

THE **tastingpanel** MAGAZINE  
the voice of hospitality & retail

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*Instant*  
**CLASSICS**

A LOOK AT THE NEW  
CRU RELEASES FROM  
**BIONDI-SANTI'S**  
**CASTELLO DI MONTEPÒ**



**Gust 2022 Pinot Noir, Petaluma Gap, Sonoma County (\$45)** Aged 16 months in (45% new) French oak, this is a stellar vintage for this wine, sourced from two distinct vineyards within the windy Petaluma Gap AVA: While Diamond Pile is exposed to the elements of wind and fog, Catapult is sheltered, yielding grapes with more structure. Notes of just-picked red cherries are sprinkled with white pepper before cinnamon-dusted candied apple meets tilled soil on the midpalate. Red beet, radish, and cranberry bring up the rear, making for a juicy, refined finish. **94**

CLINE FAMILY CELLARS



**Domaine Carneros 2021 Estate Pinot Noir, Carneros (\$47)** Some 20 different clones went into this marvelously moody Pinot Noir, which immediately spirits you to a forest teeming with berries, where a plume of woodsmoke rises in the background along with flickers of beet and lavender. Displaying fleshiness commensurate with its elegance, it enchants with earthy tannins and a sprinkle of cacao and black tea on the finish. **95**



**Schug 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon, Sonoma Valley (\$48)** Highlighted by spiced sandalwood and juicy plum, dried violets settle on the tongue, aided by supple tannins that maintain the wine's luxe approachability. Ripe black cherry melds with dark chocolate and espresso. **93**



**Domaine Lumineux 2021 Cuvée Pinot Noir, Dundee Hills, Willamette Valley, Oregon (\$48)** From Francis Ford Coppola's attention-grabbing Dundee Hills project, this expression is luscious and delicious. Bright notes of mocha and cherry in tilled soil settle on the palate, amped up by focused acidity and silky tannins. Pomegranate, red beet, and a stony middle create a texturized mouthfeel that leads to an exotic finish of sandalwood and plum blossom. **94**



**Post & Beam 2022 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley (\$55)** Richly appointed, with dark blue and purple fruit and a plush mouthfeel. Notes of plum liqueur and freshly roasted coffee grace the palate as dark chocolate and anise entwine with the wine's well-defined structure and satin-lined tannins. Spiced red tea and sandalwood engage with more chocolate on the finish. **95**

FAR NIENTE WINE ESTATES



**Quilt 2022 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley (\$55)** Structured like a skyscraper, this bold red stands tall with concentrated notes of espresso, dark chocolate, and blackberry. Its plush palate feel lingers through the lengthy finish. **94**

COPPER CANE WINES & SPIRITS



**Clos du Val 2023 Sauvignon Blanc, Napa Valley (\$55)** Aged in stainless steel and neutral French oak, this wine made with 17% Sémillon exudes focused aromas of lime zest, basil, and green tea. Floral tones venture across the palate on a tightrope of acidity. Honeysuckle, candied ginger, and lemongrass are streamlined on the salty, stony finish. **95**



PHOTO: ALEXANDER RUBIN



**Merriam 2022 Eastside Estate Pinot Noir, Russian River Valley, Sonoma County (\$56)** Chiaroscuro comes to mind: The interplay of bright and darker aromas and flavors in this estate-grown single-vineyard Pinot ranges from cranberry and sour cherry to mocha and smoky pepper to hints of cola and sun-dried tomato. Though light on its feet thanks to mellifluous tannins, it's not without depth as it conveys a touch of soil on the finish. **94**



**Optio Vineyards 2021 Grenache, San Luis Obispo County (\$58)** Intense, with concentrated notes of black plum, vanilla, and coffee bean plus a hint of hazelnut. Floral tones of mulberry, plum blossom, and blackberry liqueur whet the palate before the finish of spiced oak leaves a lasting impression. **92**



**Clos du Val 2022 Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley (\$60)** A wash of elegant liquid offers a whisper of sleek tannins guided by sweet earth, slate, purple plum, and black olive. Midpoint savory notes of fig, toasted cedar, and black tea meld with heather and blackberry on the well-structured and impeccably balanced palate. **96**



**Jordan 2020 Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley, Sonoma County (\$60)** With lower alcohol than most California Cabs, this elegant beauty boasts Old World acidity that levels out with freshness on the palate, contributing to its excellent food-pairing abilities. Plum, anise, tilled soil, and Italian herbs integrate with a luxe mouthfeel. **96**