

Wine Spectator Insider

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Marvin R. Shanken, Editor and Publisher

FIRST LOOK AT OUR EDITORS' MOST EXCITING NEW WINES

An exceptional selection of Spanish wines leads this week's edition of the *Wine Spectator Insider*. Thomas Matthews reviews five reds from Spain's hot 2003 vintage, and four of them have earned classic ratings. These rich, powerful, fruit- and oak-filled reds, made in a modern style, are based on local clones of Spain's indigenous Tempranillo grape.

From France, Bruce Sanderson reviews seven outstanding brut Champagnes and 10 white Burgundies from the outstanding 2004 vintage. (You'll find two classic-rated versions from Domaine Leflaive among the Hot Wines, on page 4.) Sanderson also reviews six 92-point 2005 Riesling kabinette from Germany in this issue. And from Portugal, five reds from the Douro earn outstanding scores from Kim Marcus.

Nearly all of these exciting wines are also eligible for consideration in *Wine Spectator's* 2006 Top 100. Don't miss this year's announcement of the top 10 wines of the year, which will begin on *Wine Spectator Online* on Monday, Nov. 13.

France / Burgundy

Domaine Leflaive

Meursault Sous le Dos d'Ane 2004

93 points | \$128 | 108 cases imported | White

With the essence of freshly crushed rocks, this has depth drawn from its intense flavors, like citronella and honey strained through limestone. It's hard to believe this is Chardonnay—it evokes a sense of place so strongly. Fine length and finesse. Best from 2008 through 2018.—B.S.

Bouchard Père & Fils

Chevalier-Montrachet 2004

92 points | \$320 | 56 cases imported | White

Finesse and subtlety are the hallmarks of this sleek 2004. The floral, lemon, hazelnut and mineral flavors build in intensity and the finish picks up a toasty vanilla component. Drink now through 2015.—B.S.

Louis Carillon

Puligny-Montrachet Les Combettes 2004

92 points | \$94 | 25 cases imported | White

Ripe and generous, this exudes peach and mango flavors backed by spice and mineral. It's more forward than many of its peers, with balance and

length. The structure emerges on the finish. Drink now through 2014.—B.S.

Vincent Girardin

Meursault Les Narvaux 2004

92 points | \$48 | 525 cases imported | White

A beauty, this is harmonious and complex, layering its honeysuckle, apple and vanilla aromas and flavors from beginning to end. It picks up mineral notes on the long aftertaste. Drink now through 2015.—B.S.

Domaine Leflaive

Puligny-Montrachet Les Foliatières 2004

92 points | \$158 | 200 cases imported | White

A gorgeous nose combining toast and mineral aromas introduces this silky white Burgundy. It's lightweight yet finely detailed with citrus, hazelnut and mineral flavors. Terrific balance and integration, with a long finish. Best from 2008 through 2016.—B.S.

Lucien Le Moine

Chassagne-Montrachet La Romanée 2004

92 points | \$89 | 4 cases imported | White

Spice and smoky oak greets the senses, leading to citrus, apricot and mineral shadings in this racy white. It's rich

yet still tight, leaving a glimpse into its potential on the long finish. Best from 2008 through 2015.—*B.S.*

Vincent Girardin

Chassagne-Montrachet Le Cailleret 2004

91 points | \$66 | 125 cases imported | White

This is lean and racy, with lemon, butter, vanilla and apple flavors wrapped tightly around a spine of acidity. Mineral accents emerge on the finish. Fine balance and length. Drink now through 2012.—*B.S.*

Louis Latour

Puligny-Montrachet Les Folatières 2004

91 points | \$75 | 200 cases imported | White

Very elegant, this white displays graceful floral, mineral and anise flavors in a well-integrated frame. It's intense on the finish, needing time to smooth out. Best from 2008 through 2015.—*B.S.*

France / Champagne

de Venoge

Brut Champagne Millésimé 1996

93 points | \$80 | 100 cases imported | Sparkling

Very fruity. Displays both the exotic aromas and the vivid structure of 1996. Lychee, pineapple and papaya aromas mingle with lemon and mineral flavors. Well-balanced, with the exotic fruit notes returning on the finish. Still needs time.—*B.S.*

Veuve Clicquot

Brut Rosé Champagne La Grande Dame 1995

93 points | \$225 | NA cases made | Sparkling

Somewhat mature aromas and flavors of decaying cherry and berry, warm spice and woody accents and a firm structure mark this silky, vinous rosé. It's like an aged Burgundy with bubbles.—*B.S.*

Deutz

Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne 1998

92 points | \$94 | 450 cases imported | Sparkling

Rich, with a dense texture, evoking whole-grain toast, honey and mineral aromas and flavors. Has good grip, with a crisp structure and a long, mouth-watering finish.—*B.S.*

Nicolas Feuillatte

Brut Rosé Champagne Cuvée Palmes d'Or 2000

92 points | \$175 | 500 cases imported | Sparkling

Full of flavor and finesse, this rosé evokes cherry, spice and a touch of green, minty notes. It's finely woven, with a very silky mousse and long, dried berry aftertaste.—*B.S.*

Henriot

Brut Rosé Champagne Millésimé 1998

92 points | \$80 | 2,300 cases imported | Sparkling

Mature notes of dried cherry, spice and forest floor mingle with fresh citrus in this elegant, layered rosé. A subtle texture, with a firm spine and fine length.—*B.S.*

Jean Milan

Brut Blanc de Blancs Champagne Terres de Noël

Sélection 2000

92 points | \$71 | NA cases made | Sparkling

Graphite, pencil shavings and honey mark the aromas on this full, rich Champagne. Driven by a firm, chalky structure, picking up lemon and whole-grain notes. Lingers with a mineral and honey aftertaste.—*B.S.*

Moët & Chandon

Brut Rosé Champagne Cuvée Dom Pérignon 1995

92 points | \$400 | NA cases made | Sparkling

A vibrant Champagne, firm, intense and mineral, supporting subtle berry and currant aromas and flavors. It's elegant though well-toned, with a dry, chalky finish.—*B.S.*

Germany

Peter Geiben (Karlsmühle)

Riesling Kabinett Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Kaseler Nies'chen 2005

92 points | \$22 | NA cases made | White

Very mineral in aroma, then exploding on the palate with lime, apple and peach notes. Racy, it has the delicacy of a kabinett, the pedigree of a great site and the intensity of the vintage. Fine balance and length. Drink now through 2015.—*B.S.*

Fritz Haag

Riesling Kabinett Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Brauneberger

Juffer 2005

92 points | \$NA | NA cases made | White

Well-delineated and racy, with lime, floral and slate notes, this is a textbook kabinett. It's light-weight yet packed with flavor. Subtle balance, with length and harmony. Drink now through 2015.—*B.S.*

von Hövel

Riesling Kabinett Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Oberemmeler

Hütte 2005

92 points | \$NA | NA cases made | White

This has an extra level of ripeness, along with a creamy texture. Lemon pie, vanilla, pear and mineral flavors combine with the firm structure for balance. It's long and fresh on the finish. Drink now through 2018.—*B.S.*

Schloss Lieser

Riesling Kabinett Mosel-Saar-Ruwer 2005

92 points | \$NA | NA cases made | White

This is lively, with an airy texture. The lime and mineral notes have concentration and persist from start to finish. Though rich, it retains a sense of elegance. Nice stony aftertaste. Drink now through 2018.—*B.S.*

Markus Molitor (Haus Klosterberg)

Riesling Kabinett Gold Cap Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Zeltinger Sonnenuhr 2005

92 points | \$17 | 500 cases made | White

Still a little reduced in aroma, but this is generous and silky on the palate. Passion fruit, mango, apricot and mineral flavors get support from the moderately firm structure. It's well-balanced, with a long finish. Drink now through 2012.—*B.S.*

Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler

Riesling Kabinett Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Bernkasteler Badstube 2005

92 points | \$17 | 700 cases made | White

Gorgeous, complex aromas and flavors of spring blossoms, peach and lime, with a hint of herbs, all supported by bright structure and a slate component. It's elegant and harmonious, with a long, succulent finish. Best from 2007 through 2018.—*B.S.*

Portugal

Lemos & Van Zeller

Douro Quinta Vale D. Maria 2004

92 points | \$48 | 250 cases imported | Red

Lush and flavorful, with balance and elegance to the red plum, berry and savory spice elements. Well-crafted, with silky tannins and a creamy finish of paprika and cardamom. Drink now through 2010.—*K.M.*

Niepoort

Douro Vertente 2004

92 points | \$30 | 300 cases imported | Red

Muscular, angular red, with a steel jaw of ripe, structured flavors of red fruits, mineral and iron, with plenty of mocha and dark chocolate notes. Long finish of cola and spice. Drink now through 2010.—*K.M.*

Quinta do Vale Meão

Douro Meandro 2004

92 points | \$20 | 355 cases imported | Red

Intense kirschlike aroma followed by pure flavors of dark cherry, blackberry and loads of mineral and spice. Refined and powerful, with a long, long finish

of iron and hot stone. Touriga Nacional, Tinta Roriz, Touriga Franca and Tinta Barroca. Drink now through 2012.—*K.M.*

Niepoort

Douro Batuta 2004

91 points | \$100 | 70 cases imported | Red

There's a smoky essence to this full-bodied red, with plenty of dark plum and berry flavors. Supple, with a pretty red cherry and spice filled finish. Drink now through 2010.—*K.M.*

Lemos & Van Zeller

Douro Casa de Casal de Loivos 2004

90 points | \$40 | 100 cases imported | Red

Lush, mouthfilling red, with a crushed red pepper aroma and lots of plum, berry, espresso and cream flavors. Finish is filled with milk chocolate and spice. Drink now through 2010.—*K.M.*

Spain

Numanthia-Termes

Toro Termanthia 2003

95 points | \$182 | 125 cases imported | Red

Powerful and concentrated, this immense red is austere, but remains balanced, hinting at potential. Plum, dark chocolate, mineral and tobacco flavors are rich and deep. Best after 2007.—*T.M.*

Bodegas Hnos. Sastre

Ribera del Duero Pesus 2003

95 points | \$395 | 100 cases made | Red

This lush red is like pie à la mode, sweet with ripe blackberry and huckleberry fruit and vanilla oak flavors. It's mouthfilling yet not aggressive, and there's enough acidity to keep it lively. An oaky, modern style, ripe and heady, but rich and deep. Drink now through 2015.—*T.M.*

Bodegas Aalto

Ribera del Duero PS 2003

94 points | \$110 | 450 cases imported | Red

It's hard to resist this lush, modern red, with its mouthwatering blackberry and boysenberry fruit and lavish toasty vanilla oak. But it has plenty of structure, with ripe tannins and fresh acidity, so give it time to develop. Drink now through 2015.—*T.M.*

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 Leflaive

Bâtard-Montrachet 2004

96 points | \$270 | 260 cases imported | White

This is intense, revealing layer after layer of nuance. Citrus blossom, hazelnut, anise, lemon custard, apricot, smoke and mineral flavors mingle with the firm structure and creamy texture. It's harmonious and balanced, with lingering notes of vanilla and mineral salts. A lot of finesse for the appellation. Best from 2009 through 2025. *From France.*—B.S.

Domaine Leflaive

Chevalier-Montrachet 2004

95 points | \$360 | 270 cases imported | White

The oak is a bit flashy now, but there's plenty of substance underneath in this powerful, seductive white. Apple, citronella, hazelnut, smoky spices and mineral aromas and flavors mingle with the bright structure. It's concentrated, yet balanced, with a creamy texture and a long, racy finish. Best from 2009 through 2020. *From France.*—B.S.

Bodegas Emilio Moro

Ribera del Duero Malleolus de Sanchomartin 2003

95 points | \$190 | 25 cases imported | Red

Espresso and bitter chocolate oak flavors dominate this powerful red now, but there's a core of ripe, deep blackberry and currant fruit and an underlying mineral backbone that promises complexity will come with time. Very elegant for such power. Best after 2007. *From Spain.*—T.M.

Numanthia-Termes

Toro Numanthia 2003

95 points | \$56 | 225 cases imported | Red

This rich, alluring red is packed with black fruit flavors framed by sweet, toasty oak. Despite its thick texture and full tannins, it remains lively and even graceful. Modern style, yet its mineral and wild herb notes root it firmly in its *terroir*. Drink now through 2015. *From Spain.*—T.M.

Wine Spectator's Tastings

Wine Spectator reviews more than 12,000 wines each year; our senior editors comprise the most experienced staff of professional wine tasters of any publication in the world. Each editor specializes in the wines of specific regions; their initials identify the taster of each wine reviewed.

We always taste wines blind, in our offices in San Francisco, Napa, New York and Tuscany, and in the vineyard regions of Europe. This is your guarantee that a wine's reputation or price does not influence its score. We score wines using our 100-point scale, explained below.

James Laube Senior editor, Napa

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

Kim Marcus Managing editor, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1988. Tasting beat: Southern France, Portugal

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: Loire Valley, Rhône Valley, South Africa, South America

Bruce Sanderson Tasting director, New York

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1993. Tasting beat: Alsace, Austria, Burgundy, Champagne, Germany

Harvey Steiman Editor at large, San Francisco

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1983. Tasting beat: Australia, New Zealand, Oregon, Washington

James Suckling European bureau chief, Italy

Joined *Wine Spectator* in 1981. Tasting beat: Bordeaux, Italy, Port

Tasting staff: **Jo Cooke** (Veneto), **Daniel Sogg** (New Zealand)

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