

Wine Spectator Insider

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A Members-Only, Weekly Publication

STRUCTURED REDS BUILT TO AGE MAKE THEIR DEBUT in this week's *Wine Spectator Insider*, with wines from California, Germany and Italy, up to 96 points. This is a report of the most exciting wines our editors have discovered in the tasting room in recent weeks.

The newest releases of Scarecrow, Bond, Harlan Estate and The Maiden make a splash among impressive California Cabernets that will delight fans of the grape. In Italy, the 2013 Brunellos di Montalcino and 2012 riservas are a gift that keeps on giving, from stars like Il Poggione and Uccelliera. Gorgeous whites from Germany show the country's diversity with bottlings from Pfalz, Nahe and Rheingau.

CALIFORNIA Cabernet & Blends

BOND

Melbury Napa Valley 2014

94 points | \$715 | 448 cases made | Red

Massive and rich, yet balanced and refined, with a sense of elegance and refinement that is worth experiencing, as the charm and grace of this powerful wine is noteworthy. Best from 2020 through 2030.—J.L.

BOND

St. Eden Napa Valley 2014

94 points | \$715 | 603 cases made | Red

Pure, rich and vibrant, with a tasty core of plum, blackberry, currant, anise and cedar flavors. Most impressive for the weight and refinement, remaining quite elegant and graceful despite the size. Best from 2020 through 2034.—J.L.

BOND

Vecina Napa Valley 2014

94 points | \$715 | 679 cases made | Red

A mix of creamy, toasty oak casts a large shadow but the fruit underneath is rich and up to the task, folding in nicely and adding dimension, body and length to the core flavors. Best from 2020 through 2032.—J.L.

HALL

Cabernet Sauvignon St. Helena Coeur 2015

94 points | \$80 | 1,921 cases made | Red

Sleek and elegant, deep and refined, with a tight focus to the core of blackberry, wild berry, anise and cedar flavors, gliding effortlessly on the finish. Best from 2020 through 2032.—J.L.

HARLAN ESTATE

Napa Valley 2014

94 points | \$1300 | 2,283 cases made | Red

A dense, potent, chewy effort, very tight and focused, with intense dark berry, mocha and licorice notes, cedary oak and substantial fine-grained tannins that keep the flavors in check. Tightens on the finish. Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2020 through 2032.—J.L.

HALL

Cabernet Sauvignon Diamond Mountain District 2015

93 points | \$185 | 732 cases made | Red

Big, sturdy and immense, with tiers of complex flavor built around cedar, dark berry, tobacco leaf and dried herb, ending with a sense of gusto. Drink now through 2030.—J.L.

THE MAIDEN

Napa Valley 2014

93 points | \$430 | 1,134 cases made | Red

Very complete and complex, from the spicy, cedary oak to the broad, expansive midpalate, offering layers of nuanced berry, plum, licorice and road tar flavors, ending with firm, grippy tannins and excellent length. Best from 2019 through 2031.—J.L.

GERMANY

BASSERMANN-JORDAN

Riesling Qualitätswein Trocken Pfalz
Jesuitengarten GG 2016

94 points | \$114 | 10 cases imported | White

A well-concentrated dry Riesling, featuring ripe nectarine and quince flavors and a mineral core. Expressive despite its youth, this shows balance, with powerful acidity and savory mineral details carrying through. Best from 2019 through 2031.—A.Z.

PFEFFINGEN

Scheurebe Beerenauslese Pfalz Ungsteiner
Herrenberg 2016

94 points | \$55/375ml | 50 cases made | White

This stunning dessert wine is lightly golden in color and explosive on the palate despite the fatness. Syrupy in texture, featuring sweet tropical aromas that linger, with pineapple and honey details. Shows depth and richness, but a bright beam of acidity cuts through, providing balance. Drink now through 2046.—A.Z.

ÖKONOMIERAT REBHOLZ

Riesling Qualitätswein Dry Pfalz Kastanienbusch GG 2016

94 points | \$120 | 250 cases made | White

Floral, round and rich-tasting, with laser-precise acidity keeping this intact and harmonious. This shows wonderful energy throughout. Mineral elements emerge midpalate and are carried to the balanced and refreshing finish. Best from 2020 through 2029.—A.Z.

BASSERMANN-JORDAN

Riesling Qualitätswein Trocken Pfalz
Hohenmorgen GG 2016

93 points | \$100 | 10 cases imported | White

A well-crafted, expansive white, underscored by a firm structure that defines the peach, tangerine, grapefruit and mineral flavors. Youthful but shows great tension between the elements, which should integrate nicely over the next several years. Best from 2020 through 2030.—A.Z.

DR. BÜRKLIN-WOLF

Riesling Qualitätswein Dry Pfalz Gaisböhl G.C. 2015

93 points | \$60 | 90 cases imported | White

Opulent, with a thick texture, but balanced by driving acidity that supports well-defined flavors of apricot, tangerine, grapefruit and stone. Features a long finish that is savory and mouthwatering, making you reach for another sip. Drink now through 2026.—A.Z.

A. CHRISTMANN

Riesling Qualitätswein Trocken Pfalz Deidesheimer
Paradiesgarten 2015

93 points | \$45 | 50 cases imported | White

Concentrated and juicy, this is dry, but with plenty of flavor and character, featuring ripe peach and apricot flavors, tied to a viscous texture. The echoing finish is focused and well-defined, showing notes of spice. Drink now through 2029.—A.Z.

A. CHRISTMANN

Riesling Qualitätswein Trocken Pfalz Idig GG 2016

93 points | \$74 | 30 cases imported | White

This medium-bodied Riesling delivers plenty of character, with bursts of ripe peach, eucalyptus and citrus supported by a firm structure. Shows wonderful tension between the fruit, floral and spice details. Best from 2019 through 2031.—A.Z.

EVA FRICKE

Riesling Qualitätswein Rheingau Schlossberg 2016

93 points | \$67 | 10 cases imported | White

Pungent, ripe and exotic, with intense acidity balancing the ripe flavors of tropical fruit, spice, mint and tangerine zest. On the palate, this is firm and expressive, enveloping layers of flavors that build up to a long complex finish. Drink now through 2028.—A.Z.

EVA FRICKE

Riesling Qualitätswein Trocken Rheingau Krone 2016

93 points | \$67 | 25 cases imported | White

Well-knit and alluring, with a lovely mix of ripe apricot and pickled ginger notes. Combines power and delicacy, with the palate showing fruit, spice and floral details, leading to a long, lingering aftertaste of mineral and spice. Best from 2019 through 2029.—A.Z.

RUDOLF FÜRST

Riesling Qualitätswein Trocken Franken
Centgrafenberg GG 2016

93 points | \$85 | 200 cases made | White

Concentrated and tightly wound, with flavors evoking peach, dandelion tea and fleur de sel, which remain submerged. At the moment, the focus is more on the structure and smooth texture, so better to wait a few years. Best from 2020 through 2030.—A.Z.

KOEHLER-RUPRECHT

Riesling Beerenauslese Pfalz Kallstadter Saumagen 2015

93 points | \$160/375ml | 80 cases imported | Dessert

Extremely elegant and vibrant for the category, this glides smoothly across the palate, enveloping layers of flavors. The acidity effortlessly provides harmony and fuels this sweetie, but also provides a firm backbone for flavors of sage honey, crystallized caramel and cooked pear. Drink now through 2043.—A.Z.

SCHÄFER-FRÖHLICH

Riesling Qualitätswein Dry Nahe Halenberg GG 2016

93 points | \$110 | 150 cases made | White

Richly spiced, with good intensity and lovely harmony between the powerful acidity and flavors of blood orange, jasmine, coriander and nectarine. Hints of sage and cream are introduced midpalate, while savory mineral notes echo in the background. Best from 2020 through 2030.—A.Z.

SCHÄFER-FRÖHLICH

Riesling Qualitätswein Dry Nahe Kupfergrube GG 2016

93 points | \$110 | 150 cases made | White

This white begins on the savory side, with a crunchy texture, fueled by powerful acidity. Floral, orange blossom and orchard fruit notes are introduced midpalate, followed by saffron and cilantro details on the finish. This is still youthful, but there are multidimensional layers underneath. Best from 2021 through 2031.—A.Z.

ITALY

Brunello di Montalcino

ANTINORI

Brunello di Montalcino Pian delle Vigne Vignaferruvia Riserva 2012

94 points | \$150 | 100 cases imported | Red

This is round, offering cherry, plum and savory, salty mineral elements. The structure is well-meshed, lending support while remaining harmonious. Almost feels approachable now, but this will be better in two to three years. Best from 2021 through 2035.—*B.S.*

CAPARZO

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2012

94 points | \$80 | 1,000 cases made | Red

Cherry, strawberry and floral notes are hallmarks of this elegant, smooth red. Picks up spice and earthy accents, along with a cigar box element. Shows fine balance, with a line of dusty tannins lending support. Best from 2021 through 2035.—*B.S.*

COL D'ORCIA

Brunello di Montalcino Nastagio 2012

94 points | \$70 | 125 cases imported | Red

Everything is correctly proportioned in this cherry-, leather- and tobacco-flavored wine. Shows a hint of oak spice. Firm grip plies the fresh, lingering finish. Best from 2022 through 2036.—*B.S.*

FANTI

Brunello di Montalcino Vigna Le Macchiarelle Riserva 2012

94 points | \$97 | 100 cases imported | Red

A broad, lush version, exuding vanilla, toast, leather, cherry, plum and graphite flavors. A more contemporary style, yet well done, with ample fruit to match the new oak, fine complexity and length. Best from 2022 through 2036.—*B.S.*

FATTOI

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2012

94 points | \$120 | 50 cases imported | Red

A round, fleshy style, offering cherry, plum, mineral and tobacco flavors. Firms up nicely as this glides across the palate to a long, muscular and fresh finish. Best from 2022 through 2037.—*B.S.*

LA MANNELLA DI CORTONESI

Brunello di Montalcino La Mannella Riserva 2012

94 points | \$230 | 100 cases imported | Red

A pleasant rusticity is the hallmark of this red, whose macerated cherry, currant and earth flavors are encased in burly tannins. The ripe fruit prevails and this persists on the finish, with lively berry, tobacco and tea notes. Best from 2023 through 2035.—*B.S.*

TENUTA LE POTAZZINE

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2011

94 points | \$220 | 16 cases imported | Red

This red offers ripe, sweet fruit, with macerated cherry, plum and chocolate flavors that verge on jammy. Nonetheless, this is fresh, tightly structured and persistent on the finish. A layer of dusty tannins holds court for now, so be patient. Best from 2022 through 2035.—*B.S.*

ARGIANO

Brunello di Montalcino 2013

93 points | \$60 | 908 cases imported | Red

An elegant style, offering ripe cherry, plum, leather, almond and subtle chocolate flavors. Harmonious and long, with an aftertaste evoking cherry, iron and tobacco. Fine balance. Best from 2021 through 2033.—*B.S.*

FATTORIA DEI BARBI

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2012

93 points | \$113 | 250 cases imported | Red

Rich and full of cherry, strawberry, spice and tobacco flavors. Balanced, with a well-integrated structure, though not as complex as some of its peers. Stays fresh on the lingering finish. Best from 2021 through 2035.—*B.S.*

CASTIGLION DEL BOSCO

Brunello di Montalcino Campo del Drago 2013

93 points | \$95 | 100 cases imported | Red

Verging on plum and savory mineral flavors, this red is plump and supported by a firm backbone. Leather, iron, sanguine and saline notes prevail as this remains long and vibrant. Best from 2022 through 2036.—*B.S.*

COLLOSORBO

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2012

93 points | \$105 | 200 cases imported | Red

Pushes the boundaries of ripeness, yet has good underlying structure too, framing plum, prune and spice flavors. Dusty tannins lend support as this winds down on the leather- and plum-accented finish. Best from 2021 through 2035.—*B.S.*

PIEVE SANTA RESTITUTA

Brunello di Montalcino Rennina 2013

93 points | \$165 | 400 cases imported | Red

This is fragrant, offering cherry, leather, floral and spice notes. On the palate, this remains fresh, with persistent flavors and fine harmony. Dusty tannins pull everything together on the finish. There's plenty of energy here. Best from 2021 through 2035.—*B.S.*

IL POGGIONE

Brunello di Montalcino 2013

93 points | \$85 | 8,333 cases imported | Red

This red strikes a nice balance between plum and cherry fruit and beefy tannins, featuring elements of leather, tobacco, earth and iron. Balanced and long, with a gripping finish. Best from 2022 through 2035.—*B.S.*

SAN FILIPPO

Brunello di Montalcino 2013

93 points | \$70 | 500 cases imported | Red

Sweet plum and cherry flavors course through this round, fleshy red, with supporting roles from earth, spice and tobacco notes. Balanced yet firm enough, with excellent freshness on the long finish. Best from 2021 through 2035.—*B.S.*

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.

SCARECROW

Cabernet Sauvignon Rutherford 2015
96 points | \$350 | 1,850 cases made | Red

Broad, expansive and layered, with dark berry, currant, anise, cedar and sage notes, supported by firm, chewy tannins and an impressive aftertaste where the flavors glide along rather effortlessly. Best from 2020 through 2034. From California.—*J.L.*

BOND

Pluribus Napa Valley 2014
95 points | \$715 | 501 cases made | Red

A chunky, chewy, extracted style, with a mix of loamy earth, tobacco leaf, dark berry and licorice flavors that slowly expands, gaining length and dimension. Best from 2020 through 2032. From California.—*J.L.*

IL POGGIONE

Brunello di Montalcino Vigna Paganelli Riserva 2012
95 points | \$130 | 1,450 cases imported | Red

Rich and evocative of cherry, currant, mineral, spice and tobacco flavors, this tightly knit red is harmonious and solidly built. Remains vibrant and persists on the mineral-inflected aftertaste. Fine length. Best from 2023 through 2038. From Italy.—*B.S.*

CASTELLO ROMITORIO

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2012
95 points | \$150 | 20 cases imported | Red

This is rich, with a dense matrix of tannins, yet also boasts cherry, floral and spice flavors. Touches of tobacco and earth round out the flavor profile as this extends on the finish. Finely balanced, this should be approachable soon. Best from 2020 through 2035. From Italy.—*B.S.*

UCCELLIERA

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2012
95 points | \$140 | 300 cases imported | Red

Offers a balance of cherry and berry fruit, savory wild herb and balsamic notes and leather and tobacco details, all matched to a firm, harmonious structure. Juicy, building to a long, energetic finish. Best from 2021 through 2035. From Italy.—*B.S.*

PODERE LA VIGNA

Brunello di Montalcino Riserva 2012
95 points | \$85 | 180 cases imported | Red

The saturated floral, macerated berry and mineral flavors are matched by broad tannins in this vibrant red. The components are well-proportioned, dovetailing at the end of the long, mineral- and tobacco-tinged aftertaste. Best from 2022 through 2037. From Italy.—*B.S.*

WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

Wine Spectator's tasting staff includes 16 tasters and tasting coordinators in two offices. They work together to review more than 16,000 wines each year; more than 360,000 reviews are available in our online database. Together, our 11 tasters count more than 235 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 1983. Tasting beat: California

Harvey Steiman Editor at large, San Francisco
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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 2013. Tasting beat:
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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 |