



Stephen Tanzer's  
INTERNATIONAL WINE CELLAR

Review dated May 16, 2013

## TOP SCORING WINES

### [2010 Harlan Estate Red Wine Napa Valley](#)

(\$750) Saturated medium ruby. Knockout nose combines black raspberry, smoke, minerals and hints of forest floor. At once silky and high-pitched, offering superb concentration of fruit and inner-palate saline energy even if it's an infant today. Boasts a rare combination of density and nerve. Has great breed and an inexorably building finish that must be experienced to be believed. This will be great by about 2020. Will it merit a perfect score then? **98(+?)**

### [2010 Kapcsandy Family Winery Roberta's Reserve State Lane Vineyard Yountville](#)

(95% merlot with 5% cabernet franc): Good medium ruby. High-pitched aromas of blackberry, blueberry, minerals and licorice. Wonderfully intense but youthfully imploded on the palate, offering electric flavors of black fruits, cocoa powder, bitter chocolate and minerals. Utterly seamless considering that it's so backward today. Finishes with noble tannins, great class and energy and endless lingering perfume. This gained steadily in complexity during the 45 minutes or so I was able to follow it, but its steely structure suggests it will evolve gracefully for two or three decades. It's perhaps the single greatest merlot-based wine I have ever tasted from California. (Winemaker Denis Malbec, who literally grew up at Chateau Latour, also makes the great merlot-based Rive Droite bottling at Blankiet, which means that he is responsible for California's two greatest merlots, in the opinion of this taster.) **98(+?)**

### [2010 Screaming Eagle Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley](#)

(75% cabernet sauvignon, 16% merlot and 9% cabernet franc; the harvest here ended on October 13, about two weeks later than usual): Brilliant ruby-red. Urgent aromas of crushed boysenberry, wild herbs, licorice and spearmint are complemented by sexy oak tones. Densely packed and electric, with great energy to the highly concentrated, pliant flavors of black fruits, cocoa powder and flowers. Still quite youthfully backward, but the inexorable slowly mounting finish and big but noble tannins suggest a long and glorious evolution in bottle. Owing to the small clusters, thick skins and concentration of tannins, this wine got a longer *elevage* than usual, with the bottling done at the end of November 2012. **97(+?)** Priced from \$1,695.00

### **2010 Kapcsandy Family Winery Cabernet Sauvignon Grand Vin State Line Vineyard Yountville**

(13.6% alcohol; includes 4% merlot and 1% petit verdot): Full ruby. Deep aromas of cassis, blackberry, licorice, bitter chocolate and crushed rock, with a sexy suggestion of candied fruit. Then amazingly precise and pure on the palate, with outstanding mineral cut and inner-mouth perfume to the flavors of black fruits, graphite, cedar and lavender. Best today on the expanding, slowly mounting finish, shaped by noble tannins and redolent of captivating mineral and violet perfume. This, too, should improve in bottle for decades. If the Roberta's Blend resembles a top vintage of Petrus, this one is Latour-like--and I don't make those comparisons lightly. **97(+?)**

### **2010 Kongsgaard Wines Chardonnay The Judge Napa Valley**

(\$175) Brilliant medium yellow, the palest of these four chardonnays. Reticent, Burgundian nose hints at peach, citrus fruits, hazelnut and gunpowder complicated by mineral and sulfide nuances. Extremely deep and concentrated but youthfully closed, showing a powerful crushed stone character that reminded me of a Corton-Charlemagne. With its strong minerality, this very Burgundian chardonnay comes across as drier than the Napa Valley bottling. Already shows outstanding palate presence, but really calls for three to five years of aging. **96(+?)**

### **2010 Dalla Valle Vineyards Maya Proprietary Red Wine Napa Valley**

(\$300) (two-thirds cabernet sauvignon and one-third cab franc): Deep, bright ruby. Crushed blueberry and violet on the perfumed nose. Densely packed and wonderfully aromatic, with terrific floral lift to the sharply delineated dark berry flavors. Almost painful in the early going, but has great energy and class. Finishes with big, broad tannins and outstanding vibrating persistence. Should turn out to be one of the monuments of the vintage. I've long been a sucker for cabernet franc from this red volcanic soil on the eastern hillside above Oakville. **96(+?)**

### **2010 Bond Vecina Red Wine Napa Valley**

(\$375) Bright full ruby. Vibrant, expressive aromas of blueberry, black cherry, menthol, graphite minerality and licorice. Plush, ripe and deep; not overly sweet but utterly seamless and refined. This wonderfully broad, rich wine saturates every square millimeter of the palate with flavors on the lively, extremely long finish. The tannins are remarkably fine-grained. This is remarkably balanced from the outset, but it would be a crime to open it too early. **96**

### **2010 Blankiet Proprietary Red Wine Paradise Hills Vineyard Napa Valley**

(\$200) (a Bordeaux blend based on 84% cabernet sauvignon): Good saturated bright ruby. Knockout perfume of cassis, graphite, violet, licorice, bitter chocolate and dusty brown spices, lifted by the compelling violet character of the site. Suave, fine-grained and energetic, with harmonious acidity giving brilliant definition to the dark raspberry, spice, mineral and menthol flavors. This juicy, classy wine is very young today but has the perfect balance for a graceful evolution in bottle. Very long on the ripe tannic aftertaste. **96**

### **2009 Verite Le Desir Red Wine Sonoma County**

(\$390) (Pierre Seillan's St. Emilion blend, based on 74% cabernet franc): Deep ruby-red. Vibrant nose offers cassis, blackberry, licorice, minerals, tobacco leaf and violet. Rich, tactile and deep, offering outstanding energy for the vintage. Boasts a rare combination of explosive fruit intensity and elegance. Builds and echoes dramatically on the vibrant, nuanced finish, which saturates the palate with dark fruits and minerals. This shut down in the glass but my recorked bottle showed uncanny freshness after three days in the refrigerator. **96(+?)**

### **2010 Hundred Acre Cabernet Sauvignon Kayli Morgan Vineyard Napa Valley**

(\$250) Bright ruby-red. Aromas of black raspberry, licorice, graphite and flowers are complicated by exotic spices. Densely packed and remarkably deep, with the velvety black fruit and mineral flavors gaining red cherry and floral qualities as the wine opened in the mouth. At once thick and penetrating, showing more obvious tannins today than the Ark but finishing with outstanding echoing persistence and energy. **96(+?)**