

# The Successful Collector – By Julian Hitner

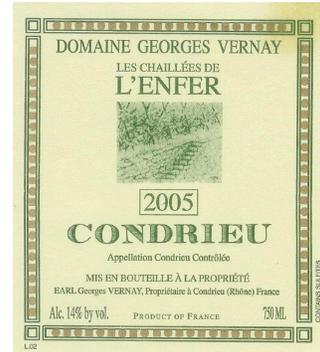
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~ Wine education for us all – Viognier ~

Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012

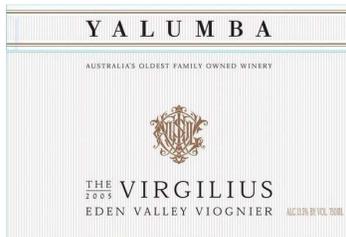
## From oblivion to stardom:

The newest grape to be admitted into the pantheon of France's greatest whites, the rise of Viognier has been astounding. But not accidental. Were it not so difficult to cultivate, wine lovers would probably have discovered it sooner. But such as it is, this was not to be, and it has only been over the last dozen years that Viognier has become so successful.



It originally hails from the Northern Rhône, grown to perfection in Condrieu. The best examples are truly unique, all perfume and creamy headiness, with stunning aromas of ripe apricots, nectarines, lemon blossom, white flowers, and honeysuckle. These days, however, Viognier is found in many other winegrowing regions worldwide, performing best in places warm enough for it to properly ripen.

Aside from Condrieu and the single-estate appellation of Château Grillet (also located in the Northern Rhône), in the rest of France the vast majority of Viognier is grown in Languedoc-Roussillon. Many such bottlings are well priced and refreshing. It is also grown throughout various parts of Italy and Spain, though quality here will vary from the appreciable to the undrinkable.



In the New World, Viognier is planted just about everywhere. In Australia, some of the best offerings are just as seductive as the finest Condrieus; while those of California have been steadily gaining in both quantity and quality. Viognier is also found in Chile, Argentina, South Africa, New Zealand, and even Canada.

It is also interesting to note that Viognier is being increasingly used as a blending component with various red grapes, most notably Syrah/Shiraz. Fermented at the same time (known as 'co-pigmentation'), adding around 5% Viognier contributes both aroma



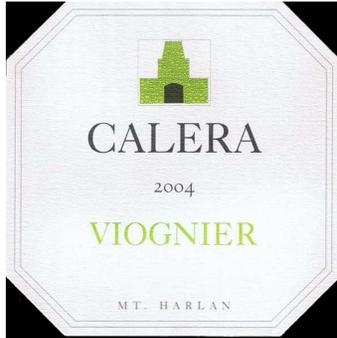
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and finesse to the wine, as well as enhances its colour. In the Northern Rhône appellation of Côte-Rôtie, this practice has been commonplace for decades, and is also on the increase in places like Australia and California.



But Viognier shall always be celebrated as an unblended white wine par excellence. Served at around 10-12°C, its texture should always be soft and enveloping, with a finish to both match and compliment the initial flavours detected. Most Viognier will not age more than a few years, and is one of few dry wines that actually performs better as an aperitif. However, if food is a must-have,

herbed lemon chicken will probably do nicely. Just be sure the wine's creaminess—its wonderful perfumed creaminess—is not hindered.

Shared At: <http://www.winealign.com/user-list/julianhitner/4-august-2012-release---other-gems>

## A few gems for collectors:

### White Wines:

**Domaine de Chevalier Blanc 2010, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France:** The greatest Chevalier Blanc ever? All signs point to an emphatic affirmative! Pale lime in colour, Olivier Bernard's monumental '10 yields stunning scents of pears, passion fruit, lemon citrus, subtle orange zest, kiwi, white chalk, white flowers, and a hint of lime, quince, vanilla pods, and nuts. Extremely complex and compact at this stage, nonetheless delivering extraordinarily elegant fruit, perfect acidity, and a fantastic, luminous hint of pears, minerals, citrus oils, and dried nuts on the finish. Brilliantly sculpted, possessing unbelievable intensity, finesse, balance, and harmony. Words cannot describe how much I admire this wine. 85% Sauvignon Blanc and 15% Sémillon. Now-2032++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**97 \$149.00 (#259580) Vintages 2010 Bordeaux Futures**

**Château Pape Clément Blanc 2010, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Reflecting the style of the estate, Bernard Magrez's prodigious 2010 Pape Clément Blanc, the most enveloping white wine of the vintage, is an exercise in unfettered indulgence and renewal. Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, it displays astounding scents of fragrant pears, star fruit, white flowers, kiwi, orange zest, minerals, nuts, and spice. Beguilingly complex, featuring incredibly elegant, poignant fruit, brilliant acidity, and a fantastically elegant, decadent hint of pears, lemon citrus, and delicate butterscotch on the finish. Quite heavenly, with astounding depth, flavour, and nerve. 52% Sauvignon Blanc, 34% Sémillon, 8% Sauvignon Gris, and 6% Muscadelle. Now-2030++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**96+ \$229.00 (#260570) Vintages 2010 Bordeaux Futures**

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## **Château Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc 2010, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France:**

Similar to the '07 only much more prodigious, the 2010 Smith Haut Lafitte Blanc is the best white wine Florence and Daniel Cathiard have ever produced. Pale lime in colour with a trace of straw, this striking jewel displays wonderful, inspiring scents of mildly tropical pears, apricots, lemon citrus/lemongrass, pineapple, kiwi, minerals, and a hint of nuts. Truly complex, possessing amazingly vibrant, elegant fruit, arresting acidity, and a magnificently refined hint of lemon citrus, ripe pears, and kiwi on the finish. Absolutely captivating, stylish, and harmonious, not to mention one of the most intense examples I have ever tasted from here. 90% Sauvignon Blanc, 5% Sémillon, and 5% Sauvignon Gris. Now-2030+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**96 \$154.00 (#260067) Vintages 2010 Bordeaux Futures**

## **Château Carbonnieux Blanc 2010, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France:**

Likely the best Carbonnieux Blanc ever conceived, the 2010 most closely resembles the '08 (which I prefer to the '07), only with greater concentration and intensity. Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, this beauty reveals exquisitely refined scents of ripe citrus pears and lemon; giving way to star fruit, minerals, nuts, and a hint of lanolin—all very youthful and tight at the moment. Very complex, boasting impeccable, vibrant minerally fruit, balanced acidity, and a lingering, engrossing hint of pears, lemon citrus, and kiwi on the finish. Brilliantly integrated and styled, this is certainly Anthony Perrin's most generous white wine to date. Bravo! 65% Sauvignon Blanc and 35% Sémillon. Now-2025++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**92++ \$49.00 (#64) SAQ 2010 Bordeaux Futures**

## **Château Malartic-Lagravière Blanc 2010, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France:**

Under its present owners Alfred-Alexandre and Michèle Bonnie, Château Malartic-Lagravière is currently one of the fastest-improving estates in Pessac-Léognan. Pale straw-lime in colour, the 2010 Blanc features exceptional, confident scents of pears, lemon citrus, Life Savers®, lime, quince, passion fruit, and a hint of orange zest and minerals. Very complex, carrying outstandingly vibrant, finesse-laden fruit, balanced acidity, and a magnificent hint of pears, minerals, and star fruit on the finish. With amazing grace and vitality, this will easily keep for over ten years, perhaps more if stored in correct conditions. 85% Sauvignon Blanc and 15% Sémillon. Now-2023+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2012)

**92++ \$110.00 (#59) SAQ 2010 Bordeaux Futures**

## **La Chablisienne 2009, Chablis Premier Cru Vaurorent AOC, Burgundy, France:**

Few operations in Chablis have improved as rapidly as the Cave Coopérative la Chablisienne, a body accounting for roughly one-quarter of all production in the region. Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, the 2009 Vaurorent displays elegant, delicate scents of pears, green apples, mild quince, lemon, flint, and a beautiful hint of smoke. Complex, with refined fruit, balanced acidity, and a focused, subtle hint of pears, green apples, and minerals on the finish. Remarkably expressive, showcasing first-rate delicacy and finesse. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90+ \$31.95 (#111666) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

**Reichsgraf von Kesselstatt 2006 Riesling Kabinett, QmP Scharzhofberger, Mosel-Saar-Ruwer, Germany:** Top bargain for Kabinett lovers, the 2006 Reichsgraf von

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Kesselstatt (remembering that '06 was considered a lesser vintage) is both enveloping and finesse-driven. Light lime in colour with a touch of straw, the wine is aging superbly, offering beautiful scents of sweet lemon blossom, white peaches, green grapes, pears, kerosene, and spice. Complex, with elegant off-dry fruit (very fulsome), balanced acidity, and a marvellous hint of sweet green grapes and kerosene on the finish. First-rate wine, several bottles of this would enhance any cellar. Now-2019. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90+ \$17.95 (#282343) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

## **Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Eroica Riesling, Columbia Valley, Washington State:**

Joint venture between Ernst Loosen of the Mosel and Chateau Ste Michelle, the Eroica label has fast emerged as one of the finest Rieslings in the Pacific Northwest. Very pale straw-lime in colour, it exhibits absolutely lovely scents of white peaches, fresh lemonade, and lemon citrus; giving way to lime, dried pears, cordial, and the slightest hint of kerosene and spice. Complex, with great fruit, vibrant acidity, and a lingering, elegant hint of pure lemon citrus, white peaches, and minerals on the finish. Beautiful expression and style. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**90 \$32.00 (#677161) Vintages Shop Online**

## **La Crema 2010 Chardonnay, Sonoma Coast (Sonoma County), California:**

Better than the '09, the 2010 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay boasts a deliciously 'limpid' feel about it. Pale-light greenish-lime in colour, it is finely toasted, offering beautiful scents of ripe pears, butterscotch, apricots, clementines, lemon, and a hint of vanilla and nuts. Complex, with great fruit, balanced acidity, and a lingering, elegant hint of pears, caramel, and nut traces on the finish. Very tempting, La Crema seems to have been quietly upping its game over the past several years. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90 \$28.95 (#962886) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

## **Domaine Latour-Giraud 2009, Meursault Les Narvaux AOC, Burgundy, France:**

One of the best non-Premier Cru sites in Meursault, white Burgundy collectors should find the 2009 Les Narvaux a great little specimen. Pale-light straw-lime in colour, the oxidative influence is slightly uplifted at first, offering expressive, 'contemplative' scents of pears, lemon, nuts, mild orange peel, apricots, and white flowers. Complex, with beautiful fruit, balanced acidity, and a round, texturally engaging hint of pears and roasted nuts on the finish. Fulsomely coated, this is nonetheless meant for earlier drinking, before full-on oxidation takes too great a hold. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90 \$45.95 (#12369) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

## **Whitehaven 2011 Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough, South Island, New Zealand:**

Superior Marlborough Sauvignon, the 2011 Whitehaven has all the makings of a benchmark wine. Pale lime in colour with a touch of straw, it exhibits very intense scents of gooseberries, lemongrass, white peaches and grapefruit, minerals, and a hint of herbs and cat's pee. Complex, with extremely zesty fruit, bracing acidity, and a lingering, rather emphatic hint of gooseberries and lemongrass on the finish. Expressive and confident, a few bottles would enhance any wine cellar. Screwcap closure. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89++ \$19.95 (#278556) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

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**Bernard Reverdy & Fils 2010, Sancerre AOC, Loire, France:** One of at least three wineries in the appellation with the last name 'Reverdy' (no doubt the families are related), the 2010 Sancerre is very pure, elegant, and suitably intense. Pale lime in colour, it reveals heightened scents of gooseberries, lemongrass, white grapefruit, green apples, and a hint of dried pears and flint. Complex, boasting beautiful fruit, balanced acidity, and a refined hint of gooseberries and green apples on the finish. Very lovely. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89+ \$22.95 (#200055) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

**Jean-Marc Brocard 2010 Chablis Premier Cru Vaucopin AOC, Burgundy, France:** Surrounded entirely by generic Chablis parcels, this is one of few notes I have from the Vaucopin vineyard; though it is a most admirable recording. Pale-straw lime in colour, the 2010 Jean-Marc Brocard features appreciably understated scents of green apples and pears; giving way to lemon, flint, and wet stones. Complex, delivering heightened nervy fruit, balanced acidity, and a highly minerally hint of green apples and pears on the finish. Lovely texture, balance, and nerve. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89 \$29.95 (#288019) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Esk 2008 Black Label Sauvignon Blanc, Hawke's Bay, North Island, New Zealand:** One of only several notes I have from this winery, the 2008 Black Label is a beautiful Sauvignon Blanc. Pale straw-lime in colour, the wine exhibits delightfully understated scents of grassy quince, light lemon and lime, quince, a few green pears, and a hint of wet stones. On the palate: lovely racy fruit showing, with good acidity, and a refreshing hint of lemongrass and wet stones on the finish. Truly an original. Screwcap closure. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2009)

**89 \$20.99 (Private Order) PMA Canada**

**Vavasour 2008 Sauvignon Blanc, Awatere Valley (Marlborough), South Island, New Zealand:** As time progresses, it's only natural that specific subregions within Marlborough would emerge. Pale lime in colour, the 2008 Awatere-based Sauvignon Blanc offers intense scents of pebbly-grassy, almost 'icy' gooseberries; giving way to lemon, melon, and cat's pee. On the palate: heightened zesty fruit showing, with good acidity, and a lovely hint of gooseberries on the finish. Textbook style for the most part, both extremely identifiable and refreshing. Screwcap closure. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2009)

**89 \$19.95 (Private Order) B & W Wines**

**Villa Maria 2008 Reserve Sauvignon Blanc, Wairau Valley (Marlborough), South Island, New Zealand:** One of the most individualistic Sauvignon Blancs I have ever tasted from here, the 2008 Reserve, while overpriced in this market, certainly merits attention. Pale straw-lime in colour, it starts off with grassy/dewy gooseberries, lemon, lime, cat's pee, wet stones, and a hint of seasalt. On the palate: lovely polished fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a stylish hint of gooseberries and lemon on the finish. Highly personable and balanced. Screwcap closure. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2009)

**89 \$29.95 (Private Order) PMA Canada**

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**Wairau River 2008 Sauvignon Blanc, Wairau Valley (Marlborough), South Island, New Zealand:** My first note from this winery, the 2008 Sauvignon Blanc is unusually finely structured and balanced. Pale straw-lime in colour, it presents subtle notes of limy lemongrass, gooseberries, wet stones, and cat's pee. On the palate: good zesty fruit showing, with vibrant acidity, and a rather vivid hint of lemongrass and cat's pee on the finish. Crisp, fresh, and appealing. Screwcap closure. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2009)

**89 \$20.00 (Private Order) PMA Canada**

**Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Indian Wells Chardonnay, Columbia Valley, Washington State:** Impressively balanced and fresh, the 2008 Indian Wells was obviously crafted with care. Light straw-lime in colour, it is lightly toasted, with lovely notes of pears, dried apricots, and a hint of butterscotch, lemon, and stony beach pebbles. On the palate: very good, refreshing fruit showing, with slightly milder acidity, and a splendid hint of pears and mild butterscotch on the finish. Oak-driven to a point, this Chardonnay's target audience should have little to complain about. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**88+ \$26.95 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**André Blanck 2011 Altenbourg Gewurztraminer, Alsace AOC, France:** Not to be confused with the top-rated domaine Paul Blanck & Fils, the wines of André Blanck nonetheless merit attention. Light straw-lime in colour, the 2011 Altenbourg Gewurztraminer features lovely, slightly reserved notes of spicy lemon and lychees; switching to gingerroot, flint, and a hint of jasmine and peaches. Complex, with fine fruit, balanced acidity, and hint of spicy lemon and lychees on the finish. Tasty, balanced, and characterful. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**88 \$17.95 (#168906) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Domaine de Bois St-Denis 2010, Reuilly AOC, Loire, France:** One of several lesser-known AOCs situated in the Upper Loire, the best Reuilly Sauvignons have improved with resounding speed over the past several years. Very pale lime in colour, the 2010 Domaine de Bois St-Denis provides splendid notes of gooseberries, dried pears, lemon, white grapefruit, and minerals. On the palate: refreshing steely fruit showing, with vibrant acidity, and a hint of gooseberries and green apples on the finish. Very crisp and balanced. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**88 \$18.95 (#289348) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Chalkers Crossing 2008 Hilltops Semillon, New South Wales, Australia:** With grapes sourced through the entirety of NSW (theoretically), the 2008 Hilltops Semillon is noticeably well crafted. Pale straw-lime in colour, it offers engaging notes of ripe green apples, light caramel, lanolin, melon dew, and a hint of Bartlett pears. On the palate: good mellow fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of ripe green apples and dried caramel on the finish. Good character and balance. Now-2011+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2009)

**88 \$22.65 (Private Order) Hobbs Wine Merchants**

**Clairault 2008 Semillon/Sauvignon Blanc, Margaret River, Western Australia, Australia:** Margaret River is one of few places in Australia where Semillon/Sauvignon Blanc blends are commonly produced. Pale straw in colour with a touch of yellow, the

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2008 Clairault, though somewhat closed at the moment, hints at notes of mild stone fruit, lemon, and a hint of stony beach pebbles. On the palate: good mellow fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of green apples and lemon on the finish. Enjoyable and balanced. 57% Semillon and 43% Sauvignon Blanc. Screwcap closure. Now-2011. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2009)

**88** \$23.95 (#282615) [Vintages Archives](#)

**Hiedler 2010 Thal Premier Cru Grüner Veltliner, Kamptal DAC, Niederösterreich, Austria:** Under a new classification system introduced several years ago, member-wineries belonging to the Traditionsweingüter Österreich may list wines hailing from specific vineyards as 'Erste Lagen' (or 'Premier Cru'). Pale straw-lime in colour, the 2010 Thal Grüner Veltliner reveals elegant, crisp notes of green apples, white lentils, mild seasalt, wet stones, and a hint of straw. On the palate: good crisp fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a delightful hint of yellow plums on the finish. Refreshing and balanced, sporting a good attitude. Screwcap closure. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**88** \$23.95 (#285056) [Vintages 21 July 2012 Release](#)

**Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Chardonnay, Columbia Valley, Washington State:** Good for the style, the 2008 Chardonnay merits attention. Pale straw-lime in colour, the wine is lightly toasted, boasting decent notes of pears and butterscotch; switching to dried apricots, green apples, and a hint of kiwi and lemon. Palate: good fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of moderate butterscotch and dried pears on the finish. Oaky and tasty. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**87++** \$17.95 (#232439) [Vintages 10 December 2010 Release](#)

**Chateau Ste. Michelle 2009 Sauvignon Blanc, Columbia Valley, Washington State:** One of a handful of Washington State Sauvignons I've ever examined, the 2009 Chateau Ste. Michelle performs as it should. Very pale lime in colour, it offers fresh notes of lemongrass, pears, lemon, and a hint of green apples and stony beach pebbles. Palate: light, crisp fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of lemony green apples on the finish. Refreshing and balanced. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**87++** \$18.95 (Private Order) [Profile Wine Group](#)

**Cave de Producteurs de Jurançon 2008 Grain Sauvage Blanc de Blancs, Jurançon Sec AOC, Southwest, France:** The Cave de Producteurs de Jurançon is by far the largest producer in the appellation, particularly of dry versions. Light straw-lime in colour, the 2008 Grain Sauvage displays lemon blossom at the outset, with notes of nectarines, apricots, orange peel, and spice. Palate: good fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a pleasant hint of fresh lemony orange blossom (very dry) on the finish. Solid expression and balance. Now-2011++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2010)

**87+** \$15.95 (#176727) [Vintages 18 September 2010 Release](#)

**Fontanafredda 2009, Gavi del Comune di Gavi DOCG, Piedmont, Italy:** One of few notes I have on this type of wine, the 2009 Gavi del Comune di Gavi is both easygoing and fresh. Pale straw-lime in colour, it offers pleasant notes of leafy green apples, light floral notes, and a hint of stony beach pebbles. On the palate: light, dry leafy fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a hint of herbed green apples and lemon traces on

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the finish. Refreshing and uncomplicated. 100% Cortese. Now-2010. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2010)

**87** \$15.95 (#75440) Vintages 18 September 2010 Release

**Bodega del Abad 2010 Abad Dom Bueno Godello, Bierzo DO, Spain:** One of Spain's more promising white varietals, the 2010 Godello is an interesting and refreshing proposition. Pale straw-lime in colour, it reveals idiosyncratic yet likeable notes of white peaches, green stone fruit, and a hint of petrol and nuts. Palate: nice crisp fruit showing, with balanced acidity, and a delicate hint of green apples and kerosene on the finish. Agreeably intriguing. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**86++** \$14.95 (#154302) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release

## Red Wines:

**Col d'Orcia 1980, Brunello di Montalcino Riserva DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** Having tasted only a handful of extra-old Brunellos, it was an especial treat to examine such an astonishing wine as the 1980 Col d'Orcia Riserva. Dark cherry-red brick in colour, it exudes a positively radiant, potent bouquet of cigarbox and dried red fruits; switching to garrigue, sandalwood, savoury underbrush, mahogany, cedar, roasted meats, and exotic spices. Extremely complex, possessing gorgeously mature fruit, finely integrated tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, instrumentally elegant hint of savoury/cedary cigarbox and underbrush on the finish. Traditional, quite powerful, and classically crafted. Easily the greatest wine I have ever tasted from here. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2009)

**95** \$250.00 (Private Order) Diamond Estates

**Clos Apalta 2008, Colchagua Valley, Chile:** One of the all-time Chilean greats, the 2008 Clos Apalta is unequivocally the most profound, seductive vintage yet from Viña Lapostolle's flagship label. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is beautifully toasted, expressing marvellous aromas of blackberries, crème de cassis, 'silky' mocha, black cherries, blueberries, graphite, charcoal, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, featuring sensationally layered, whimsical fruit, firm tannins, slightly milder acidity, and a lasting, supremely integrated hint of mocha and currants on the finish. Fits like a velvet glove: magnificent, precise, even elegant. 73% Carmenère, 17% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 10% Merlot. Now-2030++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

**94++** \$114.95 (#723676) Vintages Special Offer

**Château Troplong Mondot 2008, St-Emilion Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:** A candidate for wine of the vintage, the 2008 Troplong Mondot is, from what I can tell, one of the most powerful blends owner-winemaker Christine Valette has ever fashioned. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, this amazing bottling is beautifully toasted, expressing dangerously alluring aromas of mocha and Oreo Cookies®, switching to currants, plums, black cherries, graham crackers, charcoal, subtle tarry traces, vanilla, and spice. Truly complex and multilayered, featuring powerful yet elegant fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting, abundant hint of currants and espresso on the finish. Absolutely terrific, concentrated, and balanced; despite logging in at 14.5% alcohol. 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2032+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**94++** \$115.00 (#136820) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures

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**Château Lynch Bages 2008, Pauillac AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Should the 1855 Classification be ever revised, Lynch Bages would be assuredly promoted to Second Growth status. Take the outstanding '08: dark-opaque ruby in colour, this stupendous wine is beautifully toasted, offering enticing, pure 'Pauillac' aromas of currants, plums, blackberries, black cherries, graphite, forest floor, and a very subtle, exemplary hint of berries, scorched earth, mocha, vanilla, and spice. Truly complex, featuring exceptional, concentrated yet elegant fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a delicious, uninhibited hint of currants, graphite, and black cherries on the finish. Excellently structured, balanced, and brilliant. Not sure what the blend is, but the vineyard is planted to 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot. Now-2032++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**94+ \$189.00 (#580852) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Château Canon-la-Gaffelière 2008, St-Emilion Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:** One of the most opulent wines of the Right Bank these days, the 2008 Canon-la-Gaffelière is a 'strengthened,' indulgent bottling of the utmost purity, power, and (even) finesse. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, displaying fiercely enticing aromas of black mocha, currants, black cherries, plums, espresso, leather, cocoa powder, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, possessing exquisite, generously inlaid fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an incredible hint of mocha, plummy currants, and subtle pencil lead traces on the finish. From a vintage some have recently dismissed as below expectations, a wine like this certainly lends voice to those of alternate thinking. According to one source: 50% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2032++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**94 \$85.00 (#135764) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Château Clinet 2008, Pomerol AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Excepting the '05, the 2008 Château Clinet seems to wholly eclipse most other vintages from recent memory from this fast-improving estate. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is marvellously toasted, offering elegant, alluring aromas of graphite-infused currants, mocha, blackberries, black cherries, crème de cassis, crème brûlée, vanilla, and spice. Very complex and unbelievably pure, possessing extraordinarily layered fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a dazzling, lasting hint of cocoa powder, crushed rocks, and plummy currants on the finish. Outstandingly executed, with superlative structure, pedigree, polish, and breadth. 85% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2036+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**94 \$219.00 (#567545) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Château Figeac 2008, St-Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:** From a vintage many seem to have written off (though I say many great wines were produced), the 2008 Figeac is an exceptional, brilliant claret fashioned in a decisively polished, generous, and almost 'dextrous' style. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, delivering exemplary aromas of fresh mocha, currants, black cherries, blackberries, blueberries, spring flowers, graphite, pain grille, licorice, vanilla, and spice. Truly complex, featuring marvellous, intense yet elegant fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a terrific, lingering hint of currants, delicate mocha, and graphite on the finish. Superbly concentrated (for the vintage), balanced, and beautifully structured.

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70% Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon, plus 30% Merlot. Now-2034++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**94 \$109.00 (#135822) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Château Léoville Barton 2008, St-Julien AOC, Bordeaux, France:** After Léoville-Las Cases and Ducru-Beaucaillou, Léoville Barton is rightly considered the greatest estate of St-Julien. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the fabulous '08 is finely toasted, delivering exquisite, elegant aromas of fragrant currants, plums, blueberries, delicate mocha, licorice, graphite, charcoal, pain grille, vanilla, and spice. Truly complex, possessing exceptional, multilayered fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting, inspirational hint of perfumed currants (actually rather subtle yet pure) on the finish. Amazingly graceful, well structured, and stylish. A wine that, while sufficiently concentrated, utilizes finesse more than anything else. 75% Cabernet Sauvignon, 23% Merlot, and 2% Cabernet Franc. Now-2035++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**94 \$75.00 (#133058) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Château Pichon-Longueville Baron 2008, Pauillac AOC, Bordeaux, France:** With even greater class than is normally the case, the 2008 Pichon-Baron constitutes a brilliant outing for administrator Christian Seely, who took over from Jean-Michel Cazes in 2000. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is beautifully (never overly) toasted, offering inescapably elegant, 'Pauillac' aromas of currants, light mocha, blackberries, black cherries, plums, graphite, pain grille, and a beautiful hint of vanilla and spice. Very complex, possessing impeccable fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a superlative, lingering hint of refined currants, asphalt, and delicate mocha on the finish. Nothing in excess, the '08 is the epitome of balance, judicious concentration, and breed. According to one source: 65% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and 5% Petit Verdot—please note I'm unsure if this is correct. Now-2034++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**94 \$115.00 (#136333) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Château Smith Haut Lafitte 2008, Pessac-Léognan AOC, Bordeaux, France:** For claret collectors, the 2008 Smith Haut Lafitte comes across as one of those rare, (near-) bargain-basement bottlings that are hard to pass up. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, this vinous emerald is beautifully toasted, presenting wonderful aromas of mocha, currants, plums, forest floor, pain grille, graham crackers, crushed rocks, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, carrying exceptionally beautiful, refined fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a wonderful, precise hint of currants and 'black' Oreo Cookies® on the finish. A claret of exquisite, glorious character, structure, and style. 60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 33% Merlot, and 7% Cabernet Franc. Now-2032++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**94 \$79.00 (#136838) Vintages 25 November 2011 In-Store Discovery**

**Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2006 Cask 23 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California:** The top wine of Stag's Leap as well as one of the most iconic reds in California, the 2006 Cask 23 is just about as tantalizing and profound as collectors have come to expect, especially from a label with such an exulted reputation. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is beautifully toasted, delivering excellent, multilayered aromas of espresso, currants, blackberries, plums, black cherries, graphite, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, featuring seamless, sumptuous fruit, firm tannins, balanced

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acidity, and a lasting, layered hint of black mocha, blackberries, and black cherries on the finish. Uplifting and elegant as always, with immense structure, balance, and breed. Compared to the '05, this is more supple and upfront. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2026++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**94** \$230.00 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group

**Col d'Orcia 2001 Poggio al Vento, Brunello di Montalcino Riserva DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** From one of my favourite recent vintages (by Brunello standards), the 2001 Poggio Al Vento is one of the stars of this sensational year. Dark garnet in colour, the wine appears rather reserved at the present time, hinting at a particularly refined set of aromas consisting of cedar-laced red plums and dried wild cherries, wild game, mild cigarbox, sandalwood, and spice. Very complex, sporting truly beautiful, well-structured fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a terrific lingering hint of cedar and light wild red cherries on the finish. Incredibly refined, backward, balanced, and delicate. A wine like this demands decanting. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2009)

**93+** \$125.00 (Private Order) Diamond Estates

**Château Léoville Poyferré 2008, St-Julien AOC, Bordeaux, France:** With the issue of consistency no longer a problem, recent vintages of Léoville Poyferré have been mostly outstanding. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the exciting '08 is finely toasted, presenting exemplary aromas of fresh plummy currants, lightly graphite- (or mineral-) infused mocha, blackberries, black cherries, blueberries, graham crackers, charcoal, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, featuring superlative, almost velvety fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a remarkably polished, creamy hint of currants, pencil lead, and blueberries on the finish. Texturally brilliant, with superb concentration, balance, and style. 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 5% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Petit Verdot. Now-2032++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**93+** \$84.00 (#580779) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures

**Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande 2008, Pauillac AOC, Bordeaux, France:** As usual, the 2008 Pichon Comtesse conducts itself as the most 'feminine' of the Classed Growths in Pauillac, both embracing and expressing its origins like few other clarets. Dark ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, presenting exceedingly alluring aromas of fragrant currants, black cherries, plums, blackberries, pain grille, and a hint of spring flowers, mocha, vanilla, and spice. Very complex and pure, showcasing deliciously textured, elegant fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an extraordinarily beautiful hint of slightly sweet currants, pencil lead, and crushed flowers on the finish. Amazingly crafted, with excellent structure, agility, and refinement. 63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 29% Merlot, 5% Petit Verdot, and 3% Cabernet Franc. Now-2030+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**93+** \$109.00 (#133512) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures

**Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2006 SLV Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California:** My earliest note of the prestigious SLV label (sourced exclusively from the vineyard of the same name), the 2006 vintage is only surpassed by the Cask 23—and just by a small margin. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, offering extremely enticing, slightly reserved aromas of black and white mocha, currants, blackberries, plums, dark cherries, dried blueberries, minerals, forest floor, vanilla, and

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spice. Very complex, delivering fantastic fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a very lengthy, extraordinary hint of black mocha, currants, and dark cherries on the finish. Generous and impactful, at the same time judiciously restrained and elegant. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2025++. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, June 2010)

**93+ \$150.00 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Château Angélu 2007, St-Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Ordinarily, I wouldn't publish a note taken from such a small sample; but because the personality of the superlative 2007 Angélu is so apparent, just this once I'm willing to overlook what had been a pathetically miserly pour. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the '07 is finely toasted, delivering exquisite aromas of mocha, currants, plums, blackberries, red plums, graphite, graham crackers, licorice, espresso, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, retaining fabulous fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a fully integrated, indulgent hint of smooth currants and mocha on the finish. Fantastic for the vintage; though it will probably age a lot quicker than might be anticipated. 62% Merlot and 38% Cabernet Franc. Now-2022++. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, January 2010)

**93 \$225.00 (#100446) Vintages 2007 Bordeaux Futures**

**Col Solare 2005, Columbia Valley, Washington State:** Joint venture between Marchesi Antinori of Tuscany and Chateau Ste. Michelle (its first vintage was in 1995), Col Solare has since become one of the most highly acclaimed wines in Washington State. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the '05 is beautifully toasted, presenting abundant, enticing aromas of currants, plums, blackberries, black raspberries, dried cherries, espresso, leather, forest floor, and a hint of minerals, cedarwood, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, delivering excellent, decadent fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lasting, superbly structured hint of mocha, blackberries, and plums on the finish. Sumptuous, sturdy, and rather refined for such a powerful wine. 71% Cabernet Sauvignon, 25% Merlot, and 4% Cabernet Franc. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, June 2010)

**93 \$89.95 (#20487) Vintages 6 June 2009 In-Store Discovery**

**Merry Edwards 2009 Georganne Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley (Sonoma County), California:** One of the most stunning Russian River Pinots I have ever tasted, the 2009 Georganne personifies the ideal combination of richness and finesse. Dark ruby in colour, it reveals an amazingly decadent cornucopia of aromas: raspberries and violets at the outset; switching to plums, blackberry compote, cherries, and a hint of licorice, vanilla, minerals, and spice. Very complex and pure, retaining exquisite fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, elevated yet well-integrated alcohol (14.4%), and an all-embracing, polished hint of violets and raspberries (plus a trace of minerals) on the finish. Truly exemplary—highly recommended for collectors. Now-2018+. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, September 2011)

**93 \$89.99 (Private Order) Stem Wine Group**

**Château Rauzan-Ségla 2008, Margaux AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Continuing its upward trend of radical improvement(s), the 2008 Rauzan-Ségla is a remarkably pure and stylish Margaux. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, displaying wonderfully elegant, delicate aromas of subtly fragrant currants, blackberries, black cherries, violets, plums, graphite, dried black raspberries, and a hint of forest floor,

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vanilla, and spice. Very complex, possessing truly beautiful, refined fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an extremely polished, delectable hint of gently perfumed currants and dried black raspberries on the finish. Like most vintages from here, this is not for ultra-long keeping, but will provide enormous pleasure over the next few decades. Now-2030++. 62% Cabernet Sauvignon and 38% Merlot. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**93 \$99.00 (#136671) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Valdicava 2005, Brunello di Montalcino DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** For a vintage that produced many medium-weight wines, the 2005 Valdicava is one of few Brunellos that seems to have defied the vast majority of its peers. Dark red-garnet in colour, it offers exceedingly elegant aromas of cherries, red fruits, and delicate cedarwood; switching to undergrowth, leather, green tea, white pepper, and a refined hint of tree bark and spice. Very complex, delivering outstanding fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an extraordinary hint of semi-fragrant cherries and cedarwood on the finish. Irrepressibly elegant, fresh, and taut, possessing just that extra weight denied many other bottlings. Now-2024+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2011)

**93 \$105.99 (Private Order) Stem Wine Group**

**Château Canon 2008, St-Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:** For the past several vintages, the wines of Château Canon have increasingly caught my attention. Though always very good, in the past I often found the wines lacking in personality and much needed ‘textural fat.’ No longer, it seems. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the excellent '08 is finely toasted, offering intense, inviting aromas of mocha, currants, plums, blackberries, graham crackers, pain grille, subtle charcoal traces, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, carrying superb fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a very polished, expressive hint of plummy currants and black mocha (plus a little graphite) on the finish. Immensely beautiful, abundant, and refined. Typically a blend of around 75% Merlot and 25% Cabernet Franc. Now-2032++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**92++ \$99.00 (#137414) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars 2006 Fay Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California:** One of two top-notch vineyards owned by Stag’s Leap Wine Cellars, the Fay vineyard is named after grape-growing pioneer Nathan Fay (1915-2001), planted roughly fifty years ago. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the '06 is beautifully toasted, displaying wonderfully fragrant aromas of mocha, ‘crunchy’ black currants, dark cherries, blackberries, plums, forest floor, scorched earth, asphalt, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, with superb fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity (rare in Napa), and a lingering, elegant hint of mocha, currants, and dark cherries on the finish. Excellently structured, exuding a sort of ‘minerally finesse’ seldom experienced in this part of the valley. Now-2024++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**92++ \$125.00 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Château Trotte Vieille 2008, St-Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:** One of lesser known estates of Premier Grand Cru status, recent vintages from Trotte Vieille have reflected an astonishing improvement in standards. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the superlative '08 is beautifully toasted, offering unmistakably alluring aromas of mocha, currants, plums, blackberries, graham crackers, Oreo Cookies®, berries,

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vanilla, and spice. Very complex, possessing marvellous, slightly velvety fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a polished, multilayered hint of currants and espresso on the finish. Wonderfully precise and finesse-driven yet generous, this is clearly one of the best vintages ever produced under the careful management of the Castéja family. According to one source: 50% Merlot, 45% Cabernet Franc, and 5% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2025++. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, January 2011)

**92++ \$99.00 (#229278) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Santa Carolina 2007 Herencia, Cachapoal Valley, Chile:** Santa Carolina's new iconic/blockbuster red wine, the 2007 Herencia surpasses all expectations I have come to anticipate from this otherwise uninteresting, albeit reliable operation. Opaque ruby in colour, this beauty is marvellously toasted, offering truly tantalizing aromas of dark mocha covered in black cherries, giving way to crème de cassis, asphalt, underbrush, licorice, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, featuring multilayered, immensely sumptuous fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and an extremely long, velvety hint of cherried currants and dark baker's chocolate on the finish. Fantastically integrated, balanced, and powerful. 100% Carmenère—who knew? Now-2019++. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, March 2011)

**92++ \$99.95 (#228387) Vintages Special Offer**

**Chateau Ste. Michelle 2006 Artist Series Meritage, Columbia Valley, Washington State:** One of Bob Bertheau's most profound offerings, the 2006 Artist Series Meritage is a truly inspiring wine. Opaque ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, showcasing incredible, assertive aromas of espresso, currants, plums, blackberries, dark cherries and raspberries, mocha, spring flowers, forest floor, minerals, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, delivering superlative, finely structured fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a delicious, carefully seamed hint of milk chocolate, blackberries, and currants on the finish. Rich, excellently built blend. 58% Cabernet Sauvignon, 35% Merlot, 6% Malbec, and 1% Petit Verdot. Now-2024+. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, June 2010)

**92+ \$64.95 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Château Gruaud Larose 2008, St-Julien AOC, Bordeaux, France:** As usual, this impeccable Second Growth churns out a claret of terrific elegance, pedigree, and structure. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2008 Gruaud Larose, while not as concentrated as some might prefer, offers truly beautiful aromas of lightly toasted oak that shortly gives way to currants, blackberries, black cherries (slightly fragrant), subtle pencil lead, loamy earth, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, possessing singularly refined, marvellous fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a wonderful, expressive hint of pure plummy currants and graphite on the finish. Excellent claret; and while lighter-bodied, the magic touch of the château remains unmistakable. 54% Cabernet Sauvignon, 34% Merlot, and 12% Petit Verdot. Now-2025+. (Julian Hitner, *The Successful Collector*, January 2011)

**92+ \$95.00 (#229435) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Kaiken 2007 Mai, Mendoza, Argentina:** Its inaugural vintage, the exquisite 2007 Mai represents a new level of excellence for a winery that, while producing acceptable bottlings, has never really managed to wow the vinous establishment. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is beautifully toasted, offering gorgeous, fragrant aromas of violet-infused mocha and currants, plums, blueberries, dark cherries, pain grille, tar, saddle

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leather, loamy earth, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, with beguilingly delicious, seamless fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a really concentrated, lingering hint of mocha, currants, and violets on the finish. A wine of excellent power, poise, and sumptuous personality. 100% Malbec. Now-2024+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

**92+ \$89.95 (#227819) Vintages Special Offer**

**Château Langoa Barton 2008, St-Julien AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Under the same ownership as Léoville Barton, these days the wines of Langoa Barton offer collectors incredible value for money. Take the remarkable 2008: dark ruby in colour, the wine displays wonderful aromas of semi-fragrant currants, black mocha, blackberries, black cherries, asphalt, spring flowers, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, retaining delicious, elegant fruit (slightly silky), firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an exemplary, generous hint of currants and fragrant black cherries on the finish. Great claret—indeed, recent vintages have taken on much more depth and structural dimension. According to one source: 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 20% Merlot, and 10% Cabernet Franc. Now-2026+-. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**92+ \$59.00 (#133074) Vintages 2008 Bordeaux Futures**

**Col Solare 2006, Columbia Valley, Washington State:** Tasted alongside the '05, the 2006 Col Solare is a sumptuous Cabernet-blend of amazing integration, intensity, and style. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, revealing remarkable aromas of mocha, red currants, plums, blackberries, pain grille, leather, asphalt, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with great fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a long, powerful hint of mocha and dark plummy red currants (with the slightest trace of cedarwood) on the finish. Delicious, well-structured, and tempting, this is more accessible and developed than the tighter, flashier '05. 72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot, 4% Cabernet Franc, 3% Petit Verdot, and 2% Syrah. Now-2019+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**92 \$87.95 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Craggy Range 2007 Sophia, Gimblett Gravels Vineyard (Hawke's Bay), North Island, New Zealand:** One of the best Bordeaux-blends in New Zealand, I only have a handful of notes on this remarkable label. Opaque purple-ruby in colour, the 2007 Sophia is finely toasted, featuring incredible aromas of violet-tinged mocha/espresso and currants; making way for 'purple' blackberries, plums, graphite, scorched earth, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Very complex (of not somewhat reserved), possessing wonderful fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an exceptionally elegant yet powerful hint of mocha, blackberried plums, and violets on the finish. Absolutely delicious, delivering great balance, structure, power, and finesse. 81% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Franc, 7% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 2% Malbec. Now-2022+-. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2010)

**92 \$66.95 (Private Order) Lifford Wine Agency**

**Merry Edwards 2008 Klopp Ranch Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley (Sonoma County), California:** One of several single-vineyard Pinot Noirs produced by Merry Edwards, the 2008 Kopp Ranch delivers wonderful richness and precision in spite of logging in at 14.4% alcohol. Medium ruby in colour, it displays remarkably Burgundian-themed aromas of delicate white mocha, cherries, raspberries, violets, red plums, loamy

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chalk, graphite, and a hint of forest floor, cinnamon, and spice. Complex, with delicious, superlative fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, powerful yet elegant hint of raspberries and crushed flowers (very subtle) on the finish. Excellently executed, with great balance, focus, and style. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2011)

**92 \$89.99 (Private Order) Stem Wine Group**

**Montes 2007 Alpha M, Apalta Single Estate Santa Cruz (Colchagua Valley), Chile:**

One of several flagship wines from one of Chile's most dynamic large-scale operations, the 2007 Alpha M is a Bordeaux-blend of excellent depth, power, and attitude. Opaque ruby in colour, it reveals bountiful, resplendent aromas of 'dark' mocha and toasted oak, switching to currants, blackberries, black cherries, burning embers, leather, tar, underbrush, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, retaining delicious, seamless forward fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lasting, 'inky' hint of slightly minerally currants and mocha on the finish. My first note on this superlative wine, and hopefully not my last. 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 10% Cabernet Franc, 5% Merlot, and 5% Petit Verdot. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

**92 \$79.00 (#914580) Vintages Special Offer**

**Northstar 2005 Merlot, Walla Walla Valley, Washington State:** Northstar's flagship wine, the 2005 Walla Walla Valley Merlot is extremely fulsome, powerfully structured, balanced, and textured. Opaque ruby in colour, it is beautifully toasted, allowing for alluring, elegant aromas of currants, plums, black raspberry compote, dark cherries, scorched earth, forest floor, minerals, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, delivering delicious, well-structured fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity (very important), and a lengthy, poised hint of mocha, currants, and plums on the finish. Richly inlaid yet managed superbly. Also contains 16% Cabernet Sauvignon and 4% Petit Verdot. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**92 \$76.95 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Château Pavie Macquin 2008, St-Emilion Premier Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux, France:**

Of similar disposition and the same confounded quality as the '07, the 2008 Pavie Macquin is a more fulsome, powerful style of claret that, logging in at a staggering 14.5% alcohol, succeeds only because of its inherent balance and prowess. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is beautifully toasted, offering enticing aromas of currants and black cherried mocha, switching to licorice, crème brûlée, blueberries, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, revealing deliciously elegant, concentrated fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting hint of plummy currants and dark blueberries (almost velvety) on the finish. Similar in approach to the '07, only tighter structured and more concentrated. 85% Merlot, 14% Cabernet Franc, and 1% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2028+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2011)

**92 \$89.00 (#136432) Vintages Shop Online**

**Livio Sassetti 2006 Pertimali, Brunello di Montalcino DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:**

Collectors of fine Brunello should take note: the 2006 Pertimali is one exemplary bottling. Dark garnet in colour, the wine exhibits significantly elegant, 'rugged' aromas of savoury undergrowth, roasted game, leather, mild red fruits, cedarwood, and a hint of herbs and spice. Very complex, with brilliant, traditional-styled fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an impeccable hint of cedary/savoury plums on the finish. Truly

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delicious, but what's most impressive is its wonderful style and breed. Built for the long term, it will be interesting to see how the wine evolves. Now-2026. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**92 \$47.95 (#287292) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

**Gabriel Meffre 2009 Laurus, Gigondas AOC, Rhône, France:** The best vintage yet, the 2009 Laurus is a Gigondas of considerable complexity, layering, and power. Opaque ruby in colour, this overachiever presents abundant, characterful aromas of blackberries, currants, brambleberries, black raspberries, white pepper, lavender, underbrush, and spice. Very complex, with exquisitely rich fruit, very firm tannins (critical), balanced acidity, and a long, superb hint of blackberries, brambleberries, and pepper traces on the finish. Strong, exceptional brew, this will easily keep for well over a decade. Grenache and Syrah (percentages unknown). Now-2024. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**91+ \$26.95 (#163113) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

**Hewitt Vineyard 2008 Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon, Rutherford (Napa Valley), California:** My first note from this winery, the 2008 Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon is very concentrated, sturdy, and excellently calibrated. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, delivering abundant, alluring aromas of black mocha, currants, blackberries, charcoal, mild spring flowers, minerals, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with sumptuous forward fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lengthy, well-structured hint of currants, mocha, and floral elements on the finish. Powerful and Parkerized, yet with enough backbone to render most excesses non-adverse. The wine is typically 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2022++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**91++ \$69.95 (#80192) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

**Bennett Lane Winery 2006 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California:** My only note from this winery, the 2006 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon is a sincerely delicious, powerful offering. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, presenting enticingly 'rounded' aromas of black mocha and currants; switching to plums, blueberries, incense, vanilla, and spice. Complex, delivering sumptuous, extracted fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lengthy hint of smooth currants and mocha on the finish. Fashioned with hedonists in mind, this should keep for up to decade, perhaps more. Now-2021+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

**91 \$55.00 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Château Branaire-Ducru 2007, St-Julien AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Outstanding for the vintage, Patrick Maroteau's 2007 Branaire-Ducru is a collector's delight; though it remains overpriced in this market. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, displaying beautiful, elegant aromas of currants and plums; switching to black cherries, mocha, smoke, scorched earth, graphite, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with attractive, seamlessly integrated fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a wholly refined hint of plummy currants on the finish. Rounder than usual, saved by that extra layer of fat and outlying structure that so many other wines in '07 seem to lack. 63% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 4% Petit Verdot, and 3% Cabernet Franc. Now-2022. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, January 2010)

**91 \$68.00 (#98467) Vintages 2007 Bordeaux Futures**

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**C.G. Arie Vineyard & Winery 2006 Southern Exposure Zinfandel, Shenandoah Valley, California:** My only note from this winery, the 2006 Southern Exposure is a delicious, individualistic vineyard of great power, balance, and flavour. Dark ruby in colour, the wine reveals fresh, endearing aromas of cherries and underbrush; switching to incense, tar, leather, and spicebox. Complex and eerily refined, possessing superb fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and an exceedingly satisfying hint of leathery currants and incense on the finish. Also contains 11% Petite Sirah, 4% Cabernet Franc, and 5% 'other varietals.' Fascinating, first-rate bottling—one of few notes I have from the Shenandoah Valley. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

**91 \$49.95 (Private Order) Grape**

**Col d'Orcia 2004, Brunello di Montalcino DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** First-rate Brunello, the 2004 Col d'Orcia boasts excellent refinement, structure, and focus. Dark red currant in colour, the wine offers inviting aromas of roasted meats at the outset; giving way to red plums and cherries, cedarwood, leather, undergrowth, and a hint of herbs and spice. Complex, featuring great fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a surprisingly delicate yet polished hint of cherries and cedarwood on the finish. Crafted in the traditional style, its extra roundness and elegance offer immense appeal. Now-2018+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2009)

**91 \$65.00 (Private Order) Diamond Estates**

**Cono Sur 2008 Ocio Pinot Noir, Casablanca Valley, Chile:** Flagship, high-priced Pinot Noir from the oftentimes-hopelessly varied Cono Sur lineup, the 2008 Ocio is surely of impeccable quality, polish, and substance. Medium ruby in colour, the wine reveals beautiful aromas of fresh cherries, raspberries, plums, licorice, cinnamon sticks (extremely delicate), rhubarb, and a hint of toasted oak and spice. Complex and purely formatted, possessing superlative silky fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting, refined hint of raspberries and cherries on the finish. Excellent Pinot—indeed, the Valle de Casablanca seems remarkably well-suited to this most finicky of grapes. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

**91 \$59.95 (#83378) Vintages Special Offer**

**Pinino 2006, Brunello di Montalcino DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** An excellent vintage for Brunello, the Pinino comes across as fully confident, refined, and excellently executed. Dark garnet in colour, it exudes beautiful, traditional yet 'energetic' aromas of slightly fragrant red fruits, roasted meats, seasoned leather, mild herbs, cedarwood, and spice. Complex, possessing focused, enticing fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an elegant hint of dried red plums, leather, and cedarwood on the finish. Medium-weight in style, showing wonderful personality and balance. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**91 \$38.95 (#32508) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Barone Ricasoli 2006 Castello di Brolio, Chianti Classico DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** Likely the best Chianti Classico I have ever encountered from Castello di Brolio, the '06 is extremely delicious, full-bodied, and harmonious. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, offering beautiful, inviting aromas of dark mocha, plummy currants, black cherries, blueberries, pencil lead, undergrowth, vanilla, and spice. Very complex, revealing delicate, yet finely integrated, powerful fruit, firm tannins, balanced

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acidity, and a lasting, polished hint of dark mocha and plums (plus toasted oak traces) on the finish. Crafted in the modern style, it would seem, I am relieved that Barone Ricasoli has finely established a reputation for itself befitting the lineage of both the family and the estate. Predominantly Sangiovese, with 'a small amount' of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Now-2018++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

**91 \$54.95 (#942607) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release**

**Spring Valley Vineyard 2007 Uriah, Walla Walla Valley, Washington State:** One of several notes I have from this winery, the 2007 Uriah is a sumptuous Merlot-blend of great appeal. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, this powerful bottling is finely toasted, displaying beautiful, intense aromas of mocha, black raspberry treacle, currants, plums, leather, scorched earth, minerals, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting powerful, forward yet well-structured fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a truly delicious, long-lasting hint of dark mocha and black raspberried plums on the finish. Quite rich and enveloping. 60% Merlot, 28% Cabernet Franc, 6% Petit Verdot, and 6% Malbec. Now-2019+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**91 \$67.95 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Campbells 2007 The Brothers Shiraz, Rutherglen, Victoria, Australia:** One of the Campbells' top reds, the 2007 Brothers is an extremely tempting Shiraz, exerting excellent flavour and grip. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, offering assertive aromas of graham cracker-infused currants, red plums, blackberries, eucalyptus, licorice, leather, and a hint of crème brûlée, vanilla, and spice. Quite complex, with generous, well-structured fruit, firm tannins, mild acidity, and a lasting hint of baked currants and eucalyptus on the finish. Potent liquid, this should probably be enjoyed in particularly modest amounts. Now-2018++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

**90++ \$55.00 (#237347) Vintages Special Offer**

**Christian Moueix 2008 Othello, Napa Valley, California:** Like most of Moueix's Californian wines nowadays, the 2008 Othello clearly features Pomerol-like characteristics to an appreciable extent. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, presenting terrific, enticing aromas of currants, blackberries, dried cherries, licorice, 'iron' graphite, forest floor, duck smoke, vanilla, and spice. Complex, possessing superbly poised fruit, firm tannins, slightly milder acidity, and an outstanding hint of currants, dark cherries, and graphite on the finish. Graceful, deliciously structured Bordeaux-blend. Now-2022++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90++ \$41.95 (#156539) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Delas 2009 Haute Pierre, Châteauneuf-du-Pape AOC, Rhône, France:** Powerful, concentrated Châteauneuf, the style of the 2009 Haute Pierre is definitely for high-octane fanatics. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it offers tempting aromas of blackberries and plums; giving way to baked black raspberries, blueberry pie, dried cherries, incense, underbrush, grilled herbs, and spice. Complex, boasting powerful fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting hint of blackberries and dried black raspberries (a little 'dusty') on the finish. Big, abundant wine, handling itself with few difficulties. Typically 90% Grenache and 10% Syrah. Now-2022++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90+ \$37.95 (#74195) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

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**Freemark Abbey 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California:** From one of the most delightfully named wineries in Napa, the 2002 Cabernet Sauvignon is maturing superbly. Dark ruby-red currant in colour, it boasts a mix of youthful and evolved characteristics, featuring beautiful aromas of fresh black cherries intermixed with milk chocolate, currants, forest floor, gentle cedarwood, scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting deliciously approachable fruit, fine tannins, milder acidity, and a lovely, lingering hint of soft cherried currants, mocha, and cedarwood on the finish. Extremely charming, well-aged, and harmonious. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

**90+ \$39.95 (#904532) B & W Wines**

**Domaine de Grapillon d'Or 2010, Gigondas AOC, Rhône, France:** One of the first 2010s I have yet to taste, the Domaine de Grapillon is one powerful, abundant Gigondas. Opaque ruby in colour, it delivers poignant aromas of dark blackberry treacle, plums, black raspberries, licorice, underbrush, mild garrigue, Provençal herbs, and spice. Complex, featuring delicious, marvellously structured fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, decadent yet 'compact' hint of blackberry treacle and asphalt on the finish. Quite multilayered and weighty—absorbing, to say the least. 80% Grenache and 20% Syrah. Now-2022+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90+ \$28.95 (#981787) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Tahbilk 2005 Eric Stevens Purbrick Cabernet Sauvignon, Nagambie Lakes, Victoria, Australia:** One of few notes I have from Tahbilk, the 2005 Eric Stevens Purbrick Cabernet Sauvignon is named after the estate's winemaker between 1931 and 1978. Opaque ruby-red currant in colour, it reveals surprisingly fragrant aromas of eucalyptus, licorice-infused currants, plums, asphalt, pain grille, coffee, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with beautifully forward, discernibly elegant fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lingering hint of fragrant currants and eucalyptus on the finish. Superbly crafted, this delicious wine should easily keep for another eight years or so. Now-2020. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

**90+ \$59.00 (#237453) Vintages Special Offer**

**Te Awa 2004 Boundary, Hawke's Bay, North Island, New Zealand:** From what I can gather, the Boundary label has been discontinued at Te Awa, or is perhaps produced under another name. Regardless, the '04 is a first-rate bottling. Dark-opaque red-garnet in colour, this now-mature wine displays lovely, elegant aromas of cedar-laced mocha, red plums and currants, earth, leather, and a hint of white pepper, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with beautiful fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and an endearing, enduring hint of cedarwood, mocha, and plums on the finish. Evolving quickly, yet delicious—drink very soon. 80% Merlot, 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 5% Cabernet Franc. Now-2014. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2010)

**90+ \$40.00 (Private Order) MCO Wines**

**Pascual Toso 2005 Finca Pedregal, Barrancas Vineyards (Mendoza), Argentina:** Top wine from Pascual Toso, the 2005 Finca Pedregal is a blend of great polish, freshness, and tempting disposition. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, revealing beautiful, 'pure' aromas of mocha laced with black cherries that give way to currants, violets, licorice, pain grille, crème brûlée, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with

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delicious, more forward, noticeably rounder fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lingering, very polished hint of black cherried currants on the finish. A serious success story, I've little doubt that future vintages will be even better, carrying greater structure and less ample roundness. 70% Malbec and 30% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2019++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, March 2011)

**90+ \$49.95 (#227439) Vintages Special Offer**

**Tyrrell's 2009 Vat 9 Hunter Shiraz, Hunter Valley, New South Wales, Australia:**

Arguably Bruce Tyrrell's most elegant Shiraz, the 2009 Vat 9 is crafted from vines with an average age of fifty years, and is assuredly more polished and elegant than is the norm. Opaque purple-ruby in colour, it is mildly toasted, revealing beautiful aromas of mildly peppery currants, plums, violets, incense, leather, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with delicious forward fruit, slightly softer yet well-integrated tannins, milder acidity, and a round, stylish hint of currants, incense, and leather on the finish. Focused and pure, it certainly has a lot to offer, and should reward proper cellaring. Screwcap closure. Now-2017++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

**90+ \$49.00 (#237917) Vintages Special Offer**

**Yalumba 2005 Habermann Vineyard Bethany Grenache, Barossa, South Australia,**

**Australia:** While I have dozens of notes from Yalumba, this is the only one I possess of the Bethany Grenache from the Habermann Vineyard. Dark red currant in colour, the wine starts off with a slightly savoury element, offering truly striking aromas of dark berries, leather, pain grille, crushed flowers, licorice, and spice. Complex, boasting inviting forward fruit, well-integrated tannins, balanced acidity, and lasting, characterful hint of dark berries and leather on the finish. Delicious and lively, while it can probably go on for another five years, it does seem to be at its peak. Now-2015++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

**90+ \$76.00 (#237537) Vintages Special Offer**

**Marziano Abbona 2005 Terlo Ravera, Barolo DOCG, Piedmont, Italy:** My only note from this winery (founded in 1970), the 2005 Terlo Ravera represents a first-rate effort in the form of an elegant, expressive Barolo. Dark garnet in colour, the wine is very moderately toasted, offering truly lovely, subtle aromas of cedary white mocha, cherried plums, tealeaves, sandalwood, tar, and spice. Complex, possessing beautiful, refined fruit, very firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a stylish hint of dried cherries and tealeaves on the finish. In terms of expression and quality, one can tell that this wine was made with tender-loving care—my compliments. Now-2016++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2010)

**90 \$36.95 (#67918) Vintages 4 September 2010 Release**

**Château Balestard la Tonnelle 2001, St-Emilion Grand Cru Classé AOC, Bordeaux,**

**France:** The only other note I have from this estate is an obscure recording of the '95; but it did serve to remind me that wines from Balestard la Tonnelle are can be quite beautiful and remarkably cellarable. Dark red currant in colour with a touch of garnet, the '01 reveals a truly lovely bouquet of dried red fruits, cherries, cedarwood, mild cigarbox, and a hint of earth and spice. Complex, with very fine fruit, still-firm yet mellowing tannins, balanced acidity, and a graceful hint of red currants and cedarwood traces on the finish. Vibrant and elegant, this is still very much alive. Now-2014. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2009)

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**90 \$65.07 (Private Order) Hobbs Wine Merchants**

**Chateau Ste. Michelle 2006 Canoe Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon, Horse Heaven Hills, Washington State:** One of the finer labels of Chateau Ste. Michelle, the 2006 Canoe Ridge is a powerful, lengthy Cabernet Sauvignon. Opaque ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, offering inviting aromas of milk chocolate, baked currants and plums, dark cherries, pencil shavings, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Complex, delivering delicious, well-structured fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a beautiful, lingering hint of mocha and currants on the finish. Enticing, first-rate wine; though it's probably not 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**90 \$35.95 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Col d'Orcia 2004 Olmaia Cabernet, Sant'Antimo DOC, Tuscany, Italy:** For technocrats, the Sant'Antimo covers the same boundaries as Brunello di Montalcino, but permits grapes other than Sangiovese Grosso. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the 2004 Olmaia is finely toasted, presenting enticing aromas of mocha, currants, plums, dark cherries, dried blueberries, and an underlying hint of scorched earth, cedarwood, vanilla, and spice. Complex, revealing truly fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, 'persuasive' hint of mocha and red plummy currants on the finish. Beautiful wine, boasting great structure, balance, and style. 100% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2016++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2009)

**90 \$59.95 (Private Order) Diamond Estates**

**Davis Bynum 2008 Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley (Sonoma County), California:** For Pinot lovers, the wines of Davis Bynum rarely disappoint. Medium-dark ruby in colour, the '08 is mildly toasted, with inviting aromas of black cherries and raspberries, blackberries, plums, cinnamon, rhubarb, and spice. Complex, delivering great fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a beautiful hint of dark cherries and raspberries on the finish. Remarkably fragrant, balanced, and pure. Built for medium-term cellaring. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, October 2010)

**90 \$29.95 (#202556) Vintages Special Offer**

**Longplay 2009 Lia's Vineyard Pinot Noir, Chehalem Mountains (Willamette Valley), Oregon, United States:** Small-scale winery, the 2009 Lia's Vineyard Pinot Noir is crafted entirely from the Chehalem Mountains AVA. Medium ruby in colour, it displays mightily pretty, fragrant aromas of licorice, raspberries, strawberries, red fruits, and a hint of minerals and spice. Complex, retaining beautiful, elegantly silky fruit, finely integrated tannins, balanced acidity, and a finesse-oriented hint of raspberries and strawberries on the finish. Fully fresh, delicate, and balanced, it's hard to believe this logs in at 14.5% alcohol. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90 \$27.95 (#267344) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

**McWilliams 2006 Mount Pleasant Maurice O'Shea Shiraz, Hunter Vale, New South Wales, Australia:** Flagship Shiraz from McWilliams' Hunter Valley outpost, the 2006 Maurice O'Shea is crafted from 120-year-old vines. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, offering beautiful, intense aromas of baked eucalyptus and red currants; switching to plums, coffee, leather, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Complex, carrying deliciously powerful, chewy fruit, firm tannins, mild acidity, and a long, 'chunky' hint of baked currants, eucalyptus, and roasted coffee beans on the finish. Quite weighty,

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hugely satisfying offering. Now-2017+-. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

**90 \$65.00 (#237941) Vintages Special Offer**

**Ngatarawa 2007 Alwyn Winemaker's Reserve Merlot/Cabernet, Hawke's Bay, North Island, New Zealand:** My only note from this winery, the Alwyn Winemaker's Reserve is only produced in exceptional vintages and in very small quantities. Opaque ruby in colour, the '07 is finely toasted, revealing enticing aromas of mocha, fragrant baked plums and currants, loamy earth, tobacco, pain grille, and a hint of brownies, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with beautiful fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting, surprisingly powerful hint of baked mocha and plums on the finish. Successful, ambitious blend. I would imagine future vintages shall only be better. 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2010)

**90 \$49.95 (Private Order) Whitehall Agencies**

**Northstar 2006 Merlot, Columbia Valley, Washington State:** Here at Northstar, the speciality is Merlot-blends, with winemaker David Merfeld crafting some of the most well-fashioned around. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the '06 Columbia Valley is finely toasted, offering inviting aromas of black mocha, currants, plums, dried black cherries, graham cracker traces, and a hint of scorched earth, vanilla, and spice. Complex, carrying very fine fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lengthy, polished hint of mocha and red currants on the finish. Delicious and well-structured. Also contains 19% Cabernet Sauvignon, 3% Petit Verdot, and 2% Cabernet Franc. Now-2020. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**90 \$54.95 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Enrico Pierazuoli 2005 Tenuta Le Farnete, Carmignano Riserva DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** My only note from this winery, the 2005 Carmignano Riserva is a first-rate success. Dark red currant in colour with a touch of garnet, the wine is maturing beautifully, boasting elegant aromas of cedary plums and red fruits; giving way to savoury wild game, underbrush, and a hint of herbs and spice. Complex, with impressive fuller-styled fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a delicious hint of savoury plums, red fruits, and cedarwood on the finish. Great wine, best for medium-term drinking. 80% Sangiovese and 20% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

**90 \$29.00 (#1321) Vintages Shop Online**

**Soter Vineyards 2009 North Valley Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley, Oregon:** Among the most respected wineries in the state, Tony Soter has been making wine in Oregon since the late-1990s. Medium-dark ruby in colour, the 2009 North Valley Pinot Noir displays beautiful, elegant aromas of fragrant raspberries, cherries, plums, licorice, and a hint of minerals and spice. Complex, retaining truly lovely, stylish fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a refined, slightly silky hint of raspberries and strawberries on the finish. Polished, tasteful, and complete; my first note from this winery—and hopefully not my last. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90 \$37.95 (#289470) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Summers 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon, Calistoga (Napa Valley), California:** Jim and Beth Summers have been involved in the winegrowing business since 1987; and the

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2009 Calistoga-derived Cabernet Sauvignon is quite a marvellous bottling. Opaque ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, featuring 'sturdy,' appetizing aromas of blackberries, currants, subtle mocha, spring flowers, forest floor, vanilla, and spice. Complex, delivering deliciously forward fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lingering, smooth hint of plummy currants and mild mocha on the finish. Fulsome, balanced; the whole package, albeit in a slightly rounder format—ideal for the style. Now-2020+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**90** \$29.95 (#279380) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release

**Clos Henri 2010 Bel Echo Terroir Greywacke Pinot Noir, Marlborough, South Island, New Zealand:** Charming and ideally styled, the 2010 Bel Echo Terroir has a distinct Burgundian feel about it. Medium ruby in colour, it reveals attractive aromas of cherries, raspberries, plums, licorice, pain grille, and spice. Complex, featuring elegant, freshly textured fruit, fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a lovely hint of cherries and licorice on the finish. Finely crafted and fresh, this was obviously made with considerable care. Screwcap closure. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89+** \$18.95 (#159137) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release

**Lamole di Lamole 2008, Chianti Classico Riserva DOCG, Tuscany, Italy:** Impressively flavoured and balanced, the 2008 Chianti Classico Riserva is certainly a fine wine. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it reveals refined, slightly fragrant aromas of licorice-driven plums, dried cherries, incense, leather, cedarwood, and spice. Complex, possessing very fine fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and an expressive hint of licorice and plums on the finish. Lovely flavour profile, freshness, and balance. Just as important: not in the least bit excessively dry. 100% Sangiovese. Now-2019. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89+** \$27.95 (#280651) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release

**Château Beauchêne 2006 Premier Terroir, Côtes du Rhône AOC, Rhône, France:** One of the most serious Côtes du Rhône's I've ever tasted, the 2006 Premier Terroir does its job better than most. Dark ruby in colour with a touch of red currant, it displays lovely aromas of dark cherries, black raspberries, plums, licorice, and a hint of leather and spice. Complex, with well-formatted fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, elegant hint of dark raspberries and plummy cherries on the finish. Admirably crafted and very satisfying. Typically 70% Grenache, 25% Syrah, and 5% Mourvèdre. Now-2012+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2009)

**89** \$23.85 (Private Order) Hobbs Wine Merchants

**Canonica a Cerreto 2006 Sandiavolo, IGT Toscana, Tuscany, Italy:** My only note from this winery, the 2006 Sandiavolo is, from a standpoint of taste, considerably accommodating. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it reveals impressive aromas of wild raspberries, currants, and plums; switching to leather, subtle savouriness, and a hint of alternate black fruits and spice. Complex, with beautiful, more oak-driven fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering, flavourful hint of plums and blackberries on the finish. Full-bodied, smooth, and characterful. Equal parts Sangiovese, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot. Now-2019. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89** \$24.95 (#270256) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release

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**Chapel Hill 2007 Shiraz, McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia:** One of my first-ever notes from this reliable producer, the 2007 Shiraz is delicious, well-structured, and balanced. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is heavily toasted, with attractive aromas of eucalyptus, red currants and plums, blackberries, mocha, leather, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with tastily smooth fruit, supple tannins, mild acidity, and a lengthy hint of red plums, eucalyptus, and mocha on the finish. Pleasingly extracted. Screwcap closure. Now-2015++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2009)

**89 \$20.95 (#743989) Vintages 9 January 2010 Release**

**Chateau Ste. Michelle 2008 Indian Wells Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley, Washington State:** From one of Washington State's most prominent operations, the 2008 Indian Wells Cabernet Sauvignon is very well-structured, boasting good flavour and balance. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, revealing lovely aromas of mocha, reserved red currants, plums, blackberried cherries, forest floor, leather, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with fine fruit, firm tannins, milder acidity, and a lasting hint of fresh mocha and currants on the finish. Immediately appealing. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, June 2010)

**89 \$26.95 (Private Order) Profile Wine Group**

**Col d'Orcia 2007, Rosso di Montalcino DOC, Tuscany, Italy:** Impressive 'second wine' to the Brunello label, the 2007 Rosso di Montalcino has plenty to offer. Dark ruby-red currant in colour, it is surprisingly fragrant, displaying lovely aromas of fresh, slightly sweet red cherries and plums, underbrush, wild game, and a hint of cedar and spice. Reasonably complex, with fine fruit and tannins, balanced acidity, and a delightful hint of cherries (slightly perfumed) on the finish. Beautifully balanced, round, and fresh. Now-2014+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2009)

**89 \$25.00 (Private Order) Diamond Estates**

**Deloach 2010 Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley (Sonoma County), California:** Crafted in the North American style—which invariably implies, for better or worse, more of everything—the 2010 Deloach Pinot Noir will be adored by some and abhorred by others. Dark ruby in colour, it reveals 'Californian' aromas of cherries, raspberries, plums, blueberries, cola gummy bears, rhubarb, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with appetizing fruit, fine tannins, milder acidity, high alcohol (14.5%), and a lingering, flavourful hint of blueberried raspberries and cola gummies on the finish. Powerful and profound, but my praise (such as it is) ends there. Now-2017. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89 \$28.95 (#119024) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Château Lamothe-Cissac 2005, Haut-Médoc AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Fully integrated and balanced, the 2005 Lamothe-Cissac is neatly coming into its own. Dark red currant in colour, it now seems at its peak, offering refined aromas of earthy currants and licorice; switching to plums, forest floor, tobacco, and a hint of cedarwood and spice. Complex, with very good fruit, still-firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a refined hint of red currants, scorched earth, and cedarwood on the finish. Properly formatted, claret lovers will admire its typicity and elegance. According to one source: 70% Cabernet Sauvignon, 26% Merlot, 2% Cabernet Franc, and 2% Petit Verdot. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89 \$23.95 (#206755) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

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~ Wine education for us all – Viognier ~

Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012

## **Fattoria La Lecciaia 2004, Brunello di Montalcino DOCG, Tuscany, Italy (375 mL):**

In half-bottle format, the 2004 Fattoria La Lecciaia showcases impressive firmness and elegance. Dark garnet in colour, the wine is delicately toasted, offering lovely aromas of dried cedary cherries, red plums, undergrowth, balsam, scorched earth, sandalwood, and spice. Complex, with refined fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a refined, delightful hint of wild cedary cherries (very dry) on the finish. Maturing quicker than would be the case for a standard-sized bottle, this lively Brunello has plenty to recommend itself. Now-2013+-. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2010)

**89 \$24.95 (#180083) Vintages 18 September 2010 Release**

## **Little Beauty 2010 Limited Edition Pinot Noir, Marlborough, South Island, New Zealand:**

My only note from this winery, the 2010 Limited Edition Pinot Noir reflects the winery's namesake adequately. Medium ruby in colour, it offers attractive aromas of fragrant cherries, raspberries, berries, licorice, and spicebox. Reasonably complex, carrying very fine, elegant fruit, soft tannins, balanced acidity, and an especially pleasing hint of cherries and licorice on the finish. Confident, focused, and admirable. Screwcap closure. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89 \$27.95 (#290346) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

## **Pirramimma 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon, McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia:**

A shade off the mark from the first-rate '08, the 2009 Cabernet Sauvignon boasts considerable structure, balance, and flavour. Opaque ruby-red currant in colour, it is finely toasted, revealing engaging aromas of 'dusty' plums (slightly baked), dried mocha, forest floor, woodsmoke, vanilla, and spice. Complex, with concentrated forward fruit, firm tannins, mild acidity, and a lasting hint of 'dusty' mocha and plums on the finish. Abundant wine, though it might be on the verge of shutting down. Now-2017+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89 \$24.95 (#730374) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

## **Wirra Wirra 2009 Catapult Shiraz, McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia:**

From one of the most well-regarded wineries in McLaren Vale, the 2009 Catapult Shiraz is undeniably appealing. Opaque ruby in colour, it reveals lovely aromas of eucalyptus, plummy currants, blackberries, mocha, licorice, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting forward, uniquely flavourful fruit, firm yet supple tannins, mild acidity, and a lasting hint of eucalyptus and plummy currants on the finish. Fulsome and balanced. Also contains 3% Viognier. Screwcap closure. Now-2019. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**89 \$19.95 (#278564) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

## **D'Arenberg 2009 The Wild Pixie Shiraz/Roussanne, McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia:**

Not one to shy away from unusual blendings, Chester Osborn's 2009 Wild Pixie is a tasty, interesting wine. Opaque ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, revealing fragrant, sweet-scented aromas of baked currants and plums, licorice, spicebox, incense, and vanilla. Reasonably complex, with soft forward fruit, firm tannins, mild acidity, and a lingering hint of dark licorice and currants on the finish. Flavourful and tasty, without a trace of pretension. 94% Shiraz and 6% Roussanne. Screwcap closure. Now-2016+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, May 2011)

**88++ \$28.00 (#237487) Vintages Special Offer**

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~ Wine education for us all – Viognier ~

Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**Château Pérenne 2005, Premier Côtes de Blaye AOC, Bordeaux, France:** One of many wineries owned by Bernard Magrez (proprietor of Château Pape Clément), the 2005 Pérenne is concentrated and Parkerized. Dark-opaque ruby-red currant in colour, it features 'brooding' aromas of mocha (slightly earthy), currants, blackberries, black cherries, forest floor, and a hint of cedarwood and spice. Complex, with fairly generous fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lingering hint of currants and scorched earth traces on the finish. Focused, well-developed Blaye. 83% Merlot and 17% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**88++ \$18.95 (#283150) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

**Bodega La Milagrosa 2009 Escondido Tempranillo, Ribera del Duero DO, Spain:** Nicely priced (a rarity in this market), the 2009 Escondido is a tasty, Parkerized wine. Opaque ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, with appealingly saturated notes of sinewy blackberry compote, currants, blueberry crumble, vanilla, and spice. Fairly complex, with abundant, extracted fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lasting hint of blackberry compote and blueberry crumble on the finish. Very satisfying. Now-2018. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**88+ \$14.95 (#132597) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Mitolo 2007 Jester Shiraz, McLaren Vale, South Australia, Australia:** A growing favourite amongst wine lovers, the 2007 Jester Shiraz offers very good structure, balance, and length. Opaque ruby in colour, the wine is finely toasted, displaying fresh, crisp notes of mocha, black plummy cherries, currants, light eucalyptus, vanilla, and spice. On the palate: lovely smooth fruit showing, with supple tannins, mild acidity, and a lengthy hint of black cherried plums and eucalyptus on the finish. Impressive flavour profile and cleanness. Screwcap closure. Now-2014++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2009)

**88+ \$19.95 (#659607) Vintages Essentials**

**Château Beaumont 2007, Haut-Médoc AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Definitely the lightest Beaumont I've ever tasted, still superior to many châteaux. Dark ruby in colour, the '07 is lightly toasted, displaying lovely notes of dark red currants, blackberries, plums, light earth, and a hint of vanilla and spice. Palate: fine fruit and tannins showing, marked by balanced acidity, and a hint of plums on the finish. Refined, balanced, and eminently approachable. According to one source: 51% Merlot, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc, and 3% Petit Verdot. Now-2016. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2009)

**88 \$20.00 (#580548) Vintages Special Offer**

**Bodegas Barreda 2006 Torre de Barreda Amigos, Vino de la Tierra de Castilla (La Mancha), Spain:** One of countless new operations now up and running in La Mancha, the 2006 Torre de Barreda Amigos is well structured and very tasty. Dark ruby-red currant in colour, it is finely toasted, displaying compelling notes of blackberries, licorice, vanilla, and a hint of mocha and spice. On the palate: a little tight, with good fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of American toasted oak and plums on the finish. Shows good potential. 75% Tempranillo, 15% Syrah, and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon. Now-2013. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, April 2009)

**88 \$23.15 (#273341) Vintages Archives**

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~ Wine education for us all – Viognier ~

Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012

**CJ Pask 2008 Gimblett Road Cabernet/Merlot/Malbec, Hawke's Bay, North Island, New Zealand:** It's been several years since I've tasted from here, yet the style and reliability of Chris Pask's wines seem agreeably unaltered. Dark ruby in colour, the 2008 Gimblett Road displays lovely Médoc-themed nuances of earthy currants, plums, pain grille, mild cedarwood, and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a satisfying hint of currants and earth (nicely integrated) on the finish. Good refinement and balance. Screwcap closure. Now-2015. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**88 \$19.95 (#279869) Vintages 21 July 2012 Release**

**Col d'Orcia 2008 Spezieri, IGT Toscana, Tuscany, Italy:** Marketed as Col d'Orcia's everyday drinking wine, the 2008 Spezieri does its job nicely. Dark ruby in colour, the wine offers pleasant notes of fresh red plums and cherries (slightly herbaceous), undergrowth, cedarwood, and a hint of spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with fine tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of fresh red plums and mild herbs on the finish. Decent bottling. 40% Sangiovese, 20% Ciliegiolo, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 20% Merlot. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, November 2009)

**88 \$18.00 (Private Order) Diamond Estates**

**Poderi Colla 2010 Pian Balbo, Dolcetto d'Alba DOC, Piedmont, Italy:** With splendid freshness and balance, the 2010 Pian Balbo is of excellent value by our market standards. Dark ruby in colour, it displays pleasant, crisp notes of plums, herbs, and a hint of dried berries and spice. On the palate: good dry fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lovely hint of plums on the finish. Ideal Dolcetto. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**88 \$16.95 (#285494) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Quinta de Ventozelo 2008 Touriga Nacional, Douro DOC, Portugal:** Suitable successor to the '07, the 2008 Touriga Nacional is a very satisfying wine. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it is finely toasted, revealing splendid notes of blackberries, plums, licorice, mocha, light herbs, vanilla, and spice. Complex, boasting flavourful, well-structured fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a lovely hint of plums and subtle mocha (plus American oak traces) on the finish. Very tasty, appropriately structured, and balanced. Now-2019. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**88 \$18.95 (#657452) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**La Velona 2009, Rosso di Montalcino DOC, Tuscany, Italy:** Like Brunello di Montalcino, Rosso di Montalcino must be made from 100% Sangiovese Grosso. Dark red-garnet in colour, the 2009 La Velona reveals cedary/leathery notes of red plums, undergrowth, herbs, and spice. Slightly savoury, with good fruit, firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of red plums and cedarwood on the finish. Nice and dry, with decent grip and balance. Now-2015+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**87++ \$17.95 (#285429) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Pietro Rinaldi 2008 Madonna di Como, Dolcetto d'Alba DOC, Piedmont, Italy:** Cute, appealing Dolcetto, the 2008 Madonna di Como retains good freshness from only being aged in stainless steel vats for six months. Dark purple-ruby in colour, it reveals agreeable notes of black plums, blueberries, and a hint of white pepper and spice. On

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the palate: good fruit showing, with approachable tannins, balanced acidity, and a satisfying hint of fresh black plums on the finish. Good stuff, though overpriced in this market. Now-2011+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2010)

**87+ \$16.95 (#182261) Vintages 18 September 2010 Release**

**Evans & Tate 2004 X & Y Shiraz, Margaret River, Western Australia, Australia:** Straightforward and tasty, the 2004 X & Y Shiraz is not without charm. Dark red-garnet in colour, the wine offers intense notes of plummy cedar, dried meaty currants, earth, and spice. Palate: good fruit showing, with well-integrated tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of jammy plums and cedarwood on the finish. Almost fully evolved, this reasonably solid wine is ready to drink. Screwcap closure. Now-2010+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, September 2009)

**87 \$15.95 (#41194) Vintages 5 December 2009 Release**

**Château Tour d'Horable 2005, Côtes de Castillon AOC, Bordeaux, France:** Reasonably priced, the 2005 Tour d'Horable has good appeal. Dark ruby in colour, it reveals respectable notes of currants, red plums, light earth, plus a few berries and spice. On the palate: good fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of red currants on the finish. Decent stuff, one of many such wines nowadays hailing from Côtes de Castillon. 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Franc. Now-2012. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2010)

**87 \$14.95 (#174656) Vintages 18 September 2010 Release**

**Château d'Anglès 2007 La Clape Syrah/Grenache/Mourvèdre, Languedoc AOC, Midi, France:** Ideal as any everyday drinking wine, the 2007 Château d'Anglès, sourced from the promising outpost of La Clape, is a reasonably tasty and straightforward. Dark red currant in colour with a touch of garnet, it displays savoury red fruits, leather, and spice. On the palate: decent fruit showing, with firm tannins, balanced acidity, and a hint of savoury red plums on the finish. Limited, yet appreciable. 50% Syrah, 30% Grenache, and 20% Mourvèdre. Now-2013+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, July 2012)

**86 \$14.95 (#286484) Vintages 4 August 2012 Release**

**Jean-Luc Baldès 2007 Esprit de Flore Malbec, Cahors AOC, Southwest, France:** Shutting down when examined, the 2007 Esprit de Flore will need a vigorous decanting to wake it up. Dark-opaque ruby in colour, it boasts just a few notes of plums, red fruits, and a hint of earth and spice. Palate: tight fruit and tannins, with balanced acidity, and a hint of plums on the finish. Certainly basic, nonetheless solidly built and reasonably priced. Also contains 10% Merlot. Now-2012++. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2010)

**86 \$13.95 (#176735) Vintages 18 September 2010 Release**

**Séptima 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon, Mendoza, Argentina:** Basic, tasty Cabernet Sauvignon, the 2007 Séptima is a respectable wine considering the price. Opaque ruby-red currant in colour, it is moderately toasted, with notes of sweetened currants, plums, cherry pastels, and spice. Palate: decent forward fruit showing, with approachable tannins, milder acidity, and a hint of plummy currants on the finish. Now-2011+. (Julian Hitner, The Successful Collector, August 2010)

**86 \$13.95 (#167262) Vintages 18 September 2010 Release**