

# Wine Spectator Insider

Marvin R. Shanken *Editor and Publisher*

A Members-Only, Weekly Publication

THIS week's edition of the *Wine Spectator Insider* features nearly 40 exciting new wines from Argentina, Chile, France and Washington. Classic-scoring wines from Domaine de la Solitude in Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Andrew Will in Washington's Horse Heaven Hills AVA are the two top scorers in this issue; you'll find both of them among the Hot Wines, on page 4.

In all, James Molesworth reviews seven Châteauneufs this week, all from the excellent 2005 and 2006 vintages in the Rhône. He also reviews exciting new Malbecs from Argentina and a grab bag of varieties from Chile—Chardonnay, Cabernet, Carmenère—including the 2006 version of the 2008 *Wine Spectator* Wine of the Year, Casa Lapostolle's Clos Apalta. Finally, Harvey Steiman reviews 17 reds from Washington, ranging from the state's popular Cabernet, Syrah and Merlot to more rare varietals for Washington such as Carmenère and Sangiovese.

## Argentina

### FINCA & BODEGA CARLOS PULENTA

Vistalba Corte A Mendoza 2005

**93 points | \$60 | 500 cases made | Red**

Showy and ripe, with layers of crushed plum, boysenberry and blackberry fruit gliding over rounded, well-integrated tannins and backed by fig, licorice and sweet spice notes. The long finish just sails on, with admirable purity despite its heft. Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

### BODEGA BRESSIA

Conjuro Mendoza 2005

**92 points | \$120 | 100 cases imported | Red**

Dense, but nicely rounded and well-integrated, with hints of mesquite and fruitcake mingling with dark plum and blackberry fruit. Long and lush through the finish, while staying focused and pure. Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

### FINCA & BODEGA CARLOS PULENTA

Vistalba Corte B Mendoza 2005

**92 points | \$25 | 2,500 cases imported | Red**

Lush and round, with velvety-textured tannins carrying ample layers of plum sauce, crushed currant and fig fruit and dark licorice notes. Stays admirably fresh on the hefty finish, with a nice buried black tea hint. Malbec and Cabernet Sauvignon. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

### TRAPICHE

Malbec Mendoza Viña Adriana Venturín 2006

**92 points | \$50 | 1,362 cases made | Red**

This is rather flashy, with lots of mocha and fruitcake aromatics up front, backed by lush raspberry ganache, fig sauce and plum jam flavors. The long, rich, velvety finish has plenty of latent grip, with the fruit sailing on. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

### TRAPICHE

Malbec Mendoza Viña Cristina y Bibiana Coletto 2006

**92 points | \$50 | 1,355 cases made | Red**

Densely packed for now, with fig, cocoa and blackberry notes up front, while a reserve of boysenberry, blueberry and licorice waits in reserve. Shows flittering hints of violet and graphite as well, with a long, broad finish. Best from 2010 through 2013.—*J.M.*

### TRAPICHE

Malbec Mendoza Viña Federico Villafañe 2006

**92 points | \$50 | 1,368 cases made | Red**

Dense, but creamy and approachable with lush fig, raspberry ganache and crushed boysenberry fruit flavors weaving through notes of mocha, melted licorice and graphite. The finish is long and rich. For the hedonist crowd. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

## BODEGA COLOMÉ

Amalaya Calchaquí Valley 2007

**91 points | \$15 | 15,000 cases made | Red**

Dark, with a core of crushed currant and plum fruit laced with black tea, hoisin sauce and a snappy mineral streak. Ripe, but not overblown, with a racy finish that lets sweet earth and licorice snap notes add length. Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Tannat. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

## FINCA & BODEGA CARLOS PULENTA

Malbec Mendoza Tomero Gran Reserva 2006

**91 points | \$60 | 250 cases imported | Red**

Muscular, with broad raspberry currant and crushed plum flavors backed by dark toast and mocha notes. The long finish lets licorice and fig notes linger. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

## BODEGAS TERRAZAS DE LOS ANDES

Malbec Mendoza Afincado Las Compuertas

Vineyard 2005

**91 points | \$45 | 800 cases imported | Red**

Rather flashy, with lots of plum sauce, melted licorice and fig bread flavors laid over notes of cocoa, tar and espresso. Yet the long, juicy finish keeps this all together, with a graphite edge adding length and grip. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

## Chile

### CASA LAPOSTOLLE

Chardonnay Casablanca Valley Cuvée Alexandre Atalayas Vineyard 2007

**91 points | \$24 | 8,500 cases imported | White**

Very stylish, with nice underlying richness as the suave toast melds into the pear tartine, Jonagold apple and floral notes. Long, creamy finish has nice lingering minerality. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

### VIÑA SANTA EMA

Catalina Peumo 2006

**91 points | \$40 | 7,000 cases made | Red**

Solid, muscular, mouthfilling version, with loam and coffee layered amidst the currant, plum and fig fruit flavors. Dense, but with good drive on the finish where iron and black tea notes check in. Cabernet Sauvignon, Carmenère and Cabernet Franc. Drink now through 2013.—*J.M.*

### CASA LAPOSTOLLE

Carmenère Colchagua Valley Cuvée Alexandre Apalta Vineyard 2007

**90 points | \$29 | 800 cases made | Red**

Quite toasty, with cocoa powder and espresso notes up front followed by muscular macerated currant and fig fruit flavors mingling with a maduro tobacco hint. Long, fleshy finish has nice graphite edge lurking underneath. Needs to settle in, but should age nicely. Drink now through 2010.—*J.M.*

## VIU MANENT

Viu 1 Colchagua Valley 2006

**90 points | \$75 | 171 cases imported | Red**

Big and broad, with lots of blackberry, braised fig and blueberry compote notes held together by mocha and bittersweet cocoa. Long, muscular finish has briar and licorice notes pumping through. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

## France Rhône

### M. CHAPOUTIER

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Croix de Bois 2006

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

Very pure and driven, with a great beam of macerated red currant fruit laced with licorice, raspberry, bittersweet cocoa and incense notes that extend through the long, motuhwatering finish. Very rich, but offers admirable precision. Drink now through 2022.—*J.M.*

### DOMAINE DE LA SOLITUDE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Barberini 2005

**93 points | \$76 | 465 cases made | Red**

Densely packed, with layers of fig and black currant fruit, hoisin sauce, melted licorice and black tea. The long, authoritative finish pumps with muscle and dark fruit and tar notes. Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah. Best from 2010 through 2025.—*J.M.*

### DOMAINE DE LA SOLITUDE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2006

**92 points | \$46 | 830 cases made | Red**

Rich and concentrated, with lots of crushed plum, blackberry and red currant fruit laced with garrigue, incense and black tea notes. Very broad, fleshy finish has solid drive. Drink now through 2022.—*J.M.*

### DOMAINE DES SÉNÉCHAUX

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2006

**91 points | \$53 | 500 cases imported | Red**

Ripe and well-focused, with a delicious beam of red currant, Damsion plum and red licorice backed by well-integrated toast and a long, mineral finish. Very sleek, but has depth too. Drink now through 2019.—*J.M.*

## Washington

### COUGAR CREST

Syrah Walla Walla Valley Reserve 2005

**93 points | \$55 | 447 cases made | Red**

Aromatic, seductive and impressively supple, dealing out its dark berry, cherry, exotic spice and café au lait flavors slow and long. The finish comes together beautifully, and just doesn't quit. Drink now through 2014.—*H.S.*

## ANDREW WILL

Champoux Vineyard Horse Heaven Hills 2006  
**92 points | \$63 | 1,030 cases made | Red**

Firm, with a tart balance to the bright raspberry and brooding black fruit flavors. A distinctive mineral note emerges nicely on the expressive finish. Needs time to soften. Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot. Best from 2011 through 2016.—*H.S.*

## ANDREW WILL

Ciel du Cheval Vineyard Red Mountain 2006  
**92 points | \$63 | 1,262 cases made | Red**

Supple, generous and sharply focused, delivering a complex mouthful of cherry and plum fruit with elements of dried flowers, exotic spices and savory, meaty notes competing for attention. A nice lift of acidity drives the finish, which lingers impressively. Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2016.—*H.S.*

## ANDREW WILL

Syrah Washington Annie Camarda 2006  
**92 points | \$46 | 270 cases made | Red**

Plump and inviting, offering a generous mouthful of spicy, smoke-accented plum and blackberry flavors, lingering on the polished texture. Ripe and exuberant. Drink now through 2012.—*H.S.*

## DUSTED VALLEY

Syrah Walla Walla Valley Reserve 2006  
**92 points | \$45 | 145 cases made | Red**

Polished, round and generous, focusing its gorgeous blackberry and cherry fruit like a laser beam through a layer of fine tannins, hinting at cream and spice as the finish lingers effortlessly. Drink now through 2016.—*H.S.*

## COLUMBIA

Syrah Yakima Valley Red Willow Vineyard South Chapel 2006  
**91 points | \$30 | 200 cases made | Red**

Deft, polished and focused, a lithe style of Syrah with real depth to the soft-spoken cherry, plum, spice and orange peel aromas and flavors, which linger effortlessly on the medium-weight frame. Drink now through 2016.—*H.S.*

## COLUMBIA CREST

Merlot Columbia Valley Block 08 Reserve 2006  
**91 points | \$35 | 300 cases made | Red**

Firm in texture, with a tannic grip to the generous blackberry, licorice, tobacco and sage flavors, lingering on the savory finish. Needs time, but has the goods. Best from 2011 through 2016.—*H.S.*

## FIVE STAR

Sangiovese Walla Walla Valley 2006  
**91 points | \$28 | 475 cases made | Red**

Rich, ripe and seductive, offering a lovely range of plum, blueberry, raspberry and cream flavors, plus a nice hint of floral quality in the background, lingering on the generous finish against polished tannins. Drink now through 2014.—*H.S.*

## LIBERTY BAY

Cabernet Sauvignon Columbia Valley Stillwater Creek Vineyard 2005  
**91 points | \$32 | 200 cases made | Red**

Tightly wound, focused and generous with its currant and blueberry fruit, shaded with haunting coffee, mint and spice notes that linger against polished tannins. Drink now through 2015.—*H.S.*

## SEVEN HILLS

Carmenère Walla Walla Valley 2006  
**91 points | \$30 | 100 cases made | Red**

Generous, open-textured and distinctive for its warm, enveloping range of plum, blueberry and toast flavors, remaining supple through the expansive finish. Drink now through 2013.—*H.S.*

## SPARKMAN

Syrah Yakima Valley Darkness 2006  
**91 points | \$50 | 50 cases made | Red**

Big, bold and generous with rich plum, blueberry and coffee aromas and flavors, supported by mouthwatering acidity. The tannins are well-managed, so the finish sails. Drink now through 2016.—*H.S.*

## WOODINVILLE WINE CELLARS

Ausonius Columbia Valley 2005  
**91 points | \$35 | 200 cases made | Red**

Ripe and polished, this juicy mouthful of currant, plum and spicy herbal flavors remains open and inviting through the long, refined finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Malbec. Drink now through 2015.—*H.S.*

## WOODWARD CANYON

Cabernet Sauvignon Washington Artist Series #15 2006  
**91 points | \$49 | 2,821 cases made | Red**

Soft and generous, an open-textured Cabernet brimming with black cherry and currant flavors, lingering impressively, with a sweet coffee note adding interest. Drink now through 2016.—*H.S.*

## WOODWARD CANYON

Estate Walla Walla Valley 2006  
**91 points | \$59 | 253 cases made | Red**

Smooth, focused and generous with its coffee- and tobacco-accented cherry, blackberry and savory meat flavors. The finish sails, remaining poised and expressive. Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2014.—*H.S.*

## ANDREW WILL

Syrah Washington Annie Camarda 2004  
**90 points | \$46 | 266 cases made | Red**

Dark and earthy, with a strong floral character and a decadent feel to the cherry and bacon flavors. The finish has persistence and firm tannins. Best from 2011 through 2015.—*H.S.*

## ARBOR CREST

Dionysus Columbia Valley 2005  
**90 points | \$45 | 475 cases made | Red**

Lithe and supple, showing cherry and raspberry with cream and spice on the fine-grained finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc, Malbec and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2013.—*H.S.*

# HOT WINES

These are the most exciting discoveries from our editors' most recent tastings, published exclusively in *Wine Spectator Insider*. They are high-scoring, low-production wines from around the world that may be difficult to find, but are worth seeking out.

## DOMAINE DE LA SOLITUDE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Secrète Réserve 2005  
**95 points | \$177 | 250 cases made | Red**

A dense, brooding style, with a whiff of reduction that blows off quickly to reveal black currant, dark plum and braised fig fruit flavors laced with espresso, licorice root, loam and graphite. The very dense finish is loaded with blackberry confiture and graphite notes, and will need some time to stretch out fully. Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah. Best from 2010 through 2030. *From France.—J.M.*

## ANDREW WILL

Sorella Horse Heaven Hills 2006  
**95 points | \$74 | 1,326 cases made | Red**

Tight, focused and distinctive, this sharp-edged wine shows ripe currant, spice, tobacco and coffee flavors that sneak up on you. They start slow but swirl through the mildly grippy tannins into a long, expressive finish, making for a beautifully compact and complex wine. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best from 2011 through 2018. *From Washington.—H.S.*

## M. CHAPOUTIER

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Barbe Rac 2006  
**94 points | \$110 | NA cases made | Red**

Very beguiling, stylish, perfumy style, with incense, tea, sandalwood, red cherry and red currant fruit allied to a fine-grained texture. Super silky and extremely long, with a lingering mineral and shiso leaf-tinged finish that wont quit. Drink now through 2025. *From France.—J.M.*

## CASA LAPOSTOLLE

Clos Apalta Colchagua Valley 2006  
**94 points | \$80 | 1,700 cases made | Red**

Ripe and packed, especially for the vintage, with gorgeous blackberry, blueberry and fig fruit flavors liberally laced with bittersweet cocoa and Turkish coffee notes. Muscular but rounded, with briar and mineral notes buried deep on the fleshy finish. Impressive combination of density and purity. Carmenère, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Petit Verdot. Best from 2010 through 2016. *From Chile.—J.M.*

## DOMAINE DE LA SOLITUDE

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cornelia Constanza 2005  
**94 points | \$108 | 250 cases made | Red**

Sleek and rather polished for the vintage, with creamy tannins well-embedded in the core of melted fig, macerated currant and blackberry fruit. Lots of dark licorice, Turkish coffee and fruitcake notes fill out the long powerful finish. Grenache. Drink now through 2025. *From France.—J.M.*

## WINE SPECTATOR'S TASTERS

### The Most Experienced Team of Wine Journalists in the World

*Wine Spectator's* tasting staff includes 14 people in four offices. They work together to review more than 15,000 wines each year, more than any other publication. Together, our seven senior tasters count more than 140 years of tasting experience.

We always taste wine blind in our offices in San Francisco, Napa, New York and Tuscany, and in the vineyard regions of Europe. This is your guarantee that our reviews are fair and objective, and that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed. We score wines using the 100-point scale, explained below.

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Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: California

**Kim Marcus** Managing editor, New York  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Austria, Greece, Portugal, southern France

**Thomas Matthews** Executive editor, New York  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: New York, Spain

**James Molesworth** Senior editor, New York  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1997. Tasting beat: Argentina, Chile, Loire Valley, Rhône Valley, South Africa

**Bruce Sanderson** Tasting director, New York  
Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1993. Tasting beat: Burgundy, Champagne, Germany

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**James Suckling** European bureau chief, Italy  
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Tasting staff:  
**Jo Cooke** (Veneto),  
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#### Wine Spectator's 100-Point Scale

95-100	Classic
90-94	Outstanding
85-89	Very good
80-84	Good
75-79	Mediocre
50-74	Not recommended