

# Wine Spectator Insider

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A Members-Only, Weekly Publication

**TWENTY YEARS AGO**, a *Wine Spectator Insider* like this week's couldn't have existed: It's a testament to the major quality strides made around the world, from Oregon to South Africa to the South of France. These 40 wines at 90-plus points are the most exciting discoveries to come through our tasting room recently, and among them are some of the most respected producers of their regions.

First, Trimbach and Domaines Schlumberger, of Alsace, deliver powerful expressions. Then, from Languedoc-Roussillon, Gérard Bertrand has released a rich Rivesaltes from the 1974 vintage. South African heavyweights such as Sadie Family and Ken Forrester carry their weight, and a set of Oregon Pinots rounds this out. Value hunters will be happy to find 16 wines here at \$40 or less. Don't miss the six Hot Wines on page 4.

## FRANCE Alsace

### DOMAINES SCHLUMBERGER

Gewürztraminer Alsace Grand Cru Kitterlé 2010  
**93 points | \$60 | 5 cases imported | White**

Offers lush flavors of melon, anise, Thai basil, honey and grapefruit sorbet, backed by racy acidity that provides fine balance overall, with a long, mineral-tinged finish. Drink now through 2025.—A.N.

### DOMAINES SCHLUMBERGER

Riesling Alsace Grand Cru Kessler 2010  
**93 points | \$30 | 15 cases imported | White**

Lean yet powerful, driven by piercing acidity that should help this go the distance. The flavors of fresh quince, crunchy apricot, honeysuckle, lanolin and ginger are subtle today but should become more expressive with time. Drink now through 2030.—A.N.

### ALBERT MANN

Pinot Gris Alsace Grand Cru Hengst 2011  
**92 points | \$39 | 30 cases imported | White**

The creamed apple and ripe cantaloupe fruit notes are lightly honeyed and floral in this lush white, balanced by finely tuned acidity and a streak of salinity, while accents of almond skin, pickled ginger and candied pink grapefruit zest add complexity and expand on the finish. Drink now through 2024.—A.N.

### TRIMBACH

Riesling Alsace Cuvée Frédéric Émile 2009  
**92 points | \$68 | 4,000 cases made | White**

A compact white that marries a firm backbone of acidity with focused flavors of apple and green pear, petrol and lanolin, honeysuckle and ground spice. Delivers a fresh, zesty finish. Drink now through 2029.—A.N.

## FRANCE Languedoc-Roussillon

### CHÂTEAU DE CAZENEUVE

Pic St.-Loup Les Calcaires 2010  
**92 points | \$22 | 500 cases imported | Red**

Very suave, with a beefy aroma and rich, elongated flavors of cherry and dried berry that pick up accents of tarragon and black olive. Quite minerally, presenting a refined finish that lingers with delicate cocoa powder notes. Drink now through 2017.—K.M.

### HECHT & BANNIER

Minervois 2011  
**91 points | \$24 | 575 cases imported | Red**

Suave and rich, with effusively fruity flavors of blackberry, dark plum, blueberry and spice. Features medium-grained tannins, with some graphite and mineral notes. Finishes with bittersweet chocolate accents. Drink now through 2018.—K.M.

## CHÂTEAU DES KARANTES

Languedoc La Clape 2010

**91 points | \$30 | 500 cases imported | Red**

The lively cherry, kirsch and red plum flavors are well-integrated in this spicy style, featuring some floral notes. Accents of forest floor show on the elegant finish, with chocolate and spice details. Drink now through 2018.—*K.M.*

## DOMAINE DES PRÉS LASSES

Faugères Castel Viel 2010

**91 points | \$34 | 100 cases imported | Red**

Offers a ripe, floral aroma, with luscious flavors of boysenberry, dark plum, cherry tart and paprika. Features bittersweet chocolate and cappuccino notes midpalate, with cream and Asian spice hints on the broad finish. Drink now through 2018.—*K.M.*

## GÉRARD BERTRAND

Syrah-Grenache Languedoc 2011

**90 points | \$19 | 3,000 cases imported | Red**

Offers a ripe aroma, with rich, concentrated dark plum, kirsch and dried blueberry flavors, featuring a succulent spiciness. Touches of smoke show on the finish, alongside notes of chocolate. Drink now through 2017.—*K.M.*

# OREGON

## CHAPTER 24

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley 2012

**93 points | \$90 | 824 cases made | Red**

Well-buffed and ripe, dancing deftly over refined tannins to deliver currant and blackberry fruit in spades, glinting with hot stone and meaty notes as the finish lingers expressively. Drink now through 2022.—*H.S.*

## CHAPTER 24

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Fire + Flood The Flood 2012

**92 points | \$60 | 1,358 cases made | Red**

Crisp and detailed, shining a spotlight on the blackberry, currant, smoke and nutmeg flavors in turn as they spin effortlessly through a long and expressive finish. Drink now through 2020.—*H.S.*

## CHAPTER 24

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Fire + Flood The Fire 2012

**91 points | \$60 | 1,379 cases made | Red**

Fresh and vibrant, with a layer of refined tannins underlining the currant and black cherry fruit, turning steely on the finish. Best from 2015 through 2020.—*H.S.*

## PURPLE HANDS

Pinot Noir Oregon Le Nouveau Monde 2012

**91 points | \$70 | 150 cases made | Red**

Vibrant, youthful and deftly balanced, with juicy dark berry, floral and savory herb flavors, hinting at mint as the medium-weight finish lingers expressively. Drink now through 2020.—*H.S.*

## WALT

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Shea Vineyard 2011

**91 points | \$60 | 300 cases made | Red**

Highly perfumed, with strong notes of jasmine and lavender riding over the dark berry flavors, finishing with polish and intensity on a light frame. Drink now through 2018.—*H.S.*

## RAPTOR RIDGE

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Reserve 2011

**90 points | \$40 | 935 cases made | Red**

Light and tangy, polished in texture, offering guava nuances to the red berry and tamarind flavors, lingering on the lively finish. Best from 2015 through 2018.—*H.S.*

## WALNUT CITY WINEWORKS

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Reserve 2011

**90 points | \$30 | 350 cases made | Red**

Tight, vibrant and refreshing, with citrus-accented red berry and toasted coconut flavors, featuring gentle aromatics that carry through from start to finish. Best from 2015 through 2018.—*H.S.*

# SOUTH AFRICA

## 4G WINES

A Tribute to C.P. Western Cape 2011

**93 points | \$350 | 140 cases imported | Red**

A ripe, polished, broad style, with a large core of plum sauce, raspberry ganache and blackberry paste flavors, allied to a graphite edge that drives through the finish. Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Petit Verdot. Best from 2015 through 2022.—*J.M.*

## SADIE FAMILY

Kokerboom Olifants River 2012

**93 points | \$206 | 30 cases imported | White**

Gorgeous, with racy, intense straw, white peach, nectarine and clementine notes, lined with a salted almond edge that gives the finish spine and definition. A lingering floral hint adds length and lift. Sémillon. Drink now through 2018.—*J.M.*

## SADIE FAMILY

Palladius Swartland 2011

**93 points | \$105 | 75 cases imported | White**

Engaging, with green plum and green almond notes leading the way, followed quickly by enticing pear, meringue and kaffir lime flavors. Chenin Blanc, Grenache Blanc, Clairette Blanc, Viognier, Chardonnay, Roussanne, Sémillon and Palomino. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

## VILAFONTÉ

Series C Paarl 2011

**93 points | \$84 | 45 cases imported | Red**

Very dense, with a loamy hint backing the core of licorice snap, black currant paste and warm fig fruit. This shows ample grip but remains polished and integrated. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec and Cabernet Franc. Best from 2015 through 2019.—*J.M.*

## BARTINNEY

Chardonnay Stellenbosch 2012

**92 points | \$25 | 300 cases imported | White**

A deliciously ripe, juicy core of yellow apple, pear, dried pineapple and green almond flavors stretches out here, with racy acidity lining the deftly toasted finish. Shows lovely fruit, with well-buried minerality. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

## KEN FORRESTER

The Gypsy Western Cape 2010

**92 points | \$65 | 50 cases imported | Red**

Alluring, with a lightly mulled edge to the core of red currant, plum and raspberry fruit, while dark tea, cocoa and smoldering tobacco notes hang through the finish. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

## SADIE FAMILY

Pofadder Swartland 2012

**92 points | \$58 | 90 cases imported | Red**

A stylish, perfumy wine, with alluring singed sandalwood, rooibos tea, red currant, white pepper, floral and blood orange notes all woven together and carrying through a long, silky finish. Cinsault. Drink now through 2017.—*J.M.*

## SADIE FAMILY

Skerpioen Swartland 2012

**92 points | \$53 | 40 cases imported | White**

A pure, chiseled style, with white peach, jicama, honeysuckle and salted almond notes, giving way to subtle brioche and shortbread hints through the long, finely tuned finish. Palomino and Chenin Blanc. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

## SADIE FAMILY

Skurfberg Olifants River 2012

**92 points | \$53 | 75 cases imported | White**

Shortbread, chamomile and macadamia nut notes lead the way here, with alluring lemon curd, heather and white peach flavors filling in behind them. Offers a long, stylish finish. Chenin Blanc. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

## SADIE FAMILY

Soldaat Piekenierskloof 2012

**92 points | \$63 | 90 cases imported | Red**

Distinctive, with bright pine and white pepper notes out front, followed by silk-textured cherry and Damson plum fruit. Picks up steam through the finish, with rooibos tea and blood orange hints adding length and cut. Grenache. Drink now through 2018.—*J.M.*

## SADIE FAMILY

'T Voetpad Swartland 2012

**92 points | \$70 | 40 cases imported | White**

A bright, pure style, with lovely Key lime, Meyer lemon, meringue, white peach, dried chamomile flower and green almond notes all laced together. Sémillon, Chenin Blanc, Palomino and Muscat d'Alexandrie. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

## VILAFONTÉ

Series M Paarl 2011

**92 points | \$56 | 110 cases imported | Red**

Ripe and focused, with a solid core of dark currant, crushed blackberry and steeped plum fruit, studded with anise, charcoal and dark tobacco notes. Malbec, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2017.—*J.M.*

## VINS D'ORRANCE

Syrah Western Cape Cuvée Ameena 2010

**92 points | \$40 | 100 cases imported | Red**

Perfumy incense and singed balsa wood notes meld into a core of crushed plum, cherry preserves and melted red licorice. Rich and broad. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

## DE WETSHOF

Chardonnay Robertson Bateleur 2011

**91 points | \$53 | 1,200 cases imported | White**

Lovely, with a mature, creamy edge to the core of green melon, yellow apple and heather flavors. Judicious toast is integrated through the finish, which has a languid feel overall. Sneaky acidity to keeps this balanced and defined. Drink now through 2015.—*J.M.*

## SADIE FAMILY

Treinspoor Swartland 2012

**91 points | \$53 | 50 cases imported | Red**

A perfumed sandalwood note weaves out from the core of subtle plum, cherry and tobacco leaf flavors. White pepper and iron accents line the finish, leaving the sandalwood detail lingering. Tinta Barocca. Drink now through 2017.—*J.M.*

## VINS D'ORRANCE

Chenin Blanc Western Cape Kama 2012

**91 points | \$33 | 200 cases imported | White**

A creamy, deftly toasted style, with macadamia nut, brioche and salted butter aromas and flavors leading the way, followed by alluring white peach and chamomile hints on the finish. Has weight, length and cut. Drink now through 2015.—*J.M.*

## DE WETSHOF

Chardonnay Robertson Bon Vallon 2013

**90 points | \$20 | 1,000 cases imported | White**

Bright and juicy, with a floral edge alongside the core of green almond, green fig and pear flavors. Bright, finely beaded acidity stitches up the finish. Drink now through 2015.—*J.M.*

## EIKENDAL

Cabernet Sauvignon Stellenbosch 2011

**90 points | \$23 | 59 cases imported | Red**

A polished, modern style, with a core of pure cassis augmented by notes of violet, red licorice and singed vanilla, backed by a long, fine-grained finish that lets an alluring ganache element linger. Drink now through 2017.—*J.M.*

# HOT WINES

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

## EMINENT DOMAINE

Pinot Noir Ribbon Ridge 2012

**94 points | \$40 | 405 cases made | Red**

Ripe, round and expressive, not weighty but intense and complex, layering dark berry and plum fruit with wax and mineral nuances. Finishes with a hint of root beer, showing power and finesse. Drink now through 2022. *From Oregon.—H.S.*

## SADIE FAMILY

Columella Swartland 2011

**94 points | \$130 | 180 cases imported | Red**

Rich, ripe and remarkably stylish, this lets layers of plum sauce, steeped blackberry and black currant *pâte de fruit* unfurl, while notes of ganache, espresso and graphite provide spine and direction on the finish. Presents a lovely anise echo. Drink now through 2020. *From South Africa.—J.M.*

## TRIMBACH

Riesling Alsace Clos Ste.-Hune 2009

**94 points | \$253 | 750 cases made | White**

Fresh and aromatic, this complex and layered white offers a creamy palate of yellow plum, almond skin, lemon preserves, beeswax and pine forest, underscored by a minerally streak of salinity and smoke. The lovely, lacy finish resonates on the palate. Drink now through 2029. *From France.—A.N.*

## A.A. BADENHORST FAMILY

Swartland 2010

**93 points | \$45 | 328 cases imported | Red**

Offers an aromatic mix of sage, white pepper and olive, followed by bitter cherry, damson plum and red currant paste flavors. A chalky thread stitches the finish, marrying the savory and fruit elements. Has the depth to cellar. Shiraz, Grenache, Cinsault and Tinta Barocca. Best from 2015 through 2018. *From South Africa.—J.M.*

## GÉRARD BERTRAND

Rivesaltes Ambré Legend Vintage 1974

**93 points | \$190 | 300 cases imported | Dessert**

Fresh, filled with toffee, butterscotch and honeyed and glazed apricot flavors, offset by bright, citrus-infused acidity. The creamy finish has an airy texture, with plenty of lift. Drink now. *From France.—K.M.*

## PURPLE HANDS

Pinot Noir Dundee Hills Stoller Vineyard 2012

**93 points | \$35 | 700 cases made | Red**

Vibrant, focused and chewy with tannins, this bursts with blackberry, currant, floral and clove flavors that just don't quit as the finish persists gracefully. Drink now through 2022. *From Oregon.—H.S.*

## WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

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

*Wine Spectator's* tasting staff includes 17 tasters and tasting coordinators in two offices. They work together to review nearly 20,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our nine senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

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

**James Laube** Senior editor, Napa

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

**Harvey Steiman** Editor at large, San Francisco

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: Australia, Oregon, Washington

**Kim Marcus** Managing editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Argentina, Austria, Chile, Germany, Portugal

**Thomas Matthews** Executive editor, New York

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

**Bruce Sanderson** Tasting director, New York

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

**James Molesworth** Senior editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: Bordeaux, Loire Valley, Rhône Valley, South Africa

**MaryAnn Worobiec** Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: California, New Zealand

**Alison Napjus** Senior editor, New York

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

**Tim Fish** Senior editor, Napa

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2001. Tasting beat: California

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

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