

TOP BAROLO | CABERNET SAUVIGNON | RIOJA | YEAR'S BEST CHAMPAGNE

# Wine & Spirits

## HOLIDAY REDS

Winter 2023

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## Imported New Releases

sleek, black-fruited shiraz. It's silky-smooth, with the concentration and density of flavor that takes the tannins toward blood, iron and sage. A deep, dark wine with pleasure to spare, this begins to show floral scents of roses, then detailed flavors of plums and strawberries after a day open to air. —J.G. *Kysela Père & Fils, Winchester, VA*

**93 | Penfolds** \$40  
**2021 South Australia Bin 28 Kalimna Shiraz** Fresh blueberry depths invest this wine's tannins with black velvet riches. You can sense the integration of Penfolds' wine-making, finishing the fermentation in oak. Rosemary and thyme. Luscious and delicious. Ripe and open. It's not exciting, perhaps, just comforting and beautiful. From an epic vintage, this will last for years. And yet, even now, it's supple and easy to love. —J.G. *Treasury Wine Estates, Napa, CA*

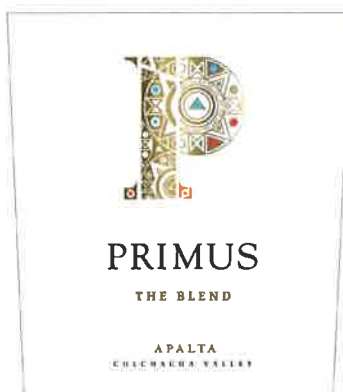
**92 | Penfolds** \$40  
**2021 Coonawarra Bin 128 Shiraz** The char and warmth of this wine's black tannins take their time to resolve. At first, you might just find olive brine and black-peppercorn spice over robust blueberry fruit, a bit sweet and sour. Come back a day later and the char has turned toward dark chocolate, cocoa powder and cream (there's nothing milk-chocolate-like about it). Firm tannins and that peppercorn spice provide restraint, while peppermint and olive-brine scents last in concert. Well worth a long-term investment. —J.G. *Treasury Wine Estates, Napa, CA*

**91 | Agricola Vintners** \$90  
**2021 Barossa Flaxman Valley** In the midst of all the South Australian shiraz, the two wines from Callum Powell stood out as more European in style. This one is all savor, from the scent of blistered shishito peppers, to eucalyptus and roasted carrot; it's an earthy, herbal shiraz with a tension and spice more reminiscent of Côte-Rôtie than the contemporary standards in Barossa. Powell's home base, the Flaxman Valley, rises to 1,650 feet of elevation, where he describes the climate as cooler and wetter than Ebenezer's. This wine is high-toned in its green edges, formidable and tight, needing age to show its best. —J.G. *Vine Street, Mt. Laurel, NJ*

**91 | Organic Hill** \$50  
**2022 McLaren Vale Founders Release Shiraz** Leon Hill's family has a long history in the South Australia wine industry, though his own certified-organic wine project is only ten years old. Based in McLaren Vale, he presents this young shiraz as spicy, fresh and bright. It wraps the tongue in blueberry sweetness, the

fruit very primary, but not at all heavy. For drinking right now with grilled pork. —J.G. *Cordelina Wine Co., Gold River, CA*

## CHILE RED



**93 | Primus** \$21  
**2020 Apalta The Blend (BEST BUY)** Primus is now a blend of six varieties—cabernets sauvignon and franc, syrah, malbec, petit verdot and carmenère. In 2020, it's sleek and saturated with blue fruit, tangy and herbal, the tannins pleasantly dry and abrasive. It offers layers of complex flavor at a very reasonable price. —J.G. *González Byass USA, Chicago, IL*

**90 | Carmen**  
**2022 Secano Interior Loma Seca Cinsault** Black and earthy, this dry-farmed cinsault benefits tremendously from a day of air. It's a simple wine, with red-currant and strawberry notes, satisfying and pleasingly fresh even as the fruit leans into peachy superripeness, checked by a savory porcini note. —J.G. *Saranty, Stamford CT*

## FRANCE WHITE

**91 | Comte de Chevalière** \$35  
**2021 Sancerre** This is a dense, young Sancerre, with a lot of green spice and a white-floral aspect. A day of air reveals more detail in the flavors, crabapple and leafy basil accents that play over the stark minerality. Decant it for roast chicken. —C.W. *Tri-Vin, New Rochelle, NY*

**89 | Château de Lascaux** \$18  
**2022 Languedoc Garrigue Blanc (BEST BUY)** This wine, based on roussanne with vermentino, viognier and marsanne, needs a few hours to shake off some greenness—one taster compared it to kiwi skin—and show some interest in the whole-peach savor. —C.W. *Montaigne Imports, San Anselmo, CA*

## FRANCE RED

### LANGUEDOC



**92 | Lorgèril** \$27  
**2020 Minervois La Livinière Domaine de la Borie Blanche Terroirs d'Altitude** Based on syrah and grenache, this Languedoc red brings complex layers of garrigue and Damsion plum. Its tannins are soft and sun-ripened, but give enough shape to the wine to invite you back for another sip. —C.W. *Albert Bichot USA, NY*

**91 | Lorgèril** \$23  
**2019 Cabardès Château de Pennautier Terroirs d'Altitude (BEST BUY)** Cabernet franc swoops in at the finish of this wine, adding a dimension of graphite and peppery spice to the intense, sunny black fruit (the blend includes merlot, syrah and grenache). This is a dense wine starting to reveal more elegance as it ages. Though you could cellar it, it's also pleasurable now. —C.W. *Albert Bichot USA, NY*

**91 | Lorgèril** \$55  
**2020 Cabardès Esprit de Pennautier** Cabernet franc spice helps to prop up the ripe syrah in this wine, coming together in a weave of black fruit, black pepper and black earth (the blend also includes some merlot and grenache). Though sixty percent of the wine spends time in new barriques, the oak does not dominate its texture. Instead, it comes across as a bloody wine, dark and brooding. —C.W. *Albert Bichot USA, NY*

**90 | Château de Lascaux** \$18  
**2021 Languedoc Garrigue Rouge (BEST BUY)** Faint alcoholic spice breathes air into this wine, stopping short of a burn. The juicy tannins and rich, transparent fruit come together in what NYC sommelier Julie