-Montrachet En Remilly 2017**  
**94 points | \$110 | 50 cases imported | White**

A plush, opulent style, whose creamy texture and toasty oak notes give way to lively acidity and peach and lemon flavors. Still needs short term to come together, yet shows balance and potential. Best from 2021 through 2029.—*B.S.*

### PHILIPPE COLIN

**Chassagne-Montrachet La Maltroie 2017**  
**94 points | \$108 | 60 cases imported | White**

An enticing white for its tightly-grained flavors of lemon oil, citronella, sweet corn and vanilla-infused oak aromas and flavors. It's dense and saturated, still needing a little time to relax. Best from 2021 through 2028.—*B.S.*

### BLAIN-GAGNARD

**Chassagne-Montrachet Morgeot 2017**  
**93 points | \$100 | 100 cases imported | White**

A ripe version, hinting at pineapple and mango, aligned to butterscotch and vanilla from the toasty oak. It's flamboyant, with a lingering tasty aftertaste. Drink now through 2025.—*B.S.*

### JEAN CHARTRON

**Puligny-Montrachet Clos du Cailleret 2017**  
**93 points | \$111 | 25 cases imported | White**

Enticing aromas of vanilla, citronella, hazelnut and lime are the hallmarks of this creamy white. Harmonious and complex, lingering on the finish and fading gracefully, with echoes of spice and citrus. Drink now through 2024.—*B.S.*

### JEAN-LOUIS CHAVY

**Puligny-Montrachet Les Folatières 2016**  
**93 points | \$120 | 90 cases imported | White**

A vibrant structure defines this racy white, marshaling lemon curd, lime blossom and hazelnut flavors. There is flesh for balance, lending overall harmony. Ends with clean, bracing acidity, a hint of the seashore, and citrus and baking spice accents. Best from 2021 through 2028.—*B.S.*

### PHILIPPE COLIN

**Chassagne-Montrachet Clos St.-Jean 2017**  
**93 points | \$108 | 35 cases imported | White**

Complex, featuring peach, hazelnut, buttered pastry and toasty oak aromas, all beautifully integrated with the juicy structure. Terrific expansive finish. Needs some time to reveal all its facets. Best from 2021 through 2028.—*B.S.*

### PHILIPPE COLIN

**Chassagne-Montrachet Les Vergers 2017**  
**93 points | \$108 | 110 cases imported | White**

Rich and creamy, yet balanced by vibrant acidity, here's an incisive style that marshals its vanilla cream, pastry, peach and citrus flavors to a lingering conclusion. The expansive finish goes on and on. Best from 2020 through 2025.—*B.S.*

### PHILIPPE PACALET

**Puligny-Montrachet 2017**  
**93 points | \$155 | 25 cases imported | White**

Lean and well-defined, with lime blossom, hazelnut, white peach and mineral flavors, wrapped in a tight grain of toasty oak. Shows fine balance and a terrific finish. Best from 2020 through 2028.—*B.S.*

# FRANCE

## Loire

### DOMAINE DE BELLIVIÈRE

**Coteaux du Loir Eparses Vieilles Vignes 2015**  
**94 points | \$60 | 20 cases imported | White**

A stunning white, with white peach, chamomile and roasted plum flavors. Aromatic and multilayered, this wins you over with each sip, expressing beautiful notes of elderflower and hints of peach cobbler. Suave in texture, showing great balance between the mineral savoriness and fruit. Very long. Drink now through 2028.—*A.Z.*

### DOMAINE DU CLOSEL

**Savennières Clos du Papillon 2016**  
**94 points | \$65 | 140 cases imported | White**

Alluring, with impressive range and complexity, showing salted butter notes that frame the core of light brioche, apple and pear flavors, while thyme and white ginger details complete the mix. Very focused, elegant and precise, this could use a few more years to open up fully but is approachable now. Best from 2020 through 2029.—*A.Z.*

## DIDIER DAGUENEAU

Pouilly-Fumé Silex 2016

**94 points | \$125 | 200 cases imported | White**

Minerally and intense, showing plump notes of yellow apple and peach, while ruby grapefruit and sea salt accents add to the vibrancy. Features a beautiful silky texture and focused acidity that proves the pedigree, adding to the charm and overall harmony. Drink now through 2031.—A.Z.

## AGNÈS & RENÉ MOSSE

Vin de France White Le Rouchefer 2017

**94 points | \$42 | 100 cases imported | White**

Moderately golden in color, this is very expressive and lush, showing notes of ripe pear, red apple, cardamom and candied ginger. Very vibrant and complex, with beautiful acidity imparting balance and energy, linking all the elements to the savory, mineral-infused finish. Drink now through 2029.—A.Z.

## FRANÇOIS PINON

Vouvray Silex Noir 2017

**94 points | \$30 | 200 cases imported | White**

A silky, mineral-driven version, featuring wet stone and *sel gris* notes that stand firm from start to finish, underscoring lemon zest, green plum and quince flavors. A bit taut now, but shows incredible precision, depth and complexity, which should all shine through after a few more years of aging. Best from 2021 through 2031.—A.Z.

## DIDIER DAGUENEAU

Pouilly-Fumé Buisson Renard 2016

**93 points | \$110 | 50 cases imported | White**

Elegant and nuanced, with a silky texture and subtle but alluring flavors of kiwifruit, white peach, lemongrass and salted butter. Prominent acidity gives this a firm spine, providing balance and linking all the elements together. Offers a long, savory finish. Drink now through 2029.—A.Z.

# ITALY

## Barbaresco

### MARCO & VITTORIO ADRIANO

Barbaresco Basarin 2016

**94 points | \$35 | 800 cases imported | Red**

Aromas of rose, cherry, strawberry and white pepper draw you in, while vibrant acidity and a lacy texture carry the fruit flavors, adding tobacco and earth details. A solid base of tannins provides support. This should come together nicely. Best from 2022 through 2038.—B.S.

### ELVIO COGNO

Barbaresco Bordini 2016

**94 points | \$64 | 119 cases imported | Red**

Rose, cherry and licorice aromas and flavors are accented by leather, tobacco and spice in this focused and complex red. Balanced, but the dusty tannins will need a year or two to integrate. Best from 2022 through 2043.—B.S.

### ODDERO

Barbaresco Gallina 2016

**94 points | \$56 | 700 cases made | Red**

White pepper, raspberry, cherry, rose, tar and leather notes converge in this elegant yet firm red. Vibrant and intense, with a base of tannins shoring up the lasting finish. Details of sweet fruit and mushroom linger at the end. Best from 2022 through 2040.—B.S.

## PRUNOTTO

Barbaresco 2016

**94 points | \$45 | 800 cases imported | Red**

Delicate floral and red fruit aromas and flavors peek through the eucalyptus, tar and tobacco notes and muscular profile of this red, though it will take some time for them to emerge and occupy center stage. This version is balanced, elegant and long in the end. Best from 2023 through 2040.—B.S.

# PRODUCER SPOTLIGHT

## TORBRECK

RunRig Barossa Valley 2016

**96 points | \$225 | 161 cases imported | Red**

Restrained and elegant, opening up with ripe black and red fruit flavors. Touches of black licorice and black walnut liqueur plump up the sense of concentration. The tannins are dense but polished, never getting in the way of the harmony. Elements of clove and tobacco emerge on the finish. Shiraz and Viognier. Drink now through 2039.—M.W.

## TORBRECK

Descendant Barossa Valley 2016

**95 points | \$135 | 73 cases imported | Red**

Distinctive and effusive, brimming with violet, white pepper, chai tea and peppermint oil notes, set on a dense frame, with thick tannins. Details of dark chocolate-covered coffee bean, cigar box and minerality gain momentum on the long, expressive finish. Shiraz and Viognier. Drink now through 2034.—M.W.

## TORBRECK

Grenache Barossa Valley Hillside Vineyard 2017

**94 points | \$85 | 27 cases imported | Red**

Succulent spiced plum, blueberry and huckleberry flavors are both elegant and powerful, with plenty of concentration and oomph, but set against a silky frame. Details of sage, green tea and violets linger effortlessly on the long, expressive finish. Drink now through 2035.—M.W.

## TORBRECK

The Factor Barossa Valley 2016

**94 points | \$135 | 84 cases imported | Red**

Expressive and detailed, with dark chocolate, Earl Grey tea and sandalwood accents to the core of plum compote and blackberry fruit. The flavors and tannins are dense and compact, adding an appealing toothsome quality and showing promise for the cellar. Drink now through 2040.—M.W.

## TORBRECK

The Steading Barossa Valley 2017

**93 points | \$40 | 132 cases imported | Red**

A focused laser beam of pure plum and apricot fruit flavors are succulent and fleshy, giving way to details of gunpowder tea, violets and palo santo. Tannins are fine grained and polished, showing their presence on the long finish. Grenache, Shiraz and Mataro. Drink now through 2035.—M.W.

## TORBRECK

The Struie Barossa 2017

**93 points | \$55 | 217 cases imported | Red**

Plush, with concentrated juicy huckleberry and blackberry flavors at the core and a supple body backed up by velvety tannins. White pepper, espresso and mahogany details combine with an air of elegance to persist on the finish. Drink now through 2034.—M.W.

# HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in *Wine Spectator Insider*. They are high-scoring wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

## GRAHAM

Tawny Port Single Harvest 1940

**96 points | \$1,200 | 25 cases imported | Dessert**

Time has intensified the core of date, toasted sesame, green tea, singed alder and Brazil nut notes in this authoritative colheita and the dry, focused, well-structured finish gives all the elements time to shine. Drink now. From Portugal.—*J.M.*

Senior editor James Molesworth says: "How often does a vintage from World War II get released into the marketplace? Not often. That's the beauty of Port, arguably the wine world's greatest repository of old vintages. Vintage-dated tawnies, called colheita, are rare. The Port house must decide in the first eight years if the stock is being set aside for an individual bottling versus a blend. Graham has been doing this since the 1930s. Their Single Harvest bottling debuted in 2010 with the 1961 vintage. The newest release is even older. According to the winery's record, the 1940 harvest was small in size, the grapes were foot-trodden, and the wine was made without electricity in the winery in the Douro. How's that for history?"

## CHÂTEAU DE ST.-COSME

Gigondas Le Poste 2017

**96 points | \$138 | 20 cases imported | Red**

This is packed with steeped fig, blackberry and boysenberry confiture notes, laced liberally with violet, anise, tobacco and lavender accents. Has enough grip through the finish to keep it honest, with tar and juniper notes adding spine and heft. A beauty. Best from 2020 through 2035. From France.—*J.M.*

## DIEVOLE

Bolgheri Superiore Tenuta Meraviglia Maestro di Cava 2016

**95 points | \$80 | 83 cases imported | Red**

Expressive flavors of black currant, plum, cedar, coffee and oak spice are allied to a firm, tannic structure. Starts out rich and complex, tightening up on the finish. Impressive, but needs time. Cabernet Franc. Best from 2022 through 2040. From Italy.—*B.S.*

Senior editor Bruce Sanderson says: "Tenuta Meraviglia is part of Alejandro Bulgheroni's Bolgheri project. It consists of 74 acres of vineyards devoted mainly to Cabernet Franc on volcanic soils, found only in the southern part of the Bolgheri DOC. At 500 feet in elevation, the vineyards are the highest point of the property. Made with 100 percent Cabernet Franc, the Maestro di Cava is fermented in untreated concrete vats, aged one year in 5,000-liter French oak casks and one year in bottle."

## ST.-COSME

Condrieu 2017

**95 points | \$85 | 240 cases imported | White**

A bold style, with quince, lemon curd, creamed pear, apricot and white peach flavors lending range and weight. Verbena and warm brioche details infuse the lush finish. Very showy and pulls it off. Drink now through 2021. From France.—*J.M.*

## WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

### The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

*Wine Spectator's* tasting staff includes 15 tasters and tasting coordinators in two offices. They work together to review more than 16,000 wines each year; more than 385,000 reviews are available in our online database. Together, our 10 tasting editors count more than 220 years of tasting experience.

We always taste wine blind, in our offices in Napa and New York. This is your guarantee that our reviews are fair and objective, and that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; initials appended to the review identify the taster of each wine. We score wines using the 100-point scale (see green box).

**Marvin R. Shanken** Editor and Publisher

**James Laube** Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1981. Tasting beat: California

**Thomas Matthews** Executive editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Spain

**Kim Marcus** Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: California Chardonnay, Merlot and Pinot Noir, Argentina, Chile

**Bruce Sanderson** Senior editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1993. Tasting beat: Burgundy, Piedmont, Tuscany

**James Molesworth** Senior editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: California Cabernet Sauvignon, Bordeaux, Rhône Valley, Port

**MaryAnn Worobiec** Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: California Sauvignon Blanc and other whites, Australia, New Zealand

**Alison Napjus** Senior editor and tasting director, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2000. Tasting beat: Italy, Champagne, Alsace

**Tim Fish** Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2001. Tasting beat: California Zinfandel and other reds, Oregon, Washington, U.S. sparkling wines

**Gillian Sciaretta** Associate editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2012. Tasting beat: France, Portugal, Israel

**Aleks Zecevic**, Associate tasting coordinator, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2013. Tasting beat: Austria, Loire, Germany, South Africa

#### Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

95-100	Classic
90-94	Outstanding
85-89	Very good
80-84	Good
75-79	Mediocre
50-74	Not recommended