



“Associate editor Ryan Montgomery was in Paso Robles, California, over the past week, tasting and discussing the release of 2023 whites along with the 2022 and 2021 reds, with some intriguing findings.”

“According to producers and winemakers he talked with, the 2022 vintage presented significant challenges, sandwiched between the refined and elegant 2021 and 2023 vintages. The harvest period in August saw 10 consecutive days of temperatures exceeding 105 degrees Fahrenheit (40.5 Celsius), a scenario many Paso Robles winemakers described as one of the most difficult in recent memory. ‘I had to recalibrate my expectations for certain sites and varieties, focusing instead on (parts of the) vineyards that could withstand the heat and maintain freshness,’ said Stefan Asseo of L’Aventure.”

ESTATE RESERVE 2022

TASTING DATE 9/5/2024 RATING **97**

A complex and inviting nose of mulberries, black olives, dried herbs and game meat. The palate is full-bodied with chalky tannins and energetic acidity, showing notes of blackcurrants, cedar, tobacco leaves and earth. The flagship wine of the estate that was once called Estate Cuvee, but from 2022 onward is named the Estate Reserve. Made from a blend of 55% Syrah, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon and 12% Petit Verdot. Incredibly complex and masterfully constructed. Drinkable now, but best from 2028.

CÔTE A CÔTE 2022

TASTING DATE 9/5/2024 RATING **96**

A spicy and earth-driven nose with aromas of dark cherries, tobacco leaves and cassia bark. The palate is full-bodied with finely integrated tannins and bright acidity, showing complex notes of mulberries, graphite, blood plums and herbs de Provence. 34% Grenache, 31% Syrah, 30% Mourvèdre, 3% Graciano and 2% Viognier. Will age and soften over time. Drinkable now, but best from 2028.

ESTATE RESERVE BLANC 2023

TASTING DATE 9/5/2024 RATING **96**

Mineral-driven with complex aromas of lemon curd, grapefruit rind, orange blossoms and chalk. The palate is medium-bodied with a generous texture and tight acidity, showing notes of green papayas, mandarins, phosphorous and salt brine. A wonderfully complex and intriguing wine that will age well. Drink or hold.

CHLOÉ 2022 (RELEASING SPRING 2025)

TASTING DATE 9/5/2024 RATING **96**

A very delicate and refined nose with lifted aromas of wild blackberries, tea leaves and herbs. The palate is full-bodied with silky tannins and bright acidity, showing complex aromas of blackcurrants, coffee beans, dark chocolate and cured meat. Refined and classy. Made from a co-fermented blend of 55% Syrah, 33% Grenache, 9% Viognier and 3% Graciano. Drink or hold.

FOR HER 2022 (RELEASING SPRING 2025)

TASTING DATE 9/5/2024 RATING **95**

Dark-fruited and spice driven, with notes of blackberries, olive tapenade, roasted game meat and spices. The palate is full-bodied with seamless tannins and focused acidity, showing blood plums, dark cherries, mocha and graphite. A co-fermented blend of 58% Syrah, 30% Graciano and 12% Viognier that will age gracefully for years to come, but is drinking wonderfully well now. Drink or hold.

OPTIMUS 2022

TASTING DATE 8/15/2024 RATING **95**

Lifted and perfumed nose with aromas of bramble berries, cedar and mocha. The palate is full-bodied with finely integrated tannins and fresh acidity, showing notes of blackcurrants, tobacco leaves and graphite. Very well constructed and balanced. A blend of 66% Syrah, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon and 9% Petit Verdot. Drink or hold.