

Anthony Dias

BLUE REVIEWS

Presented by  BLUE LIFESTYLE

In each issue, Editor-in-Chief Anthony Dias Blue selects a wide range of the best wines and spirits from among the more than 500 he samples over the course of a month. The reviews are subjective editorial evaluations, made without regard to advertising, and products are scored on a 100-point scale:

85-89: VERY GOOD

90-94: OUTSTANDING

95-100: CLASSIC


Once products are selected for publication, producers and importers will be offered the option of having their review accompanied by an image (bottle photo or label art) for a nominal fee. There is no obligation to add an image, nor does the decision affect the review or score in any way.

 The “twisty” icon indicates wines sealed with a screwcap closure.

For additional Blue Reviews, go to www.bluelifestyle.com.

Prices are for 750 ml. bottles unless otherwise noted.

DOMESTIC

91 Geysler Peak 2015 River Ranches Sauvignon Blanc, Russian River Valley (\$22) Cool-climate Russian River Valley fruit results in a seamless, bright Sauvignon Blanc with silky texture and lovely balance. 

ACCOLADE WINES



94 Patz & Hall 2015 Chardonnay, Alder Springs Vineyard, Mendocino (\$60) Now under the Ste. Michelle Wine Estates umbrella. Silky and elegant with lovely texture and precise flavors of tangy citrus and smooth vanilla oak.

STE. MICHELLE WINE ESTATES




92 Buty Winery 2015 Chardonnay, Conner Lee Vineyard, Columbia Valley (\$42) Silky and ripe with forward fruit; elegant and fresh with finesse and style—a lovely wine from Washington State.

91 Whetstone Wine Cellars 2015 Viognier, Catie's Corner Vineyard, Russian River Valley (\$50) Vintner Jamey Whetstone apprenticed at Domaine Dujac in Burgundy. Creamy and lush with elegant style; nicely dense with depth and fine balance.



91 True Myth Winery 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon, Paso Robles (\$24) The Niven family of Edna Valley look north to Paso for this Cabernet with fresh blackberry and plum; toasty with vanilla oak and balanced, structured flavors.

NIVEN FAMILY WINE ESTATES

92 Siduri 2015 Pinot Noir, Santa Lucia Highlands (\$35) The longtime cult Pinot house of winemaker Adam Lee, whose vineyard sources range from Willamette Valley to the Santa Rita Hills. Ripe cherry nose; silky with bright berry fruit and racy acidity. 

91 Verdad 2014 Tempranillo, Sawyer Lindquist Vineyard, Edna Valley (\$30) The Spanish varietal spinoff project from Qupé. Lively, tangy acid structure; crisp, pure and showing bright style and fresh fruit. Biodynamic.

93 Trombetta Family Wines 2014 Pinot Noir, Gap's Crown Vineyard, Sonoma Coast (\$65) Gap's Crown is one of the vineyard jewels of Sonoma County. Aromatic and lush nose; spicy, ripe cherry and concentrated flavors.

93 The Calling 2014 Patriarch Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast (\$70)

The Calling's best single-vineyard lot of Pinot each year is bottled as Patriarch. Lovely cherry fruit and silky texture; long, elegant, fresh and balanced.

DEUTSCH FAMILY WINE & SPIRITS



93 Clos du Val 2014 Cabernet Sauvignon, Hironnelle Vineyard, Stags Leap District

(\$120) A Stags Leap classic with deep ruby color; smooth, dense and ripe with racy and juicy fruit; nicely structured with edgy flavors.

CLOS DU VAL WINE CO.



92 Craggy Range Vineyards 2016 Sauvignon Blanc, Te Muna Road, Martinborough, New Zealand (\$22)

Smooth and juicy with much more Loire style than Kiwi; fresh, juicy and racy with lovely style. See more on page 18. ☺

KOBRAND

92 Trinity Hill 2013 The Gimblett, Hawkes Bay, New Zealand (\$35)

Pioneers of red wine in New Zealand make this dense, lush-textured Bordeaux-style blend; deep and ripe with concentrated fruit and lovely balance.



TERRAIR SELECTIONS

93 Bird in Hand 2013 Nest Egg Shiraz, Mount Lofty Ranges, Australia (\$85)

Named for the nearby 19th-century Bird in Hand gold mine. Dense, spicy nose; lush, elegant and toasty with ripe blackberry and spice. ☺

HP SELECTIONS

90 Forrest Estate 2015 The Doctors' Riesling, Marlborough, New Zealand (\$22)

John and Brigid Forrest left careers in molecular biology and medicine to create Forrest Estate. Bright, juicy Riesling with fresh, tangy flavors and a long finish.

PACIFIC PRIME WINES

91 Vietti 2016 Roero Arneis, Italy (\$23)

A lively white from the hills outside Alba in Piedmont. Fresh, bright and juicy with minerals and tangy acidity.

DALLA TERRA

91 Casarena 2015 Estate Red Blend, Luján de Cuyo, Argentina (\$20)

The folks behind Casarena are known as "the punks of Luján" for their unconventional approach. This stylish blend of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon and 40% Malbec has tangy plum and berry fruit.

VINE CONNECTIONS



97 Tenuta di Biserno 2012 Biserno, Toscana IGT, Italy (\$175)

From Lodovico Antinori's Maremma project, developed with Michel Rolland. Supple, elegant and rich with hints of earth, spice and showing great finesse; seamless and generous. Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petit Verdot.

KOBRAND

IMPORTS

91 Bodvår NV Pearly N° 1, Languedoc Roussillon, France (\$21)

Swedish entrepreneur Bodvår Hafström is a rosé specialist. This sparkling version from 100% Cinsault shows pale pink color and clean, racy flavors. A new concept, nicely done.

IMBIBE WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT



Quality-Driven in Sonoma: Donelan Family Wines

DONELAN FAMILY WINES was founded in 2009 with a focus on cool-climate Rhône and Burgundian varietal wines from Sonoma vineyards. Joe Donelan was previously the investor behind Pax Cellars but decided to rebrand under his own name. His sons, Tripp and Cushing, are also involved in the project, which has garnered well-deserved acclaim for its resolute insistence on quality.

I recently tasted through some current releases with Cushing Donelan. Here are my notes.

92 Donelan Wines 2014 Nancie Chardonnay, Sonoma County (\$48)

Made from selected vineyard blocks that the Donelan family feels demonstrate their favorite Sonoma County Chardonnay characteristics. Fresh and juicy with racy acidity and tangy fruit; silky and lifted with bright style and clean flavors.



92 Donelan Wines 2013 Two Brothers Pinot Noir, Sonoma County (\$55)

Blended from grapes from Steiner Ranch, Devoto Vineyard, Walker-Vine Hill and Perli Vineyard. Pale in color but alive with bright raspberry and cherry; silky and tangy on the palate with a long, balanced finish.



VALUE AND BY-THE-GLASS RECOMMENDATIONS

90 Pascual Toso 2015 Estate Chardonnay, Mendoza, Argentina (\$14)

One of Argentina's older wineries, founded in 1890. Silky, smooth and bright with depth, style and finesse. ☺

QUINTESSENTIAL WINES



88 The Original Dark Horse 2016 Pinot Grigio, California (\$10)

A super by-the-glass PG with bright, balanced flavors and soft style. ☺

E. & J. GALLO

90 Snoqualmie Vineyards 2014 Syrah, Columbia Valley (\$10)

This Pacific Northwest producer is always a sure-bet for value. Dense and ripe with blackberry, vanilla and spice.

STE. MICHELLE WINE ESTATES



89 Fetzter 2015 Eagle Peak Merlot, California (\$10)

Smooth, lush and dense with ripe plum and juicy acidity; fresh, balanced and classic.

90 Mirassou 2015 Pinot Noir, California (\$12)

This venerable California label still has the chops, as in this rich Pinot with red cherry, apple and hints of mocha; juicy and vibrant.

E. & J. GALLO



88 14 Hands 2016 Rosé, Columbia Valley (\$12)

A crisp and floral Syrah-based rosé with rich pink color and notes of citrus and strawberry; tangy and dry.

STE. MICHELLE WINE ESTATES



89 Rubus 2015 Old Vines Zinfandel, Lodi (\$13)

Lodi means old-vine Zinfandel. This one is spicy with vanilla, blackberry and tangy acidity; fresh and long.

KYSELA PÈRE ET FILS

93 Donelan Wines 2013 Syrah, Cuvée Christine, Sonoma County (\$48)

Named after Joe Donelan's wife Christine. And blended from vineyards selected for their dark, rich, dynamic qualities. Loaded with spice, blackberry and plum; complex and balanced on the very long finish.



95 Donelan Wines 2013 Syrah, Walker Vine Hill Vineyard, Russian River Valley (\$75)

Lush and dense with fresh blackberry and juicy spice; a complete package, fresh and generous, tangy and long. Stock up—this will be the final vintage of this wine as the Donelans are parting ways with the vineyard to pursue more Chardonnay and Pinot Noir opportunities.



RIPEN YOUR COCKTAIL



NATURAL ELDERFLOWER LIQUEUR

FOR RECIPE INSPIRATIONS VISIT
 ST-ELDER.COM | @DRINKSTELDER

©2017 PRODUCED & BOTTLED BY ST. ELDER, LTD., BOSTON, MA.
 20% ALC/VOL (40 PROOF)

PLEASE ENJOY RESPONSIBLY.