

WINE ENTHUSIAST BUYING GUIDE



Morning mist across
Anderson Valley vineyards

CSI PRODUCTIONS/ALAMY

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FOR ADDITIONAL RATINGS AND REVIEWS, VISIT WINEMAG.COM/RATINGS



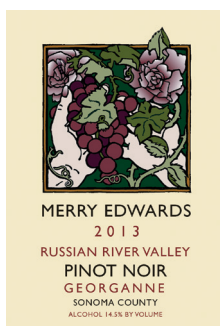
94 Herdade dos Grous 2013 Reserva (Alentejano). Produced by Winemaker Luis Duarte, this wine is darkly colored and boldly composed, with long wood-aging leaving traces of spice and toast. The fruit is rich and complex, with firm tannins. It is still young and will need time; drink after 2019. Aidil Wines/Old World Import. *Cellar Selection.* —R.V.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$60



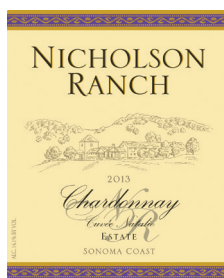
94 Justin 2011 Eighty One Cabernet Sauvignon (Paso Robles). A bottling celebrating the winery's 30th anniversary, this offers roasted coffee, nutmeg, star anise, vanilla bean and cinnamon spice atop the pure black-cherry fruit on the nose. There is a tremendous and delicious density of black-currant fruit once sipped, leveled by graphite, espresso foam, cola, cream soda and vanilla-bean flavors, held in place by chewy tannins. —M.K.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$150



94 Leeuwin Estate 2012 Art Series Chardonnay (Margaret River). Leeuwin's Chardonnay continues to be a standard-bearer for Margaret River and all of Australia. The 2012 Art Series is subtly toasty on the nose, blossoming with time into full-on crème brûlée aromas, while the palate offers creamy-textured notions of tropical fruit and custard. The long finish reverberates with fruit, suggesting plenty of aging potential, up to 10 or 12 years. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$89



94 Merry Edwards 2013 Georganne Pinot Noir (Russian River Valley). Rustic earth and the aromatic sparks of a rose garden open this wine, named by combining the middle names of the producer and her husband. Tight, youthful tannins hover around chocolate, strawberry and blackberry notes, resulting in a velvety texture on the expansive palate. It finishes quietly and confidently, eager to develop further in bottle; enjoy through 2023. *Cellar Selection.* —V.B.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$60



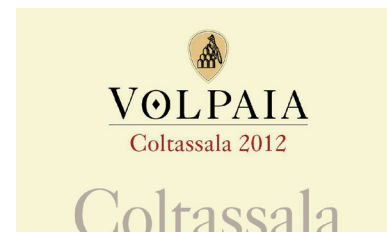
94 Nicholson Ranch 2013 Cuvée Natalie Estate Chardonnay (Sonoma Coast). Sizable portions of caramel and honey play off the nose of this inviting wine, which reveals elements of baked apple, grilled pineapple and a tangy, spicy undercurrent of acidity. Structured, layered and complex, it has more to show within its integrated layers and long length. —V.B.
abv: 14.1% **Price:** \$52



94 Sinor-LaVallee 2013 Black Label Bassi Vineyard Pinot Noir (San Luis Obispo County). This is a heady wine from Mike Sinor, with blackberry and blueberry fruit aromas that are enhanced by clove, nutmeg, cinnamon, candied lilacs and loamy soil scents. Tannic depth and sizzling acidity frame the palate, where grilled black plum and mission fig meet with pencil lead, anise, bay leaf, juniper, cocoa and beef flavors, finishing with a menthol kick. *Editors' Choice.* —M.K.
abv: 15.4% **Price:** \$45



94 The Vineyard House 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley). A small production from Jeremy Nickel of Nickel and Nickel, this aged wine incorporates 8% Merlot, sourcing grapes from several vineyards across the Napa Valley. Blueberry pie and sweet tobacco rise to the fore around an elegantly crafted structure, while soft, firm tannins provide just enough grip to stay juicy and compelling on the palate. It finishes with notes of chocolate, caramel and baking spice. —V.B.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$200



94 Volpaia 2012 Coltassala (Chianti Classico). There's a lot to love in this juicy, delicious wine, starting with aromas of ripe, dark-skinned berry, baking spice, leather, sunbaked soil and menthol. The elegant, structured palate delivers a combination of ripe black cherry, cinnamon, anise and tobacco, while firm, polished tannins provide support and finesse. A blast of orange zest signals the close. Wilson Daniels Ltd. —K.O.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$69



94 Wittmann 2014 Westhofen Kirchspiel Riesling Trocken GG (Rheinhessen). Mineral intensity and concentrated primary fruit marry beautifully in this dry, elegantly composed Riesling. Crisp yellow cherry and grapefruit flavors are mouthwatering and lush, yet shaded by streaks of stone and dusty, slightly bitter minerals. Lime acidity extends a steady finish. It drinks beautifully now, but will be delightful for the next decade, at least. Loosen Bros. USA. *Editors' Choice.* —A.I.
abv: 13% **Price:** \$85

BEST BUYS



90 **Producteurs Plaimont 2012 Beret Noir (Saint-Mont).** Celebrating both the wide beret worn by Gascon men and the local Tannat grape, this firm wine is rich and concentrated. It has dusty tannins that support the dark berry fruits and balancing acidity. The bright, fruity character suggests it will keep until 2018. Wine Wine Situation LLC. **Best Buy.** —R.V.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$15

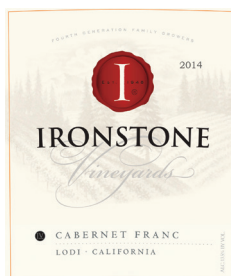


88 **Aveleda 2014 Charamba Reserva (Douro).** Named after a traditional Douro dance, this wine is ripe and spicy, with new wood flavors. It has a soft structure that allows the vibrant berry fruits to come through strongly. Both the fruit and the wood aging say this wine is too young, so drink from 2017. Aveleda Imports. **Best Buy.** —R.V.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$9



88 **Chilensis 2014 Reserva Estate Bottled Malbec (Maule Valley).** Ripe aromas of blackberry come with sides of horsey leather and baking spices. This Malbec is slightly tannic in feel, yet balanced by savory, woody black-fruit flavors. This is long, minty and lightly herbal on the finish. Old Bridge Cellars. **Best Buy.** —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$10

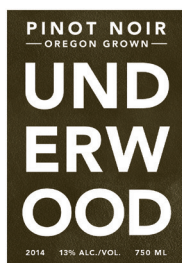
BEST BUYS



88 **Ironstone 2014 Cabernet Franc (Lodi).** Heavy oak flavors and a massive mouthfeel make this wine a little intimidating for the uninitiated, but those who enjoy spicy oak flavors like vanilla and nutmeg—as well as the smoky overtones that come from toasted oak—will enjoy it. Thick layers of drying tannins almost overwhelm the palate, but then the ripe fruit kicks back in to keep it controlled. **Best Buy.** —J.G.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$12



88 **Santa Carolina 2014 Reserva Carmenere (Cachapoal Valley).** Calm, cool, collected aromas of herbal blackberry and plum set up a plump palate with integrated, mild tannins. This tastes dark, toasty and mostly of roasted berry fruits, while it finishes on oaky spice notes and a hint of chocolate. Carolina Wine Brands USA. **Best Buy.** —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$11



87 **Underwood 2014 Pinot Noir (Oregon).** Self-described as a “notable every day wine” this meets the challenge. Given the price, it’s a winner, with 58% of the grapes coming from the Umpqua Valley AVA. The light strawberry fruit carries herbal and bitter green flavors, yet everything is in proper proportion. **Best Buy.** —P.G.
abv: 13% **Price:** \$12

BEST BUYS



86 **José Maria da Fonseca 2014 Periquita Original (Península de Setúbal).** One of the most popular Portuguese brands, made since 1850, this latest vintage is fresh and fruity. It has attractive red berry fruits and a light structure of tannins. This wine is fresh and ready to drink. Palm Bay International. **Best Buy.** —R.V.
abv: 13% **Price:** \$7



84 **G7 2015 The 7th Generation Estate Bottled Sauvignon Blanc (Central Valley).** Aromas of papaya and melon are hit with a slight sulfuric note. This feels plump, with mild citric acidity. Flavors of grapefruit, lime and grass are green and bright, but turn pithy on the finish. Titan Wines and Spirits. **Best Buy.** —M.S.
abv: 12.5% **Price:** \$8

SPIRITS



93 **Brinley Gold Shipwreck Coconut Rum Cream (St. Kitts; Market St. Spirits, Glen Rock, NJ).** Milky white and scented with coconut, this liqueur is sweet and creamy on the palate, with plenty of coconut flavor. It’s not as thick as some other cream liqueurs, which makes it relatively easy drinking. Ideal for mixing into piña colada-style drinks in place of coconut cream.
abv: 15% **Price:** \$25

Light cherry fruit mixes with both herbal and slightly vegetal streaks. —P.G.
abv: 13.7% **Price:** \$35

86 **Kriselle 2012 Tempranillo (Rogue Valley).** At first taste, this seems soaked in wood (30 months in American, Hungarian and French oak; one-third new). Flavors suggest coffee over cassis, with a somewhat bitter, tannic finish. Let it breathe. —P.G.
abv: 15.5% **Price:** \$35

85 **Maragas 2013 Tempranillo (Applegate Valley).** This rustic wine is pure varietal and spent a year in 20% new French oak. Scents favor asphalt and tar rather than oak and toast, and the candied red fruits do not speak the usual varietal flavors. But this is perfectly fine for every day drinking. —P.G.
abv: 14.2% **Price:** \$28

82 **Hip Chicks 2013 Tempranillo (Umpqua Valley).** Not close to ripe at 12% alcohol, this thin, woody wine has no trace of varietal character. —P.G.
abv: 12% **Price:** \$24

SYRAH

88 **Iris Vineyards 2014 Aroha Vineyard Syrah (Umpqua Valley).** Spice, leather, pepper and plum mingle in this medium-weight effort. Purple fruits and intimations of ginger cookie are in play, with pretty baking spices on the finish. —P.G.
abv: 13.3% **Price:** \$24

88 **Iris Vineyards 2014 Steelhead Vineyard Syrah (Applegate Valley).** Though lightly ripened, this opens with classic varietal aromas of mint, spicy berry and pepper. It tends slightly to the green side of the fruit spectrum, with the acidity to age a bit further. —P.G.
abv: 14.4% **Price:** \$24

84 **Valley View 2012 Anna Maria Syrah (Applegate Valley).** A definitive scent of leather suggests *brettanomyces* has taken over here. That leathery nose and palate totally dims the fruit, and dries out the finish. —P.G.
abv: 13.4% **Price:** \$24

OTHER RED WINES

91 **Leah Jørgensen Cellars 2014 Loiregon Cabernet Franc (Southern Oregon).** Deep purple/black in color, this wine carries varietal scents of violets and cassis, with fresh and focused flavors following. The mix of black cherry, black licorice, chalk and tobacco is complex and powerful, and that power and balance continue through the long finish. *Editors' Choice.* —P.G.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$25

88 **Iris Vineyards 2014 Aroha Vineyard Merlot (Umpqua Valley).** This is impressively dark, with dense but grapy fruit flavors right out front. The mouthfeel is sharp and spicy, and it thins out surprisingly in the middle, given the color and rather high alcohol. Sappy acids and raspy tannins carry it through the finish. —P.G.
abv: 14.9% **Price:** \$24

88 **South Stage 2011 Pleasant View Vineyard Pinotage (Rogue Valley).** Oregon Pinotage? Only one other example shows up in the database. This is estate-grown, fruit-powered and quite pleasing, with plum and purple berries pushing it along the palate. It also offers a gentle touch of baking spices and a full, round mouthfeel. It's ready to enjoy immediately. —P.G.
abv: 13.7% **Price:** \$30

87 **Leah Jørgensen Cellars 2014 Crater Lake Vineyard Loiregon Côt Malbec (Rogue Valley).** The winery aims for Loire valley characteristics in its wines, hence the reference to Côt, as Malbec is known in the region. This is grapy, purple and young. At this point it's difficult to see much else beyond the fruit and lip-sticking acids. It's a good warm-weather quaffing wine, best served slightly chilled. —P.G.
abv: 14.3% **Price:** \$30

85 **Agate Ridge 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (Rogue Valley).** This starts out well, with sniffs and sips of blackberries and black cherries. That fruit does a quick fade, and drying tannins quickly take over the thin finish. —P.G.
abv: 14.2% **Price:** \$28

85 **Season 2013 Limited Edition Series Carmènère (Southern Oregon).** If the staunchly herbal and green-bean scents and flavors often found with this grape are your cup of tea, this will prove enjoyable. It's smooth and not overly tannic, with those intense green-bean aromatics and a taste of tomato. —P.G.
abv: 13.8% **Price:** \$38

85 **Kriselle 2013 Malbec (Rogue Valley).** Smoky and oaky past the point of balance, this tastes of charred wood rather than fruit. The tannins are chewy and smoky. After considerable breathing time, blackberry fruit emerges. Aeration is highly recommended. —P.G.
abv: 14.3% **Price:** \$28

85 **J. Scott Cellars 2013 Zinfandel (Columbia Valley).** This is strongly scented with vanilla and clove. Those same flavors dominate the palate, more or less obliterating the light raspberry fruit. Oak, clove and cedar are all that's left. —P.G.
abv: 14.9% **Price:** \$28

85 **Valley View 2013 Anna Maria Zinfandel (Applegate Valley).** Though the listed alcohol pushes well past 15%, this wine does not show that much heat or concentration. Aggressive oak-

treatment flavors of vanilla and tobacco mingle with mint, cola and black cherry. —P.G.
abv: 15.5% **Price:** \$24

84 **Agate Ridge 2010 Petite Sirah (Rogue Valley).** Almost jet black, this wine is nonetheless quite thin in flavor. The color extraction and substantial alcohol do not translate to ripe, fleshy fruit. Hints of berry and cracker quickly vanish. —P.G.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$30

84 **Kriselle 2013 Cabernet Franc (Rogue Valley).** Tannic and chewy, this is dominated by flavors of char and espresso. Rather light red fruit peeks out from behind, but the oak absolutely dominates. —P.G.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$29

SWEET WINES

93 **Territorial 2013 Equinox Vineyard Spoiled Rotten Chardonnay (Willamette Valley).** Lush candied fruits abound in this naturally botrytised wine. With 147 g/L of residual sugar, it still reaches over 12% alcohol. Pineapple, lemon and orange peel, pine resin, honey, cedar and butterscotch are all in the mix, plus a lot more. You can go spelunking in this wine and never see it all. —P.G.
abv: 12.4% **Price:** \$60/375 ml

90 **Apolloni 2014 Lacrima d'Oro Muscat (Willamette Valley).** Picked at 33 brix and fermented in new French oak, this heavy, almost oily dessert wine has a floral aroma as intense as bottled perfume. Flavors suggest orange liqueur, honey and candied apricots. It pulls together just enough acidity to avoid falling into a fat, cloying finish. —P.G.
abv: 12% **Price:** \$35/375 ml

AUSTRALIA CHARDONNAY

94 **Cullen 2013 Kevin John Chardonnay (Margaret River).** It's a shame only the equivalent of one barrel of this wine was exported to the U.S., as it means only a handful of people here will get to experience it. It's perhaps the closest thing to great white Burgundy to come from Australia; subtly smoky at first, like grilled white peaches, adding hints of lime and vanilla on the palate. It's plump and slightly creamy in texture, but finishes with crisp, acidic verve. Drink now–2025. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$109

94 **Leeuwin Estate 2012 Art Series Chardonnay (Margaret River).** For full review see page 5.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$89

93 **Vasse Felix 2013 Chardonnay (Margaret River).** Winemaker Virginia Willcock's latest

effort shows that top-flight Margaret River Chardonnay doesn't have to cost three figures. This is fine stuff, a bit funky at first, but opening up in the glass to reveal hints of brown-sugar-glazed pineapple and fresh citrus. It's medium to full in body, with a long, almost painfully crisp finish that brings all that fruit into bright, refreshing focus. Negotiants USA, Inc. *Editors' Choice*. —J.C.

abv: 13% **Price: \$40**

92 Cloudburst 2013 Chardonnay (Margaret River). Once past the sticker shock, enjoy this wine for its richly toasty aromas, plush tropical fruit and warm, lingering finish. It's medium to full in body, with a creamy texture and hints of vanilla. Drink now–2018. Cloudburst. —J.C.

abv: 13.9% **Price: \$200**

90 Cloudburst 2012 Chardonnay (Margaret River). This medium-bodied Chardonnay is more restrained than the 2013, but still offers plenty of roasted-cashew toastiness combined with hints of pineapple and guava. The finish is clean and refreshing, but doesn't show the hoped-for length, so drink this over the near term. Cloudburst. —J.C.

abv: 13% **Price: \$200**

90 D'Arenberg 2013 The Lucky Lizard Chardonnay (Adelaide Hills). Pretty textbook cool-climate Chardonnay here, from the lovely aromas of toasted grain, white peach and pineapple, to the balanced alcohol levels, medium body and vibrant, citrusy finish. Drink now–2020. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.

abv: 13.5% **Price: \$32**

89 Penny's Hill 2013 The Handshake Chardonnay (Adelaide Hills). The Adelaide Hills is one of Australia's best sources of high-quality Chardonnay. This is a fine example, marrying toasted grain aromas with peach and citrus flavors and a touch of vanilla. It's soft, lush and promises easy drinking over the next year or two. Wine Trees. —J.C.

abv: 13% **Price: \$29**

89 Shaw and Smith 2013 M3 Chardonnay (Adelaide Hills). There comes a point when the pursuit of restraint becomes fruitless, and while this wine shows a wonderfully silky texture and an elegant finish, its subtle aromas and flavors of roasted cashew and citrus are indeed understated. Craft & Estate/The Winebow Group. —J.C.

abv: 12.5% **Price: \$35**

88 Jacob's Creek 2014 Two Lands Chardonnay (Australia). California winemaker Ehren Jordan contributed to the making of this wine in partnership with Australian Bernard Hickin, hence the Two Lands moniker. It's a solid wine for the price, delivering subtle toasted-grain notes, vanilla and citrus custard flavors and a reasonably full, creamy texture. Drink now. Pernod Ricard. —J.C.

abv: 13.2% **Price: \$15**

88 Sidewood 2013 Chardonnay (Adelaide Hills).

Another fine effort from Sidewood, a winery in the Adelaide Hills that is making some solid wines at realistic prices. Although this wine sees six months of French oak, the oak flavoring impact is minimal, and the wine shows ample fruit, ranging from pear and melon through peach and pineapple. It's a reasonably rich, fruity quaff for summertime drinking. USA Wine West. —J.C.

abv: 13.5% **Price: \$18**

87 Milton Park 2014 Chardonnay (South Australia). This medium-bodied, silky-textured Chardonnay offers hints of pineapple and yellow plum on the nose and palate. It's clean and refreshing on the finish, just what's wanted in this easy-to-like price range. Drink now. Kysela Père et Fils. —J.C.

abv: 13% **Price: \$13**

87 Mr. Riggs 2013 Generation Series Cold Chalk Chardonnay (Adelaide Hills). This medium-bodied wine offers an elegant, silky mouthfeel. Some yeasty-dough aromas add interest to the pineapple and tangerine flavors, which linger delicately on the finish. Wine Trees. —J.C.

abv: 12.5% **Price: \$29**

86 Gotham 2014 Wine Men of Gotham Chardonnay (South Australia). This medium-bodied wine sells at a bargain price. Mixing scents and flavors of pear, melon and pineapple, it's like a fresh fruit cocktail in a glass, ending on a tart, crisp note. Drink now. USA Wine West. *Best Buy*. —J.C.

abv: 13% **Price: \$11**

85 Madison Ridge 2014 Barker's Lane Chardonnay (South Eastern Australia). Aromas of pear and anise pace the nose of this medium-bodied wine. It's a simple, fruit-cocktail-like sipper, with a quick, easy finish and a reasonable price tag. Drink now. AWDirect (The Wine Trees Portfolio). —J.C.

abv: 13.2% **Price: \$13**

84 Jip Jip Rocks 2014 Unoaked Chardonnay (Padthaway). Despite being unoaked, this is a weighty wine, with a thick, viscous texture and simple, tangy flavors of canned pineapple. Drink it well chilled. Kysela Père et Fils. —J.C.

abv: 13% **Price: \$19**

SHIRAZ

94 Schild Estate 2008 Moorooroo Limited Release Shiraz (Barossa). Creamy textured and full bodied, this already mature Shiraz combines savory aspects of leather, soy sauce, meat and mushroom with hints of vanilla and red raspberries. It's long and supple on the finish. Drink now–2020. The Australia-New Zealand Wine Connection. —J.C.

abv: 14.9% **Price: \$90**

93 Casella 2007 1919 Shiraz (Wrattenbully). It will be interesting to see if the release of this

luxury-level Shiraz (the second vintage) has any impact on the perception of Casella's other brands: Yellow Tail and Peter Lehmann. Even at nine years of age, this is impressively dark and intense, with minty notes, cedar and vanilla and meaty, umami-like flavors that linger on the long, silky finish. Drink now. Deutsch Family Wine and Spirits. —J.C.

abv: 14% **Price: \$100**

93 Langmeil 2013 Orphan Bank Shiraz (Barossa). Appropriately youthful and flashy, this is textbook Barossa Shiraz, full bodied and rich. Dusty tannins and mouthwatering acids support dark berry fruit, cedar and vanilla. It's drinkable now, but should add savoriness over the next 10 or more years. Negotiants USA, Inc. —J.C.

abv: 14.5% **Price: \$69**

93 Yalumba 2009 The Octavius Shiraz (Barossa). Octavius has always been oaky, but over the years the fruit has come into better balance, and the 2009 may be one of the most successful editions yet released. It's dense and impenetrable at first, only slowly yielding hints of plum, mocha and vanilla. The texture is rich and supple enough to make the wine approachable now, but it should evolve and improve through 2020 or beyond. Negotiants USA, Inc. —J.C.

abv: 13.5% **Price: \$119**

92 Thorn Clarke 2013 Shotfire Shiraz (Barossa). Savvy shoppers may be able to find this for about \$20, making it an excellent deal in a full-bodied, structured red wine. Cassis, vanilla and plum notes mark the nose and palate, finishing with a flourish of dusty-textured tannins. Drink now–2025. Kysela Père et Fils. *Editors' Choice*. —J.C.

abv: 14.5% **Price: \$23**

91 Henschke 2009 Hill of Grace Shiraz (Eden Valley). This wine is rather developed, showing leather, earth and tobacco on the nose. Savory and meaty rather than fruity, it is full-bodied and pleasantly supple. Drink now–2020. Negotiants USA, Inc. —J.C.

abv: 14.5% **Price: \$780**

90 Fowles Wine 2009 Stone Dwellers Shiraz (Strathbogie Ranges). This wine from high-altitude inland Victoria is built around acids, not tannins. It's full bodied but bright, lively and refreshing, with crisp cherry and cassis fruit framed by hints of tobacco, vanilla and mint. Fowles Wine Ltd. —J.C.

abv: 14.4% **Price: \$20**

90 Schild Estate 2013 Shiraz (Barossa Valley). Sometimes all that's required is a full-bodied, supple red to pair with dinner. And sometimes, the bottle exceeds expectations, like this one. Blackberry, cassis and hints of brown sugar and vanilla avoid getting too confectionary, framed by crisp acids and fine tannins on the finish. Drink now–2020. USA Wine West. —J.C.

abv: 14.7% **Price: \$20**

90 Tahbilk 2007 Eric Stevens Purbrick Shiraz (Nagambie Lakes). From an inland region of Victoria, this is a mature wine. The tannins are plentiful but soft, wrapped around a core of dried cherries and plums. Hints of cedar and brown sugar add the impression of sweetness, while notes of mint and cracked pepper bring freshness. Epic Wines. —J.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$66

89 Jacob's Creek 2013 Reserve Shiraz (Barossa). So putting "Reserve" on a \$13 bottle of wine might seem like a stretch, but the fact is what's in the bottle is very good. It's full bodied, creamy and lushly textured, with an intriguing herbal tang to the black cherry fruit, hints of vanilla and a softly dusty finish. Drink now–2018. Pernod Ricard. **Best Buy.** —J.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$13

85 Elderton 2013 E Series Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon (South Australia). The Cabernet accounts for just 10% of the blend, but presumably contributes the hints of dried marjoram that add interest to the vanilla and cassis aromas and flavors. This medium-bodied wine finishes dry, with softly dusty tannins. Ready to drink now. USA Wine West. —J.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$20

GRENACHE

94 Langmeil 2013 The Fifth Wave Grenache (Barossa). Grenache is being treated with more and more respect around Australia, which means more bottlings are reaching the variety's potential. Gentle herbal notes intertwine with bunches of black cherries and a hint of vanilla in this medium- to full-bodied example. Hints of red peppercorn capture a unique combination of fruit and spice, while the finish is long and crisp. Negotiants USA, Inc. —J.C.
abv: 15.5% **Price:** \$53

93 Mr. Riggs 2013 Generation Series The Magnet Grenache (McLaren Vale). Not many \$30 wines can offer fruit from 100-year-old vines, but this one does. It's full bodied and rich, with notes of plum and black cherries supported by hints of chocolate and vanilla. With its long, velvety finish, there's no reason to defer gratification, although it should drink well through at least 2020. Wine Trees. **Editors' Choice.** —J.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$33

92 John Duval Wines 2013 Annexus Grenache (Barossa). John Duval (ex Penfolds) has finally released a varietal Grenache, a wine that's quite different from the blends and Shirazes he's done up until this point. This is supple, full in body and round, without the firm structural elements his wines typically possess. Dare I say it's hedonistic? Black cherry and cinnamon notes are juicy

and mouthwatering on the long finish. Drink now–2020. Old Bridge Cellars. —J.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$60

92 Thistledown 2013 Thorny Devil Old Vine Single Vineyard Grenache (Barossa Valley). This international venture based out of the former Nepenthe winery in the Adelaide Hills sources fruit from a number of vineyards in South Australia. This bottling is light on its feet for its 15% stated abv, showcasing fresh cherry fruit, gentle herbal notes and silky tannins. Drink now–2022. Wine Dogs Imports LLC. **Editors' Choice.** —J.C.
abv: 15% **Price:** \$30

90 Thistledown 2013 The Vagabond Old Vine Grenache (McLaren Vale). Just tiny amounts of this wine (25 cases) are available in the U.S. market, but it represents a trend in Australia of celebrating old-vine Grenache. A blend of two parcels from the Blewitt Springs and Seaview subregions, this is silky in texture, with crisp red cherries shot through with herbal streaks and a slightly warm finish. Wine Dogs Imports LLC. —J.C.
abv: 15% **Price:** \$50

RED BLENDS

87 Insurrection 2014 Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon (South Eastern Australia). This fills the basic need for a steakhouse-ready red at a reasonable price. Cassis fruit is framed by hints of cedar, vanilla and tobacco, while the tannins are smooth to the point of creaminess. Drink now. The Wine Group. —J.C.
abv: 15% **Price:** \$17

86 Wirra Wirra 2013 Scrubby Rise Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon-Petit Verdot (Adelaide). This simple, quaffable red is a solid introduction to the Wirra Wirra stable. Ribena-like cassis notes dominate, picking up hints of vanilla on the palate and finishing crisp and dry. Negotiants USA, Inc. —J.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$15

84 Wildling 2013 Winemaker's Red Blend (Australia). This medium-bodied red is a bit obvious and confected, but delivers ample cassis fruit without any obvious structure to support it. It's jammy and a bit sweet-tasting on the finish. Total Beverage Solution. —J.C.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$14

83 Thorn Clarke 2013 Terra Barossa Shiraz-Cabernet-Petit Verdot (Barossa). Despite being priced as an entry-level blend, this doesn't show much in the way of forward fruit. Instead, it's grippy and tough, with a veneer of dry, woody tannins over flavors of vanilla, cedar and cinnamon. Kysela Père et Fils. —J.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$15

CHILE

SAUVIGNON BLANC

89 Errazuriz 2015 MAX Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Aconcagua Costa). Cool, crisp, green-leaning aromas of lettuce, pole bean, bell pepper, jalapeño and citrus oil set up a juicy, round, easygoing palate. Flavors of bell pepper, jalapeño and white pepper finish with a reprise of fresh lettuce along with a hint of cactus. Vintus LLC. —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$20

88 Bodega Volcanes de Chile 2015 Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Leyda Valley). Dusty aromas offset by lime, nettle and snap pea scents get this off to a good start. A direct, stony, mineraly palate with tangerine, bell pepper and jalapeño flavors finishes with a controlled level of pyrazinic bitterness. Broadbent Selections, Inc. **Best Buy.** —M.S.
abv: 13% **Price:** \$13

87 Aresti 2015 Trisquel Series Hualañé Costa Sauvignon Blanc (Curicó Valley). Aromas of nettle, sweat, green herbs and sea brine accent mineraly citrus scents. This offers a lean palate with salty, briny citrus flavors. A tangy, mineraly, lemony finish is the closing act. Italy Wines & Food Distributor, Inc. —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$17

87 Quintay 2015 Clava Reserve Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley). Fresh, mineraly aromas of lime and grass set up a linear palate with a modest texture. Flavors of citrus and green herbs are direct and fresh, while this turns slightly bitter on the finish. Regal Wine Imports Inc. **Best Buy.** —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$9

87 Quintay 2015 Q Grand Resrve Sauvignon Blanc (Casablanca Valley). Pungent aromas of wet stones, citrus fruits, grass and bell pepper are lively and intense. This has a crisp, clean palate and pyrazine-based flavors of nettle, bell pepper and lime. On the finish, it remains racy until the end. Regal Wine Imports Inc. **Best Buy.** —M.S.
abv: 13% **Price:** \$10

87 Santa Ema 2015 Amplus Sauvignon Blanc (Leyda Valley). Borderline vegetal aromas fold in powdery, yeasty notes that soften things up. This feels chunky, round and a bit oily. Flavors of green bean, bell pepper and lime are textbook Leyda Valley, while this finishes with peppery pyrazine notes. Guarachi Wine Partners. —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$16

87 Santa Ema 2015 Reserva Sauvignon Blanc (Leyda Valley). Some may find this coastal SB to be too green and vegetal, but that's cool-climate Leyda in a nutshell. Aromas of bell pepper and asparagus bring on the pyrazines, while in the mouth, this is spritzly and chunky. A reprise

MALBEC

90 Altamana 2014 Grande Reserve Malbec (Maule Valley). A full, loamy bouquet with mineral blackberry and cassis aromas is modern in style despite this coming from old Maule vines. A generous palate deals woody, toasty flavors of baked black plum and blackberry, while peppery spice and a hint of clove are prominent on an oak-driven finish. Drink through 2021. Kobrand. —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$18

88 Chilensis 2014 Reserva Estate Bottled Malbec (Maule Valley). For full review see page 16. *Best Buy.*
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$10

88 Pura 8 2014 Reserve Malbec (Rapel Valley). Ripe, rugged, leathery berry and plum aromas set up a tight, rubbery palate. This tastes good, albeit different than your average Malbec—it's a bit citrusy, with orange peel and reedy cherry and plum notes. On the finish this clamps down with tannic grip. MHW, Ltd. —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$16

87 Concha y Toro 2014 Reserva Casillero del Diablo Malbec (Central Valley). Although this opens with aromatic notes of inner tube and iodine, airing reveals dry herb scents and medicinal cherry and berry aromas. With proper weight and balance, this basic Malbec tastes of cherry cough drop and plum, with a dash of green herbs. Excelsior Wines. *Best Buy.* —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$11

86 Millaman 2014 Limited Reserve Malbec (Curicó Valley). Immediately this Malbec is defined by loud, toasty, overbearing oak. On the nose, it smells like vanilla, sawdust, campfire and creamy but generic black fruits. In the mouth, it's blocky, while heavy oak-influenced flavors of chocolatey mint and vanilla finish like an ice cream sundae. Niche Import Company. —M.S.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$18

SYRAH

93 Montes 2012 Folly Syrah (Colchagua Valley). One of Chile's ripest, most full-bodied Syrahs needs more time to fully strut its stuff. Aromas of graphite and coconut are prominent on a lush, boldly fruited bouquet. A highly concentrated palate allows for deep digging, while flavors of blackberry, black plum and raw oak turn savory and spicy as this breathes. An inky, powerful finish is appropriate. Drink through 2022. Guarachi Wine Partners. *Cellar Selection.* —M.S.
abv: 15.5% **Price:** \$90

93 Pangea 2011 Apalta Vineyard Syrah (Colchagua Valley). Complex aromas of cola, spice, patchouli and earthy berry fruits are highly

appealing. This feels totally complete and elastic, with earthy, savory berry flavors matched by briary spice notes and a hint of coffee. A composed finish is lusty but neither hot nor burning. Drink this nicely made modern Syrah through 2023. Austral Wines. *Editors' Choice.* —M.S.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$60

92 Concha y Toro 2011 Gravas del Maipo Syrah (Buin). Blackened spice aromas are affixed to blackberry and herbal scents on this full-bodied, saturated Maipo Syrah. In the mouth, this is big in every way, with bolstering acidity. Flavors of black plum, boysenberry and tomato bring spice and herbal notes into play, while the finish is juicy but not overly long, with notes of herbs, spice and oaky vanilla. Drink through 2020. Excelsior Wines. —M.S.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$150

91 Undurraga 2012 T.H. Terroir Hunter Syrah (Limari Valley). It's taken time, but Undurraga has finally hit paydirt with this Limarí Syrah. Cool, gritty aromas of black olive, herbs, asphalt, cassis and boysenberry are stacked and complex. This feels just plush enough, but with bracing acidity. Flavors of hard spices, pepper, wild herbs and leather blend with plum and berry notes prior to a savory, meaty, leathery finish. Drink through 2020. Testa Wines Of The World. —M.S.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$25

90 Echeverria 2011 Signature 1 Syrah (Maipo Valley). Cool, toasty aromas of minty oak, cigar box, herbs and eucalyptus leave little doubt that this is Chilean. A tight, solid palate offers herbal flavors of plum, tomato and mint. This tastes savory, saucy and a bit like good tomato sauce on the finish. Drink through 2019. Ararat Import/Export Co. LLC. —M.S.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$80

CARIGNAN

89 Luis Felipe Edwards 2012 Cien 100 Ancient Vines Carignan (Maule Valley). Gritty but ripe and earthy dark-fruit aromas are spicy and alert. This Carignan from centenary vines feels angular and slightly acidic and tannic. Toasty oak flavors complement plum fruit, while this is bright, fresh and racy on the finish. Domaine Select Wine & Spirits. —M.S.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$35

88 Undurraga 2012 T.H. Terroir Hunter Carignan (Maule Valley). Soupy, rustic aromas of tomato and herbs feed into a scratchy palate with juicy, borderline raw acidity. Flavors of baked plum, peppercorn and brown sugar finish herbal and spicy. Testa Wines Of The World. —M.S.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** \$25

86 Odfjell 2013 Orzada Made With Organic Grapes Carignan (Maule Valley). Soft aromas akin to grape juice concentrate form the open-

ing. A jammy, obtuse mouthfeel holds herbal blueberry aromas that lean in the direction of green. A softly textured finish closes out this purple-tinted Carignan. Epic Wines. —M.S.
abv: 15% **Price:** \$21

83 Kenos 2013 Carignan (Curicó Valley). Horsey, grassy berry aromas are unconvincing. This is plump but also edgy in feel, with a pronounced but weird buttery oak flavor and marginal fruit character. A leafy, oaky finish includes notes of stalky berry and plum. The Triton Collection. —M.S.
abv: 13.1% **Price:** \$10

83 Mancura 2012 Reserva Guardián Carignan (Maule Valley). A hard, grinding scent of road tar is out front on a mostly fruitless nose. This feels choppy and in search of balance. Gritty, herbaceous plum flavors finish with only modest fruit notes. Casa Vino. —M.S.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$12

PINOT NOIR

88 Cono Sur 2014 Organic Pinot Noir (Colchagua Valley). Dry, spicy, earthy red-fruit aromas lead to a fresh palate with good body. Plum and spiced cherry flavors extend only so far, while this tasty little wine finishes dry, spicy and with a dusting of cocoa. Vineyard Brands. —M.S.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$14

88 Ventisquero 2014 Reserva Pinot Noir (Casablanca Valley). Dry, spicy, leafy berry aromas are light while setting up an equally fresh palate. Standard plum, cherry and spice flavors hardly tip the scale, while this remains fresh, clean and short on the finish. San Francisco Wine Exchange. *Best Buy.* —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$13

87 Chilensis 2014 Reserva Estate Bottled Pinot Noir (Maule Valley). A note of brine rests on top on an otherwise dry, earthy, red-fruit bouquet. Punchy tannins create mild pinch, while earthy plum flavors carry a note of leather. A crisp, zesty finish with mild oak and spice notes closes this out. Old Bridge Cellars. *Best Buy.* —M.S.
abv: 14% **Price:** \$10

86 Viña Requingua 2014 Puerto Viejo Single Vineyard Reserve Pinot Noir (Maule Valley). Gritty cherry aromas with a tarry background come before a snappy, juicy, racy palate. This is a quick, tart, slightly salty wine with mild but fresh plum and currant fruit. The finish goes so fast it barely registers. Puerto Viejo Wines. *Best Buy.* —M.S.
abv: 13.5% **Price:** \$10

RED BLENDS

92 Almaviva 2012 Red (Puente Alto). Warm-vintage characteristics of earthy berry aro-