

# BusinessWeek

## LITTLE GREEN LIES 044

The bitter education of a corporate environmentalist

BY BEN ELGIN

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Stress test for the lucrative stent business

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Asseo on his estate in Paso Robles, Calif.



## A CALIFORNIA SUPERSTAR WITH ROOTS IN BORDEAUX

Stephan Asseo made wine for 15 years in his native Bordeaux but left in 1996, searching for a place warm enough for his grapes to reach maturity and where he could be innovative in his winemaking. His adventure led him to Paso Robles, Calif., where he established L'Aventure. In just a few years, Asseo has become a superstar, producing wines with extraordinary aromas and exuberant personalities. To find L'Aventure wines, go to [aventurewine.com](http://aventurewine.com) or call (805) 227-1588.

### 90 POINTS

#### 2005 Optimus

A combination of 51% syrah, 44% cabernet sauvignon, and 5% petit verdot, this dense ruby/purple-colored wine displays black currant fruit with notions of smoky oak, licorice, and flowers. It will benefit from two to three years of cellaring and should keep for 10 to 12 years. \$40-\$46

### 91 POINTS

#### 2006 Roussanne

This elegant white offers notes of poached peaches, rose water, and spring flowers. The medium- to full-bodied wine has crisp acidity and loads of honeyed, marmalade-like fruit. Enjoy it over the next year or two. \$24-\$27

### 91 POINTS

#### 2005 Côte à Côte

The dark ruby/purple-tinged wine is a Rhône-like blend of near-equal parts grenache, mourvèdre, and syrah. Crème de cassis, black cherry, raspberry, smoke, and crushed-rock aromas soar from the glass. With superb fruit, beautiful density, soft acids, and ripe tannin, this wine will provide plenty of pleasure over the next 8 to 10 years. \$60-\$80

### 94 POINTS

#### 2005 Estate Cuvée

The blockbuster cuvée (52% syrah, 40% cabernet sauvignon, and 8% petit verdot) exhibits an inky blue/purple color. It has sumptuous aromas of charcoal, blueberry and blackberry liqueur, truffles, pain grillé, and chocolate. With good acidity, fabulous richness, a multilayered texture, and a long finish, it possesses a Bordeaux-like weight. Give it two to three years of cellaring, and drink it over the following 10 to 15 years. \$60-\$85

### 94 POINTS

#### 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon

This cabernet has an opaque, inky purple color and a gorgeous nose of graphite, crème de cassis, cedar, and new oak. When I smelled and tasted this majestic wine, it reminded me of the 2006 Mouton Rothschild (\$600 a bottle in the wine futures market). It requires three or four years of cellaring before drinking and should keep for two to three decades. \$65

Wines rated from 96-100 are extraordinary; 90-95, excellent; 80-89, above average to very good. Robert Parker is the world's most influential wine critic. Visit [eRobertParker.com](http://eRobertParker.com) to see tens of thousands of tasting notes, buy his books, or subscribe to his newsletter, *The Wine Advocate*.