

# Wine Spectator Insider

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**GERMAN** Riesling is the main attraction in this week's *Wine Spectator Insider*, with Bruce Sanderson reviewing new 2007 auslesen and beereauslesen, all 17 of which earn classic ratings. Also in this edition, James Laube offers tasting notes on 11 new reds from California, including an outstanding 2005 Napa Cabernet from Beaulieu and a 97-point Russian River Valley Pinot Noir. Check out the Hot Wines on page 4 to find out who made it.

Rounding out this week's selections is a new batch of reds from France's Rhône Valley reviewed by James Molesworth. It's a varied selection, from classic-rated 2006 Châteauneuf-du-Pape to outstanding Côtes du Rhône.

## California

### ALPHA OMEGA

Era Napa Valley 2006

**94 points | \$160 | 620 cases made | Red**

A huge step up in quality and price for this winery. Combines richness, depth and complexity with elegance and finesse. Full-bodied, showing fleshy currant, black cherry and blackberry fruit, with hints of spice, nutmeg and black licorice. Fleshes out to reveal a long, lingering finish. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2016.—J.L.

### DUMOL

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley 2006

**93 points | \$60 | 2,700 cases made | Red**

Offers wonderful purity of fruit. Rich and full-bodied, elegant and stylish, with a mix of spicy black cherry, raspberry and wilted rose scents. Intense, balanced, vibrant and well-structured, ending with a hint of black licorice. Should only get better. Drink now through 2016.—J.L.

### ERNA SCHEIN

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Spare Me 2006

**93 points | \$45 | 380 cases made | Red**

Soy sauce and Worcestershire sauce aromas stretch the flavors and give this a measure of complexity, joining dense dried currant, wild berry and savory herb flavors. Dense and concentrated, this is very young and tight now. Best from 2010 through 2017.—J.L.

### HEINTZ

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast 2007

**93 points | \$48 | 350 cases made | Red**

This offers excellent structure, focus, depth and concentration, tightly focused on ripe, firm blackberry and wild berry fruit, floral and licorice scents, and ending with a long, persistent finish. Drink now through 2015.—J.L.

### SPOTTED OWL

Syrah Napa Valley Alexandria's Cuvée 2004

**93 points | \$50 | 75 cases made | Red**

Sensational, deep, profound, complex and concentrated, with rich, full-bodied dried currant, wild berry, mineral, sage, herb and cedar notes that are focused, long and persistent, ending with chewy, integrated tannins. Drink now through 2015.—J.L.

### ARIETTA

Variation One Napa Valley 2006

**92 points | \$100 | 500 cases made | Red**

Firm, complex and full-bodied, with spicy, peppery wild berry flavors that walk the line of balance without wavering, ending with firm, dry tannins. Ends with a nice burst of grapey berry fruit and mineral and then some creamy oak. Syrah and Merlot. Drink now through 2014.—J.L.

## BEAULIEU VINEYARD

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Beaulieu No. 1 Reserve  
Maestro Collection 2005  
**92 points | \$65 | 1,108 cases made | Red**

Intense and chewy, with ripe, vibrant, full-bodied dried currant, mineral, sage, cedar and black cherry fruit that unfolds gracefully, revealing depth, complexity and great structure. Best from 2010 through 2017.—*J.L.*

## ERNA SCHEIN

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley Cemetery 2006  
**92 points | \$80 | 370 cases made | Red**

Rustic, with a pleasant earthy edge to the dried currant, blackberry, sage and savory herbal notes. Full-bodied, complex and well-focused, ending with a long finish. Drink now through 2016.—*J.L.*

## ERNA SCHEIN

Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley The Knockout 2006  
**92 points | \$75 | 350 cases made | Red**

Intense and structured, with spicy currant, cedar, cigar box and dried berry fruit that's tightly wound, full-bodied and focused, ending with hints of licorice and nutmeg. Drink now through 2017.—*J.L.*

## CLIFF LEDE

Cabernet Sauvignon Stags Leap District 2006  
**92 points | \$60 | 8,853 cases made | Red**

Creamy and seductive, with ripe currant, mocha, mineral and espresso notes that are full-bodied and complex. Long on the finish, ending with excellent structure. Drink now through 2018.—*J.L.*

# France Rhône

## CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2006  
**95 points | \$120 | 7,500 cases imported | Red**

Powerful, with a round, almost creamy core of blackberry and raspberry fruit all layered with cocoa, sweet toast, mesquite and fig paste. Long and rich through the finish. Still quite primal, with lots in reserve. Best from 2010 through 2030.—*J.M.*

## TARDIEU-LAURENT

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Cuvée Speciale 2006  
**94 points | \$78 | 75 cases imported | Red**

Rich, with a sappy intensity to the cassis and red plum fruit that pumps through, pushed by red licorice, raspberry ganache and incense notes. Mocha and roasted vanilla hints chime in on the long, detailed finish. Grenache. Drink now through 2024.—*J.M.*

## TARDIEU-LAURENT

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Vieilles Vignes 2006  
**94 points | \$75 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Structured and dense, but very racy, with a terrific graphite undertow that carries the braised fig, black tea, mesquite, chocolate and macerated currant fruit flavors. The finish is long and supple. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2024.—*J.M.*

## TARDIEU-LAURENT

Châteauneuf-du-Pape 2006  
**92 points | \$51 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Perfumed aromatics, with incense and spice box notes that give way to a silky, racy palate of blackberry, black cherry, currant and black tea notes. The long, stylish finish sails on, with nice lingering minerality. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2023.—*J.M.*

## LOUIS BERNARD

Châteauneuf-du-Pape Grande Reserve de Bonpas 2005  
**91 points | \$52 | 1,000 cases made | Red**

This is packed solid with blackberry, boysenberry and black currant fruit, all held together by roasted vanilla, mocha and coffee notes. Long and well-integrated through the rounded finish. Drink now through 2017.—*J.M.*

## TARDIEU-LAURENT

Côtes du Rhône Guy Louis Red 2006  
**91 points | \$28 | 50 cases imported | Red**

A dark, toasty style, with showy spice, fruitcake and date notes up front, backed by black cherry, fig and currant paste notes. The long, incense- and spice-filled finish lets the enticing toast edge linger. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

## TARDIEU-LAURENT

Côtes du Rhône-Villages Rasteau Vieilles Vignes 2006  
**91 points | \$31 | 25 cases imported | Red**

Gorgeous aromas of mocha, incense and Turkish coffee give way to a rich but racy palate of raspberry ganache and bittersweet cocoa, with a long, graphite-filled finish. Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

## CHÂTEAU DE BEAUCASTEL

Côtes du Rhône Coudoulet de Beaucastel 2006  
**90 points | \$31 | 12,500 cases made | Red**

Dark and still a bit reticent, with coffee, loam, bittersweet cocoa, iron and melted licorice notes holding the core of plum and black cherry at bay, followed by a long, fine-grained finish. Should cellar nicely with its fine, mineral spine. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

## A. CLAPE

Côtes du Rhône 2007  
**90 points | \$33 | 170 cases imported | Red**

Focused, with a nice prominent streak of *garrigue* running through the dark cherry, currant and mineral notes. A graphite edge frames the finish. Rock-solid. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

## DOMAINE GRAMENON

Côtes du Rhône La Sagesse 2007  
**90 points | \$33 | 50 cases imported | Red**

Ripe and dense, with nicely layered blackberry, plum sauce, coffee, cocoa and licorice notes that stay mouthwatering on the graphite-filled finish, where a nice hint of *garrigue* is buried deep. Drink now through 2011.—*J.M.*

# Germany

## Riesling

### EMRICH-SCHÖNLEBER

Riesling Beerenauslese Nahe Monzinger Halenberg 2007  
**96 points | \$174/375ml | 27 cases made | Dessert**

Light and expressive, revealing botrytis-tinged pear, apricot and lanolin aromas and flavors. All the components are well integrated and the vibrant acidity keeps the finish clean and graceful. Drink now through 2042.—*B.S.*

### SCHLOSS SCHÖNBORN

Riesling Beerenauslese Gold Cap Rheingau Hattenheimer Pfaffenberg 2007  
**96 points | \$115/375ml | 30 cases made | Dessert**

Concentrated citrus and fruit ju jube flavors are at the core of this elegant dessert Riesling. It stays racy and clean thanks to its vibrant structure, while the lime and lemon notes linger on the long finish. Best from 2011 through 2042.—*B.S.*

### ST.-URBANS-HOF

Riesling Beerenauslese Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Leiwener Laurentiuslay 2007  
**96 points | \$100/375ml | 12 cases made | Dessert**

The apricot, peach, quince and lime flavors are pure and clear, melding seamlessly with the silky texture. It's all supported by a vibrant structure, keeping it fresh and clean on the finish. A mineral element emerges on the aftertaste. Drink now through 2050.—*B.S.*

### ROBERT WEIL

Riesling Beerenauslese Rheingau Kiedrich Gräfenberg 2007  
**96 points | \$350/375ml | 10 cases imported | Dessert**

A beauty. Silky and harmonious, this BA matches concentrated flavors of honey, dried apricot, lemon and orange peel with a vibrant structure. It's very refreshing now, but this will allow it to age well as the sweetness and acidity integrate more fully. Best from 2012 through 2042.—*B.S.*

### A.J. ADAM

Riesling Beerenauslese Mosel Dhron Hofberg 2007  
**95 points | \$179/375ml | NA cases made | Dessert**

Vivid aromas and flavors of peach, apricot, Key lime pie and mineral are enticingly displayed on the elegant frame of this BA. Everything is in the right proportions and the citrus jelly notes play out on the long aftertaste. Drink now through 2048.—*B.S.*

### REICHSRAT VON BUHL

Riesling Beerenauslese Pfalz Ruppertsberger Reiterpfad 2007  
**95 points | \$120/375ml | 17 cases made | Dessert**

Clean, opulent and concentrated. Smoke, spice and dried pineapple and apricot aromas overlay tropical fruit and lemon flavors. Vibrant acidity keeps it focused and refreshing on the finish. Long, lemon and spice aftertaste. Best from 2012 through 2050.—*B.S.*

### EMRICH-SCHÖNLEBER

Riesling Auslese Nahe Monzinger Frühlingsplätzchen 2007  
**95 points | \$43/375ml | 90 cases made | White**

An enticing auslese, elegant and bursting with vanilla custard, apricot, honey and spice aromas and flavors. It feels like a touch of botrytis is adding concentration and the spice notes. Lovely balance and length. Drink now through 2035.—*B.S.*

### RUDOLF FÜRST

Riesling Auslese Gold Cap Franken Bürgstadter Centgrafenberg 2007  
**95 points | \$90 | 100 cases made | White**

This is concentrated and vibrant, providing the perfect foil for its candied lime, nectarine, passion fruit and slate aromas and flavors. Unfolds in layers on the palate, with a seemingly endless aftertaste. Best from 2012 through 2040.—*B.S.*

### FRITZ HAAG

Riesling Beerenauslese Mosel Brauneberger Juffer-Sonnenuhr 2007  
**95 points | \$180/375ml | 50 cases made | Dessert**

Like a beam of light, this sleek white shines its peach, lime and candied lemon notes in a focused way. Lovely balance and expression on a light frame. Endless finish. Drink now through 2050.—*B.S.*

### SCHLOSS LIESER

Riesling Auslese Long Gold Cap Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr 2007  
**95 points | \$60/375ml | 5 cases imported | White**

Saturated with jellied citrus, peach and nectarine flavors, this elegant white is succulent and lively, with a firm structure driving it to a long conclusion. Good concentration and a mouthcoating texture, with a peach and mineral aftertaste. Drink now through 2040.—*B.S.*

### SCHLOSS LIESER

Riesling Auslese Long Gold Cap Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Lieser Niederberg Helden 2007  
**95 points | \$52/375ml | 15 cases imported | White**

This offers a laser beam of pure peach, lime and floral notes, picking up honey and slate as it caresses the palate. Fine energy in a balanced, graceful package that should only get better with time. Drink now through 2035.—*B.S.*

### J. WEGELER ERBEN

Riesling Auslese Rheingau Geisenheimer Rothenberg 2007  
**95 points | \$65 | 200 cases made | White**

Plump and smooth, with floral, lime and peach aromas and flavors, this is very Mosel like. Terrific harmony and interplay between the components, with a juicy, acidity-driven finish. Best from 2010 through 2038.—*B.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.

## DUMOL

Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Finn 2006  
**97 points | \$80 | 420 cases made | Red**

This shows wonderful intensity, depth, focus and purity of Pinot flavor, with tiers of concentrated blackberry and wild berry, raspberry and plum. Supple, fleshy, full-bodied and persistent, ending with firm, ripe tannins and a dash of black licorice and mineral. Drink now through 2017. *From California.—J.L.*

## JAKOBY-MATHY

Riesling Beerenauslese Long Gold Cap Mosel Kinheimer Rosenberg 2007  
**97 points | \$144/375ml | NA cases made | Dessert**

A brilliant BA, lightweight, elegant and with precision balance. The flavors evoke honey, apricot and citrus pâte de fruit. The sweetness and acidity are in harmony and this should develop beautifully. Drink now through 2050. *From Germany.—B.S.*

## REINHARD & BEATE KNEBEL

Riesling Beerenauslese Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Winner Uhlen 2007  
**97 points | \$200/375ml | 15 cases made | Dessert**

Like apricot syrup, this is thick and luscious in texture, with bright acidity offsetting the sweetness. Lemon and orange candy notes enter the mix on the lingering finish. Drink now through 2045. *From Germany.—B.S.*

## BALTHASAR RESS

Riesling Beerenauslese Gold Cap Rheingau Hattenheim Nussbrunnen 2007  
**97 points | \$320/375ml | 10 cases made | Dessert**

Thick, sweet and concentrated, with a velvety texture embracing honey, apricot and intense mineral flavors. There's a lively structure, with the acidity submerged for the time being. Very approachable now, but this should develop well. Fine length. Drink now through 2040. *From Germany.—B.S.*

## HANS LANG

Riesling Beerenauslese Rheingau Hattenheimer Wisselbrunnen 2007  
**96 points | \$100/375ml | 5 cases imported | Dessert**

An open, inviting dessert style, lush and with a firm structure offsetting its sweetness. Essence of apricot is the flavor theme, with hints of orange peel and mineral carried by the long aftertaste. Lovely balance and integration. Drink now through 2042. *From Germany.—B.S.*

## SCHLOSS LIESER

Riesling Auslese Gold Cap Mosel-Saar-Ruwer Brauneberger Juffer Sonnenuhr 2007  
**96 points | \$84 | 10 cases imported | White**

A beauty, this Auslese has everything in the right proportion. The bright structure and juicy texture offer the ideal setting for its floral, apricot, peach, lime and slate aromas and flavors. All this, on a lightweight frame. Drink now through 2038. *From Germany.—B.S.*

## 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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#### 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