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Robb Report

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PREVIEW 2010



INTRODUCING
MERCEDES-BENZ'S
21ST-CENTURY
GULLWING

THE ALL-NEW
SUPERLIGHT
SLS AMG COUPE

OCTOBER 2009



EXCLUSIVE DEBUTS

FERRARI 458 ITALIA * BENTLEY MULSANNE * MANDARIN ORIENTAL'S
ONE HYDE PARK * ALLARD ROADSTER * BULGARI'S 125TH-ANNIVERSARY
JEWELRY & WATCH COLLECTION * BEECHCRAFT PREMIER II * PALMER
JOHNSON 170 * HERMÈS MEN'S BOUTIQUE * PERSHING 108 & MORE

2009 HOST'S GUIDE

**FINE
WINES
SPIRITS**
and **ENTERTAINING**

A SPECIAL BUYER'S GUIDE

Robb Report

FOR CONNOISSEURS



100 PERFECT POURS

Treasures of the vine.

By Brett Anderson / Photography by Cordero Studios

Humorist Fran Lebowitz once amended Eleanor Roosevelt's much-quoted remark on great minds (the former first lady took it as a matter of course that her own passed muster), stating, "Great people talk about ideas, average people talk about things, and small people talk about wine." We are inclined to agree with Lebowitz: Why talk about wine when you can drink it? Toward that end, we will keep the introduction to our list of the year's worthiest bottles pleasantly brief. The selections presented herein have been categorized as red or white, though the latter grouping also includes dessert and sparkling wines. For many listings, we have included estimates of the average current market price; unless it is marked as an estimate, the given number reflects the suggested retail price at the time of release. And now, enough chatter. Let us indulge. After all, as one very small person by the name of Benjamin Franklin observed, "[Wine is] a constant proof that God loves us, and loves to see us happy."



WINE GLASS AND DECANTER COURTESY RIEDEL

WINE

amaretto prepare the senses for a palate of red-berry fruit and dark chocolate. (\$150)

**COLGIN 2005
TYCHSON HILL
VINEYARD NAPA
VALLEY CABERNET
SAUVIGNON**

The Tychson Hill Vineyard was once owned by Josephine Tychson, an early vintner in the Napa Valley. Ann Colgin carries on this pioneering spirit, crafting exceptional red wines that have helped set the region's standards of quality. This inky Cabernet is a poised arrangement of spiced plum, blackberry, tangy currant, and sultry floral scents. (Estimate: \$410)

**DANA ESTATES LOTUS
VINEYARD NAPA**

**VALLEY CABERNET
SAUVIGNON 2006**

This relatively new producer nevertheless has deep roots in the Napa Valley, thanks to its flagship property, the historic Helms Vineyard, whose winery dates to 1883. The 126-year-old structure has been refurbished and expanded by architect Howard Backen, providing legendary winemaker Philippe Melka the ideal workshop in which to ply his trade. This velvety single-vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon's blueberry and blackberry flavors are enlivened by hints of cocoa and crème fraîche. (\$275)

**DOMAINE DE LA
ROMANÉE-CONTI
2006 ROMANÉE-
CONTI**

Even under the most grueling growing conditions, Domaine de la Romanée-Conti manages to produce a minor

masterpiece. This splendid Pinot Noir from the world's most famous vineyard plot presents a nose of wild mushrooms, grilled bread, and berries. Its ripe berry-filled flavor profile—showy for its youth—is tempered by vanilla cream, coffee, and holiday spice. (Estimate: \$3,400)

**DOMAINE DENIS
MORTET 2006
CHAMBERTIN**

The Pinot Noir from this distinguished appellation was a favorite of Napoléon Bonaparte, who kept himself amply supplied with the wine on even his most far-ranging campaigns. This vintage is a sensory spectacle of black-cherry blasts and licorice explosions, with a long, smoky aftermath. (Estimate: \$600)

**DOMAINE FAIVELEY
2007 CHAMBERTIN-
CLOS DE BÈZE
GRAND CRU**

This exceptional Pinot Noir combines fruit from two of Burgundy's most storied vineyards—Clos de Bèze, planted in the 7th century, and Chambertin, planted in the 12th century—which happen to be neighbors. Remarkably open for a young Burgundy, it unfolds with dark plum fruit, ethereal smokiness, and lively minerality. (\$199)

**DUMOL 2006 PINOT
NOIR FINN**

DuMol continues to produce stunning Pinots that appeal to the senses as

well as the intellect. This opulent example exhibits blackberry and plum flavors with earthy undercurrents of mushroom, nutmeg, and anise. (\$80)

**GAJA 2005
SORÌ TILDÌN**

Although Gaja produces some of the best Barolo available, the family-run wine producer is nevertheless known primarily for its arresting single-vineyard Barbaresco. Among these, the Sorì Tildìn—an infusion of black fruit, cherry, tobacco, and spice—reigns supreme. (Estimate: \$380)

**GRAHAM'S 2007
VINTAGE PORT**

This newly declared vintage in Portugal promises to fill our glasses with a wide array of wonderful fortified wines. Graham's vintage port boasts a concentration of blackberry bolstered by sweet cedar, crisp acidity, and a clean finish. (\$90)

**HALL 2006 KATHRYN
HALL CABERNET
SAUVIGNON NAPA
VALLEY**

Tourists to Napa Valley will know Hall as much for its Frank Gehry-designed visitor's center as for its dynamic Cabernet Sauvignon. This example is perhaps the best yet: Velvety in texture and alluringly dark, the wine's black fruit is intriguingly peppered with accents of dried sage, thyme, and mushroom. (\$75)



WINE

HARLAN ESTATE 2005

However imposing the selection of wines at a tasting may be, if a bottle of Harlan Estate is present, the glasses—and the conversation—will naturally drift in its direction. This wine seems to draw into itself all of the elements of its impeccable *terroir*. In its exuberant fruit, we taste the sun's warmth; in its delicate smoky-oak and sage notes, the surrounding woods; and in its soft, earthy finish, the Oakville soil. (Estimate: \$750)

HOURLASS 2006 BLUELINE VINEYARD CABERNET SAUVIGNON

After his father's Zinfandel vineyard was lost to phylloxera, Jeff Smith learned that the property's unique location would be ideal for Cabernet Sauvignon. Hourglass' Cabernets, produced by winemaker Robert Foley, have received high

praise—and high scores—ever since. Bursting with blackberry fruit, this red's flavor profile gains complexity from its blend of holiday spice and savory olive notes. (Estimate: \$135)

HUNDRED ACRE 2006 KAYLI MORGAN CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Owner and winemaker Jayson Woodbridge's seductive Cabernet Sauvignon engulfs the senses. Purple-black and darkly luscious, this full-bodied red has intense aromas and flavors—black raspberry, cassis, melted dark chocolate, and roasted coffee—that seem the embodiment of its maker's obsession. (\$300)

IL POGGIONE 2004 BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO

This Sangiovese will require some aging in order for its lovely fruit to emerge from its complex

array of tannins. Even in youth, however, the wine is loaded with berries and currents of brown spice. (Estimate: \$65)

J.C. CELLARS 2006 ROCKPILE VINEYARD SYRAH 'HALEY'

Jeff Cohn, formerly the winemaker at Rosenblum Cellars, has established relationships with the finest growers to produce an eclectic range of truly great Rhône-style wines. This intense Syrah offers a nose of fragrant wildflowers and flavors of bramble-berry juice and concentrated black-cherry liqueur. (\$60)

L'AVENTURE 2007 ESTATE CUVÉE PASO ROBLES

There may be no better producer of Syrah in California than Stephan Asseo, who came to the Golden State in the late 1990s to have the freedom to experiment with different varieties—a forbidden indulgence in his native Bordeaux. His Estate Cuvée, which typically combines Syrah with Bordelaise varieties, achieves a fascinating mélange of dark, meaty blueberry; damp tobacco; coffee; and leather. (\$85)

LOKOYA 2006 CABERNET SAUVIGNON MOUNT VEEDER NAPA VALLEY

The wines from Lokoya's Mount Veeder vineyard are, at first, the most difficult to approach in

the portfolio. Yet as one becomes familiar with the profound forces at work in this wine, one finds that one can settle for nothing less. Its mineral nose has almost a charred character that gives way to an elixir of mountain berries and dark-roasted coffee. The finish is best described as a sustained and captivating crescendo. (\$220)

LONGORIA 2007 PINOT NOIR SANTA RITA HILLS FE CIEGA

Rick Longoria, who has been involved in wine-making in Santa Barbara County since the mid-1970s, produces very small quantities of red wine, including Tempranillo. But in the 2007 vintage, his most exciting effort is this single-vineyard Pinot Noir, which tantalizes the nose with its dense raspberry aroma, exquisite balance, and playful cinnamon spice. (\$49)

M BY MICHAEL MONDAVI 2005 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

The Atlas Peak region of Napa Valley is garnering new attention, as top producers such as Heidi Barrett and Michael Mondavi embrace the mountainous area's potential for growing world-class Cabernet Sauvignon. Mondavi's inaugural vintage of M is a sophisticated and cerebral blend of black cherry, rose petals, ripe apple, plum, and almond paste. (\$200)

