

Wine Spectator Insider

Marvin R. Shanken *Editor and Publisher*

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SIGNATURE REDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD—NAPA CABERNET, Oregon Pinot Noir, Bordeaux Merlot blends and South African Shiraz—lace up this week's *Wine Spectator Insider*. Leading the pack is a classic-rated look at what the 2009 vintage may hold for Napa Cabs, the 2009 Carter Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard.

Outstanding Pomerols and St.-Emilions from Bordeaux's hot 2009 vintage, most of these at an accessible \$40 or less, should please fans of the Right Bank. A few standouts include Quinault L'Enclos, Beau-Séjour Bécot, La Grave à Pomerol and La Tour Figeac. For the Pinot-minded, Oregon's storied Domaine Serene has a few offerings here, including the Evenstad Reserve and Grace Vineyard. A diverse set of six Hot Wines can be found on page 4.

CALIFORNIA

CELANI FAMILY

Tenacious Napa Valley 2009

93 points | \$58 | 1,800 cases made | Red

Densely structured yet beautifully polished, showing aromas of currant and espresso, with complex flavors of plum, cinnamon and cedar that finish with firm but ripe tannins. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Malbec. Best from 2014 through 2018.—*T.F.*

JC CELLARS

Syrah Rockpile Rockpile Vineyard Buffalo Hill 2009

93 points | \$85 | 100 cases made | Red

Big yet balanced, with dense, intense dried dark berry, cedar, mineral and graphite notes. Full-blown and tannic, yet the flavors push through and gain depth and nuance. Best from 2013 through 2023.—*J.L.*

PARATUS

Cabernet Sauvignon Mount Veeder 2008

93 points | \$70 | 150 cases made | Red

Impressive for its mix of dense, concentrated fruit and structure, offering floral aromas, with dried berry, mineral, black cherry and plum fruit that firms up nicely on the finish, pushing past the ripe, fine-grained tannins. Drink now through 2023.—*J.L.*

FRANCE

Bordeaux

CHÂTEAU BEAU-SÉJOUR BÉCOT

St.-Emilion 2009

92 points | \$70 | 4,600 cases made | Red

Dark but racy, with chocolate-covered raspberry and blackberry fruit carried by graphite and toasty cinnamon, black tea and anise flavors. Firms up on the finish, with a lovely note of singed apple wood that should meld nicely after cellaring. Best from 2014 through 2024.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU BELLEFONT-BELCIER

St.-Emilion 2009

92 points | \$39 | 3,750 cases made | Red

This is distinctive, with lots of showy pain d'épices and blackberry reduction offset by roasted apple wood notes and a strong graphite spine. Shows plenty of flesh through the finish, featuring extra linzer torte and boysenberry notes that course along, with nice buried grip. Best from 2014 through 2025.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LA CROIX DU CASSE

Pomerol 2009

92 points | \$47 | NA cases made | Red

This broad-shouldered red is thick and dense, with mouthfilling tannins supporting rich flavors of chocolate, coffee, plum, raisin and earth. Shows impressive girth. Best from 2014 through 2022.—*T.M.*

CHÂTEAU DASSAULT

St.-Emilion 2009

92 points | \$40 | 4,165 cases made | Red

This has depth and plenty of fruit in reserve, offering dark currant confiture, linzer torte and blackberry sauce notes still wound tightly at the core, with anise and toasty spice filling in on the finish. Very solid, just needs some cellaring to stretch out. Best from 2014 through 2022.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LA GRAVE À POMEROL

Pomerol 2009

92 points | \$40 | NA cases made | Red

A well-structured version, with a spine of charcoal and graphite supporting the dark, fleshy blackberry, fig paste and mulled black currant fruit. Offers a racy edge, with flickers of anise and incense on the finish. Shows lovely mouthfeel as this expands in the glass. Best from 2013 through 2025.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LAFLEUR-GAZIN

Pomerol 2009

92 points | \$50 | 2,500 cases made | Red

Nicely packed and well-delineated, this shows a lovely beam of linzer torte and cassis running through the middle, with mouthwatering spice and mesquite filling in on the side. Rock-solid on the finish. Best from 2013 through 2025.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU SANSONNET

St.-Emilion 2009

92 points | \$30 | NA cases made | Red

This is a step up, with very plush layers of raspberry and blackberry confiture and plum sauce, liberally framed by a strong graphite note. Lots of black tea and toasty spice are inlaid on the finish, which sports some serious grip for the cellar. Best from 2014 through 2025.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LA TOUR FIGEAC

St.-Emilion 2009

92 points | \$35 | NA cases made | Red

A dense, fleshy style, with mouthfilling raspberry and boysenberry pâté de fruit notes, layered with apple wood, espresso and loam. There's plenty of weight on the finish, with a slightly chunky feel and a lovely echo of dark fruit and tobacco. Best from 2014 through 2024.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU D'AIGUILHE

Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2009

91 points | \$28 | 9,310 cases made | Red

Alluring aromas and flavors of toast, mineral and roasted plum are expressive and energetic in this rich, modern red. The texture is broad yet polished, with well-integrated tannins and fresh acidity. Drink now through 2019.—*T.M.*

L'ARCHANGE

St.-Emilion 2009

91 points | \$30 | 25 cases imported | Red

Very enticing, with lush plum sauce, anise and boysenberry preserve notes that glide along, framed by toasted spice and carried by creamy structure. Very suave finish. Drink now through 2018.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU BOURGNEUF

Pomerol 2009

91 points | \$45 | NA cases made | Red

This is all rounded, enticing flesh, with succulent boysenberry, cherry preserves, blackberry and fig notes melded together and supported by subtle spice and anise shadings through the finish. Ready to go, but with the stuffing to linger for a while in the cellar. Drink now through 2021.—*J.M.*

CLOS DES JACOBINS

St.-Emilion 2009

91 points | \$45 | 3,083 cases made | Red

A flashy, polished style, with cassis, blackberry sauce and roasted fig notes all woven together and framed by toasty spice and alluring cocoa notes. Long and rich through the finish, with some ambitious toast still to soak up, but the density is there. Best from 2014 through 2026.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU DALEM

Fronsac 2009

91 points | \$27 | 3,500 cases made | Red

This has a dark, winy core of crushed plum, pastis and steeped black currant fruit, but it's framed by suave apple wood and tobacco notes and moves gracefully through the mineral-tinged finish. Best from 2013 through 2022.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU JEAN FAURE

St.-Emilion 2009

91 points | \$60 | 4,167 cases made | Red

A high-toned style, with red currant, pomegranate and raspberry aromas and flavors, supported by lively acidity that brings a racy blood orange note. The finish is pure and lengthy. Best from 2013 through 2023.—*J.M.*

OREGON

ELK COVE

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Old School 2009

92 points | \$60 | 200 cases made | Red

Supple, generous, complex and distinctive, offering cherry, black tea, tobacco and smoke notes in expressive balance. Finishes with refinement and impressive length. Best from 2013 through 2019.—*H.S.*

CARLTON HILL

Pinot Noir Yamhill-Carlton District 2008
91 points | \$40 | 440 cases made | Red

Supple, generous and ripe, melding its blueberry and dark currant flavors with hints of clove and wet earth. Finishes gracefully. Drink now through 2017.—*H.S.*

DOMAINE SERENE

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Jerusalem Hill Vineyard 2009
91 points | \$85 | 500 cases made | Red

Supple, with a tinge of tannins around generous cherry, orange peel and black tea flavors, finishing with refinement. Drink now through 2017.—*H.S.*

LEMELSON

Chardonnay Willamette Valley Reserve 2009
91 points | \$25 | 203 cases made | White

Transparency of flavor makes this medium-weight, refreshingly balanced Chardonnay special, with pear, apple and floral notes rendered in detail as the finish lingers. Drink now through 2015.—*H.S.*

LEMELSON

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Meyer Vineyard 2009
90 points | \$42 | 161 cases made | Red

Light, lithe, supple and juicy, with raspberry and cola flavors, persisting nicely on the open-textured finish. Drink now through 2017.—*H.S.*

SOUTH AFRICA

DE TRAFFORD

Shiraz Stellenbosch Blueprint 2008
91 points | \$35 | 224 cases imported | Red

Alluring, with black tea, toasty wood spice and incense notes leading the way for a core of melted licorice, blackberry and briar. A mouthwatering tobacco note hangs on the finish. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

ERNIE ELS

Proprietor's Blend Stellenbosch 2009
91 points | \$38 | 2,300 cases made | Red

A very winery, racy style, with taut tannins framing lively red and black currant fruit, fig paste and cherry sauce notes. Flashes of roasted cedar and herb fill in on the lengthy finish. Drink now through 2015.—*J.M.*

FAIRVIEW

Cyril Back Coastal Region 2007
91 points | \$65 | 200 cases made | Red

A ripe, lush-textured style, with mulled fig, boysenberry preserves and crushed plum fruit liberally laced with toasty vanilla bean, black tea and anise notes. For fans of the flashy style. Syrah. Drink now through 2015.—*J.M.*

FAIRVIEW

Shiraz Paarl Eenzaamheid 2009
91 points | \$37 | 300 cases made | Red

Lush and exotic, with layers of crushed plum, boysenberry preserves and roasted fig fruit all rolling together, backed by lively anise and pain d'épices notes. Rock-solid, with good acidity driving underneath. Drink now through 2016.—*J.M.*

FAIRVIEW

Shiraz Paarl The Beacon 2006
91 points | \$37 | 200 cases made | Red

Big, broad and mouthfilling, with lots of roasted cedar and mesquite notes framing the core of dark currant, roasted plum and steeped blackberry fruit. The long finish sports roasted spice and bittersweet ganache notes. Wins on guts rather than grace, but with lots of range and depth for sure. Drink now through 2014.—*J.M.*

FAIRVIEW

Shiraz Swartland Jakkals Fontein 2007
91 points | \$37 | 500 cases made | Red

Mature, with a graceful frame of incense to the mulled blackberry, steeped cherry and melted licorice notes. Long and smoldering on the finish, with ample flesh still despite the extra bottle age. Drink now through 2015.—*J.M.*

GUARDIAN PEAK

SMG Stellenbosch-Piekenierskloof 2009
91 points | \$25 | 1,500 cases made | Red

This is dense and still a bit compact, with red currant, blackberry and fig fruit flavors at the core, but the acidity is well-embedded and there's great intensity on the anise- and fruitcake-filled finish. Cellar to let this stretch out fully. Syrah, Mourvèdre and Grenache. Drink now through 2015.—*J.M.*

STARK-CONDÉ

Cabernet Sauvignon Stellenbosch 2008
91 points | \$27 | 950 cases imported | Red

Broad and rich, with a loamy underlay to the mulled black currant, roasted fig and singed mesquite notes. There's also a nice back-drop of spice and tobacco, with well-buried acidity on the finish. Rock-solid. Cabernet Sauvignon with Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2013 through 2020.—*J.M.*

DE TRAFFORD

Merlot Stellenbosch 2007
90 points | \$30 | 168 cases imported | Red

This is a bit old-school in style, with dark currant and fig paste notes in the background, while more tobacco, grilled herb and olive hints take the lead. There's a plush feel through the finish, with well-embedded acidity. Drink now through 2014.—*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.

CARTER

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beckstoffer To Kalon Vineyard 2009
95 points | \$125 | 185 cases made | Red

Pure, rich and beautifully crafted, with dense, polished flavors of black fruits, mineral, loamy earth, spice, mocha, bay leaf and espresso, yet for all its size and dimensions, this glides along gracefully and gains momentum on the finish. Drink now through 2024. *From California.—J.L.*

DOMAINE SERENE

Pinot Noir Dundee Hills Grace Vineyard 2009
94 points | \$150 | 195 cases made | Red

Light and refreshing, this is precise with its raspberry, tobacco and roasted meat flavors, finishing light, transparent and expressive. The finish sails on and on, unhampered by tannins. Drink now through 2017. *From Oregon.—H.S.*

DOMAINE SERENE

Pinot Noir Willamette Valley Evenstad Reserve 2008
93 points | \$65 | 8,000 cases made | Red

Sleek and tangy, tightly focusing its cherry, raspberry and mineral flavors on a taut frame. Finishes with intensity and a hint of black olive. Drink now through 2018. *From Oregon.—H.S.*

LONGPLAY

Chardonnay Chehalem Mountains Jory Slope Lia's Vineyard 2009
92 points | \$22 | 115 cases made | White

Supple in texture, with refinement to the pear and sassafras flavors, gliding smoothly into the long, expressive finish. Shows intensity without weight. Drink now through 2016. *From Oregon.—H.S.*

CHÂTEAU MONTLANDRIE

Castillon Côtes de Bordeaux 2009
92 points | \$30 | 2,080 cases made | Red

This expressive red delivers floral, vanilla, red berry and licorice aromas and flavors that are bright and focused. Offers firm tannins and fresh acidity. Vivid and long, in the modern style. Merlot and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2019. *From France.—T.M.*

CHÂTEAU QUINAULT L'ENCLOS

St.-Emilion 2009
92 points | \$35 | 4,205 cases made | Red

This is very distinctive, with live-wire acidity running through the core of damson plum, linzer torte and blackberry fruit that's framed by a mouthwatering roasted apple wood note. The long and driven finish has a piercing iron edge and a smoldering tobacco note that adds to the dramatic profile. Best from 2015 through 2025. *From France.—J.M.*

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Wine Spectator's tasting staff includes 12 people in two offices. They work together to review more than 18,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our six 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; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed. We score wines using the 100-point scale, explained below.

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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