

Wine Spectator Insider

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A Members-Only, Weekly Publication

THIS week's *Wine Spectator Insider* newsletter features outstanding wines from Chile and three regions of France. Bruce Sanderson reviews a lineup of 2006 Burgundy, confirming his impressions of the vintage when he tasted them from barrel. He reports that the best are ripe, charming and, for the most part, forward, with good acidity and fine tannins. Below is a selection from Nuits-St.-Georges, where the two zones, north and south of the town of Nuits, express their typical character. Those from the Vosne side are more elegant and polished; those from south of Nuits more wild and minerally. There are also a few Pinots from Volnay. Though the reds from the Côte de Nuits tend to have more density and complexity, these Volnays are fine examples of the vintage. Most will benefit from another year or two of bottle age.

Also in this issue, and just in time for the holiday season, Sanderson reviews the latest releases from Champagne, including a classic-rated Krug, which you'll find among the Hot Wines, on page 4. James Molesworth's latest tasting notes on the wines of Chile's Maipo and Colchagua Valleys as well as Châteauneuf-du-Pape reds round out this report.

Chile

VIÑEDOS EMILIANA

Gê Colchagua Valley 2005

93 points | \$90 | 300 cases imported | Red

Impressively rich, with loads of blueberry compote, braised fig, graphite and roasted earth notes waiting to emerge fully from behind the wall of dark, spice-laden toast. There's great buried acidity and a long, grip-filled finish. Loaded with character, this is built for the cellar. Syrah, Carmenère, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. From winemaker Álvaro Espinoza who farms biodynamically for this cuvée. Best from 2010 through 2013.—*J.M.*

CONCHA Y TORO

Chardonnay Pirque Marqués de Casa Concha 2007

91 points | \$21 | 7,500 cases imported | White

Very ripe, but with great, underlying juiciness to the quince, Jonagold apple and pear flavors. The long, pure finish keeps you coming back for more. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

VIÑEDOS EMILIANA

Coyam Colchagua Valley 2006

91 points | \$30 | 3,000 cases imported | Red

Ripe and muscular, with freshly plowed dark earth, currant, fig, bittersweet cocoa and tobacco notes all wound up under a layer of dark, spicy toast. Flashes of graphite and minerality lurk on the finish. Needs time to come together. Syrah, Merlot, Carmenère, Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec. Also from winemaker Álvaro Espinoza (and biodynamic too). Best from 2010 through 2012.—*J.M.*

CONCHA Y TORO

Cabernet Sauvignon Puente Alto Marqués de Casa Concha 2006

90 points | \$21 | 24,500 cases imported | Red

Concentrated, with a solid core of black currant, fig and hoisin sauce notes layered with alluring bittersweet cocoa, espresso and roasted vanilla, with a long, fine-grained finish. Winemaker Marcelo Papa has this line in great form. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

VIÑA MONTES

Chardonnay Casablanca Valley Alpha 2006
90 points | \$26 | 4,950 cases imported | White

A ripe, showy style, with pear, fig and melon notes backed by alluring toast. Lively acidity keeps this honest through the lengthy, butter-tinged finish. Drink now.—*J.M.*

VIÑA SANTA EMA

Sauvignon Blanc Leyda Valley Amplus 2007
90 points | \$17 | 3,000 cases made | White

Very precise from start to finish, with pure, chiseled lemon verbena, chalk, fleur de sel and thistle flower notes that race through the stony finish. Delicious. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

SUR ANDINO

Chardonnay Limarí Valley Terra Andina 2007
90 points | \$13 | 1,000 cases imported | White

Intense, with pear and quince notes that are ripe but racy, offset by a mouthwatering hint of lime and honeysuckle. The finish is long and juicy. Very tasty. Tasted twice with consistent notes. Winemaker Stefano Gandolini of Argentina's Viña Doña Paula oversees production here. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

France Burgundy

LUCIEN LE MOINE

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Vaucrains 2006
93 points | \$165 | NA cases made | Red

Cinnamon, iron, wild berry and vegetal aromas and flavors mark this complex, tightly wound red, which is sinewy and a bit surly now, yet concentrated and fascinating. The tannins are fine and integrated on the lingering finish. Best from 2012 through 2025.—*B.S.*

DOMAINE PERROT-MINOT

Nuits-St.-Georges La Richemone Vieilles Vignes 2006
93 points | \$210 | 20 cases imported | Red

Exhibits cassis, violet, red currant, spice and mineral aromas and flavors. Concentrated, vibrant and suave, suggesting the Vosne *quartier*, yet structured. Approachable now, but better in time. Best from 2011 through 2022.—*B.S.*

BRUNO CLAVELIER

Nuits-St.-Georges Aux Cras Vieilles Vignes 2006
92 points | \$150 | 6 cases imported | Red

A rich, civilized Nuits, supple and packed with both red and black cherry notes and an underlying iron component. Lest you think it's easy, there's a firm structure and a hint of the feral, untamed side of the appellation. Fine length. Best from 2011 through 2022.—*B.S.*

VINCENT GIRARDIN

Volnay Les Santenots 2006
92 points | \$67 | 150 cases imported | Red

Offers plenty of oak, yet there's substantial sweet fruit to match. Pure cherry, black currant and mineral notes ride the supple texture as this picks up some firm tannins on the finish. Reminds me of 2005 in quality. Best from 2022 through .—*B.S.*

LABOURÉ-ROI

Nuits-St.-Georges Aux Murgers 2006
92 points | \$94 | 20 cases imported | Red

Smoke and spice notes greet the senses, along with deep black cherry and red currant flavors. The warm spice tones expand as this plays out on the lush texture, leaving a spicy aftertaste. Delicious now and should improve. Best from 2010 through 2022.—*B.S.*

THIERRY & PASCALE MATROT

Volnay-Santenots 2006
92 points | \$57 | 100 cases imported | Red

An enticing red, full of sweet strawberry and raspberry aromas and flavors, with a mineral undercurrent. This is elegant, yet has grip and intensity that carry through to the lingering finish. Best from 2011 through 2020.—*B.S.*

DOMAINE D'ARDHUY

Volnay Chanlin 2006
91 points | \$80 | 60 cases imported | Red

The fine purity here is a perfect foil for the floral, berry, cherry and mineral aromas and flavors. Well-proportioned. Excellent length. Best from 2011 through 2020.—*B.S.*

HENRI GOUGES

Nuits-St.-Georges Les Chênes Carteaux 2006
91 points | \$77 | 175 cases imported | Red

Needs aeration to reveal the dark berry, black cherry and wild forest fruit notes. There's plenty of mineral as well, as this tightens up from midpalate through the finish. A pure expression of place, yet give this time or decant now. Best from 2011 through 2022.—*B.S.*

LUCIEN LE MOINE

Volnay Clos des Chênes 2006
91 points | \$135 | NA cases made | Red

This red starts out supple and sweet, with concentrated cherry, floral and spice flavors. As it plays out, dense tannins and a mineral element emerge. A little austere now, but comes together again on the long finish. Best from 2012 through 2022.—*B.S.*

DOMAINE D'ARDHUY

Nuits-St.-Georges 2006
90 points | \$65 | 120 cases imported | Red

This is svelte, silky and saturated with black cherry, bilberry and spice notes. The ripe tannins are well-integrated and provide lift and grip on the finish. But its latent energy makes this special. Drink now through 2018.—*B.S.*

JEAN-MARC BOULEY

Volnay Vieilles Vignes 2006

90 points | \$54 | 150 cases imported | Red

This is fleeting and elegant, with smoky berry, currant and spice notes framed by bright acidity. The tannins are refined and add lift. Nice harmony and length. Best from 2010 through 2017.—*B.S.*

France Champagne

LOUIS DE SACY

Brut Rosé Champagne NV

93 points | \$40 | 600 cases imported | Sparkling

Assertive aromas and flavors of dried cherry, autumn woods and ginger highlight this vinous Champagne. Beautifully balanced, with complexity and a dry finish echoing fruit and spice. Drink now through 2016.—*B.S.*

JACQUES SELOSSE

Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Substance NV

93 points | \$NA | 250 cases made | Sparkling

Bordering on amber, this Champagne is slightly oxidized in aroma and flavor, yet fresh, with roasted nut, leather and woody notes. Full-bodied and firm, with a long, citrusy and woody aftertaste. Not a typical Champagne, yet complex and intriguing. Drink now through 2020.—*B.S.*

GARDET

Brut Champagne Selected Reserve NV

92 points | \$54 | 120 cases imported | Sparkling

Rich and creamy, but also elegant. The flavors evoke peach and honey, with hints of toast, nuts and ginger, backed by a vibrant structure. Fine length. This is already delicious, yet will age for a few more years. Drink now through 2012.—*B.S.*

LOUIS ROEDERER

Brut Champagne Cristal 2002

92 points | \$249 | NA cases made | Sparkling

A suave customer, with hints of citrus, berry and coffee. Harmonious and refined, with freshness and a bright structure. The finish shows a lot of potential, with a mouthwatering aftertaste. Better than previously reviewed. Drink now through 2030.—*B.S.*

JACQUES SELOSSE

Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Initiale NV

92 points | \$NA | 2,750 cases made | Sparkling

Still very yeasty, along with malt and spice aromas and flavors. Firm and vivid, picking up more toast and coffee notes as the texture gets creamier. On the dry side and vinous in style. Distinctive. Drink now through 2020.—*B.S.*

CHARLES HEIDSIECK

Brut Champagne 2000

91 points | \$85 | NA cases made | Sparkling

There's depth and complexity to this, from the berry, ginger and light toast notes to the supple texture and well-integrated acidity. The finish is firm and lingering, with strains of ginger and honey. Drink now through 2024.—*B.S.*

France Rhône

DOMAINE BOIS DE BOURSAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée des Felix 2006

93 points | \$90 | NA cases made | Red

Dense, with an ample core of blackberry and braised fig fruit flavors, layered with roasted herb, humus, maduro tobacco and mineral notes that stretch out the finish. There's lots of character. Should cellar very well. Best from 2010 through 2023.—*J.M.*

HENRI BONNEAU & FILS

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Marie Beurrier 2001

93 points | \$160 | NA cases made | Red

Mature, but dark, rich and inviting, with a range of cedar, roasted plum, incense, black tea and dried clove notes that stay silky and lengthy through the finish, despite a prominent undertow of braised chestnut and coffee grinds. Drink now through 2023.—*J.M.*

DOMAINE BOIS DE BOURSAN

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2006

91 points | \$54 | NA cases made | Red

Muscular for the vintage, with roasted game, coffee, bittersweet cocoa, dark currant preserve and tobacco notes. Grippy and dark on the finish, with a flicker of black tea in the background. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*J.M.*

CHANTE CIGALE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2006

91 points | \$65 | 400 cases imported | Red

Really inviting, with mocha, raspberry ganache, incense and licorice aromas and flavors that glide over rounded, well-integrated tannins. Toasty and suave on the fruit- and spice-filled finish. Drink now through 2018.—*J.M.*

CHÂTEAU LA NERTHE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2006

91 points | \$40 | NA cases made | Red

A lush, ripe, forward style, with enticing raspberry ganache, mocha and fruitcake flavors offset by fine-grained, well-embedded tannins. There's nice deceptive length. Best from 2010 through 2020.—*J.M.*

