



WINE SPECTATOR'S Advance

A SNEAK PREVIEW OF THE BUYING GUIDE FOR THE **DEC. 15, 2015** ISSUE,
FEATURING ALL OF THE SPECTATOR SELECTIONS

Wine Spectator's Dec. 15 Champagne issue is just in time for holiday buying. More than 400 Champagnes are included, plus a profile on the Rouzaud family, owners of Cristal producer Louis Roederer. Finally, a tasting report focuses on the food-friendly whites of Austria.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

97 **K Syrah Walla Walla Valley Rock Garden 2012 • \$60**
Dense, rich, ripe and expressive, offering a feast of plum and black currant flavors, with ripe pear, honey and floral overtones as the minerally finish wells up with intensity and harmony. Shows tremendous presence and depth. Best from 2017 through 2025. 348 cases made.—*H.S.*

95 **BERGSTRÖM Pinot Noir Ribbon Ridge Le Pré Du Col Vineyard 2013 • \$60**
Supple, seductive and distinctive for its pure blueberry fruit, shaded with white pepper, pear skin and floral character that dances merrily into the long and deftly balanced finish. Offers presence and intensity without extra weight. Drink now through 2023. 1,500 cases made.—*H.S.*

94 **SEGHEISIO Zinfandel Dry Creek Valley Cortina 2013 • \$40**
This captures such a distinct sense of place it almost smells like Dry Creek Valley, with briary raspberry and smoky cinnamon aromas leading to complex, layered flavors of dried sage, licorice and dark cherry. Tannins sneak in on the finish. Drink now through 2024. 3,174 cases made.—*T.F.*

93 **PALACIO DEL BURGO Rioja Reserva 2010 • \$20**
Plum, blood orange, black olive, toast and mineral notes mingle in this tight, bright red. Juicy acidity keeps this lively, while firm tannins keep it focused. Graceful, with good intensity. Drink now through 2025. 3,000 cases made.—*T.M.*

COLLECTIBLES

96 **MOËT & CHANDON Brut Rosé Champagne Dom Pérignon 2004 • \$315**
There's power to this vivid rosé Champagne, harnessed by a silky texture and a sense of finesse. Mineral-driven, with a rich, smoky underpinning, this offers an expansive palate of puréed raspberry and apricot preserves, with hints of candied kumquat, marzipan, graphite and star anise. Drink now through 2030.—*A.N.*

95 **TAITTINGER Brut Rosé Champagne Comtes de Champagne 2006 • \$262**
A lovely Champagne, offering a rich and expressive palate of dried strawberry and white peach fruit, with toasted hazelnut, pastry, candied ginger and lemon curd flavors set in a fine and elegant frame. Long and creamy on the satiny finish. Drink now through 2031. 60 cases imported.—*A.N.*

94 **DOMAINE FAIVELEY Corton-Charlemagne 2013 • \$341**
An elegant white, featuring stunning aromas and flavors of lime blossom, peach, apple and mineral, with a dose of sweet spices. This is balanced and should be approachable soon, with fine length. Best from 2018 through 2027. 50 cases imported.—*B.S.*

SMART BUYS

92 **SBRAGIA FAMILY Chardonnay Dry Creek Valley Home Ranch 2013 • \$30**
Beautifully crafted, rich and expansive, with a slow-building mix of green apple, tangerine, white peach and honeydew. Ends with a long, intense and persistent finish, echoing fig and honey. Drink now. 2,464 cases made.—*J.L.*

SMART BUYS (continued)

- 92 BODEGAS VALPARAISO** Ribera del Duero Finca El Encinal Crianza 2011 • \$19
Toasty oak, ripe fruit and vibrant acidity add up to a balanced, expressive red. The cherry and berry flavors are bright and crunchy, while cocoa and mineral notes add depth. Lithe and lively. Drink now through 2021. 5,500 cases made.—*T.M.*
- 91 KIRKLAND SIGNATURE** Signature Series Columbia Valley 2013 • \$17
Smooth and round, with expressive blueberry, pepper and floral flavors on a polished frame, generous and persistent on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Petit Verdot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2022. 6,100 cases made.—*H.S.*
- 91 ROEDERER ESTATE** Brut Anderson Valley NV • \$24
Sleek and charming, with yeasty apple torte and floral cherry aromas and rich, crisp flavors of lemon curd, spicy vanilla and fresh ginger. Drink now. 80,000 cases made.—*T.F.*
- 90 BODEGAS ALTÚN** Rioja Crianza 2011 • \$20
Plum and pomegranate flavors are framed by espresso, licorice and loamy notes in this firm red, which has firm tannins and balsamic acidity, giving way to a bitter chocolate finish. Offers savory character, with solid structure. Drink now through 2025. 9,200 cases made.—*T.M.*
- 90 ATTEMS** Pinot Grigio Venezia-Giulia 2014 • \$20
Bright and fruit-forward, offering lively peach and passion fruit notes underscored by rich, stone-tinged minerality, with a floral finish. A balanced Pinot Grigio that's creamy in texture and would pair well with lobster or other shellfish. Drink now through 2020. 9,000 cases imported.—*A.N.*
- 90 CELLERS BARONIA DEL MONTSANT** Garnatxa-Carinyena Montsant Cims del Montsant 2012 • \$15
Black cherry and dark chocolate flavors mingle with notes of smoke, licorice and mountain herb in this focused red. Lively acidity keeps this fresh, while well-integrated tannins impart structure. Drink now through 2020. 6,491 cases made.—*T.M.*

BEST VALUES

- 91 COLUMBIA CREST** Cabernet Sauvignon Horse Heaven Hills H3 2013 • \$15
Supple, focused and distinctive for its core of ripe plum, currant, sage and floral flavors, which mingle effectively and harmoniously on the long, expressive finish. The tannins are nicely shaped. Drink now through 2020. 205,000 cases made.—*H.S.*
- 89 CAVES ALIANÇA** Dão 2012 • \$11
Firm and juicy, with refined flavors of red currant, plum and forest floor that are imbued with a lively minerality. The spicy finish features notes of graphite. Drink now through 2019. 20,000 cases made.—*K.M.*
- 88 DR. HEIDEMANNS-BERGWEILER** Riesling QbA Mosel 2014 • \$11
This fleshy white offers concentrated aromas and flavors of baked apple, pear tart and lemon curd. The creamy finish is long and rich, with notes of glazed apricot. Drink now through 2018. 4,500 cases made.—*K.M.*
- 88 HEINZ EIFEL** Riesling QbA Rheinhessen Shine 2014 • \$10
A juicy white, full of lush flavors of Gala apple, melon and tangerine. Spicy midpalate, with honeyed notes lingering on the citrusy finish. Drink now through 2018. 15,000 cases made.—*K.M.*
- 87 CASTLE ROCK** Sauvignon Blanc Mendocino County 2014 • \$10
Melon, pear and floral honeysuckle accents add some charm to the juicy green apple and lemon flavors at the core. A note of lemon verbena emerges on the finish. Drink now. 17,665 cases made.—*M.W.*

Initials at the end of each tasting note indicate the *Wine Spectator* editor who blind-tasted and scored the wine and wrote the review. The tasters are as follows: James Laube (*J.L.*); Kim Marcus (*K.M.*); Thomas Matthews (*T.M.*); James Molesworth (*J.M.*); Bruce Sanderson (*B.S.*); Harvey Steiman (*H.S.*); Tim Fish (*T.F.*); Alison Napjus (*A.N.*); MaryAnn Worobiec (*M.W.*); Gillian Sciaretta (*G.S.*).

BEST VALUES (continued)

87 **VICENTE GANDÍA** Alentejo Boâbrisa 2013 • \$9
A supple, well-spiced red, showing lively flavors of red berry, plum and cherry tart that are accented by notes of chocolate and cardamom, with a juicy finish. Drink now. 40,000 cases made.—*K.M.*

87 **SCHMITT SÖHNE** Riesling QbA Rheinhessen Crisp & Fruity 2014 • \$9
Rich raspberry jam flavors flood this white along with some smoky notes. Tangerine and spice accents fill the juicy finish. Drink now through 2018. 300,000 cases made.—*K.M.*

ABOUT THE SPECTATOR SELECTIONS

Highly Recommended: The issue's most impressive wines. Includes top-scorers and wines that represent optimal purchases based on their combination of score, price and availability.

Collectibles: Wines that will improve most from additional bottle age and that show the greatest potential to gain in value.

Smart Buys: Wines that deliver fine character at affordable prices and that are broadly available.

Best Values: Wines with solid scores, modest prices and wide distribution.

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