

**90 Non-Malbec (Mendoza); \$123.** Catena's signature wine is Cabernet Sauvignon-based, and it's a purple haze of dense, exotic aromas that lean toward lavender, flower petals and black fruit. It's saturated and fruity to the point of no return, with impeccable structure and mouthfeel. An avalanche of flavor and style. Drink now through 2015. Imported by Billington Imports. —M.S.

**93 Colomé 2005 Reserva Red Blend (Calchaqui Valley); \$90.** About five years into its existence and Colomé has found its groove in this excellent, luscious Malbec-Cabernet blend. The bouquet is exotic and savory, with classic dark-fruit aromas, spice, cocoa and more. Big on the palate, with cassis, wild berry and chocolate flavors, and the finish is big, ripe and sturdy. Good now through 2013. Imported by Hess Collection. *Editors' Choice.* —M.S.

**93 Luigi Bosca 2005 Icono (Luján de Cuyo); \$150.** The nose is dusty and inviting, with notes of spiced berries, molasses, sandalwood and artisan soap. Very saturated but well balanced, with a creamy, oily mouthfeel and sweet, generous flavors of plum, blackberry and chocolate. Mellow and delicious from start to finish, and a winner even at this high price. Imported by Multiple U.S. importers. —M.S.

**92 Mendel 2006 Unus (Mendoza); \$50.** Unus is 70% Malbec and 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, but what you need to know is that it's 100% excellent. The nose features a rich blend of tobacco, baked plum and leather, while the palate is saturated, concentrated and tastes of cassis and blackberry. Clean, intense and complex. Imported by Vine Connections. —M.S.

**91 Lagarde 2006 Henry Gran Guarda Red Blend (Mendoza); \$50.** Smoky and sultry smelling, with berry jam aromas and ample subtleties. The palate is tannic and lively, like a good, masculine youngster should be. And the flavors of raspberry and plum are vivid and smack hard against the inside of your cheeks. Could use a year, but it's drinkable now with a kick. Imported by Andes Importers, Inc. —M.S.

**90 Carlos Basso 2004 Red Blend (Uco Valley); \$29.** Basso's premium blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, Syrah and Merlot is an example of good fruit meeting good winemaking. With leather and brick dust accenting black-fruit aromas, the bouquet is positive. And the flavors of plum, blackberry, soy sauce and cola

are very nice. A breakout wine for this winery. Imported by Southern Wine Group. —M.S.

**90 Clos de los Siete 2007 Mendoza; \$18.** Clos de los Siete, the amalgamated product of Michel Rolland's Uco Valley wine commune, is rich, round and ripe, with deep aromas and trimmings like polished oak and minerality. The wine is proper, medium to full in size, and full of blackberry, plum and cocoa. No hiccups, pure fruit and complexity make this stellar for the price. Imported by Slocum & Sons. —M.S.

**90 Vistalba 2006 Corte B (Mendoza); \$27.** The nose offers deep bacon, crusty mineral and hefty, perfectly ripe dark-fruit aromas. Balance is key, with beefy, sweet flavors of black plum offset by some fire and proper acidity. Peppery on the finish, with an overall warm, ripe, toasty personality. Ready to drink. Imported by San Francisco Wine Exchange. —M.S.

**90 Weinert 2005 Carrascal (Mendoza); \$15.** One of the best \$15 red blends being made today. Carrascal gives us 45% Malbec, 35% Merlot and 20% Cabernet in rock-solid form. The nose has toast, mineral, balsam wood and good berry fruit, and the palate provides the troika of cherry, raspberry and plum with no interference or oaky gimmicks. Pleasant, warm and long on the finish. Imported by Broadbent Selections, Inc. *Best Buy.* —M.S.

**89 Bodega Aconquija 2006 Furque 3 Cepas (Mendoza); \$16.** Ripe to the tipping point of being a little bit baked, but the nose of spice and mint mixed with violet, black cherry and plum is attractive. The palate on this blend is concentrated but well balanced, and the jammy flavors of plum and berry are not too heavy. Imported by Robert Kacher Imports. —M.S.

**89 Ca' de Calle 2007 Gran Reserva (Mendoza); \$16.** A five-grape mash-up with savory aromas of roasted oak, smoke, bacon and clove aromas. Despite slightly crisp acidity, the wine is lusty and giving, with juicy cherry, cassis and other bright-flavored fruit. Good length and some chocolate on the finish send it away in fine form. 550 cases made. Imported by Southern Wine Group. —M.S.

**89 Trapiche 2006 Iscay Merlot-Malbec (Mendoza); \$50.** This is a lively, slightly jagged wine with full ripeness and lots of berry, spice and zip. The palate hits hard with

cherry, raspberry and pepper flavors, and there's a bit of rasp and burn to the finish. Should get a little softer with more bottle age. Imported by Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.S.

**89 Vistalba 2006 Corte C Malbec Merlot (Mendoza); \$15.** Warm and earthy, with a touch of sulfur that subsides with air. The palate is juicy but also sort of rich, and the flavors of mixed red fruits feature a couple of layers of potency that are followed by a compact, medium-length finish. Imported by San Francisco Wine Exchange. —M.S.

**88 Familia Schroeder 2004 S (Neuquén); \$60.** This unusual marriage of Pinot Noir and Malbec has a familiar set of aromas and flavors. There's raspberry, tobacco and lemon peel on the nose, while the palate tastes of blackberry and tobacco, with some sweetness. Not pushy, a little strange, and overall very good. Imported by S Selections. —M.S.

**88 Michel Torino 2006 Ciclos Malbec Merlot (Cafayate); \$26.** Mildly raisiny on the bouquet. The palate is round and full-bodied, with blackberry and roasted plum flavors backed by smooth tannins and a chocolaty, savory finish. Heavier and warmer than some red blends, but not clumsy or overdone. Imported by Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. —M.S.

**87 Alma de los Andes 2007 Malbec Cabernet Sauvignon (Mendoza); \$10.** Tight on the nose, with hints of resin, lemon peel and black fruit that smell inviting when all added up. The palate is juicy, arguably a bit acidic, and runs fresh with red cherry and plum flavors. Spunky and properly tannic. Imported by Frontier Wine Imports. *Best Buy.* —M.S.

**87 La Yunta 2007 Tinto (Mendoza); \$10.** For something a little lighter, more herbal and different than the usual Mendoza heavyweight, this multigrape blend offers aromatic notes of pancetta, herb, fennel and dried cherry along with flavors of blueberry and elderflower. It's light-to-medium in size, with a Rhône-style personality. Drink now. Imported by Southern Wine Group. *Best Buy.* —M.S.

## TORRONTÉS

**91 Colomé 2008 Torrontés (Calchaqui Valley); \$15.** Much better and way