

Wine Spectator Insider

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A Members-Only, Weekly Publication

THE *Wine Spectator Insider* features 37 exceptional new wines this week from California, France and Spain. Leading off this issue, James Laube reviews 18 California Rhône-style reds. Syrah continues to dominate this category, but Grenache is making headway, and this week's top-scoring wine is a 2006 Edna Valley Grenache from Alban, one of California's best producers of Rhône-style wines. You'll find it among the Hot Wines, on page 4. Also included here are the latest wines from some of the most promising new California Rhône producers, including Terry Hoage, Kaena, Prospect 772 and Rudius.

From France, Bruce Sanderson reviews more 2006 red Burgundies, including a classic-rated Chambertin, and Thomas Matthews reviews five new outstanding Priorats and a dessert wine from Spain.

California

FISHER

Syrah Sonoma County Hidden Terrace Vineyard 2006
94 points | \$60 | 120 cases made | Red

Dense and chunky, with meaty, beefy, peppery wild berry and game scents that are full-bodied and supple, yet intense, concentrated and well-structured. Ends with a long, persistent finish. Best from 2010 through 2016.—*J.L.*

NEYERS

Syrah Sonoma Coast Old Lakeville Road 2007
94 points | \$30 | 989 cases made | Red

Offers wonderful focus and purity of flavor. Intense and concentrated, with gorgeous, pure, ripe blackberry, boysenberry and huckleberry fruit that unfolds to offer hints of pepper, nutmeg and other exotic spices. Deliciously full-bodied. Drink now through 2016.—*J.L.*

RUDIUS

Syrah Mendocino County Alder Springs
Emerald Pool 2006
94 points | \$45 | 55 cases made | Red

Brimming with beefy, peppery wild berry and blackberry aromas that are rich and full-bodied, intense and focused, offering a mix of power and finesse, with a long, persistent finish and structured tannins. Drink now through 2015.—*J.L.*

ERNA SCHEIN

Syrah Mendocino Homage to Ed Oliveira Alder Springs
Vineyard 2006
93 points | \$60 | 300 cases made | Red

Intense and concentrated, with well-structured exotic leather, spice box, beefy wild berry and blackberry fruit that picks up a note of tobacco and cedar. Full-bodied, with chewy tannins. Drink now through 2016.—*J.L.*

PRIDE

Syrah Sonoma County 2006
93 points | \$60 | 615 cases made | Red

Dense, detailed and concentrated, this is tight, focused and full-bodied, with an enticing mix of mineral, wild cherry and black cherry fruit, picking up lots of spice, pepper and nutmeg scents that provide depth and length. Best from 2009 through 2016.—*J.L.*

EPIPHANY

Revelation Santa Barbara County 2006
92 points | \$35 | 630 cases made | Red

Enormously complex, brimming with ripe, concentrated flavors that echo blackberry and wild berry, boysenberry and cherry jam. Full-bodied, supple and balanced, this is a big, flavorful wine that's also elegant and refined. Syrah, Grenache and Petite Sirah. Drink now through 2014.—*J.L.*

TERRY HOAGE

Grenache-Syrah Paso Robles The 46 2006
92 points | \$40 | 350 cases made | Red

Serves up lots of dark fruit flavors, built around full-bodied blackberry, black cherry and boysenberry fruit that's pure and focused, ending with a long, complex finish. Drink now through 2013.—J.L.

MARIMAR TORRES

Syrah-Tempranillo Russian River Valley Don Miguel Vineyard 2006
92 points | \$40 | 56 cases made | Red

Savory wild berry, mineral, cedar and spice notes give this a wonderful range of flavors. Well-structured, full-bodied and complex, ending with firm, rich, chewy tannins. Drink now through 2015.—J.L.

BECKMEN

Grenache Santa Ynez Valley Purisima Mountain Vineyard 2006
91 points | \$48 | 850 cases made | Red

Savory herb, ripe plum, blackberry, earth and mineral flavors define this full-bodied, complex and engaging young wine, which builds momentum and ends with a long, persistent finish. Drink now through 2011.—J.L.

RED CAR

Syrah Sonoma County Tomorrowland 2007
91 points | \$55 | 647 cases made | Red

Dense and chewy, with exotic earth, tar, wild berry and pebble flavors that are intense and concentrated, still echoing hints of fermentation aromas. Ends with full-bodied, chewy tannins. Best from 2010 through 2016.—J.L.

DOMAINE DE LA TERRE ROUGE

Syrah Fiddletown DTR Ranch 2006
90 points | \$35 | 200 cases made | Red

Intense and pleasantly earthy, offering grainy mineral, dried berry and currant fruit, with touches of spice and hazelnut. Ends with chewy tannins and good length. Drink now through 2014.—J.L.

GREY STACK

Syrah-Grenache Bennett Valley The Folly Dry Stack Vineyard 2007
90 points | \$32 | 75 cases made | Red

Intense, with a leafy juniper berry edge to the wild berry and blackberry flavors. Full-bodied and complex, with spicy, peppery flavors that are well-structured, with chewy tannins. Drink now through 2014.—J.L.

KAENA

Grenache Santa Ynez Valley Lerner Vineyard 2006
90 points | \$34 | 100 cases made | Red

Offers plump, ripe and generous plum and black cherry fruit that builds intensity and structure, firming up on the finish. Full-bodied and brimming with ripe fruit. Drink now.—J.L.

KAENA

Grenache Santa Ynez Valley Tierra Alta Vineyard 2006
90 points | \$32 | 100 cases made | Red

Ripe and plump, with supple plum, black cherry and wild berry fruit that's full-bodied and easy to enjoy, with enough complexity and depth to hold your interest. Drink now through 2012.—J.L.

PROSPECT 772

The Brawler Calaveras County 2006
90 points | \$36 | 183 cases made | Red

A ripe, juicy style. Full-bodied, with complex cherry, currant and wild berry fruit that's well-proportioned, turning supple and polished on the finish. Syrah and Viognier. Drink now through 2013.—J.L.

RED CAR

Syrah California The Fight Round 4 2006
90 points | \$60 | 427 cases made | Red

Fans of this very ripe and flavorful style will enjoy the vivid black cherry, wild berry fruit, hints of balsamic raspberry and savory notes. Full-bodied and potent, this ends with a juicy burst of dark berry fruit. Drink now through 2013.—J.L.

France Burgundy

DOMAINE PERROT-MINOT

Mazoyères-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes 2006
94 points | \$323 | 35 cases imported | Red

Rich, with a firm edge, both mineral and tannic, escorting the black cherry, tobacco and spice flavors. The purity of flavors and structure dovetail on the finish, which echoes sweet fruit and spice. Needs time. Best from 2012 through 2022.—B.S.

DENIS MORTET

Gevrey-Chambertin 1er Cru 2006
93 points | \$248 | 10 cases imported | Red

Incredibly silky and saturated with deep black cherry, plum, iron and licorice flavors, this red has both sweet and salty tastes. Harmonious, with ripe tannins that meld effortlessly with the whole. This is drinkable now, yet should only improve. Drink now through 2018.—B.S.

PERROT-MINOT

Chambertin-Clos de Bèze Vieilles Vignes 2006
93 points | \$375 | 45 cases imported | Red

Ripe, displaying blackberry, plum and pomegranate aromas and flavors, augmented by oak spice and mineral. This seems open and lacy, yet there's a good structure for support, with a very long aftertaste. Best from 2012 through 2027.—B.S.

PERROT-MINOT

Chapelle-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes 2006
93 points | \$278 | 37 cases imported | Red

Starts out briary and wild, with tobacco and spice notes, taming to sweet black cherry and licorice flavors. There's power and assertiveness as this cuts a broad swath. Shows the wild side of Gevrey, but also has purity and staying power. Fine length. Best from 2011 through 2022.—*B.S.*

DOMAINE PERROT-MINOT

Charmes-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes 2006
93 points | \$278 | 35 cases imported | Red

Lush, with texture and cherry and spice flavors that envelop the palate. The flavors are persistent, with hints of vegetal and spice notes in turn. The structure is well-integrated, and this has class and length. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*B.S.*

BERNARD DUGAT-PY

Gevrey-Chambertin Coeur de Roy Très Vieilles Vignes 2006
92 points | \$215 | 100 cases imported | Red

Offers gorgeous aromas of red and black currant, flowers and spice. The flavors deliver more of the same, with a mineral element that turns to licorice and tobacco on the finish. There's terrific balance and intensity at this level. Best from 2010 through 2018.—*B.S.*

DENIS MORTET

Gevrey-Chambertin Les Champeaux 2006
92 points | \$248 | 8 cases imported | Red

Dark in both color and fruit character, offering blackberry, black cherry, plum and oak spice aromas and flavors. Opulent, yet with a firm structure keeping it grounded, ending with a long aftertaste of sweet fruit and spice. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*B.S.*

BRUNO CLAVELIER

Gevrey-Chambertin Les Corbeaux Vieilles Vignes 2006
91 points | \$150 | 5 cases imported | Red

An animal aroma ushers in a mix of bright red cherry, red currant, mineral and forest floor. Bright and medium-bodied, this is a more elegant style, with moderate tannins. Fine length. Best from 2011 through 2018.—*B.S.*

BERNARD DUGAT-PY

Gevrey-Chambertin Vieilles Vignes 2006
90 points | \$155 | 75 cases imported | Red

Offers fine purity, from the violet and black currant aromas and flavors to the silky texture and elegant profile. There are also smoke and earth accents, and this has grip and length. Best from 2010 through 2016.—*B.S.*

DENIS MORTET

Gevrey-Chambertin 2006
90 points | \$120 | 93 cases imported | Red

Smooth and ripe, evoking red and black cherry and oak spice notes. Balanced and juicy, yet with firm, fine-grained tannins underneath, followed by a nice expansive finish. Drink now through 2016.—*B.S.*

DENIS MORTET

Gevrey-Chambertin Lavaux St.-Jacques 2006
90 points | \$248 | 30 cases imported | Red

A ripe version, matching sweet black cherry and plum flavors with vanilla and spice. Moderate length. Attractive, but almost too open and accessible now. Drink now through 2016.—*B.S.*

Spain

TERROIR AL LÍMIT

Priorat 2005
93 points | \$78 | 233 cases made | Red

Exotic and alluring, this dark red brims with kirsch, licorice, dark chocolate and mineral flavors that sing through the finish. Beautifully balanced, with both power and grace. Drink now through 2013.—*T.M.*

MARCO ABELLA

Priorat Clos Abella 2005
92 points | \$70 | 750 cases made | Red

Black cherry, licorice, mineral and coffee flavors are subtle and harmonious in this well-integrated red, which has firm tannins, good balance and a long, fresh finish. Drink now through 2013.—*T.M.*

FERRER BOBET

Priorat 2005
90 points | \$45 | 380 cases imported | Red

Toast and chocolate oak notes frame blackberry and plum fruit in this polished red. Supple and lively, with firm tannins and a smoky, spicy finish. Expressive. Carignane, Grenache, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2012.—*T.M.*

MAS DE SUBIRÀ

Priorat Morlanda Criança 2004
90 points | \$48 | 105 cases imported | Red

Alluring morello cherry, wild herb and mineral notes mingle in this rich, firm red. Not showy, but harmonious, delivering balance and freshness. Drink now through 2012.—*T.M.*

JORGE ORDOÑEZ & CO.

Málaga Old Vines 2006
90 points | \$78/375ml | 50 cases imported | Dessert

This viscous white offers orange peel, honey, coconut and spice flavors, sweet, with just enough acidity to keep it lively. Not heavy, but intense. Moscatel. Drink now.—*T.M.*

SADIE FAMILY

Priorat Dits del Terra 2004
90 points | \$125 | 68 cases imported | Red

This solid red delivers plum, licorice and chocolate flavors over firm, well-integrated tannins. Ripe fruit and toasty oak are balanced by fresh acidity, and the finish opens to berry and floral notes. Drink now through 2012.—*T.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.

ALBAN

Grenache Edna Valley Alban Estate Vineyard 2006
96 points | \$94 | 500 cases made | Red

Dark, rich and savory, intense and full-bodied, with concentrated layers of blackberry, wild berry and boysenberry flavors that are pure and focused, ending with fleshy tannins. Young and massive for Grenache. Drink now through 2015. *From California.*—J.L.

LEWIS

Alec's Blend Napa Valley 2006
95 points | \$60 | 875 cases made | Red

Enormously rich and concentrated, offering a dense, full-blown mix of savory blueberry and blackberry fruit, mineral, sage and loamy earth notes, ending with a burst of complex flavors and an amazingly long, layered finish. Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now through 2016. *From California.*—J.L.

DENIS MORTET

Chambertin 2006
95 points | \$675 | 4 cases imported | Red

A textbook example of the succulent character and charm of the 2006 vintage, delivering pure, juicy flavors of black cherry, with hints of licorice and spice. As this develops on the palate, mineral and tobacco notes emerge. It's harmonious and kicks into overdrive on the finish. Best from 2012 through 2025. *From France.*—B.S.

PERROT-MINOT

Chambertin Vieilles Vignes 2006
94 points | \$450 | 5 cases imported | Red

Offers fine purity and an almost weightless feel underscored by a driving energy. This marshals its black cherry, spice and mineral flavors to a long conclusion. There's a sense of grandeur and class, without power and extraction, only pure, sweet fruit and terrific length. Best from 2012 through 2025. *From France.*—B.S.

WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

Wine Spectator's tasting staff includes 14 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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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