

# WINE News

To kick off 2016, we're remembering the 90s...and a few 100s, too. It's all about the points.



**“Amazing quality”**  
 Crazy nose with chocolate, smoke, grilled meat, ripe fruits and walnuts. The palate is super and goes on for minutes with plum, berry, spice, chocolate, and nuts. Full body, velvety tannins and a long, long finish. Amazing quality. Goes on for minutes. Made from biodynamically grown  
**2010 Le Ragnaie Brunello**  
**98 points**

## JANUARY 4, 2016 FEATURES

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## You Want Points? You Got Points!

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

Unlike K&L's early days in the '70s, when there were few wine writers and no universal scoring system for wines, today we have a plethora of writers, publications, and *one* main scoring system. That is, of course, the 100-point scale that Robert Parker debuted in the early '80s. Since many wine lovers and consumers follow the points, I decided

to do this issue based on points. There are 100-point wines on page 4, and superb 90-point-plus values on this first page. We've got the scores from Bordeaux on page 2, with 92+ wines around the world on page 3—most of them under \$40. I must say that all wines in this issue are also recommended by our buyers and sales staff—in addition to the points.

## High-Scoring Values From Around the World—Under \$30

### 2009 Tronquoy St-Anne, St-Estephe (\$16.99)

90 points WE: "All fresh blackberry juice with sweetness and power." We sold three hundred cases quickly last time we had it—do not wait to buy this beauty.

### 2012 Château de Montfaucon "Baron Louis" Lirac (\$18.99)

90 points RP: "...A gorgeous Lirac that has pretty black raspberry, spice and floral aromatics, medium-bodied richness and an overall elegant, polished and layered style."

### 2012 La Massa "La Massa" Toscana (\$19.99)

93 points RP: "The wine shows luscious dark concentration with equal billing to both the dark fruity component of the wine and its spicy, oak-driven spice."

### 2013 Hahn Estates Santa Lucia Highlands

**Pinot Noir (\$19.99)** 93 points WE: "Crystalline cranberry, concentrated violets and rose petals and a shred of cola show on the nose of this upper-level bottling from one of the appellation's longtime stars."

### 2013 Finca Villacreces "Pruno" Ribera

**del Duero (\$19.99)** 92 points RP: "This wine, which offers up copious quantities, of blueberry, black raspberry and black currant fruit, licorice, graphite and meaty notes, offers fabulous aromatics...and a long, heady finish with subtle oak."

### 2010 Felsina Chianti Classico Riserva

**(\$27.99)** 93 points RP: "This is a stunning effort available at a reasonable price."

### 2013 Mount Edward Pinot Noir Central

**Otago (\$27.99)** 96 points JS: "Ripe-dark-cherry and plum fruit aromas abound, along with a subtle spice and fragrant layer, too; this is gently herbal, flinty and complex."

### 2013 Orin Swift "Mannequin" California

**Chardonnay (\$29.99)** 96 points RP: "This is an amazing wine, a gorgeous, full-throttle, honeyed wine..."

### 2009 Grand Corbin Manuel, St-Emilion

**(750ml \$19.99; 1.5L \$39.99; 3L \$99.99)** 92 points WE: "It conveys a southern French feel with its rich fruitiness and powerful dry tannins. It has concentration and power, and will develop well over the medium-term."

## Classic Bordeaux—Something for Any Pocketbook

By Clyde Beffa Jr.

**2005 Fontenil, Fronsac (\$29.99)** 92 points RP: “Dense plum, black cherry, blackberry and cassis fruit jump from the glass of this full-bodied, terrific Fronsac, which is one of the appellation’s stars of the vintage.” One of the great values at K&L, but only 20 cases available.

**2012 Angludet, Margaux (\$32.99)** 91 points JS: “Earthy and rich with currant, meat and spice undertones. Full body, firm tannins and a fresh finish...Delicious Angludet.”

**2009 Brown Rouge, Pessac-Léognan (\$34.99)** 92 points WE: “A deeply rich-colored and flavored wine, smooth and showing the great ripeness of the vintage. Acidity and firm tannins offer structure to what is a spicy, fruity wine, dominated by fresh black plum and prune flavors.”

**2009 Meyney, St-Estèphe (\$39.99)** 92 points RP: “The finest wine made at this estate since 1982, this opaque black wine is a sleeper of the vintage, with oodles of blackberry fruit interwoven with hints of charcoal, forest floor, licorice and damp earth...Bravo!”

**2012 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$29.99)** 92 points JS: “This red shows some cassis, blueberries and floral notes on the nose. Some tar, too. Medium to full body, juicy tannins and a fruity finish. Enticing wine. Drink now or hold.”

**2010 Cantemerle, Haut-Médoc (\$42.99)** A truly great wine for your cellar—and so inexpensive. 94 points RP: “...This is the finest Cantemerle I have encountered...”

**2009 Phélan-Ségur, St-Estèphe (\$44.99)** 93 points JS: “Solid wine. Bright blueberry and floral aromas follow through to a full body, with soft, velvety tannins and a long finish. Best since 1989.”

**2009 La Lagune, Haut-Médoc (\$66.99)** 95 points RP: “It is not unusual that the 2009 La Lagune is a spectacular effort given the fact that this estate has been making terrific wines over the last decade or more. It boasts a dense purple color as well as a beautiful perfume of blueberries, mulberries, cassis, white chocolate and subtle toasty oak.” 200 cases sold—this is our last 25.

**2012 Léoville-Barton, St-Julien (\$79.99)** 92 points RP: “Dense ruby/purple, with cassis licorice and forest floors notes in the aromatics... a relatively big, rich, masculine style of wine.”

**2012 Lynch-Bages, Pauillac (\$109.99)** 92 points WS: “This has a very solid core of dark plum, crushed black currant and blackberry fruit, with lightly firm flesh and good drive through the finish, where alder and iron notes fill in. Shows excellent energy and depth, while harnessing the austere edge of the vintage.”

**2005 Domaine de Chevalier Rouge, Pessac-Léognan (\$109.99)** 93 points WS: “Displays floral, blackberry and mineral aromas, with a hint of fresh tobacco. Full-bodied, with supersilky tannins and a long, caressing finish. Has a fine, polished texture. This is a class act—the best since 1998.”

**2012 Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac (\$119.99)** 94-96 points WE: “Intense black currant fruitiness makes this wine unabashedly forward. The palate bears weighty tannins behind that fruit, resulting in a wine that is already quite balanced and structured.”

**2006 Pichon-Lalande, Pauillac (750ml \$149.99; 1.5L \$299.99)** My all-time favorite property in Bordeaux in the '80s, and now this 2006 is at the top again. 95 points RP: “...A return to the velvety-textured, rich, sexy style most readers would associate with Pichon Lalande. This blend of 64% Cabernet Sauvignon and 36% Merlot...exhibits a dense purple color as well as abundant aromas of chocolate, coffee, cedar, black currants, and a subtle touch of smoke, a rich, savory, full-bodied mouthfeel, plump, fleshy fruit, and a superb finish. This is a 21st century version of the brilliant 1996.”

**2012 Léoville-Las Cases, St-Julien (\$139.99)** 96 points WE: “This combines considerable power and concentration with rich, impressive fruits. It has both style and elegance, with density to give it great aging potential. The tannins are firm while also having a velvet texture. The wine, dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, is for serious aging.”

**2005 Cos d'Estournel, St-Estèphe (\$249.99)** 99 points JS: “The purity of fruit in this is fascinating with plums, currants and other dark fruits. Then there is another layer of spices and chocolate. So much cassis. Full and very layered with chewy polished tannins and a long, long finish. Just starting to open. Changes all the time. Still needs a year or two but gorgeous to drink already.”



# 92+ Point Wines from Around the World

## Champagne

**Billecart-Salmon “Brut Reserve” Champagne (\$44.99)** 93 points JS: “I drink this regularly and always enjoy it. Wonderful aromas of light dough, fresh flowers, and sliced pears and peaches. Full-bodied yet agile and fresh, it shows layers of marvelous light tropical fruit and cream with hints of dough on the finish.”

## Rhone/Regional

**2012 Domaine d’Ouréa Vacqueyras (\$24.99)** 92 points RP: “Also brilliant, the 2012 Vacqueyras offers notes of anise, plum, dried soil and violets to go with a fleshy, ripe, textured and fantastically pure style on the palate. Made all from Grenache and aged all in concrete, it’s up there with the top wines in the appellation. It should drink nicely for a decade or more.”

**2012 Villa Symposia “Equilibre” Languedoc Rouge (\$15.99)** 90-92 points RP: “...Similar to the 2011, yet I think could be even better. Offering loads of black fruits, pen ink, licorice and toasted spice, this medium to full-bodied effort has a plush, polished texture, fantastic purity of fruit and no hard edges, with fine tannin coming through on the finish. It should have a decade of ultimate longevity.”

## Spain/Argentina

**2014 Familia Zuccardi “Concreto” Malbec Medoza (\$34.99)** 95 points RP: “The nose mixes the violet aromas and those wild herbs, rockrose and spices, but also a saline side, and a mix of black olives and smoke. Raspberry leaf perhaps? There is a different character, they have taken away all that gives sweetness to the wine, searched for chalky soils, used part of full clusters and only cement was used for the fermentation and élevage. The wine is dry, but the tannins are sweet. There is very good length and persistence here... Groundbreaking Malbec! An awesome value for money too!”

**2013 Mas Alta “Black Slate” La Vilella Alta Priorat (\$22.99)** 95 points RP: “The wine offers up notes of blueberry and blackberry liqueur mixed with wet rocks, spring flowers and graphite, followed by a full-bodied, dense, multidimensional wine with fabulous intensity, loads of burgeoning complexity and a precise and lush feel to the palate. Tannins are present, but silky and well-integrated. This is a seamless, beautifully made wine that sells for a song, considering the quality and complexity it possess.”



## California/Oregon

**2013 Gary Farrell “Russian River Selection” Russian River Valley Pinot Noir (\$37.99)** 95 points WE: “This might be one of the best values on the market, given the quality. Equal parts pretty and funky, it’s a tightly wound, savory, fruity wine that’s elegant and compelling. The tannins and oak are lightly imprinted around strawberry-rhubarb and fresh-cut rose, and the texture seductively silky.”

**2012 Colene Clemens “Margo” Chehalem Mountains Pinot Noir (\$32.99)** 93 points WS: “Lithe and expressive, shading black cherry fruit with glints of mint, loamy earth and walnut. Fine tannins underline a long, dancing finish.”

**2007 Roederer Estate “l’Ermitage” Anderson Valley Brut Sparkling Wine (\$39.99)** 95 points and named one of *Wine Enthusiast’s* top 100 wines of 2015: “Very fruity and fresh in aroma, this elegant wine has light, crisp apple and lemon flavors, fresh-baked bread accents and lively acidity. A layered texture seems to blend in accents of almond and vanilla, increasing complexity with each sip. It’s one of California’s bluechip bubbliés.”

## Italy

**2010 Poggiarellino Brunello di Montalcino (\$34.99)** 95 points JS: “Fascinating. It’s full body, juicy and savory with a wonderful finish of dried meat, berry and dried mushroom. Drinking beautifully now but will age beautifully. Great value.”

**2010 Il Valentiano “Campo di Marzo” Brunello di Montalcino (\$29.99)** 92 points JS: “A rich and earthy red with orange peel and plum character. Full body and tangy with lots of jammy flavors. It becomes bright and fresh with air. Thoroughly delicious.”

## New Zealand/Australia

**2013 Oakridge Single Vineyard Series “Guerin Vineyard” Chardonnay Yarra Valley Victoria (\$19.99)** 96 points JH, 92 points RP: “...Intensely scented of lemon curd, lemongrass, lime leaves and mandarin peel with touches of struck flint, toasted cashews, cedar and ginger. Medium-bodied, the palate delivers a beautiful satiny texture and plenty of lively citrus flavors, yielding savory layers in the long finish.”

**2013 Elephant Hill “Hieronymus” Bordeaux Blend Hawke’s Bay (\$39.99)** 100 points RC, points 98 SK. The “Hieronymus” or “sacred one” is made only in the most exceptional years from the very best parcels of fruit from the estate. This is a very serious, powerful, Bordeaux inspired wine with huge fruit concentration and structure. It can be enjoyed as a young wine but is best cellared for 5-15 years. —Ryan Woodhouse, *K&L NZ wine buyer*



# Upcoming Events for Our 40th Year in 2016

**Sunday, January 17, 6pm: Annual Fête du Bordeaux at One Market in San Francisco** Taste the 2013 vintage. Featured châteaux include Langoa-Barton, Léoville-Barton, Petit-Figeac, Figeac, Ormes de Pez, Lynch-Bages and La Conseillante. With dinner, we will feature 92+ point wines from the 2005, 2000, and 1995 vintages. Price per person, \$200.

**Saturday, January 30, 2-5pm: Union des Grand Crus de Bordeaux Tasting at the Bently Reserve in San Francisco** Featuring over 90 Bordeaux properties pouring the 2013 vintage. Do not miss the fabulous dry whites and Sauternes from 2013. Price per person, \$75.

**Tuesday, February 9, 5-7pm: Consumer Burgundy Event at Clift Hotel in San Francisco** Pouring 2014 Burgundies from Domaine Faiveley, Christian Moreau, Olivier Leflaive and Château Fuisse. Price TBD.

**Thursday, February 25: Great Wines of Italy with James Suckling in Los Angeles** Wines scoring 90 points or more. Location to be determined. Purchase tickets at [james-suckling.com](http://james-suckling.com).

**Sunday, February 28: Great Wines of Italy with James Suckling at Fort Mason in San Francisco** Wines scoring 90 points or more. Purchase tickets at [james-suckling.com](http://james-suckling.com).

**Monday, April 25: MMD Tasting and Dinner with Six Famous Châteaux** Huge-scoring wines of Mouton Rothschild, Ducru-Beaucaillou, Palmer, Pichon-Lalande, Haut-Bailly, and Hosanna; dinner separately. Time, price and place TBD.

**Saturday, May 14: Bordeaux Confidential with James Suckling at Fort Mason in San Francisco** Wines scoring 90 points or more. Purchase tickets at [james-suckling.com](http://james-suckling.com).

## A Perfect One Hundred Points

**2010 Pontet-Canet, Pauillac (\$279.99)** 100 points RP: “The wine has off-the-charts massiveness and intensity but never comes across as heavy, overbearing or astringent. The freshness, laser-like precision, and full-bodied, massive richness and extract are simply remarkable to behold and experience.”

**2010 Ducru-Beaucaillou, St-Julien (\$269.99)** 100 points JS: “A pure expression of Cab. The palate is perfect with a full body, but has perfectly integrated tannins with a texture like the finest cashmere. It’s strong but noble with perfect form and beauty.”

**2002 Salon Blanc de Blancs Champagne (\$399.99)** 100 points WE: “Made only from Chardonnay grown in the Grand Cru village of Les Mesnil-sur-Oger, it combines intense minerality, a crisp textured core and the beginnings of maturity. The depths of this wine, with its layers of fruit and steeliness, are superb. Even after 12 years, it still needs to age further.”



**2013 Philip Togni “Estate” Spring Mountain District Cabernet Sauvignon (1.5L \$349.99)** 100 points AG: “Deep, unctuous and remarkably vivid for such a big, intense wine, the 2013 simply conquers all of the senses, from the intellectual to the hedonistic. A host of dark red cherry, pomegranate, spice, mint and floral notes meld together in the glass, but the 2013 is a wine to admire for its total sense of completeness. This is easily the greatest young Philip Togni wine I have ever tasted. Simply put, the 2013 is magnificent and one of the wines of the vintage.”

**1994 Taylor’s Vintage Port (\$249.99)** 100 points JS: “This is, to date, the greatest Vintage Port ever from here. It overwhelmed me years ago when I tasted it from barrel, but only now is it crossing gradually into its drinking window...A full-bodied, medium sweet and sublime Vintage Port, showing forest fruits and freshly picked blackberries on the palate in the form of a creamy, focused and tannic texture.”



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### K&L EVENTS & TASTINGS

We host regular evening and Saturday tastings at each K&L store as well as many special events throughout the year. For the complete calendar go to [KLWines.com/Local-Events](http://KLWines.com/Local-Events).

### K&L SAN FRANCISCO

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