



**Chapoutier 2006 Cornas Les Arnes**

The 2006 Cornas Les Arenes displays the fig, blackberry, pepper, and earthiness from this sun-drenched amphitheater overlooking the Rhone River. Deep ruby/purple, full-bodied, but with relatively suave and civilized tannins.

**87-90 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Cronas Les Arenes**

The 2005 Cornas Les Arenes exhibits plenty of pepper and fig, a dark ruby purple color, nice sweetness on the attack, but then it shuts down totally and comes across as austere. I think everything is present for a nice ride.

**88 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Cote Rotie Les Becasses**

Dark ruby/purple with notes of cassis, bacon fat, smoke, and tapenade, the wine is medium to full-bodied, ripe, chewy, and long. This is heady stuff, a classic Cote Rotie that can be drunk now or cellared for 12-15 years.

**88-91 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Cote Rotie Les Becasses**

The 2005 Cote Rotie Les Becasses displays plenty of tannin, tapenade, bacon fat, and red currant. The wine is rich, medium-bodied, but because of the elevated tannins, needs 3-4 years of cellaring.

**89+ Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Cote Rotie La Mordoree**

Inky purple to the rim without a touch of aggressiveness, the wine flows over the palate in a seamless way, with layers of black fruits, cherries, licorice, graphite, and some roasted meat and tapenade notes. This is a sensational, multi-dimensional Cote Rotie that I suspect will be drinkable in 3-4 years

**96-98 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Cote Rotie La Mordoree**

This deep ruby/purple wine exhibits loads of tannin, bits of bacon fat, cassis, and a steely personality with superb depth, but an abundance of structure and tannin, and also displays tobacco leaf and a hint of fig.

**94 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Crozes Hermitage Les Meysonniers**

No tasting note

**88-89 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Crozes Hermitage La Petite Ruche**

No tasting note.

**89 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Crozes Hermitage Les Varonnières**

The 2006 Crozes-Hermitage Les Varonnières is absolutely stunning. A beautifully projected, fragrant nose of sweet black fruits, licorice, truffle, and incense soars from the glass. Dense ruby/purple to the rim, this full-bodied wine has sweet tannin, yet lively acidity

**92-95 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Crozes Hermitage Les Varonnières**

The 2005 Crozes-Hermitage Les Varonnières reveals plenty of black olives, creme de cassis, graphite, and subtle oak, in a full-bodied, tannic, backward style that requires 3-4 years of cellaring.

**93 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Ermitage Chante Alouette**

The 2006 Ermitage Chante Alouette has the vintage's aromatics, zesty underlying acidity that serves to buttress the enormous richness, and notes of liquified flowers, rocks, and licorice.

**95 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Ermitage Chante Alouette**

The 2005 Ermitage Chante Alouette exhibits terrific notes of marzipan/almond, and honeyed citrus. It boasts great acidity with a terrific finish loaded with hints of acacia blossom and marmalade.

**94 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Ermitage L' Ermite**

Could the 2006 Ermitage l'Ermite be even better? It is more seamless and perhaps slightly more flamboyant and showy, and that always tends to impress me with a wine this young and concentrated. Dense bluish/purple to the rim, it has an extraordinary purity of fruit, crushed rock intermixed with some spring flowers, graphite, and licorice. This is just an amazing wine

**98-100 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Ermitage L' Ermite**

Lastly, from the very dome of the granite hill of Ermitage is the 2005 Ermitage l'Ermite. An extraordinarily powerful wine that probably needs 10-15 years in the bottle. Dense purple to the rim, with notes of crushed rock, charcoal, roasted meats, and enormous quantities of blue and black fruits, this wine is almost painfully rich and thick, with mouthsearing levels of tannin and zesty acidity.

**99+ Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Ermitage L' Ermite Blanc**

This wine is the equivalent of drinking liquified rocks. The 2006 Ermitage l'Ermite blanc is pure perfection. A liqueur of licorice, crushed rocks, white citrus, and currants jumps from the glass, and in the mouth, the wine is one seamless, layered mouthful of citrus oil, white flowers, white peach, and honeysuckle. Just amazing.

**100 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Ermitage L' Ermite Blanc**

The 2005 Ermitage l'Ermite blanc has that multi-layered mouthfeel, an extraordinary nose of intense minerality, quince, and white fruits. Some of the vines in this parcel are 130 years old, and the wine has over-the-top richness yet amazing acidity, depth, and a freshness that is hard to believe given its power and intensity.

**95+ Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Ermitage Le Meal**

The 2006 Ermitage Le Meal has pure creme de cassis, camphor, truffle, and an earthiness, a rich, full-bodied, powerful mouthfeel, a beautiful purity, and sensational intensity, but I have to rate it behind Les Greffieux at this stage.

**95-97 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Ermitage Le Meal**

As always, classic blackberry, asphalt, charcoal, and beef blood notes jump from the glass of this intense wine. Full-bodied, with staggering concentration and a personality not terribly dissimilar from a first-growth Pauillac, but showing no evidence of oak whatsoever.

**96 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Ermitage Le Meal Blanc**

The multi-dimensional 2006 Ermitage Le Meal blanc has mouthsearing levels of acidity as well as phenomenal intensity, compelling richness, and a full-bodied power.

**98 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Ermitage Le Meal Blanc**

The most flamboyant of these wines, the 2005 Ermitage Le Meal blanc, exhibits notes of buttered citrus, copious tropical fruit, crushed rocks, white currants, and an amazing amount of honeysuckle allied with good acidity and enormous body.

**96 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Ermitage Cuvee de L'Oree**

The 2006 Ermitage Cuvee de l'Oree exhibits classic peach jam, marmalade, quince, white stone, and crushed rocks, full-bodied intensity, crisp acidity, and amazing freshness, in spite of huge power. I have no idea what the alcohol levels on these wines are, but I suspect they must be in the 15% range, yet the acidities are so high, the balance is struck.

**99 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 Ermitage Cuvee de L'Oree**

The 2005 Ermitage Cuvee de l'Oree is a spectacular wine, with notes of nectarine, quince, honeyed hazelnuts, honeysuckle, and an almost exotic note buttressed by excellent acidity and no notice of any oak. The wine has prodigious richness and a full-bodied intensity that needs to be tasted to be believed.

**98 Points**

### **Chapoutier 2006 Ermitage Le Pavillon**

Inky black/purple to the rim, with an extraordinary nose of subtle smoke, melted licorice, creme de cassis, truffle, and graphite, full-bodied, powerful, with elevated tannins, but so sweet and velvety, the acidity gives the wine a freshness and precision as well as transparency. This is amazing stuff!

**96-100 Points**

### **Chapoutier 2005 Ermitage Le Pavillon**

The 2005 Ermitage Le Pavillon has a dense purple color, the classic acacia flower, graphite-based, smoky creme de cassis nose with a tremendous intensity and a full-bodied power and richness that is awesome.

**98+ Points**

### **Chapoutier 2006 Ermitage La Sizeranne**

This wine has a deep ruby/purple color, a big, forward nose of creme de cassis intermixed with lead pencil shavings, licorice, and a touch of underbrush. It is full-bodied, with pure fruit, deep, and probably as concentrated as the 2005, but much more charming and forward.

**90-92 Points**

### **Chapoutier 2005 Ermitage La Sizeranne**

The 2005 Ermitage La Sizeranne is a beauty. It is closed and in need of a good 6-8 years of bottle age, so don't be impatient if you are going to buy this wine. Dense ruby/purple, with notes of graphite, creme de cassis, licorice, and crushed rocks, the wine is classic Ermitage.

**90+ Points**

### **Chapoutier 2006 Gigondas**

Chapoutier's 2006 Gigondas is also better than many of the estate wines of the appellation. Totally destemmed fruit dominated by Grenache, the wine has a deep ruby/purple color, good minerality, some spring flowers, as well as earthiness.

**87-88 Points**

### **Chapoutier 2006 St.-Joseph Grantis Red**

The 2006 St.-Joseph Les Granits exhibits an inky bluish/purple color, a stunning nose of incense, and perfumed black fruits with hints of acacia flowers, blackberry, and raspberry. The wine is seamless, opulent, but with the acidity more noticeable than any tannins, yet I am sure they are there. This is a gorgeous wine, one of the great cuvees of the vintage, and perhaps one of the more fairly priced.

**94-96 Points**

### **Chapoutier 2005 St.-Joseph Grantis Red**

The 2005 St.-Joseph Les Granits displays the classic stony, flowery, black currant nose with the unmistakable crushed rocks, quince, and licorice notes. Full-bodied, pure, with stunning concentration and intensity, this wine has incredible transparency, as well as depth.

**95 Points**

### **Chapoutier 2006 St.-Joseph Grantis White**

The 2006 reveals slightly more acidity, but also higher levels of concentration. It is an absolutely amazing wine that would probably outperform many a grand cru white Burgundy if put in a blind tasting – it is that stunning.

**95 Points**

**Chapoutier 2005 St.-Joseph Grantis White**

The 2005 St.-Joseph Les Granits blanc displays full-blown nectarine/clementine notes, with oranges, crushed rock, flowers, and white currants. The wine is stunningly full, has good acidity.

**94 Points**

**Chapoutier 2006 Vin de Paille L' Ermite**

Even better is the 2006 Vin de Paille, where only 180 half bottles were made. This also has 170 grams of residual sugar, and comes completely from L'Ermitage. The Vin de Paille is probably the finest of the region. These are non-botrytis grapes left to dry out on straw mats until December, and then crushed. With respect to their longevity, they can easily surpass the century mark!

**99 Points**

**J. L. Chave 2006 Hermitage**

This should turn out to be a great, great vintage for their red Hermitage as it reveals the classic cassis, crushed rock, and pepper characteristics along with enormous power, unctuousness, and richness. Licorice and black olive notes are also apparent.

**95-98 Points**

**J. L. Chave 2005 Hermitage**

The 2005 Hermitage is a frighteningly backward, tannic, broodingly dense, formidable wine. Its dense purple color is followed by notions of road tar, spring flowers, camphor, creme de cassis, licorice, and earth. It displays high tannin, huge extract and richness, with fresh acidity.

**94+ Points**

**J. L. Chave 2006 Hermitage Blanc**

Generally a blend of 80% Marsanne and 20% Roussanne, it is fascinating to see how the different sites, such as Peleat (pure finesse, elegance, and minerality), Rocoules (fat, honeysuckle, and loads of glycerin), and l'Ermitage (a combination of power, concentration, and extraordinary laser-like precision and minerality), combine to produce an amazingly rich, concentrated wine that should turn out to be as good as the blockbuster 2005.

**94-96 Points**

**J. L. Chave 2005 Hermitage Blanc**

The 2005 Hermitage blanc is an amazing effort that defines the classic style of white Hermitage. It offers hints of marzipan, roasted hazelnuts, quince, licorice, honeysuckle, citrus oil, and wet stones. It is a superbly concentrated and powerful wine

**96 Points**

**J. L. Chave 2006 St.-Joseph**

The 2006 St.-Joseph exhibits beautiful sweet cherry, tapenade, herb, and mineral characteristics in an exceptionally elegant, finessed style with lovely purity, but also a sensuality to the fruit.

**87-90 Points**

**J. L. Chave 2005 St.-Joseph**

The 2005 St.-Joseph is deeper than the 2006, with more pepper, black cherry, and raspberry scents intermixed with loamy soil nuances. Medium-bodied with beautiful fruit and, surprisingly for the vintage, ripe tannins

**90 Points**

**Domaine des Lises 2006 Crozes-Hermitage**

The 2006 Crozes-Hermitage exhibits smoky cassis, olive, licorice, and earth characteristics in its medium-bodied, charming personality

**88-89 Points**

**Domaine des Lises 2005 Crozes-Hermitage**

Chunky, dense, and tannic, the 2005 Crozes-Hermitage reveals fine harmony. It will drink well for 7-8 years.

**89 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent 2006 Cornas Coteaux**

Inky purple to the rim, with notes of scorched earth, truffle, and animal fat, the wine is full-bodied and rich, with sweet tannin, superb intensity, and purity. This is a stunning Cornas.

**90-93 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent 2006 Cote Rotie**

The deep ruby-colored 2006 Cote Rotie, which is dominated by purchases from the Cote Brune, has some striking olive and lavender notes intermixed with pepper, underbrush, sweet currants, and raspberries. It is an elegant, lighter style to drink over the next 7-8 years.

**87-90 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent 2006 Cotes du Rhone**

The 2006 Cotes du Rhone is a bistro-style red, made mostly from Grenache, with good acidity, a dark ruby color, and superficial strawberry and black cherry fruit.

**85 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent 2006 Crozes-Hermitage Vieilles Vignes**

The 2006 Crozes-Hermitage Vieilles Vignes is a beauty, showing plenty of black olive, cassis, and licorice notes, medium to full body, gorgeous fruit, soft tannin, and decent acidity.

**90-92 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent 2006 Gigondas Vieilles Vignes**

This wine is better than those of many of the best growers. Dark ruby/purple with notes of crushed rock and some hints of blueberry and raspberry, the wine has a cooler-climate feel, but medium to full-bodied flavors and a long, heady finish.

**91-93 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent 2006 Hermitage**

The dense ruby/purple-colored 2006 Hermitage smells of pen ink, creme de cassis, earth, and truffles. The wine has medium to full body, with rich, pure fruit, excellent density, and good acidity in the finish. Overall, it is a very elegant style of wine.

**89-91 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent 2006 Rasteau Vieilles Vignes**

The 2006 Rasteau Vieilles Vignes is a beauty. Kirsch and licorice-scented, this dark ruby/purple-colored wine shows notes of chocolate covered cherries, has medium to full body, beautiful density, depth, and sweet tannins.

**90-92 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent St.-Joseph Vieilles Vignes**

More crushed rock, spring flowers, raspberry, and cherry notes are present in the lighter, but stylish 2006 St.-Joseph Vieilles Vignes. This is an almost Burgundian take on St.-Joseph that should drink well for 5-6 years.

**89-91 Points**

**Tardieu-Laurent 2006 Vacqueyras Vieilles Vignes**

A full-bodied wine with plenty of cassis fruit intermixed with smoked herbs, licorice, and a hint of garrigue, this is a beauty – deep, full-bodied, powerful, and in the style of a top Chateauneuf du Pape.

**91-93 Points**

**Bellum-Senorio de Barahonda 2006 Bellum el Principio**

Deep crimson colored, it offers an uplift perfume of spice box, mineral, and blueberry. On the palate the wine reveals a forward personality with excellent flavors, velvety tannins, and 2-3 years of aging potential.

**91+ Points**

**Bodegas Berroja 2007 Berroia**

Pale-straw colored, the wine offers an exceptional perfume of slate/mineral, green apple, and floral aromas. On the palate it has excellent volume and density with lots of bright fruit.

**90 Points**

**Bodega Bixente E.-Talai-Berri 2007 Oreka**

Light straw-colored, it has an uplifted nose of slate/mineral, green apple, and spring flowers. This is followed by a crisp, balanced, dry, intensely flavored wine with solid length.

**90 Points**

**Capafons-Osso 2003 Mas de Masos**

Dark garnet in color, it has a bouquet of cedar, slate, spice box, herbs, black cherry, and blueberry. On the palate the wine is quite structured and austere although it appears to be in balance. The wine's tannic structure persists into the finish.

**90? Points**

**Capafons-Osso 2004 Sirsell**

Dark ruby-colored, it has an attractive perfume of cedar, red and black currants, black cherry, spice box, and mineral. In a relatively lean style for Priorat, this medium to full-bodied wine has some elegance as well as good depth and length with enough structure to evolve for another 2-3 years.

**90+ Points**

**Cims de Porrera 2004 Classic**

Deep purple-colored, it delivers a superb perfume of mineral, earth, mushroom, coffee, licorice, blueberry, and blackberry. Considerably more structured than the Solanes, it is a mouth-filling, powerful, nearly opulent wine.

**83 Points**

**Cims de Porrera 2004 Solanes**

Deep crimson-colored, it gives up an alluring bouquet of slate, scorched earth, cedar, blueberry, black cherry, and black currant. Full-bodied and smooth textured. Sweetly fruited, ripe, and surprisingly elegant for its size.

**91 Points**

**Clos Figueres 2005 Clos Figueres**

Is opaque purple-colored. It delivers a complex and expressive perfume of smoky oak, pencil lead, mineral, spice box, black cherry, blueberry, and black raspberry. This leads to a dense, opulent wine that still manages to retain some elegance. Ripe and sweet, this hedonistic effort should evolve for 3-5 years.

**96 Points**

**Clos Figueres 2005 Font de la Figuera**

The 2005 Font de la Figuera is purple-colored with aromas of mineral, earth, spice box, black cherry, and black raspberry. Chunky and slightly rustic in personality, the wine has enough structure to evolve for 2-3 years.

**90 Points**

**Clos Mogador 2005 Clos Mogador Vi de Finca Qualificada**

The wine is deep purple-colored with a superb bouquet of toasty oak, pencil lead, mineral, blackberry and black cherry. This leads to an opulent, dense, packed, structured wine. Super-concentrated, sweetly-fruited, and complex.

**98 Points**

**Clos Mogador 2006 Nelin Blanco**

Light gold-colored, it has an aromatic profile like a top flight white Rhone, perhaps a hypothetical blend of Beaucastel Vieilles Vignes and Chave Hermitage Blanc. Notes of mineral, honey, spring flowers, white peach, and pear are followed by a mouth-filling, viscous wine with excellent depth and concentration. This tasty, lengthy effort can be enjoyed now and over the next 6 years.

**92 Points**

**Comenge 2004 Comenge**

Is purple colored with an alluring bouquet of cedar, tobacco, violets, bing cherry, and blackberry. This leads to a full-bodied wine with layers of spicy fruit, notes of chocolate and nutmeg, excellent depth, and a long, pure finish.

**91 Points**

**Bodegas Diaz Bravo 2005 Nuestro**

Deep crimson in color, it has a fragrant nose of cedar, pencil lead, spice box, and blackberry. This is followed by a wine with a forward personality, ripe, spicy fruit, and sweet tannins.

**90 Points**

**Exopto Cellars 2006 Big Bang**

Purple colored, the wine offers up a nose of cedar, spice box, lavender, black cherry and blackberry. This is followed by a full-flavored, loaded, primary wine with a supple-texture, layers of fruit, excellent richness and balance, and a pure finish.

**90 Points**

**Falset-Marca 2004 Castell de Falset**

Purple-colored, it has a superb bouquet, of cedar, mineral, scorched earth, pencil lead, black cherry, and blackberry. This leads to an intensely flavored, sweetly-fruited, plush wine with incipient complexity and elegance.

**92 Points**

**Bodegas Fillaboa 2006 Albarino**

The 2006 Albarino is light gold colored with a fragrant bouquet of spring flowers, lemon, and green apple. This is followed by a supple-textured, medium-bodied wine with notes of citrus and tropical undertones. Nicely balanced with good intensity and length.

**88 Points**

**Bodegas Fillaboa 2006 Selecccion Finca Monte Alto**

Light gold-colored, it has an alluring perfume of mineral, apple, lemon, spring flowers, and pineapple. On the palate, it has a smooth, nearly creamy texture, ripe fruit, and good balance.

**89 Points**

**Vinos Jeromin 2005 Manu**

Opaque purple-colored, it offers up a super-expressive bouquet of bacon, tar, mineral, pencil lead, blueberry, black raspberry, and licorice. Smooth-textured, layered, ripe, and sweetly-fruited, this forward, pleasurable, lengthy effort has 2-3 years of aging potential, but can be enjoyed now.

**93 Points**

**Cellar Laurona 2004 Laurona**

Inky purple-colored, it offers an expressive nose of toasty oak, spice box, black cherry, black raspberry, and black currant. This leads to a medium to full-bodied wine with loads of sweet fruit, excellent concentration and depth, and a firm structure.

**91 Points**

**Cellar Laurona 2003 6 Vinyes de Laurona**

The 2003 6 Vinyes de Laurona is less densely colored than the Laurona. It has the slightly baked aromatic character sometimes found in the 2003 vintage along with cedar, tobacco, smoke, and a compote of black fruits. Dense, brooding, and reticent.

**93 Points**

**Bodegas Licinia 2006 Licinia**

Inky purple-hued, it offers up an enticing bouquet of mineral, pencil lead, tar, scorched earth, black currant, and blackberry. Layered, ripe, and spicy.

**91 Points**

**Emilio Lustau N.V. V.O.S. Dry Amontillado**

Dark amber with a very intense nose of roasted nuts, marmalade, and dried fruits. Complex, round, and concentrated, this would make an excellent substitute for an aged Armagnac.

**94 points**

**Emilio Lustau N.V. V.O.S. Dry Oloroso**

The non-vintage V.O.S. Dry Oloroso is very fragrant, rich, and layered. It is just off dry and very long.

**93 Points**

**Bodegas Vina Magana 2004 Baron de Magana**

Inky purple, it has an alluring perfume of pain grille, pencil lead, wood smoke, blackberry, and black currant. Ripe, sweet, and more structured than the Dignus.

**90 points**

**Bodegas Vina Magana 2005 Calchetas**

Opaque purple-colored, it delivers a complex perfume of pain grille, mineral, earth, spice box, black currant, and black cherry. Bordering on opulent, with layers of ripe, sweet fruit and great balance.

**95 Points**

**Bodegas Vina Magana 2004 Dignus**

Dark ruby colored, it offers up a fragrant nose of wood smoke, toast, mineral, black cherry, black currant and licorice. Fruit-forward, light in tannin, and easy-going, this tasty wine has no hard edges.

**89 Points**

**Bodegas Vina Magana 2005 Magana Merlot**

Deep crimson-colored, it offers up an aromatic array of toasty oak, smoke, mineral, violet, spice box, tar, and black currant. This is followed by a full-bodied, plush, full-flavored Merlot with considerable structure, 3-5 years of aging potential, and a lengthy, fruit-filled finish.

**92 Points**

**Mas de L'Abundancia 2004 Mas de L'Abundancia**

Deep purple in color, it offers up a classy bouquet of wood smoke, mineral, scorched earth, black raspberry, and black currant. This leads to a full-bodied wine with a plush texture, layers of spicy black fruits, licorice, soft tannins, and exceptional depth and length.

**92 Points**

**Mas Martinet 2005 Clos Martinet**

Inky purple, it exhibits a brooding bouquet of mineral, scorched earth, black cherry, and black raspberry. Like the Martinet Bru, it has significant tannin but with enough fruit for balance. Dense, structured, and backward

**93+ Points**

**Mas Martinet 2005 Martinet Bru**

Purple-colored with an excellent nose of cedar, smoke, mineral, black cherry, and black currant. Structured, with enough tannin for 5-7 years of evolution, this intense, lengthy wine will require considerable patience.

**91+ Points**

**Bodegas Matarredonda 2004 Juan Rojo**

Opaque purple-colored, the nose exhibits lots of spice, mineral, scorched earth, and blackberry. This leads to a full-bodied, structured wine with layers of fruit, intense flavors, and 4-6 years of aging potential.

**91 Points**

**Bodegas Matarredonda 2004 Libranza**

Inky purple-hued, it has a complex bouquet of smoke, cedar, tar, pencil lead, espresso, and blackberry. This is followed by a plush, full-bodied, intense wine in which spice notes and licorice emerge.

**94 Points**

**Bodegas Mauro 2005 Mauro**

Opaque purple-colored, it reveals a brooding but enticing bouquet of wood smoke, pencil lead, tar, and assorted black fruits. This leads to a layered, plush, mouth-filling, sweetly fruited wine with tons of flavor. It has enough structure to evolve for 2-3 years and its finish is long and pure.

**93 points**

**Bodegas Mauro 2003 Tererus**

Purple/black in color, it offers a superb perfume of smoky oak, pencil lead, mineral, spice box, black cherry, and blackberry liqueur. Opulent, thick, and layered, it has gobs of spicy, ripe black fruits, and licorice and espresso notes which emerge on the palate. The wine is beautifully balanced and very lengthy.

**96 Points**

**Bodegas Mauro 2003 Vendima Seleccionada**

The 2003 Vendimia Seleccionada is inky purple-colored. It has that slightly baked aromatic character found in the best 1959 Bordeaux as well as fragrant notes of pain grille, pencil lead, mineral, blueberry, and blackberry liqueur. On the palate the wine is opulent, complex, intense, and super-concentrated. It has a firm structure and enough tannin to develop for another 5-7 years. The finish lasts for longer than one minute.

**94+ Points**

**Caves Naveran 2005 Naveran Dama**

Light-straw colored, it offers persistent small bubbles and a sophisticated nose. Creamy textured with ripe fruit and excellent green apple and mineral flavors, this high class sparkling wine has a lengthy finish and is an outstanding value.

**90 Points**

**Bodegas Manuel De La OSA 2004 Manuel De La OSA**

Deep crimson colored, it reveals a complex bouquet of toast, pencil lead, spice box, blueberry compote, and black currant. Layered, ripe, and sweet, the wine is made in a forward, meaty style with lots of chewy fruit and substantial flavors.

**91 Points**

**Bodegas Palacios Remondo 2004 La Montesa**

Medium crimson-colored, it offers an expressive bouquet of cedar, pencil lead, black raspberry, and blackberry. Medium to full-bodied, it reveals a supple texture, plenty of spicy dark fruits, good complexity, and an elegant personality. It has a lengthy finish for its modest price.

**90 Points**

**Bodegas Palacios Remondo 2006 Placet**

It is light gold-colored with a slightly muted nose of mineral, flowers (magnolia and jasmine), pear, and melon. This is followed by a medium-bodied wine with good acidity, tropical flavors, and a smooth texture.

**86 Points**

**Bodegas Palacios Remondo 2005 Propiedad**

Dark ruby-colored, it presents an enticing perfume of smoke, pencil lead, spice box, flowers, black cherry, and blackberry. Medium to full-bodied, the wine delivers plenty of ripe fruit, and excellent balance.

**91 Points**

**Pazo de Galegos 2007 Albarino**

Light gold-colored, it has an attractive perfume of lemon, orange peel, and mineral. Creamy, round, and balanced, it has a very good acidity and a long, crisp finish.

**90 Points**

**Bodegas y Vinos Raul Perez 2005 A Trabe Red**

Purple-colored, the wine yields a kinky, exotic, unique perfume that nearly defies words. Toasty, complex, and spicy, there are mineral notes as well as a multitude of red and black fruits. Supple, smooth, and deceptively easy-going, this brilliant effort has considerable structure, depth, and concentration.

**97 Points**

**Bodegas y Vinos Raul Perez 2005 A Trabe White**

Light gold in color, the nose offers up a kiss of oak, honey, dried herbs, mineral, and floral notes. Full-bodied, smoothly-textured, and elegant, the wine has superb depth, concentration, and length.

**93 Points**

**Bodegas y Vinos Raul Perez 2005 El Pecado**

Opaque purple-colored wine with an exotic, kinky aromatic array featuring notes of scorched earth, tar, slate, black raspberry, and black cherry. Ripe and sweet. Sleek, elegant, and altogether hedonistic, this is without question the finest example of Mencia to have crossed these lips.

**98 Points**

**Bodegas y Vinos Raul Perez 2006 Sketch**

Medium straw-colored, the wine offers up an alluring bouquet of mineral, pear, citrus, melon, and lemon meringue. This is followed by an elegant, harmonious, intensely flavored Albarino with outstanding depth and length.

**93 Points**

**Bodegas y Vinos Raul Perez 2006 Ultreia St. Jacques**

It received the same élevage leading to a purple-colored wine with an exotic perfume of cedar, spice box, floral notes, and blueberry. Sweet, complex, and structured.

**93 Points**

**Bodegas y Vinos Raul Perez 2006 Ultreia de Valtuille**

Opaque purple-colored, it offers greater complexity aromatically and on the palate. It has an exotic, mineral-dominated nose with lots of floral elements, blueberry, black cherry, and black raspberry. Layered, opulent, yet elegant.

**98+ Points**

**Cellar Vinos Pinol 2006 Josefina Pinol Red Dulce**

It reveals aromas of earth, mineral, and black cherry with flavors of assorted black fruits and prunes. On the palate it is intense, medium sweet, and lengthy.

**92 Points**

**Cellar Vinos Pinol 2007 Josefina Pinol White Dulce**

The result is a medium sweet wine with aromas and flavors of orange marmalade. It has good acidity and balance and should pair well with fruit desserts.

**91 Points**

**Michael-David Winery 2005 Zinfandel Windmill Old Vine**

The 2005 Zinfandel Windmill Old Vine is an excellent bargain. Deep ruby-colored with loads of briery fruit interwoven with earth, pepper, and spice, this medium-bodied, pure, classic Zinfandel.

**88 Points**

**Cellar Vinos Pinol 2005 L'Avi Arruffi**

A glass-coating purple color, the aromatics feature notes of tar, mineral, licorice, blackberry, and blueberry compote. Excellent grip, layers of fruit, and a firm structure, and well-balanced.

**91 Points**

**Cellar Vinos Pinol 04/05 Mather Teresina**

Purple/black in color, the wine offers up a complex bouquet of pain grille, pencil lead, tar, mineral, scorched earth, violet, blueberry, and blackberry. This is followed by a full-bodied, opulent wine with layers of ripe, spicy fruit, excellent breadth and depth

**92 Points**

**Cellar Vinos Pinol 2006 Sacra Natura**

Purple-colored, it offers up an enticing nose of cedar, tobacco, pencil lead, blueberry, and blackberry. This leads to a medium to full-bodied, layered wine with complex flavors, and gobs of ripe fruit.

**90 Points**

**Bodegas Pintia 2005 Pintia**

Opaque purple-colored, it offers complex perfume of pain grill, pencil lead, spice box, black cherry, and black berry. This leads to a full-bodied, ripe, layered wine with intense flavors, serious complexity, and exceptional length.

**95 Points**

**Senorio de Barahonda 2006 Heredad de Candela**

Dark ruby-colored, the wine offers up a slightly exotic perfume of wood smoke, leather, and wild blue fruits. Ripe, sweet, and complex.

**90 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The Rose Series) 2007 Columna Rose**

Medium pink in color, it has an attractive strawberry/rhubarb nose with spice notes of cinnamon and clove. Dry, balanced, and concentrated, the wine has excellent length.

**89 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The Rose Series) 2007 Gordo Rose**

It is candy-like revealing darker berries with notes of red currants and black raspberry. Dry, supple, and mouth-filling, it has a lengthy, clean finish.

**90 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The Rose Series) 2007 Katas Rose**

Dark pink, the wine is currently a bit disjointed and needs to settle down. The largest in scale of these Roses, the wine has floral aromas, hints of apple, as well as strawberry and raspberry notes. It is ripe, structured, and lengthy, a virtual red wine in rose clothing.

**90 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The Rose Series) 2007 Puntazo Rose**

It is light pink in color with a pleasant bouquet of strawberry and rhubarb but it could use a bit more mid-palate oomph.

**86 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The Rose Series) 2007 Valle Claro Rose**

Dark pink in color, it has an expressive perfume of darker fruits including black cherry and black raspberry. Dry, very ripe, and concentrated, this Rose has lots of flavor and a lengthy finish.

**90 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The G Series) 2006 G1**

Purple-colored with a nose of earth, mineral, and black cherry. On the palate the wine is a bit compressed and firm but pleasant nevertheless. This is an excellent value to drink over the next three years.

**85 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The G Series) 2006 G2**

It is more expressive than the G1 with notes of mineral, floral aromas, and red and black cherry. The wine has some silky tannin, excellent cherry flavors, and a balanced, lengthy finish.

**87 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The G Series) 2006 G3**

Purple-colored with a fragrant perfume that jumps from the glass. Black cherry, black raspberry, and blackberry liqueur notes are prominent aromatically and on the palate. The wine has excellent depth and concentration.

**88 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The G Series) 2006 G4**

The 2006 G4 from Carinena is dark ruby-colored with a lively nose of red and black cherry. Supple, seamless, and with no hard edges, this easy-drinking wine is a crowd pleaser.

**89 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The G Series) 2006 G5**

The 2006 G5 from the D.O. of Madrid is purple-colored with a slightly roasted character featuring black cherry and black raspberry aromas and flavors. Plush and layered with a bit of underlying structure.

**90 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The G Series) 2007 G7**

The 2007 G7 from Navarra is liqueur-like with aromas and flavors of blueberry, black cherry, and black raspberry. The wine is a bit tight currently and will need some time to unwind.

**89 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The M Series) 2006 M1**

The 2006 M1 from Valencia is dark ruby-colored. It has an expressive nose of blue fruits and violets leading to a supple-textured wine with no hard edges. It is a user-friendly wine for near-term drinking.

**87 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The M Series) 2006 M2**

The 2006 M2 is from Alicante. Purple in color, it has an excellent bouquet of mineral, licorice, blueberry and blackberry. Supple, sweet, and concentrated.

**88 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The M Series) 2006 M3**

The 2006 M3 is slowly but surely, more good wine is being produced. Medium ruby-colored, this wine is a bit more austere and compressed than its siblings. However, it offers good flavors and balance.

**87 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The M Series) 2006 M4**

The 2006 M4 is from Bullas. Dark ruby-colored, this strong effort has a classy nose of smoke, pencil lead, mineral, and blueberry. Ripe and mouth-filling, the wine is well-balanced and long in the finish.

**89 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley (The M Series) 2006 M5**

Dark ruby-colored, it has a serious perfume of smoke, mineral, blueberry, and blackberry. Ripe and full-flavored, it has excellent depth and length.

**90 Points**

**Vinos Sin-Ley 2006 Gra2**

Opaque purple-colored, it has a classy nose of mineral, pencil lead, tar, pepper, blueberry, and blackberry. Pure, sweet, and ripe, this tasty wine has considerable breadth on the palate as well as excellent depth and concentration.

**90 Points**

**Cellar Vall-Llach 2005 Embruix**

Crimson-colored, the wine has an attractive nose of cedar, tobacco, pencil lead, black cherry, and blackberry. Full-bodied, plush, forward, and nearly seamless, it has lots of spicy dark fruits, silky tannin, excellent depth, and a pure finish.

**91 Points**

**Cellar Vall-Llach 2005 Idus**

Dark garnet-colored, it offers up a complex perfume of wood smoke, tobacco, mineral, wild blueberry, black cherry, and black currant. This leads to a full-bodied, opulent, full-flavored wine with lots of extraction, sweet, ripe fruit, and well-concealed tannins,

**94 Points**

**Cellar Vall-Llach 2005 Vall-Llach**

Opaque purple-colored, it offers up a splendid aromatic array including pain grille, slate, mushroom, espresso, garrigue, blueberry, and black currant. Opulent, full-bodied, and rich, a pedal to the metal Priorat.

**95 Points**

**Bodegas Vizcarra Ramos 2005 Celia Vizcarra**

Deeper in color and a bit more fragrant, its superb aromatics are followed by an intense, layered, plush wine with tons of spicy fruit, hidden tannin, and 6-8 years of cellaring potential.

**95 Points**

**Bodegas Vizcarra Ramos 2005 Ines Vizcarra**

It reveals a complex aromatic array of pain grille, violets, tobacco, leather, spice box, and blackberry liqueur. This leads to a full-bodied, opulent yet elegant wine with gobs of sweet fruit, superior depth, and a very long finish.

**93 Points**

**Bodegas Vizcarra Ramos 2006 J.C. Vizcarra**

It delivers enthralling notes of cedar, bacon, wood smoke, mineral, and blueberry and blackberry. It has more structure as well as greater depth and concentration.

**92 Points**

**Bodegas Vizcarra Ramos 2006 Vizcarra Roble**

Purple in color, it offers up an alluring bouquet of smoke, cedar, bacon, blueberry, and blackberry. This is followed by a round, large-scaled wine with excellent balance, and some hidden silky tannins.

**90 Points**

**Cantina del Notaio 2005 Aglianico del Vulture Repertorio**

The 2005 Aglianico del Vulture Repertorio is made in a concentrated style with plenty of dark cherry fruit and sweet toasted oak flavors. This engaging, plump Aglianico is sure to deliver much pleasure.

**88 Points**

**Cantina del Notaio 2004 Aglianico del Vulture la Firma**

Sweet and refined, with layers of dark fruit, tobacco, earthiness, roasted coffee beans and chocolate that flow from the glass. It offers outstanding persistence on the palate and a fresh, bright note of mint that frames the finish and provides a lovely counterpoint to some of the darker aromas and flavors. The oak is quite prominent.

**92 Points**

**Donnafugata 2005 Chiaranda**

The 2005 Chiaranda (Ansonica, Chardonnay) offers a silky-textured palate of flowers and honeyed apricots, with excellent length and a fresh, inviting finish.

**89 Points**

**Donnafugata 2004 Mille E Una Notte**

It is an explosive wine loaded with super-ripe dark cherries, scorched earth, herbs and toasted oak. It offers lovely balance in a brooding yet expansive style.

**91 Points**

**Donnafugata 2004 Tancredi**

Notable warmth and richness in its fruit. Herb, chocolate and toasted oak nuances also come to the forefront, adding further complexity. The Cabernet is very much felt in the structure and density of the wine. All of the wine's elements come together in an engaging and utterly satisfying glass of wine.

**92 Points**

**Farnese 2003 Montepulciano d' Abruzzo**

The 2003 Montepulciano d' Abruzzo is sweet, jammy wine loaded with dark fruit, licorice and earthiness. It offers excellent balance in an up-front, pleasing style.

**87 Points**

**Farnese 2001 Montepulciano d' Abruzzo Riserva Opis**

As expected, this is a sweet, full-bodied style of Montepulciano, with an attractive opulence to its dark fruit, new leather and spice flavors. The wine offers outstanding balance, not to mention a seductive, irresistible personality.

**91 Points**

**Farnese NV Edizione Cinque Autoctoni**

The NV Edizione Cinque Autoctoni is an intense, fruit-driven wine made in a sweet, generous style with notable purity as well as depth of material.

**90 Points**

**IL Feuduccio 2003 Montepulciano d' Abruzzo**

The 2003 Montepulciano d' Abruzzo is rustic yet pleasing in its expression of dark cherries, spices, leather, earthiness and black pepper. Drink this generous red over the next few years.

**88 Points**

**Mastroberardino 2006 Greco di Tufo Nova Serra**

A clean, focused Greco di Tufo with prominent notes of flinty minerality, white peaches, grapefruit, mint and flowers. This linear, sinewy wine will offer its finest drinking at the dinner table.

**89 Points**

**Mastroberardino 2006 Fiano di Avellino Radici**

The 2006 Fiano di Avellino Radici reveals a distinctly earthy, smoky profile with sweet ripe fruit buffered by a lively note of minerality that carries through to the long finish.

**88 Points**

**Mastroberardino 2003 Taurasi Radici**

It offers an intriguing array of sweet dark fruit, smoke and dried, cured meats with an attractive, plump personality. This is a fairly approachable style of Taurasi with outstanding length and fine overall balance.

**90 Points**

**Mastroberardino 2003 Taurasi Radici Riserva**

The 2000 Taurasi Riserva naturally shows more advanced leather, tar, smoke, spice and dark fruit aromas and flavors. Made in a full-bodied, yet restrained style, it offer notable persistence on the palate, well-integrated tannins and an approachable personality.

**91 Points**

**Molettieri 2005 Irpinia Aglianico Cinque Querce**

The 2005 Irpinia Aglianico Cinque Querce is a bold, racy wine loaded with dark red fruit, flowers, spices, leather and black pepper. It offers excellent length and a clean finish, not to mention plenty of style.

**89 Points**

**Molettieri 2003 Taurasi Vigna Cinque Querce**

The 2003 Taurasi Cinque Querce is perhaps a shade less aromatically complex than the 2004, but it too is an explosive wine impressively endowed with a multitude of black cherries, leather, grilled herbs and earthiness.

**93 Points**

**Molettieri 2003 Taurasi Riserva Vigna Cinque Querce**

It reveals a totally opaque color followed by a multitude of smoke, roasted coffee bean, licorice and chocolate aromas that literally jump out of the glass. This intense, rich wine is packed with the essence of dark cherry fruit that coats the palate with notable concentration and density, yet it never comes across as heavy. Even more surprisingly, it remains a fresh, vibrant wine with many, many years of life ahead of it.

**94 Points**

**Palazzone 2006 Orvieto Terre Vineate**

It is a soft, caressing white with lovely perfumed fruit and a generous personality that carries through to the long finish.

**88 Points**

**Palazzone 2006 L'Ultima Spiaggia**

The fruit is rich, honeyed and candied as the wine opens in the glass. The oak has added an additional layer of volume and sweetness, but has also covered much of the varietal detail.

**87 Points**

**Palazzone 2006 Rubbio**

It is a fresh, vinous wine with fresh berry fruit and an accessible personality which is best enjoyed over the next year or two.

**88 Points**

**Santadi 2004 Carignano Riserva Rocca Rubia**

Santadi's 2004 Carignano Riserva Rocca Rubia is a terrific effort. It reveals a beguiling array of black pepper, spices, herbs, juniper berries and ripe dark fruit on a full-bodied, structured frame. This incredibly pure wine is bursting with personality and character. It is not to be missed.

**91Points**

**Santadi 2003 Carignano Del Sulcis Terre Brune**

It boasts an irresistibly wild expression of smokiness, earth, new leather, spices and dark, jammy fruit. Made in a full-bodied style, it reveals outstanding length and a pretty note of sweetness that lingers on the finish.

**92 Points**

**Sant' Anastasia 2003 Montenero**

The 2003 Montenero is a pleasing, opulent wine bursting with dark fruit intermingled with sweet toasted oak and mint. It is a generous wine with plenty of up-front appeal.

**88 Points**

**Sant' Anastasia 2004 Litra**

This massively endowed, structured wine is packed with layers of sweet dark fruit that only begin to emerge with quite a bit of air. Sweet herb and spice overtones develop in the glass as well, but the wine remains extremely vibrant and primary. It is a terrific effort.

**92 Points**

**Shardana 2003 Shardana**

A gorgeous wine loaded with the essence of minerals, graphite, black cherries, smoke, tar, tobacco and leather. It offers superb purity and focus. This is a wonderfully complex and complete wine.

**92 Points**

**Tenuta Delle Terre Nere 2006 Etna Rosso**

It is a very pretty, mid-weight effort with attractive notes of tobacco, earthiness and black cherries, and an accessible personality.

**89 Points**

**Tenuta Delle Terre Nere 2005 Calderara Sottana**

The 2005 Calderara Sottana presents a darker color with spicy aromatics and a somewhat brooding personality. Initially very tight, with air the cherry fruit gradually emerges to complete this lovely wine.

**89 Points**

**Tenuta Delle Terre Nere 2005 Guardiola**

Reveals firm, yet silky tannins and gorgeous purity in its earthiness, tar, black cherries and toasted oak, with outstanding length and terrific overall balance even if there doesn't seem to be quite enough fruit to stand up to the oak. This beautiful, classy wine comes across as delicate yet deeply-flavored at the same time.

**90 Points**

**Tenuta di Tavignano 2006 Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi**

A very pretty entry-level Verdicchio redolent of flowers, peaches and apricots. This medium-bodied, focused wine is best enjoyed over the next year or so.

**87 Points**

**Le Terrazze 2005 Rosso Conero**

The cask-aged 2005 Rosso Conero (100% Montepulciano) is a plump, accessible wine with juicy, super-ripe fruit and a medium-bodied personality.

**87 Points**

**Le Terrazze 2004 Rosso Conero**

The 2004 Rosso Conero is a pretty, expressive wine with perfumed aromatics and sweet dark fruit on a medium-bodied frame. It offers notable harmony, particularly at this level and is an outstanding value.

**89 Points**

**Le Terrazze 2004 Rosso Conero Riserva Sassi Neri**

2004 Rosso Conero Riserva Sassi Neri reveals awesome depth and delineation in its very pure expression of black cherries and sweet toasted oak, with outstanding persistence on the palate and refined, silky tannins.

**92 Points**

**Le Terrazze 2004 Rosso Conero Visions of J.**

It is a soft-textured wine with a deep, dense personality. It offers plenty of dark fruit and sweet toasted oak, but needs at least another year or two to come together.

**91 Points**

**Le Terrazze 2004 Chaos**

This sumptuous wine reveals gorgeous, perfumed aromatics and layers of vibrant, sweet fruit that open onto the palate with lovely detail and clarity. It shows terrific balance, particularly in the way the finessed tannins frame the fruit. It is the most complex and intriguing of these wines.

**92 Points**

**Le Terrazze 2004 Planet Waves**

The estate's 2004 Planet Waves is a more up-front wine loaded with plump, dark, jammy fruit intermingled with sweet toasted oak. While it doesn't quite have the complexity of the Chaos it does offer very pleasurable drinking in a juicy, accessible style.

**91 Points**

**Villa Matilde 2006 Greco di Tufo**

The 2006 Greco di Tufo is a laser-like, pure wine that emphasizes the mineral qualities of this terroir. It offers excellent length and terrific harmony in a very classic expression of Greco.

**89 Points**

**Villa Matilde 2003 Camarato**

Villa Matilde's 2003 Camarato (80% Aglianico and 20% Piediroso) is made in a more jammy style than the 2001. This plump red is loaded with dark fruit, chocolate, new leather and sweet spices. The toasted oak is still quite dominant here, and this wine needs at least a few years to come together.

**91 Points**

**Villa Matilde 2001 Camarato**

The 2001 Camarato (80% Aglianico and 20% Piediroso) is an awesome effort. This very youthful wine delivers an exciting array of black cherries, new leather, spices, earthiness and roasted coffee beans. It is a powerful wine, yet there is a lovely core of fruit underneath that needs a few years of bottle age to fully emerge.

**92 Points**