



Reviews

Starlane 2004 Santa Ynez Valley Syrah

The wild blueberry flavor and mineral-edged tannin gives this syrah the intensity of a great petite sirah, attained here with freshness and length that buzzes for minutes after each sip. The tannins explode with the dust of crushed granite while the fruit coasts along, delicious and lithe.

94 Points

Bonny Doon 2005 Santa Maria Valley Bien Nacido Vineyard Syrah

Violets and grilled red meat scents power through this peppery syrah. The tannins are a little blunt for now, carried by white and black peppercorn aromas that lasts. Firm and juicy.

90 Points

Davis Family 2005 Russian River Valley Guyzer Block Syrah

Let this wine sit in the glass and its sweet purple flavors punch through earthy tannins in the finish. The tannins are black and substantial for now, but the youthful fruit has the staying power to outlast them.

90 Points

Novy 2005 Sonoma County Syrah

The lean, wild blueberry flavors of this syrah are tightly framed by scents of game. It has an herbal spice that recalls mint and rooibos tea, and a succulent acidity.

90 Points

Henschke 2002 Eden Valley Hill of Grace Shiraz

The first impression is oak, a barrier to the fruit until it recedes and reveals the scent of forest underbrush, the dark savor lasting for minutes. The flavor is as saturated as the color, purple to the rim.

95 Points

Grant Burge 2004 Barossa Filsell Shiraz

This is a classic Barossa in its big-blue fruit intensity, its plum pudding scents and lasting warmth. Scents of roast meat and blueberry drive it forward, a rich and savory red for lamb stew.

92 Points

Henschke 2004 Eden Valley Mount Edelstone

Its flavors ranging from persimmon to something blacker and rooty. The supple texture is the center of the wine's beauty for now, the flavors need time to develop.

92 Points

Yalumba 2003 Barossa The Octavius Shiraz

The long curing process diminishes any immediate impression of oak, while seeming to enhance the tannic integration of the wine. The bosky black cherry flavors are sweet and ripe, girded by dark tannins that modulate the fruit power and leave a sense of elegance.

92 Points

Jim Barry 1998 Clare Valley The McRae Wood Shiraz

A river of black cherry and espresso coffee flavor flows through this wine and ends at roast duck. Not particularly complex, this is dark, rich and feels complete. Ready to enjoy.

91 Points

Henschke 2001 Eden Valley Hill of Grace Shiraz

The warmest summer on record, produced this intense, completely black wine. It's compressed, mostly textural impression, the fine oak and careful wine-making more apparent than any details in the flavor. Super rich.

91 Points

Vasse Felix 2003 Margaret River Shiraz

This starts off clean and fresh, with bright red cherry flavors and plenty of oceanic acidity. The tannins build with air, thickening the wine until its rich enough for oxtail stew.

90 Points

Yalumba 2005 Barossa 95% Shiraz 5% Viognier

Viognier gives both the florals and the tannins a lift in this clean, refreshing red. The fruit is grapey and blunt at first, but it responds to air with bright scents of red berries and green herbs.

89 Points

Grant Burge 2005 Barossa Miamba Shiraz

A supple, textural pleasure, this wine's fruit tannins have ripened to softness. The blackberry syrup flavors have a touch of bitterness.

87 Points

Yalumba 2004 Barossa Shiraz

The superripe fruit and sharp acidity meld into a black fruit density with some air. Decant it to bring flavors out.

87 Points

Bleasdale 2004 Langhorne Creek Bremerview Shiraz

All fruit up front, all tannin in the end, this wine's blueberry and black cherry aromas turn earthy and blunt. A eucalyptus edge adds up to its pleasantly rustic feel.

86 Points

Chateau de Beaucastel 2006 Chateauneuf-du-Pape Blanc Vieilles Vignes

Its rich, waxy texture is filled with spicy quince and mineral flavor. The toasted wheat scents turn floral as it sits in the glass, the whole lasting with vibrant acidity. On the finish, oak overwhelms the fruit.

92 Points



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Volker Eisele 2004 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

A firm elegant cabernet, this is loaded with red fruit that rides high above the palate. The tannins have a black olive and red spice tone. It's not complex, but clean and fine.

91 Points

Spottswoode 2004 St. Helena Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

This 2004 is the sort of supple, silken cabernet, silken cabernet that has made their reputation, with straight-on black currant flavor and a robust structure.

90 Points

Chehalem 2006 Willamette Valley Pinot Gris

Bright with an enticing scent of spiced apple-cake, this exuberant gris is ripe and creamy but doesn't feel pushed. The flavors have deepened on the palate to juicy pear and apple, ample yet elegant.

90 Points

WillaKenzie Estate 2004 Willamette Valley Triple Black Slopes Pinot Noir

The aromas all point to massive pinot, so it's a delight to find the palate so delicate and bright. Its black cherry flavors are deep, yet pristine, with a firm finish tingled with the flavors of thyme.

92 Points

WillaKenzie Estate 2004 Willamette Valley Terres Basses Pinot Noir

There is a fresh, kirschwasser scent in this wine, accented by forest floor aromas. Its lean, savory herbal flavors and earthy edge make a fine pairing with plank-roasted salmon.

91 Points

Tablas Creek 2005 Paso Robles Cotes de Tablas

Brisk, ripe strawberry flavors show the grenache in the blend. Its light tannins let the fruit show through while the finish deepens to cherry and spice.

89 Points

Zaca Mesa 2005 Santa Ynez Valley Z Cuvee

A funky, rustic red with high-toned flavors of fresh fig, this is balanced by pleasantly bitter tannins.

87 Points

La Posta 2006 Mendoza Cocina

It's all black fruit and violets, but there is a solid structure of tannins and a fresh acidity to balance the ripeness.

87 Points

Pewsey Vale 2002 Eden Valley The Contours Museum Reserve Riesling

This is a tight, intense, powerful white wine wrapped in an elegant scent of savory lime. The stony length of flavor will develop further with five or ten more years of age.

94 Points

Grant Burge 2006 Eden Valley Thorn Riesling

Scents of lime blossoms and minerals lend intensity to this wine, a showy riesling that's heady in the middle, then stony in the end. It's supple and firm, already yielding enough jasmine-inflected Kaffir lime flavor.

91 Points

Henschke 2006 Eden Valley Louis Semillon

Scents of lemon and wheat give this youthful Semillon character, balanced in a tight, crisply tailored finish. Those lean flavors last, as will the wine.

91 Points

Yalumba 2006 Eden Valley The Virgilius Viognier

Yalumba's work with the variety shows in the mineral intensity of the style, its floral peach scents delicate rather than overt. This vintage has a little talc and pepper in the scent.

92 Points

Yalumba 2004 Coonawarra The Menzies Cabernet Sauvignon

This has the fragrant refinement of the region's top cabernets. The wine's complexity is ornate, with pungent scents of dried herbs, pomegranate and lasting, dark-toned currant fruit. It feels cool, exceptionally long, the tannins building minerality into the fruit and needing time.

93 Points

Vasse Felix 2004 Margaret River Heytesbury

A Margaret River beauty, this has the coastal freshness of wild berries and herbs at its heart. The aromas are complex and increasingly detailed with air, yielding layers of woodland mushroom over the fruit. Light, yet luscious and rich in texture, this wine is poised for long aging.

93 Points

Jim Barry 2005 Coonawarra First Eleven Cabernet Sauvignon

It's layered in currants, red and black, with soft tannins providing a chocolate cushion to all that bright fruit. The oak integrates seamlessly, further enriching the wine.

92 Points

Henschke 2003 Eden Valley Cyril Henschke Cabernet Sauvignon

A dry season of heat and wind in which she managed to grow this sleek, elegant cabernet with lovely ripeness. Its bright red fruit is seamlessly interwoven with its tannin, an herbal, tobacco scent adding sophistication.

92 Points

Vasse Felix 2004 Margaret River Cabernet Sauvignon

Jet black, this holds all its energy in the texture, integrated and sleek. Eucalyptus comes up, perhaps the scent of the coastal heath and jarrah forest along the Indian Ocean, hinting on the flavor detail that should come.

90 Points

Yalumba 2006 Barossa Bush Vine Grenache

The tar red fruit of this wine tastes like fresh black raspberries and leaves a trace of Christmas spice that lasts. It's layered and firm, a light, mouthwatering grenache.

90 Points



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Rochford 2005 Macedon Ranges Pinot Noir

This cool-climate pinot has scents of black tea and bosky raspberry. It's complex, with touches of root vegetable in the flavor, the lovely texture suited to stewed wild duck or other game birds.

90 Points

Yalumba Australia Antique Tawny Museum Reserve Dessert

Layered flavors of black walnuts, raisins, coffee and toasted caramel provide this wine with complexity to match its considerable sweetness.

90 Points

Jackson-Triggs 2004 Okanagan Valley Grand Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

With its aroma of menthol and pink peppercorns over red cherry fruit, this cabernet from the north latitudes feels cool and intense at the outset. It follows a fine, elegant line, with a mild astringency to the finish.

90 Points

Palliser Estate 2005 Martinborough The Great George Pinot Noir

This wine bristles with tannic power and savory spice, slow to yield its complex fruit flavors. Tart black cherry and pomegranate scents emerge with air. It's powerful and sleek, with a pungent soil character that could on come from Martinborough.

91 Points

Vina Chocalan 2006 Maipo Valley Syrah Seleccion

A big and opulent red, its flavors dominated by black fruit, this has a delicate and surprisingly fresh note of green pepper. The hard tannins demand something meaty off the grill.

89 Points

Seven Terraces 2006 Marlborough Pinot Noir

Grapey and light as a Beaujolais, this has crushed red raspberry and red cherry flavors with little tannin to get in the way. Chill it as an aperitif.

87 Points

Guardian Peek 2005 Western Cape Frontier Cabernet Sauvignon Shiraz Merlot

Warm red berry flavors meet bitter tannins in this unctuous red for game.

83 Points