

# Wine Spectator Insider

Marvin R. Shanken *Editor and Publisher*

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THIS issue of *Wine Spectator's* weekly *Insider* newsletter features two classic-rated wines among more than three dozen outstanding selections from Australia, California and France. From California, James Laube scores a new Russian River Valley Syrah 95 points, and from France's Rhône Valley, James Molesworth reviews a white Hermitage from one of the region's best-known domaines that merits 97 points; you'll find both of them among the Hot Wines, on page 4.

Also in this issue you'll find Harvey Steiman's latest reviews of Barossa Valley Shiraz and other Aussie reds as well as Bruce Sanderson's newest notes on 2006 red Burgundy.

## Australia

### THE COLONIAL ESTATE

John Speke Barossa Valley 2006

**92 points | \$45 | 300 cases imported | Red**

Rich and velvety, with layers of spice and cracked pepper winding through the dark berry and currant flavors, lingering on the open-textured finish. Grenache, Shiraz and Mourvèdre. Best from 2011 through 2016.—*H.S.*

### THE COLONIAL ESTATE

Shiraz Barossa Valley Richard Lander 2006

**92 points | \$45 | 300 cases imported | Red**

Ripe, meaty and generous with its plum and fresh currant fruit, with spicy, earthy overtones as the finish expands and becomes even more seductive, lingering against polished tannins. Drink now through 2016.—*H.S.*

### TORZI MATTHEWS

Shiraz Eden Valley Schist Rock 2007

**92 points | \$20 | 600 cases imported | Red**

Broad but jazzy, this is beautifully focused to show its deep, mahogany-accented plum, cherry and clove flavors, turning meaty and wild on the long, vivid finish. Drink now through 2017.—*H.S.*

### THE COLONIAL ESTATE

Émigré Barossa 2006

**91 points | \$60 | 1,200 cases imported | Red**

Ripe and rich, with a distinctive black olive cast to the dark berry and cherry flavors, lingering against fine tannins on the brooding finish. Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvèdre, Cabernet Sauvignon, Carignane and Muscadelle. Best from 2010 through 2014.—*H.S.*

### THE COLONIAL ESTATE

Shiraz Barossa Valley Mungo Park 2006

**91 points | \$55 | 300 cases imported | Red**

Smooth and round, with a roasted red pepper edge to the dark berry and licorice flavors, persisting impulsively on the long, meaty finish. A tart balance makes this feel lively and should carry it well in the cellar. Drink now through 2016.—*H.S.*

### THE COLONIAL ESTATE

Grenache Barossa Valley Alexander Laing 2006

**90 points | \$35 | 300 cases imported | Red**

Dark, ripe and spicy, with a meaty character to the black cherry and tar flavors, lingering on the firm-textured finish. Best from 2010 through 2014.—*H.S.*

### THE COLONIAL ESTATE

Grenache Barossa Valley Eclairer 2006

**90 points | \$22 | 1,800 cases imported | Red**

Smooth and spicy, with layers of pepper and star anise around a silky core of blackberry and currant flavors, lingering on the fine-grained finish. Drink now through 2013.—*H.S.*

### THE COLONIAL ESTATE

Shiraz Barossa Valley Explorateur 2006

**90 points | \$22 | 5,100 cases imported | Red**

Lush in texture, but subtle in flavor, with black olive and meat notes adding interest to the dark berry and licorice flavors, lingering with finesse on the silky finish. Drink now through 2016.—*H.S.*

# California

## GHOST BLOCK

Cabernet Sauvignon Yountville 2005

**93 points | \$100 | 100 cases made | Red**

Tightly wound, chunky, firm and spicy, with concentrated and well-distributed dried currant, anise, sage and wild berry notes. This is well-focused and intense without being heavy. Built to age. Best from 2010 through 2017.—*J.L.*

## NOVY

Syrah Santa Lucia Highlands 2006

**92 points | \$27 | 517 cases made | Red**

Intensely peppery—with cracked black and jalapeño evident—this turns rich, dense and loamy in a pleasing way, ending with a chewy, tannic finish. Best from 2010 through 2016.—*J.L.*

## SHAFFER

Relentless Napa Valley 2005

**92 points | \$70 | 3,500 cases made | Red**

Brimming with spicy, zesty wild berry, pepper, mineral and fresh earth flavors presented in a tight, focused, concentrated manner. Finishes with firm tannins and good length. Syrah and Petite Sirah. Drink now through 2012.—*J.L.*

## MORLET

Syrah Bennett Valley Bouquet Garni 2006

**91 points | \$85 | NA cases made | Red**

There's lots of spice, red berry and black cherry fruit in this elegant, stylish offering, which ends with a nice mix of tar and earth. Dense and concentrated. Drink now through 2011.—*J.L.*

## WAYPOINT

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Weiss Vineyard 2005

**91 points | \$50 | 474 cases made | Red**

Firm and elegant, with spicy currant, light cedary oak, anise and black cherry flavors that are well-focused, with a long, complex finish. Best from 2009 through 2015.—*J.L.*

## DUTTON ESTATE

Syrah Russian River Valley Dutton Ranch My Father's Vineyard 2006

**90 points | \$42 | 129 cases made | Red**

Sweet berry and minty bay leaf scents are nicely balanced, with the fruit fresh and sweet and the herb scents clean and focused. Supple, yet rich and deep. Best from 2009 through 2016.—*J.L.*

## STEPHAN

L'Aventure Côte à Côte Estate Paso Robles 2006

**90 points | \$85 | 800 cases made | Red**

Big, ripe and intense. Firm and muscular, with complex cedar, blackberry and wild berry fruit that's well-proportioned, ending with good length and a dash of heat. Mourvèdre, Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2014.—*J.L.*

# France Burgundy

## THIBAUT LIGER-BELAIR

Nuits-St.-Georges Les St.-Georges 2006

**93 points | \$112 | 240 cases imported | Red**

An attractive mix of sweet fruit, oak spice and dense, ripe tannins set the stage for blackberry, bilberry, vanilla and fruitcake flavors. The tannins are firm, but this beautifully balanced and very long and spicy. Best from 2010 through 2022.—*B.S.*

## MICHELE & PATRICE RION

Nuits-St.-Georges Clos St.-Marc 2006

**93 points | \$119 | 225 cases made | Red**

Smoky oak lends an immediate appeal, then the black cherry, plum and mineral flavors show their colors. There's an impression of sweet fruit overall, yet this is also ripe and firm. Chewy tannins on the finish require cellaring. Best from 2011 through 2022.—*B.S.*

## JEAN CHAUVENET

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Boussselots 2006

**92 points | \$90 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Well-oaked and concentrated, this assertive red has a core of raspberry, cherry, iron and earth flavors. Vibrant acidity and stiff tannins shore it up, and it seems impenetrable now. But the fruit peeks through on the finish. Best from 2011 through 2020.—*B.S.*

## DOMAINE CHEVILLON-CHEZEAUX

Nuits-St.-Georges Les St.-Georges 2006

**92 points | \$75 | 35 cases imported | Red**

Gorgeous violet, blackberry, raspberry and mineral aromas and flavors pulse through this rich, firm, elegant red. Well-proportioned and polished, this is delicious now, but will it age? Give this the benefit of the doubt, but enjoy for its youthful fruit. Drink now through 2018.—*B.S.*

## J. FAIVELEY

Nuits-St.-Georges Les St.-Georges 2006

**92 points | \$130 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Warm spice and mulled cherry flavors quickly concede to stiff tannins. This has sweetness midpalate, along with intensity. Seems closed down now. Hints of licorice and mineral define the finish. Give this a few years. Best from 2010 through 2018.—*B.S.*

## JEAN CHAUVENET

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Vaucrains 2006

**91 points | \$110 | 10 cases imported | Red**

Well-muscled and compact, this displays a core of concentrated blackberry and black cherry notes, accented by earth and mineral. A solid phalanx of tannins closes the deal. Needs time. Best from 2011 through 2020.—*B.S.*

## DOMAINE CHEVILLON-CHEZEAUX

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Bouscelots 2006

**91 points | \$65 | 35 cases imported | Red**

A feral character overlays the pure cherry, red currant and mineral notes in this slim, intense red. Persistent and firmly structured, with lingering fruit and spice accents on the aftertaste. Just needs a few years to come together. Best from 2011 through 2020.—*B.S.*

## MICHELE & PATRICE RION

Nuits-St.-Georges Clos des Argillières 2006

**91 points | \$119 | 350 cases made | Red**

Endowed with oak, this evokes sweet spice, along with plum and blackberry flavors. A bit flashy, with good concentration and a tannic finish. Best from 2010 through 2017.—*B.S.*

## BERTAGNA

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Murgers 2006

**90 points | \$110 | 40 cases imported | Red**

Floral and spice notes add complexity to the cherry, raspberry and mineral flavors, while the bright structure keeps them focused. Slightly chewy, but a nice long finish wraps it up. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*B.S.*

## JEAN CHAUVENET

Nuits-St.-Georges Rue de Chaux 2006

**90 points | \$90 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Spice aromas and flavors lead off in this fleshy red, with an undercurrent of black cherry and mineral. It's all supported by a layer of firm tannins, ending with an aftertaste of sweet fruit. Best from 2011 through 2020.—*B.S.*

## DOMAINE CHEVILLON-CHEZEAUX

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Porets 2006

**90 points | \$67 | 30 cases imported | Red**

Pure cherry, berry and mineral aromas and flavors permeate this lithe red. Though elegant in style, it's bolstered by lively acidity and firm tannins. Requires time to integrate the fruit and tannins. Best from 2011 through 2019.—*B.S.*

## DOMAINE CHEVILLON-CHEZEAUX

Nuits-St.-Georges Les St.-Julien 2006

**90 points | \$46 | 40 cases imported | Red**

Very distinctive for its violet, black currant and raspberry aromas and flavors. There's good structure underneath, in the form of lively acidity and fine-grained tannins. Fine length. Best from 2010 through 2016.—*B.S.*

## HENRI GOUGES

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Prulliers 2006

**90 points | \$94 | 100 cases imported | Red**

A burly style, with smoke and earth notes, black cherry and plum flavors. The tannins are stiff and leave an astringent impression on the finish, but there's substance underneath. Best from 2010 through 2018.—*B.S.*

# France

## Rhône

### E. GUIGAL

Hermitage White 2005

**93 points | \$60 | NA cases made | White**

Young but packed, with sweetened butter, creamed peach, toast-ed brioche, almond and heather notes that are densely layered on the long finish. Will need some time to stretch out fully. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*J.M.*

### M. SORREL

Hermitage White Les Rocoules 2006

**92 points | \$123 | 30 cases imported | White**

Honeyed, with tropical mango and papaya notes up front laced with ginger and sweetened butter. Shows a slightly firm, blanched almond note on the waxy finish, along with plenty of buried minerality. Best from 2010 through 2015.—*J.M.*

### GEORGES VERNAY

Condrieu Les Terrasses de l'Empire 2007

**92 points | \$85 | 65 cases imported | White**

Really bright and superracy, with a tightly coiled core of orange blossom, honeysuckle, green fig, yellow apple and chamomile notes waiting to gush forth. Taut acidity holds this back for now, so cellar to let it round into form. Best from 2009 through 2012.—*J.M.*

### E. GUIGAL

Condrieu 2007

**91 points | \$55 | 20,000 cases made | White**

Very juicy and still a touch compact, with green almond, fig and anise notes waiting to come out from behind the fennel and mineral. Long finish. Cellar short term to let this open up. Best from 2009 through 2011.—*J.M.*

### M. SORREL

Hermitage White 2006

**91 points | \$78 | 15 cases imported | White**

Quite rich, with heather honey, paraffin, brioche, blanched almond and mango notes that pump through the full-bodied finish, where a hint of dried apricot peeks in. A showy version of the traditional style. Drink now through 2012.—*J.M.*

### FRANÇOIS VILLARD

St.-Joseph White Fruit d'Avillera 2006

**90 points | \$37 | 40 cases imported | White**

Very ripe, with a smoky edge and tropical guava, melon and mango fruit flavors backed by a floral and ginger-tinged finish. A showy style, but stays bright and pure. Drink now through 2010.—*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, low-production wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

## E. GUIGAL

Ermitage White Ex Voto 2005

**97 points | \$200 | 500 cases made | White**

This shows stunning purity and range, with blanched almond, chamomile, green fig, persimmon and apricot notes all weaving around a core of heather honey and brioche. The long finish resonates with minerality. Best from 2010 through 2025. *From France.—J.M.*

## DUTTON ESTATE

Syrah Russian River Valley Dutton Ranch Cherry Ridge Vineyard 2005

**95 points | \$34 | 223 cases made | Red**

Deliciously rich and layered, this is intense and vibrant, with dense, concentrated blackberry and wild berry, anise, fresh earth, cedar and pleasing mineral notes. The finish sails on and on. Drink now through 2014. *From California.—J.L.*

## E. GUIGAL

Condrieu La Doriane 2007

**94 points | \$115 | 3,000 cases made | White**

Really dense, with a massive core of white peach, fig, almond and Cavaillon melon notes carried by a remarkably creamy-textured palate. Long and pure through the finish, with mineral and floral notes waiting in reserve. Guigal is really coming on strong with their Viognier cuvées. Best from 2009 through 2014. *From France.—J.M.*

## TORZI MATTHEWS

Shiraz Eden Valley Frost Dodger 2006

**93 points | \$50 | 240 cases imported | Red**

Ripe and juicy, with dark plum and blackberry flavors that turn almost syrupy against fine tannins and a swipe of black pepper that keeps the finish honest. Expressive and generous, this could develop even more with cellaring. Drink now through 2014. *From Australia.—H.S.*

## WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

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

*Wine Spectator's* tasting staff includes 17 people in four offices. They work together to review more than 15,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our seven senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

We always taste wine blind in our offices in San Francisco, Napa, New York and Tuscany, and in the vineyard regions of Europe. 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; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed. We score wines using the 100-point scale, explained below.

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: California

**Kim Marcus** Managing editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Austria, Greece, Portugal, southern France

**Thomas Matthews** Executive editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: New York, Spain

**James Molesworth** Senior editor, New York

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

**Bruce Sanderson** Tasting director, New York

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

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

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

**James Suckling** European bureau chief, Italy

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1981. Tasting beat: Bordeaux, Italy, Port

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**Jo Cooke** (Veneto),

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#### 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