



## **Boscarelli 2004 Noci dei Boscarelli (Vino Nobile di Montepulciano)**

This is a broad, thick and ripe Vino Nobile with gritty aromas of red berry fruit, tobacco, caramel and carbon. It has smooth, silky texture in the mouth with tight tannins and good structure.

**90 Points**

## **Engelbrecht Els Vineyards 2005 Proprietor's Blend (Western Cape)**

A beautiful wine at an affordable price. All of the hallmarks of a good Bordeaux blend are here—firm tannins, solid, spicy flavors of plum, cedar and mocha, an elegant balance of acid and fruit. It's a big wine with a poised touch.

**90 Points**

## **Sauvignon Republic 2007 Sauvignon Blanc (Stellenbosch)**

Lively, spritely and with a touch of spice, this wine also offers weight without heft, and complexity that's still approachable. Clean and fresh tropical fruit and citrus with a rounder mouthfeel. A balanced, elegant white.

**88 Points**

## **Palacios Remondo 2006 La Vendimia (Rioja)**

Exotic, reflective strawberry and tea notes open this lighter-bodied, not so-serious Rioja. Next in line is a mouthfilling blend of blackberry and cassis, but with ample acidity so that it avoids any weighty pitfalls. Finishes soft, with a swath of oaky vanilla flavor.

**88 Points**

## **Palacios Remondo 2006 Placet (Rioja)**

The gold standard among Viura-based wines from Rioja has to be Placet from Palacios Remondo. Oak plays a big role here, and the nose wows with spice and cinnamon apple. There's more ripe apple and spice in the mouth, along with excellent acidity and textural creaminess.

**90 Points**

## **Star Lane Vineyard 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon (Santa Ynez Valley)**

It's quite a good wine, soft and rich and immediately likeable for its array of black currants, licorice and mocha flavors. The 100% new French oak is just right in smoke and cedary vanilla. The next step is to build in layers of density and complexity, but this is a huge step forward for Santa Ynez Cabernet.

**92 Points**

**Girard 2005 Artistry (Napa Valley)**

The latest string of successful Cab-based Bordeaux blends. Girard's 05 Artistry is a little jammy and chocolaty, but offers up counter-balancing blackberry and currant flavors that give the wine bite.

**88 Points**

**Pavilion 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley)**

A solid effort in an everyday Cab, rich and ripe in blackberry, currant, cherry and cocoa flavors. The texture is smooth and velvety.

**83 Points**

**Morgan 2006 Twelve Clones Pinot Noir (Santa Lucia Highlands)**

It's a big, voluptuous wine, as Santa Lucia Highlands Pinots tend to be. With its highly extracted, jammy cherry, currant and cola flavors, it's a palate flatterer, even if it's not particularly delicate or complex.

**87 Points**

**Morgan 2006 Double I Vineyard Chardonnay (Santa Lucia Highlands)**

This is a very dense, layered wine, with many intricate corners to explore. The winemaker has put on lots of lees and quite a bit of new oak, which of course adds creamy, smoky complexities.

Fortunately, the underlying wine can handle it. Pure Santa Lucia Chardonnay, it's intricate in tangerines, limes, pineapples, honeysuckle and Asian spices, with a flinty minerality. Acidity is quite high.

**93 Points**

**Mason Cellars 2006 Sauvignon Blanc (Napa Valley)**

Lemon and lime fruit juice flavors mark this easy, slightly sweet-tasting wine. Partial barrel fermentation gives it a coating of creamy vanilla and butterscotch.

**84 Points**

**Nugan Family Estates 2006 Chardonnay (Riverina)**

This is an unapologetically warm-climate Chardonnay, featuring tropical fruit, plenty of weight and texture and a whack of vanilla and cut wood character. It's a broad, full-bodied wine that pulls together on the finish. Ending with notes of pineapple and citrus.

**86 Points**

**Junipero Gin NV**

A magnificently dry, assertive and aromatic spirit distilled with over a dozen botanicals. It is a crisp and eminently flavorful gin with a lightweight body, and spicy, juniper-laced bouquet. Although bottled at 98.6 proof, Junipero is too silky smooth for you to notice its elevated alcohol content.

**Top 12 Unforgettable Gin**