



ULTIMATE WINE CHALLENGE

LIKE NO OTHER COMPETITION

2015 Ultimate Wine Challenge

Tried & True Award

Ultimate Wine Challenge lists below the **Tried & True Award** recipients for 2014. Products that were entered into UWC 2014 and a minimum of two prior UWCs and have scored 85 or higher each time, are **recognized for consistency of product quality** with this new award.



A note on the icons:

 **Product Image:** to assist you with visual identification, we've included an image for each product evaluated. (Please note that age statements, vintages or label may vary slightly from the specific product evaluated but it represents a helpful portrayal of the brand.) *Click icon to view.*

Champagne/Sparkling Wines

Champagne - France

Award	Score
Finalist	93 Moet & Chandon Imperial Brut Rose Epernay (France), \$55.00

Visual effect of the mesmerizing pale rose color is memorable. First inhalations feature subtle fragrances of ripe peach, nectarine, pink grapefruit, black grapes, raisins. Taste profile highlights the orchard fruit freshness and tanginess that's both acidic and moderately tannic, but dazzlingly concentrated on grapiness. Finishes long and languid. **Great Value.**

Excellent, Highly Recommended

Finalist	92 Moet & Chandon Grand Vintage Brut Rose 2006 Epernay (France), \$65.00
Carries an onionskin hue with flecks of copper. The nose is floral and spicy, bringing to mind cinnamon and chrysanthemum. The mouth is soft and delicate, leading way to crushed raspberry fruits and a touch of preserved orange. Excellent, Highly Recommended	

Finalist	92 Moet & Chandon Imperial Brut Epernay (France), \$41.00
Pale straw tone. Mineral, limestone aromas on the nose. Apple tastes on the palate, an appealing hint of crisp pear character also come across. Bubbles are fine while a stony minerality is apparent. An excellent bubbly for all occasions. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended	

91	Moet & Chandon Grand Vintage Brut 2006 Epernay (France), \$60.00
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Frothy mousse gives away to Granny Smith apples and a chalky minerality. Dry, bracing and invigorating, the razor sharp, bright acidity wakes up the palate and primes it for food. This wine offers fine, needle point bubbles. The ideal aperitif. Excellent, Highly Recommended

Champagne/Sparkling Wines

Prosecco - Italy

Award	Score
Finalist	93 Zonin Prosecco Veneto (Italy), \$14.99

Pale straw-colored, this softly effervescent prosecco is bursting with fresh aromas of summer fruits and flowers. Easy-drinking at a pleasant 11% ABV, it's crisp and refreshing on the palate, with a hint of minerality and a nice, clean finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Champagne/Sparkling Wines

Sparkling – USA

Award	Score
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Chairman's Trophy

95 **Domaine Carneros by Taittinger Le Reve 2008**

Carneros (United States), \$105.00

Bright, tornado-like effervescence. Toasted opening scents marry ripe grapes, dry earthiness, and lemongrass into a powerfully structured bouquet that's sublime and multilayered. Taste profile accents the acidic crispness which is the featured flavor highlight that lends a pleasing freshness throughout the whole in-mouth experience. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

91 **Chateau Frank Blanc de Noirs 2009 Finger**

Lakes (United States), \$29.99

This bubbly is bursting with fruit character, from the apricots on the nose to the citrus and red berries on the palate. It also shows notes of bread yeast and vanilla for a rich, mouth-filling effect.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

90 **Chateau Frank Blanc de Blancs 2009 Finger**

Lakes (United States), \$29.99

This is a wine that possesses dynamic bubbles and a near crunchy texture. Chalky minerals exude from the glass and continue on the palate, along with Granny Smith apples and cranberries. A bone-dry bubbly with razor sharp acidity.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

87 **Barefoot Bubbly Pink Moscato California**

(United States), \$9.99

White peaches and meyer lemon offer a balanced aroma. Tart and lightly sweet, it is fruity on the palate with hints of lemon candy and white flowers. The texture is light with a soft bubble.

Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation

86 Barefoot Bubbly Moscato Spumante California (United States), \$9.99

Medium-large bubbles break surface in molten storms. Aroma is fresh, intensely fruity and ripe, peppery, citrusy, vividly orange blossom-like. Flavors explode on the tongue, including green apple, white grapes, blood orange, tangerine, pineapple. Brief finish is crisp and fresh. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 Barefoot Bubbly Brut Cuvee California (United States), \$9.99

A cheerful nose with plenty of pears, guava and floral aromas mixing in the glass. Tart and vibrant on the tongue with chalky minerals and clean peachy fruit. This zippy wine is tangy and refreshing. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Champagne/Sparkling Wines

Sparkling - World

Award	Score
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Finalist	91 Rotari Rose Trento (Italy), \$14.99
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On the nose it is a wonderful display of sweet red berries and savory aromas of dried oregano, ripe tomato, and pink peppercorn. On the palate it has a fine mousse and more red berry fruits backed by minerals and a savory edge. The finish is dry, crisp, and mineral with red berries. **Great Value.**

Excellent, Highly Recommended

Finalist	90 JCB by Jean Charles Boisset No. 21 Cremant de Bourgogne (France), \$25.00
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A fragrant floral nose gives way to bright green apple aromas. Crisp citrus and more green apple carry on through to the palate. Tongue-tickling bubbles are small and persistent, and a stony minerality makes it the perfect aperitif. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

White Wines

Chardonnay - World

Award	Score
Finalist	92 Black Stallion Estate Winery Chardonnay 2013 Napa Valley (United States), \$18.99 Pale straw tone with flecks of gold-green. Heady oak character comes through on the nose. Palate is opulent and plush. Balanced citrus acidity balances the rich character of this wine. The finish lingers long after the last mouthful. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	92 Rodney Strong Chardonnay 2013 Sonoma County (United States), \$17.00 Peaches and cream leap from the glass followed by more delicate hints of apples, blossom, and toasted oak. Oak is present on the palate with orange marmalade, apples, minerals and the finish is lengthy, warm, and citrus fruit runs rampant. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	92 Rodney Strong Estate Chardonnay 2013 Chalk Hill (United States), \$22.00 The nose is delightfully restrained with chalky minerals, lime zest, sweet nectarine, and pear. On the palate it is fresh with pear, citrus, zesty barrel spice, and pineapple. Pineapple returns on the finish with minerals and lime. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
	91 Davis Bynum River West Single Vineyard Chardonnay 2013 Russian River Valley (United States), \$25.00 Rich. nose of apple tart, roasted salted almonds, pineapple stalk, and caramel. The palate features baked apples, pear skin, a touch of toasted oak, and vanilla bean and leads into a toasty, rich finish. Excellent, Highly Recommended

91 **Gnarly Head Chardonnay 2013 California
(United States), \$9.99**

Clear with a hint of delicate straw color. Nose shows candied fruit and ripe berries such as blackberries and raspberries. The palate verges on sweet and is intense with ripe fruit flavors. Luscious, juicy and honeyed. **Great Value.**
Excellent, Highly Recommended

90 **Bota Box Chardonnay 2013 California (United States), \$22.99, 3L Box**

Ripe pears burst on the nose of this lively quencher. Citrus fruits join the Rosaceae family of fruits to make this a zinger of a wine. Mouth-watering and easy to drink with the kind of acidity that sings for food. **Great Value. Excellent,**
Highly Recommended

90 **HandCraft Chardonnay 2013 California (United States), \$11.99**

Oaky and menthol nose with a gorgeous floral fragrance. There is a hint of sweetness here, with zingy acidity and a mouthful of citrus and ripe nectarine. This lovely quaffer is an instantly likeable wine that sings of spring and summer flowers and fruits. **Great Value. Excellent,**
Highly Recommended

90 **La Merika Chardonnay 2013 Central Coast (United States), \$12.99**

Offers a tempting oaky nose delivered with a touch of spearmint. Delivers gorgeous bright acidity that is reminiscent of orange skins. White flowers and vanilla seeds permeate the palate. A bright and thoroughly and cheerful wine. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

88 **J. Lohr Arroyo Vista Chardonnay 2013 Arroyo Seco (United States), \$25.00**

A pale straw yellow in the glass with enticing orchard fruit, biscuit dough, and lemon zest. On the palate it is voluptuous with crème brûlée, mango, and subtle hints of citrus and minerals. The finish is ripe, round, and soft. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

88 **Robert Mondavi Private Selection Chardonnay 2013 Central Coast (United States), \$11.00**

Tropical melon, preserved lemons, almonds, and a toasty spice comprise the bouquet. The palate is rich and ripe with butter, mango, toast, and sweet spice that linger on a round, toasty finish.

Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation

87 **Irony Chardonnay 2013 Russian River Valley (United States), \$24.95**

Lime and mango aromas jump from the glass, joined by mouth-watering fruits on the palate, including passion and star fruit, with a herbal edge. All fruit characters progress into the finish to give a symphony of flavors. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

86 **Domino Chardonnay 2013 California (United States), \$7.49**

A deep toasty oaked nose, with a hint of eau-de-cologne. A bold and assertive wine that reveals buttery-rich character with the aforementioned oak on the palate. Lovely bright fruit enliven the big oak flavors, while the finish is filled with radiant oranges. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 **Alexander Valley Vineyards Estate Chardonnay
2013 Alexander Valley (United States), \$18.00**

Straw color with a gold hued core. Charred new oak and citrus aromas, with fresh apple hints. The palate is like biting into a fresh Red Delicious apple. The texture is rounded, and the bright fruit pervades. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 **Barefoot Cellars Chardonnay California (United States), \$6.99**

This fresh and fruity chardonnay gives off summertime areas of peaches and honey. In the mouth, it's lush yet tart, with notes of green apple, butter and vanilla. Soft melon and yellow pear linger on the finish. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 **J. Lohr October Night Chardonnay 2013 Arroyo Seco (United States), \$25.00**

Fresh and lively nose of coconut, key lime, Anjou pear, and blossom. The palate is full and round with lush orchard fruits and citrus pith leading into a juicy, mineral-laden finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

White Wines

Sauvignon Blanc - World

Award	Score
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Chairman's Trophy	95 Rodney Strong Charlotte's Home Sauvignon Blanc 2013 Northern Sonoma County (United States), \$17.00
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Fresh and fruity nose reminiscent of white peach, apricot blossom, lemon skin, and minerals. There is a light spritz on the palate with peach and clementine zest and a mineral backbone. The finish is crisp, fresh, and squeaky clean. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

91 Harbor Town Sauvignon Blanc 2014

Marlborough (New Zealand), \$12.99

This refreshing and easy-drinking sauvignon blanc shows typical characteristics of grassy and tropical fruit aromas. On the palate, it's juicy and tart, with notes of white peach and soft melon. A perfect patio sipper. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 The Crossings Sauvignon Blanc 2014

Marlborough (New Zealand), \$14.99

An invigorating bouquet of lime zest and fresh herbs bursts forth from the glass. In the mouth, this sauvignon blanc is juicy and lively, with plenty of fresh lime juice, gooseberry and a hint of pepper on the finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

88 Barefoot Cellars Sauvignon Blanc California

(United States), \$6.99

Typical varietal notes of "green" come through on this sauvignon blanc: fresh herbs, lime juice. On the palate, it's all tart passion fruit, ripe melon and white peaches. A lush yet lively wine full of fresh, zingy flavors. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 Cannonball Sauvignon Blanc 2014 Sonoma

County (United States), \$14.99

Round aromas of apples and grapefruit zest and vibrant on the nose. Ripe white grapefruit and apple flesh are ripe and tangy in the mouth. The piquant body is punctuated with citrus zest and a hint of sweet young grass. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 **Nitty Gritty Sauvignon Blanc 2014 Napa Valley
(United States), \$13.99**

An inviting nose of fresh herbs and white pepper give way to a lush mouth of ripe melon, tart citrus and a prickle of spice on the finish. Juicy and lively, laced with a fine mineral focus throughout.

Very Good, Strong Recommendation

White Wines

Riesling - World

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy 94 **Dr. Konstantin Frank Semi-Dry Riesling 2013
Finger Lakes (United States), \$14.99**

Super aromatic, boasting lychee and rose flower water. Roses continue on the palate in the form of rose petal jam, joined by Seville oranges and Turkish apricots. Contains lovely juicy acidity to balance out the sweetness. **Great Value.**

Excellent, Highly Recommended

Finalist 91 **Dr. Konstantin Frank Riesling 2013 Finger
Lakes (United States), \$24.99**

Ripe peaches and nectarines are heady on the nose. Slightly oily on the palate, this richly textured and deeply flavored wine remains bright with meyer lemon and steely minerals while the ripe stone fruit unfurls with a hint of sweetness. Fresh and balanced. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

88 **Wagner Vineyards Estate Grown & Estate
Bottled Semi-Dry Riesling 2012 Finger Lakes
(United States), \$14.99**

Bright and steely aromas of stone fruit and citrus are juicy. A gentle spritz on the tongue is a welcome accent to the complex flavors of peach, tangerine and petrol. A rich texture leaves a slight tingle on the tongue on the long aromatic finish. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 **Barefoot Cellars Riesling California (United States), \$6.99**

Fresh and juicy aromas of tangerine, apple blossom, white peach, and lime rise from the glass. Sweet but balanced with opulent tangerine and stone fruit flavors on the palate. The finish is wonderfully delicate. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 **Wagner Vineyards Estate Grown & Estate Bottled Select Riesling 2013 Finger Lakes (United States), \$14.99**

Heady and floral with honeysuckle, lavender, jasmine, lime zest, and dried apricot on the nose. On the palate it is fresh with juicy apricot, quince, and minerals with a touch of sweetness. It finishes dry with stone fruits and citrus oil. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

White Wines

Pinot Grigio/Pinot Gris - World

Award	Score	
Chairman's Trophy	94	Dr. Konstantin Frank Pinot Gris 2013 Finger Lakes (United States), \$19.99 Intriguing steely mineral aromas abound on the lightly pungent nose. On the palate it is fresh and ripe with Anjou pears, varied ripe citrus, and white flowers, all integrated cleanly. A soft and pretty wine. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	91	Domino Pinot Grigio 2013 California (United States), \$7.49 Delicate and peachy on the nose with intriguing floral and citrus aromatics as well. Crisp and clean on the palate with equally delicate peach and stone flavors. A wonderfully crisp and dry finish ensues. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

White Wines

Muscat/Moscato/Moscatel – World

Award	Score
87	Barefoot Cellars Moscato California (United States), \$6.99
	Very floral and fruity on the nose with peach, honeysuckle, key lime pie, and passion fruit. On the palate it is soft and sweet with more peach and citrus fruits. There are minerals here as well. Juicy and playful on the finish with sweet peach and citrus. Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation
87	Twisted Moscato 2013 California (United States), \$7.99
	Candied mango, orange marmalade, fresh fig, and Meyer lemon draw you in with delicate floral aromatics also present. Playful and sweet on the palate with sweet nectarine and apricot leading into a finish dotted by tropical fruit, citrus, and minerals. Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation
86	Domino Moscato 2013 California (United States), \$7.49
	Pale yellow in the glass with aromas of overripe peach, grape skin, and orange blossom with enticing hints of mint. Round and sweet on the palate with broad tropical fruit character and welcome citrus presence. Elegant and sweet on the finish punctuated by citrus. Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation

White Wines

Sweet White Wines - World

Award	Score
Finalist	91 Barefoot Refresh Sweet White California (United States), \$7.99
	Candied lime and kiwi burst from the glass. Bright lemon and sweet candied apple and citrus with floral undertones are sweet and spritzy on the tongue. The dry finish is enhanced by a gentle chalky minerality. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

White Wines

Assorted Whites - Italy

Award	Score
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Chairman's Trophy	93 Barone Fini Pinot Grigio 2013 Valdadige (Italy), \$11.99
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Pale ecru/oyster color is bright and pure. Fresh, crisp and tart fragrance highlights minerals, dry earth, as in arid desert, fruit stone. Taste profile is long on finesse and intense grapiness. Concludes medium long in the throat, tart, acidic. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

88 Mezzacorona Pinot Grigio 2014 Vignetti delle Dolomiti (Italy), \$8.99

A canary yellow wine with light golden flecks. Aromas of dried grass and lemon zest are earthy. Ripe meyer lemon and herbs mix with flinty minerals on the bright palate. Subtle honeysuckle notes round out each sip. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 Cavit Moscato 2014 Provincia di Pavia (Italy), \$8.99

Slightly floral aromas mix with green apple and piquant citrus. Bubbly on the tongue and sweet, with flavors of ripe yellow and white peaches. A light honey syrup flavor continues throughout the long sweet finish. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 Cavit Chardonnay 2013 Trentino (Italy), \$8.99

A burst of green apple, yellow pear, and lemon-lime comes through on the nose. On the palate, it's more fruit, a mix of citrus and tree fruit, with a fine salinity along the edges. Crisp and refreshing. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

**86 VOGA Italia Pinot Grigio 2013 Delle Venezie
(Italy), \$10.99**

On the nose this yellow wine with green flecks offers aromas of pears, and hints of barely ripe pineapple. Clean and focused on the palate with tangy green apple that turns into rounded minerals. The lingering finish leaves the mouth pleasantly dry. **Very Good, Strong**

Recommendation

**85 Ca' Montini Pinot Grigio 2013 Valdadige (Italy),
\$14.99**

Pale yellow color is pretty and shimmering. Dry aromas open up with faint hints of yeast and bread dough then with further air contact they morph into a grapy, ambrosial bouquet. There's plenty of stony, mineral-like aspects in the flavor that carry over into the keenly dry, tart, almost astringent aftertaste. **Very Good, Strong**

Recommendation

White Wines

Assorted Whites - Portugal

Award

Score

**Finalist 92 Monte da Ravasqueria Reserva Branco 2013
Alentejo (Portugal), \$16.00**

Heady and tropical aromas of lychee, mango, kiwi, and pineapple stalk fill the nose. The palate is more delicate with citrus and salty minerals which lead onto a very fresh and crisp finish.

Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

**85 Estreia Branco 2014 Vinho Verde (Portugal),
\$8.99**

A pleasantly pungent wine bursting with flowers and tropical fruit aromas. A lively spritz on the tongue reveals more flowers and juicy pear flavors. It remains light and clean throughout, with a slight chalky finish. **Very Good, Strong**

Recommendation

White Wines

Assorted Whites - Spain

Award	Score
	86 Marques de Riscal White Wine 2014 Rueda (Spain), \$10.99
	<p>More herbals aromas than anything else make this an earthy nose. A slight spritz on the palate adds freshness to the intensely mineral core which is supported by white grapefruit flesh, kiwi and light basil flavors. Very Good, Strong</p> <p>Recommendation</p>
Red Wines	
Cabernet Sauvignon - World	
Award	Score
Chairman's Trophy	96 J. Lohr Carol's Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 Napa Valley (United States), \$40.00 <p>Black plum and hints of green vegetation mingle on the nose. Velvety and rich on the palate, it offers flavors of concentrated blackcurrants, green forest twigs and lightly toasted vanilla custard. The finish is dry with a smooth leathery texture. Extraordinary, Ultimate</p> <p>Recommendation</p>
Finalist	94 J. Lohr Hilltop Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 Paso Robles (United States), \$35.00 <p>Roasted cranberry and dried pomegranate seed aromas suggest a concentrated and powerful wine. On the palate it is incredibly concentrated with rich and deep fruit, cocoa, and light roasted coffee bean. Long lasting complexity. Excellent, Highly Recommended</p>
Finalist	93 Rodney Strong Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 Alexander Valley (United States), \$28.00 <p>Aromas of mixed plums and vanilla are warm on the nose. In the mouth it is soft and round with flavors of dried herbs and black fruit. A long finish is characterized by toasted vanilla and charred firewood. Excellent, Highly Recommended</p>

- 91 **Chateau Ste. Michelle Canoe Ridge Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 Horse Heaven Hills (United States), \$28.00**

Cedar and sage come to mind as well as sun baked olives, ripe damson plum, and cassis. On the palate it is mouth-coating and ripe with ample blackberry and toasty spice. The tannins are a bit green, but balanced and fruit lingers on the finish.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

- 91 **Midsummer Cellars Canon Creek Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 Napa Valley (United States), \$75.00**

Baked plum, dried black cherry, summer berry pie, and eucalyptus aromas leap from the glass. On the palate, stewed plum, cocoa, herbs, and dark cherries abound which lead into an equally rich finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 91 **Rodney Strong Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 Sonoma County (United States), \$20.00**

Rich nose with smoke, pepper, and an abundance of ripe red berry fruits. Barrel spice and chocolate come forward on the palate and the wine finishes sultry, smooth, and fruit-forward. **Great Value.**

Excellent, Highly Recommended

- 90 **Josh Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 Napa Valley (United States), \$14.99**

Brambly fruit character, with cocoa powder in the perfume and palate. Sumptuous and rich in flavor and texture. Sweet fruit character charges the taste and leaves a haunting hint of dark fruit and bittersweet chocolate. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 90 **Midsummer Cellars Clark-Claudon Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 Napa Valley (United States), \$65.00**

Possesses a stunning nose of blackcurrant skins and juice. Stemmy tannins poke through the palate with big, bold flavors of berries, bittersweet chocolate and oak. The oak marries all the flavors and textures nicely and the finish is long and persistent. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 88 **Trapiche Oak Cask Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 Mendoza (Argentina), \$13.99**

Classic and full bouquet of dried flowers, cassis, blackberry jam, toasted oak, and spice. The palate is fruit-forward with blackberry jam mingling with spicy oak and toasted coconut. On the finish, soft fruit and toast marry well. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 87 **Gnarly Head Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 California (United States), \$11.99**

A well-integrated nose of fresh black currant, black raspberry, blueberry, and toasted coconut. The palate is soft and fruity with loads of red raspberry, blackberry, vanilla, and a touch of earth. The finish is smooth, dry, and fruit-forward. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 87 **HandCraft Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 California (United States), \$11.99**

Ripe aromas of cassis, strawberry compote, green herbs, and pipe tobacco mingle on the nose. Marinated plum and blackberry are on the palate with silky tannins and a rich bite of toasted oak. Fresh fruit and jam linger on the palate. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 87 **Nordby Vineyards "Il Re" Cabernet Sauvignon**
2008 Red Hills Lake County (United States),
\$37.00

Very aromatic with notes of pine, tar, smoky black currant, blood orange, and thyme. On the palate it is rich and savory with blackberry jam, earth, mineral, and black pepper. The finish is lush, yet savory, with leather, and cigar box. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 86 **Black Stallion Estate Winery Cabernet Sauvignon 2012 Napa Valley (United States),**
\$29.99

Deep, oaky spice mingles with cassis, blackberry compote, pine resin, and smoky beef on the nose. Rich and full-bodied on the palate with cedar, smoke, blackberry preserves, and black cherry on the palate. The finish is velvety and smooth. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 86 **Santa Carolina Reserva Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 Colchagua Valley (Chile),**
\$10.99

Strong aromas of cassis, minerals and green pepper waft from the glass. Chocolatey berries with notes of jalapeno are nicely layered and well integrated in the medium leathery texture. The earthy green pepperiness lingers long on the finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 86 **Twisted Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 California (United States), \$7.99**

A deep purple robe envelopes aromas of dark purple berries, dried violet, cassis, and black pepper. Juicy and slightly sweet with ripe black currant and vanilla flavors. The finish is soft, floral, and fruity. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

**85 Bota Box Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 California
(United States), \$22.99, 3L Box**

Bold red cherry, cinnamon, blood orange, and goji berry aromas fill the nose. Rich and full of opulent red berry fruits and cocoa powder, this is well-structured within elegant and fruit-forward finish.

Great Value. Very Good, Strong

Recommendation

Red Wines

Pinot Noir - World

Award	Score
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- Finalist 94 **Rodney Strong Estate Pinot Noir 2013 Russian River Valley (United States), \$25.00**

Bright red cherry, goji berry, and strawberry compote aromas fill the nose. Also a touch of blossom. Clementine zest and red raspberry marry well on the palate along with strawberry and chalky minerals. The finish is bright and juicy.

Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

- Finalist 93 **Davis Bynum Jane's Vineyard Single Vineyard Pinot Noir 2013 Russian River Valley (United States), \$35.00**

Pale ruby color. Toffee, cherries and oak in the perfume. Spicy and woody palate with hints of caramel and Bing cherries. Light tannins and bright acidity sing on that palate, while the finish ends with juicy cherries. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 91 **Irony Pinot Noir 2013 Russian River Valley (United States), \$29.95**

Toasted marshmallow, vanilla and berry preserves abound in the rich aromas. In the mouth the ripe berry fruit is rounded with accents of cola and vanilla. A silken texture adds to the luxuriousness of this well aromatic wine. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **La Merika Pinot Noir 2013 Central Coast**

(United States), \$14.99

Enticing nose of strawberry liqueur, baked strawberry pie, pink peppercorn, and vanilla draws you in. The palate is bolstered by fresh red berry fruit and a delicate spice that leads into a soft and smooth finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **Noble Vines 667 Pinot Noir 2013 Monterey**

(United States), \$14.99

Bright ruby with purple flecks in the glass with and ripe nose of baked tart cherries, red plum, oaky spice, and toasted coconut. Well-integrated fruit and silky tannins are paired with an elegant acidity on the palate and it finishes strong. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 **HandCraft Pinot Noir 2013 California (United**

States), \$11.99

Ripe red cherry, damson plum, rose petal, and strawberry on the nose give way to luscious red cherry, cinnamon, and strawberry on the palate. The finish is stained with red berry fruits and spice. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

89 **Robert Mondavi Private Selection Pinot Noir**

2013 California (United States), \$11.00

Brick red and bursting with red cherry, oaky spice, dried cranberry, and toasted coconut. The palate is soft and smooth with red berry fruits, sweet spice, and a touch of smoke and the finish lingers on the palate with fresh fruit. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 **Gnarly Head Pinot Noir 2013 California (United States), \$11.99**

Soft and restrained on the nose with red currant, goji berry, red flowers, and toasted coconut. The palate is fresh and juicy with red plum, bing cherry, baked peach, and a touch of tangerine. The finish is fruity and smooth. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 **Domaine Carneros Pinot Noir 2012 Carneros (United States), \$36.00**

Elegant nose of ripe red plum, red raspberry, vanilla, salty cured beef, and roasted cherries. Rich and smooth on the palate with berries and toasted oak balanced by spice and minerals. The finish is bright, fruity, and fresh. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Red Wines

Merlot - World

Award	Score
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Chairman's Trophy	96 Rodney Strong Merlot 2012 Sonoma County (United States), \$20.00
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Boysenberries and minerals are elegant on the nose. Sweet ripe plums and berries give way to baking spices, minerals, fresh young herbs and then turn into a toasted oak with vanilla ornaments. Smooth and silky through the finish.

Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

88 Alexander Valley Vineyards Estate Merlot 2012

Alexander Valley (United States), \$20.00

Garnet color is brilliant and almost opaque. First nosings pick up subtle hints of Bing cherry, eucalyptus, and dry soil then with additional aeration the bouquet rounds out into a cherry preserves banquet that's lovely and slightly herbal. The herbaceous quality accelerates on palate as the taste profile turns seriously earthy, herbal, cocoa-like, and even chocolaty. A bigger, deeper style of merlot that is scrumptious. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 Barefoot Cellars Merlot California (United States), \$6.99

A lightly pungent nose offers aromas of plums and berry jam. Ripe in the mouth with more berries and a slightly candied note. The structure is firm with grippy tannins and woody spice that leave the mouth dusty and dry. **Great Value.**

Very Good, Strong Recommendation

86 Bota Box Merlot 2013 California (United States), \$22.99, 3L Box

A lightly fragrant nose of plums and cooked earth. Juicy and ripe on the palate with red plums and red berry preserves and hints of new spring green leaves. A gentle minerality carries through to the smooth and easy finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Red Wines

Shiraz/Syrah - World

Award

Score

86 **Barefoot Cellars Shiraz California (United States), \$6.99**

Candied blackberry, blueberry jam, orange marmalade, and dried plum and violet on the nose. Juicy and dark with blackberry jam, rich oak and toasted coconut, and dried flowers on that palate hint at the jammy, fruity finish that ensues.

Great Value. Very Good, Strong

Recommendation

Red Wines

Zinfandel - USA

Award **Score**

Finalist 93 **Rodney Strong Knotty Vines Zinfandel 2012 Northern Sonoma County (United States), \$25.00**

Garnet hue and ruby rim appearance. Dark oak dominates the nose, while big, jammy, cooked fruits attack the palate. Morello cherry confiture, blackcurrant jam and cocoa powder all linger in the mouth. The tannins are rather soft and luscious in this full-bodied and gutsy wine. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 **Brazin (B)old Vine Zinfandel 2012 Lodi (United States), \$16.99**

Sage and alpine herbs mingle with baked plum and red cherry notes on the nose. Oaky spice, vanilla bean, ripe red plum and baked cherries on the palate lead into a soft, vanillin, and fruit-forward finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

85 **Gnarly Head Old Vine Zinfandel 2013 Lodi (United States), \$11.99**

Complex aromas offer layers of coffee beans, red and black fruits and dried herbs. Medium rich in the mouth with piquant red fruits and deep earthy concentration. The charred earth and dried herbs flavors continue through the finish integrated with the smooth tannins. **Very Good, Strong**

Recommendation

Red Wines

Cabernet Franc - World

Award	Score
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89	Alexander Valley Vineyards Estate Cabernet Franc 2013 Alexander Valley (United States), \$28.00
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A rich and spicy nose full of green bell pepper and jalapeno. The earthy peppers are coated in raspberry puree on the palate followed by considerable spice of both red chilies and black pepper. Leathery tannins are between smooth and rustic. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Red Wines

Petite Sirah - World

Award	Score
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85	HandCraft Petite Sirah 2013 California (United States), \$11.99
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Dark purple with a blue rim in the glass with telltale aromas of blackberry, cool blueberry, sweet smoke, and earth. On the palate it is jammy with blackberry jam, dried flowers, and sweet spice giving way to a fruit-forward and rich finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Red Wines

Red Blends - North America

Award	Score
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Finalist

- 93 **Rodney Strong Symmetry Red Meritage 2012
Alexander Valley (United States), \$55.00**

Cassis and black raspberry are rich and dark on the nose. Equally concentrated in the mouth, the fruit is dark and intense, enhanced by charred wood and mineral rich soil. A hint of earthy mushroom and herbs comes through on the spicy finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Finalist

- 92 **J. Lohr Cuvee St. E 2011 Paso Robles (United States), \$50.00**

Leafy, savory, and powerful nose dotted with stewed plum and sweet red cherries. On the palate it is unctuous and rich with heavy blackberry fruits, ripe plum, tar, and sweet oak. The finish is semisweet with ample fruit.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

- 91 **J. Lohr Cuvee Pau 2011 Paso Robles (United States), \$50.00**

Toasted coffee beans with dried blackberries. Velvety smooth with fresh integrated tannins create a plush texture. The flavors are luscious with very ripe black plums and berries and hints of mint peeking through as accents. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 88 **Gnarly Head Authentic Red 2013 Lodi (United States), \$11.99**

Pomegranate and burnt molasses mingle with red berries on the nose. Sweet ripe fruit bursts on the palate followed by savory earth and smoky chocolate-covered cranberry. The complex layers are well balanced in the full and firm body. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

88 J. Lohr Cuvee Pom 2011 Paso Robles (United States), \$50.00

Red raspberries with mineral rich soil characterize the aromas. Ripe bing cherry and red berries are sweet alongside a considerable mace spice. Dusty dried herbs emerge before finishing with rounded gentle vanilla spiked coffee flavors. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 Chateau Ste. Michelle Artist Series Meritage 2011 Columbia Valley (United States), \$60.00

Deep and chocolatey on the nose with dark berry fruits, sweet smoke, and spice. It is at first ripe and plummy on the palate with delicate flavors of tobacco and chocolate mingling deeper. Sweet, smooth, and fruity on the finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Red Wines

Assorted Reds - France

Award	Score
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Finalist	94 Barton & Guestier Chateau Magnol 2012 Haut-Medoc (France), \$24.99
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Telling notes of black currant, cedar, pipe tobacco, and cracked black pepper on the nose. The palate shows restraint with dark fruits balanced by savory herbs and a toasted spice. The finish lingers with blackberry and a touch of coffee bean. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Red Wines

Assorted Reds - Italy

Award	Score
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- 90 **Stemmari Nero d'Avola 2012 Sicily (Italy), \$8.99**

Blackberry jam, rose petal, dried rosemary, and cured meats come to mind on the nose with a subtle hint of spice. Medium-to full-bodied with baked berry fruit, minerals, and black cherry on the palate with ripe tannins leading to a smooth finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 87 **Mezzacorona Pinot Noir Vignetti delle Dolomiti (Italy), \$8.99**

Bright red cherry, red plum, hibiscus, and beet root leap from the glass accompanied by a subtle savory edge. Smooth and elegant with silky tannins and ripe red berry fruits on the palate before finishing with ripe fruit and a hint of sweet spice. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 86 **Villa Pozzi Nero d'Avola 2013 Terre Siciliane (Italy), \$9.99**

Dark and earthy on the nose with aromas of plum, mushroom and mineral rich soil. Plummy on the palate with plush berries underscored by thyme and oregano. A bright tanginess keeps each sip refreshing and clean. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Red Wines

Assorted Reds - Portugal

Award	Score
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- 89 **Monte da Ravasqueria Reserva Tinto 2013 Alentejo (Portugal), \$16.00**

Charred blackberry, crushed cocoa nib and dried hibiscus offer a dark toned aroma. The palate opens with incredible brightness and ripe berries followed by baker's chocolate and charred wood. The leathery texture is rustic and dry. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

**87 Fonte da Serrana Tinto 2014 Alentejo
(Portugal), \$7.99**

Wildberries and mace characterize the pungent aromas of this wine. High toned flavors of red raspberry, just barely ripe strawberry, and red cherry are tart and crisp. Fine tannins create a smooth and silky mouthfeel. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Red Wines

Assorted Reds - Spain

Award **Score**

**92 Marques de Riscal Proximo 2010 Rioja (Spain),
\$10.99**

A complex nose of dark roasted coffee bean, cedar box and Concord grape aromas. Dark Boysenberries and blackcurrants dance on the palate, with a sumptuous dose of oak. The mature age of this wine is apparent on the palate. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

**88 Marques de Riscal Reserva 2010 Rioja (Spain),
\$17.99**

Carries a deep garnet hued robe. The exotic nose is reminiscent of chocolate covered raisins, rose petals and nutmeg spice. Baking spices continue on the palate along with Medjool dates, sweet oak flavors and soft tannins. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Rosé & Blush Wines

Rosés - Europe

Award **Score**

**Finalist 92 Stemmari Nero D'Avola 2014 Sicily (Italy),
\$9.99**

A pretty blush-colored rosé, you'll find plenty of forest fruit coming through on the nose. In the mouth, it's lively and juicy with tart fruit character and a fine mineral edge. A rather bracing acidity makes this a total food wine. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 86 **Chateau Leoube Secret de Leoube 2014 Cotes de Provence (France), \$31.88**

A pale salmon color in the glass, this rosé is brimming with pretty floral and wild berry aromas. In the mouth, it's full of citrus notes, with a savory, subtly herbaceous edge. An elegant minerality makes this wine ideal for pairing with food. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Rosé & Blush Wines

Rosés - North America

Award **Score**

- 85 **Midsummer Cellars Grenache Rose 2014 Yolo County (United States), \$19.00**

Pleasant and aromatic with summer strawberry, smashed red raspberry, orange blossom, and clove. On the palate it is round with plentiful red berry fruits, white peach, and minerals. The finish is dry and delicate with hints of watermelon and spice. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Dessert

Ice Wine/Eiswein – World

Award **Score**

- 87 **Wagner Vineyards Estate Grown & Estate Bottled Ice Vidal Blanc 2012 Finger Lakes (United States), \$24.99, 375 ml**

A bright and inviting set of aromas with stone fruit, honey, beeswax and fresh melon. In the mouth it is vibrant with meyer lemon, juicy peach and apricot, and honeyed flavors that carry through the mouthwatering finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Fortified

Sherry - Spain

Award **Score**

- Chairman's Trophy 97 **Barbadillo Obisco Gascon Palo Cortado Jerez-Xeres-Sherry (Spain), \$35.00**
- A baking spice laden nose full of roasted nut skin and toasted pine nuts. Savory and high toned flavors of toasted nuts develop into light coffee and butter crunch toffee. The finish is long, nutty and bone dry. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**
- Finalist 93 **Barbadillo Cuco Oloroso Seco Jerez-Xeres-Sherry (Spain), \$28.00**
- Spice cake, nutmeg, glazed carrots and date honey all unfurl on the nose. Dry in the mouth with bright toasted nuts, coffee beans and medium dark caramel all have a savory edge to them. Crisp and complex. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- Finalist 93 **Barbadillo Principe Amontillado Jerez-Xeres-Sherry (Spain), \$28.00**
- Cinnamon, figs and honey all mingle on the aromatic nose. More spice with roasted chestnuts develop on the layered palate and turn into charred hazelnuts and light coffee. Complex and long lasting in the mouth. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- Finalist 93 **Barbadillo La Cilla Pedro Ximenez Jerez-Xeres-Sherry (Spain), \$25.00**
- A striking balance of decadent molasses and baking spices and strong, earthy, umami oyster mushrooms on the nose. Also burnt orange peel and butter roasted nuts. Sumptuous and sweet on the palate with toffee and nutmeg charging onto the finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 Barbadillo San Rafael Oloroso Dulce Jerez-Xeres-Sherry (Spain), \$28.00

Dried fig, cinnamon and savory toasted nuts are sweetly aromatic on the nose. In the mouth it is reminiscent of light date syrup, baking spices and candied chestnuts. The flavors are long lasting and continue to change on the palate. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 Barbadillo Solear Manzanilla Sanlúcar de Barrameda (Spain), \$10.00, 375 ml

Lemon/lime citrus, baked apricot, astringent rhubarb, and toasted walnuts fill the glass. The palate is crisp and clean, skittle fruity at first, but giving way to roasted nuts, fresh butter, toast and a hint of mango skin on the finish. **Great Value.**

Excellent, Highly Recommended

Fortified

Porto - Portugal

Award

Score

88 W&J Graham's Six Grapes Reserve Port Douro (Portugal), \$25.00

The aromas are mixed between developed dried figs and fresh dark berries. Lavishly sweet on the tongue, balanced by dark flavors of baker's chocolate, dried blackberry and generous baking spices. Supple in texture with long lasting flavors.

Very Good, Strong Recommendation