

**"ONE OF THE FINEST AND
MOST HELPFUL PUBLICATIONS THAT
I HAVE COME ACROSS..."**

Arkansas Democrat & Gazette

the
Wine Pocket List

**A GUIDE TO TOP-RATED WINES
\$30 A BOTTLE AND UNDER**



**2004
WINE BUYING GUIDE**

Featuring
OVER 1700 WINES

Compiled from
MAJOR WINE PERIODICALS

Sorted by
COUNTRY, TYPE & WINERY

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films on a similar scale. Would you find a meaningful difference if Chicago was given a 94 and *The Hours* a 93?

In fact, when we've blind tasted against this scale, we found that wine "X" might earn a 91 one day, and an 89 on another. Still a good wine, but for most of us (including the majority of professional wine tasters) it's simply too subjective to consistently discern the differences that would affect a score by a few points.

Add to this the fact that each individual, publication or group that rates by a 100 point system applies it slightly differently, and it further muddles the implied value of a given score. For instance, you're not likely to find that the *Wine Spectator* and *Wine Advocate* award points using the same set of criteria. *Wine Enthusiast* rates differently still.

THE WINE POCKETLIST: A GUIDE EVERYONE CAN USE

Originally devised by Wine PocketList founder John Vankat, our system is pretty straightforward.

You'll Find Only Highly Rated Wines for \$30 or Less

While there are many exceptional wines with price tags of \$50, \$60, \$80 and up, we focus on wines that score well *and* are good values. For that reason, the Wine PocketList includes only wines that cost \$30 or less. That way, you won't waste energy reviewing a wine that only scored an 87 and is priced at \$50. The score is too low, the price is too high, and there are better wines on which to spend your time and money.

Ratings are Compiled from Top Wine Periodicals

The Wine PocketList compiles its scores from wines reviewed, rated and published in the following publications, as well as exclusive tastings and recommendations from our advisory board.

- 1) *Connoisseurs Guide to California Wine*
- 2) *International Wine Cellar*
- 3) *Wine Access*
- 4) *Wine Advocate*
- 5) *Wine and Spirits*
- 6) *Wine Enthusiast*
- 7) *Wine News*
- 8) *Wine Spectator*

Every day, every month, every quarter, we scour these publications and update our database with every wine—\$30 and under—that's been reviewed. Then we weight, grade and store the information, until any given wine achieves a score high enough to become part of the Wine PocketList. We strive to collect multiple

scorings for individual wines whenever possible, in order to bring more than one opinion to bear on a final grade.

Letter Grades

The Wine PocketList utilizes a grading system that people intuitively grasp. Letter grades. After all, which of us doesn't understand that an A+ is the best you can get? Or that a C is mediocre? At the same time, a letter grade is not absolute. An A+ doesn't have to be 100 percent. In school, you can get an A+ with 98, 99 or 100 percent. 94 percent to 97 percent earns you an A. And so on.

An equally important part of our process is to appropriately "weight" the scores. Our weighting criteria are designed to balance price, publication bias and other factors, and help ensure consistent ratings validity across all varietals and vineyards. For example, an 89 in *Wine Spectator* will not have the same weight as an 89 by Robert Parker, and a \$30 wine with an 89 point rating will likely be dropped, while an \$8 wine with the same score is probably worth a try, and will remain.

Once each individual rating has been documented and weighted, we average the final scores together to arrive at the Wine PocketList grade. If a composite score falls below our cutoff point due to a low scoring review, the wine hides in our database until a high score nudges it onto the public list. If it makes the list, then we show you not only the Wine PocketList grade, but the individual grades upon which the composite score is based.

Here's a breakdown of what you can expect from wines that have earned different grades in the Wine PocketList system:

A+: TRULY OUTSTANDING As good as gets. Flawless, nearly perfect in every way; a wine that brings you to your knees. Around five percent of the wines in our complete online database boast an A+ rating. But because reviewers have such trouble agreeing on what constitutes a dazzling wine, very few of the A+ wines are made up of multiple scores.

A: EXCEPTIONAL An "A" rated wine should knock your socks off, and is highly recommended. Fabulous taste, finish and body. On average, you'll find around 20 percent of the wines in our complete online database feature a composite A rating.

A-: EXCELLENT These wines are well worth seeking out, especially if they can retain an A- rating with more than one review. About 35 percent of the wines in our database sport an A-.

B+: VERY GOOD These wines are typically very well made with some obvious appeal. We'd certainly give them a try if the price is right and they've received multiple reviews. Around 40 percent of Wine PocketList wines are rated B+.

BUYING GUIDES

HOW TO USE THE WINE POCKETLIST BUYING GUIDES

The heart of the Wine PocketList Book is its buying guides. Here, you'll be able to quickly search through over 1700 wines, sorted into three primary sections.

Every wine that appears in this guide has a suggested retail price of \$30 a bottle or less, and—to the best of our ability to discover the information—a minimum case production of 1000 cases for domestic (U.S.) producers, and 1000 cases imported for wines produced outside the U.S.

QUICK BUYING GUIDES

The first section is comprised of five “*Quick Buying Guides*.” First is an alphabetical listing of wineries included in this issue, plus the composite grades of its represented wines. This is followed by four guides based on the Wine PocketList exclusive categories: Widely Available Wines; Top Buy-by-the-Case Wines; Bargain Wines; and Splurge Wines.

COMPREHENSIVE BUYING GUIDES

The second section is comprised of two primary guides:

Guide by Type Wines sorted by varietal or generally known region (e.g. Bordeaux)

Guide by Region Wines sorted by country or U.S. state

UNDERSTANDING OUR SYSTEM

Entries in the Wine PocketList appear as follows:

Winery	Vintage	Description (from label)	Varietal/Type						
CABERNET SAUVIGNON									
Geyser Peak, 1999 Block Collection, Kuimelis Vineyards, Alexander-Livermore									
CALIFORNIA, USA	IE A+, A	PV	'97 A-, '98 A+	WPL	BBC, S	\$26	A		
Region	Country	Individual Evaluations (IE)	Prior Vintage Grades (PV)	Wine PocketList Exclusive Categories (W, BBC, B, S)		Suggested Retail Price	Composite Grade		

QUICK BUYING GUIDES TO TOP RATED WINES

WINERY LISTING

ALPHABETIZED*

- A. Rafanelli** USA (A-)
Abacela USA (B+)
Abadia Retuerta SP (A-)
Acacia USA (B+, B+)
Acorn USA (A-)
J. B. Adam FR (A, B+)
Adega de Monção POR (B+)
Ch. d' Aiguilhe FR (A-)
Ch. d' Aiguilloux FR (B+)
Alban USA (A, A-, B+)
Alderbrook USA (B+)
Alexander Valley USA (B+, B+, B+)
Caves Aliança POR (A, A-, B+, B+)
Alkoomi AUS (B+)
Allan Scott NZ (A-, B+, B+)
Allandale AUS (B+, B+)
Amano IT (B+)
Amity USA (B+, B+)
Anastasia ARG (B+)
Dom. d' Andezon FR (B+)
Andretti USA (A, A-, A-, A-)
Andrew Murray USA (A, A-, A-, A-)
Andrew Rich USA (A-)
Olivier Andrieu FR (A-)
Ch. d' Angludet FR (B+)
Annie's Lane AUS (A-, A-, B+)
Antinori IT (A-)
Antonelli IT (B+)
Apaltagua CH (B+, B+)
- Ch. D' Aquéria** FR (B+)
Araujo USA (A)
Arbios USA (A)
Arbor Crest USA (A-, B+)
Arca Nova POR (B+)
Arcadian USA (A-)
Argyle USA (A, B+)
Marqués de Arienzo SP (A, B+, B+)
Arrowood USA (A-, A-, B+, B+)
Artadi SP (A-, A-)
Artesa USA (A, A, A, A-, A-, B+, B+)
Astoria IT (A-, B+)
Atalon USA (A)
Atlas Peak USA (A-)
Au Bon Climat USA (A)
Dom. D' Aupilhac FR (B+)
Quinta da Aveleda POR (B+, B+)
Avila USA (B+)
Avinyo SP (B+)
Babcock USA (A, A-, B+)
Babich NZ (B+)
Clos Badon-Thunevin FR (A)
Baileyana USA (B+, B+)
Balgownie Estate AUS (A-)
Ballentine USA (B+)
Balnaves AUS (A, A-)
Castello Banfi IT (B+, B+)
Bannister USA (A-)
Baobab SA (B+)
Antonio Barbadillo SP (A-, A-, A-, B+, B+, B+)

* While U.S. wineries are listed by their full name, import wines are typically listed by their primary name, and not by common prefixes (e.g. Chateau, Caves, Domaine, etc) or first names.

QUICK BUYING GUIDES TO TOP RATED WINES

BARGAIN WINES (B)

\$10 A BOTTLE AND UNDER

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Covides, 1996 <i>Gran Castellflorit Reserva</i>				
PENEDÈS, SP	IE B+	PV	WPL B	\$10 B+
Condesa de Leganza, 1998 <i>Crianza</i>				
MANCHA, SP	IE B+	PV	WPL B	\$9 B+
KWV, 2000				
WESTERN CAPE, SA	IE A-	PV	WPL B	\$10 A-
Powers, 2000				
WA, USA	IE A	PV	WPL B	\$10 A

MERLOT

Buena Vista, 2000				
CA, USA	IE B+	PV	WPL B	\$9 B+
Casa Julia, 2001				
CH	IE B+	PV	WPL B	\$9 B+

SYRAH/SHIRAZ

Dom. des Blageurs, 2000 <i>Syrah, Vin de Pays d'Oc</i>				
LANGUEDOC, FR	IE A-	PV	WPL B	\$9 A-
Vinterra, 1999				
MENDOZA, ARG	IE A-	PV	WPL B	\$10 A-

TEMPRANILLO

Campo Viejo, 1998 <i>Crianza</i>				
RIOJA, SP	IE A-	PV	WPL B	\$10 A-

ZINFANDEL

Buena Vista, 2000 <i>Carneros</i>				
CA, USA	IE B+, B+	PV	WPL B	\$9 B+
Cline, 2000				
CA, USA	IE B+	PV	WPL B	\$10 B+
Ravenswood, 2000 <i>Vintners Blend</i>				
CA, USA	IE B+	PV 99 A-	WPL B	\$10 B+
Rosenblum, NV <i>Vintners Cuvée XXIV</i>				
CA, USA	IE B+	PV	WPL B	\$10 B+

OTHER RED

Caves Aliança, 1999 <i>Galeria Tinta Roriz</i>				
DOURO, POR	IE A-	PV	WPL B	\$9 A-
Ca' del Solo, 2001 <i>Big House Red</i>				
CA, USA	IE A-	PV 00 B+	WPL B	\$10 A-

QUICK BUYING GUIDES TO TOP RATED WINES

BUY BY THE CASE (BBC)

MULTIPLE REVIEWS, A- OR BETTER

BORDEAUX

Ch. Monbrison, 2000 *Margaux*

BORDEAUX, FR | IE | A, A- | PV | WPL | S, BBC | \$30 | A

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Ch. Ste. Michelle, 1999 *Cold Creek Vineyard, Columbia Valley*

WA, USA | IE | A, A- | PV | WPL | S, BBC | \$29 | A

Sebastiani, 1999 *Appellation Selection Alexander Valley, Sonoma Co.*

CA, USA | IE | A, A-, B+ | PV | WPL | BBC | \$24 | A-

DOLCETTO

Francesco Boschis, 1998 *Vigna dei Prey, Dogliani*

PIEDMONT, IT | IE | A, A- | PV | WPL | BBC | \$17 | A

GAMAY

Georges Duboeuf, 2000 *Prestige, Morgon*

BEAUJOLAIS, FR | IE | A-, A-, B | PV | WPL | BBC | \$14 | A-

MERLOT

Ch. Ste. Michelle, 1999 *Canoe Ridge Estate Vineyard, Columbia Valley*

WA, USA | IE | A, A-, B | PV | WPL | BBC | \$23 | A-

Louis M. Martini, 1999 *Del Rio Vineyard, Russian River Valley, Sonoma Co.*

CA, USA | IE | A-, A- | PV | WPL | BBC | \$22 | A-

Selby, 1999 *Sonoma Co.*

CA, USA | IE | A, A, A- | PV | WPL | BBC | \$24 | A

PINOT NOIR

King, 1999 *Eugene*

OR, USA | IE | A-, B+ | PV | WPL | BBC | \$20 | A-

La Crema, 2000 *Anderson Valley, Mendocino Co.*

CA, USA | IE | A, A- | PV | WPL | BBC | \$25 | A

SANGIOVESE

Capezzana, 1999 *Conte Contini Bonacossi, Carmignano*

TUSCANY, IT | IE | A-, A- | PV | WPL | BBC | \$20 | A-

SYRAH/SHIRAZ

Ch. Souverain, 2000 *Alexander Valley, Sonoma Co.*

CA, USA | IE | B+, A-, B, A+ | PV | WPL | BBC | \$20 | A-

Equus, 1999 *Paso Robles, San Luis Obispo Co.*

CA, USA | IE | A, A- | PV | WPL | BBC | \$18 | A

COMPREHENSIVE BUYING GUIDES TO TOP RATED WINES

WINES SORTED BY TYPE

REDS

BARBERA

La Ghersa, 1999 <i>Camparo</i>					
ASTI SUPERIORE, IT	IE B+	PV	WPL	\$14	B+
Montevina, 1999 <i>Terra d'Oro, Amador Co.</i>					
CA, USA	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$18	A-
Neirano, 1998 <i>Le Croci, Barbara Asti d'Superiore</i>					
PIEDMONT, IT	IE A	PV	WPL S	\$30	A
Sebastiani, 2000 <i>Sonoma Co.</i>					
CA, USA	IE B+	PV	WPL	\$18	B+

BAROLO

Beni di Batasiolo, 2001 <i>Barolo</i>					
BARBARA D'ALBA, IT	IE B+	PV	WPL	\$18	B+
Beni di Batasiolo, 1998 <i>Barolo</i>					
LA MORRA, IT	IE A-	PV	WPL W,S	\$30	A-
Michele Chiarlo, 1998 <i>Barolo</i>					
PIEDMONT, IT	IE A-	PV	WPL S	\$30	A-

BORDEAUX

Ch. d' Angludet, 2000 <i>Margaux</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE B+	PV	WPL	\$16	B+
Clos Badon-Thunevin, 2000 <i>St.-Emilion</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE A	PV	WPL	\$25	A
Ch. Beaumont, 2000 <i>Haut-Médoc</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE A-	PV	WPL W	\$15	A-
Ch. Beau-Site, 2000 <i>St.-Estéphe</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE A-	PV	WPL W	\$20	A-
Ch. Belgrave, 2000 <i>Haut-Médoc</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE A-	PV	WPL W	\$20	A-
Ch. Bellefont-Belcier, 2000 <i>Saint-Emilion</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE A-	PV	WPL S	\$30	A-
Ch. Bouscaut, 2000 <i>Pessac-Léognan</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$20	A-
Ch. Boyd-Cantenac, 2000 <i>Margaux</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE A-	PV	WPL S	\$30	A-
Ch. Brillette, 2000 <i>Listrac & Moulis</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE B+	PV	WPL	\$15	B+
Ch. Camensac, 2000 <i>Haut-Médoc</i>					
BORDEAUX, FR	IE A-	PV	WPL W	\$20	A-

COMPREHENSIVE BUYING GUIDES TO TOP RATED WINES

AUSTRALIA

REDS

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Annie's Lane, 1999	<i>Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot, Clare Valley</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$15	A-
Heritage Road, 1999	<i>Reserve, Limited, Bethany Creek Vineyard, Barossa Valley</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A+	PV	WPL S	\$30	A+
Hillview Vineyards, 1999	<i>Blewitt Springs, Fleurieu Peninsula</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE B+	PV	WPL	\$15	B+
Kangarilla Road, 1999	<i>McLaren Vale</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$23	A-
Leasingham, 1999	<i>Cabernet Sauvignon, Bin 56, Clare Valley</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A-, B+, B+	PV	WPL	\$19	B+
Lindemans, 1999	<i>St. George, Coonawarra</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A	PV	WPL S	\$27	A
Madfish, 2001	<i>Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot-Cabernet Franc</i>				
WESTERN, AUS	IE B+	PV	WPL	\$14	B+
Marquis Philips, 2001	<i>McLaren Vale</i>				
SOUTH EASTERN, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$23	A-
Marquis Philips, 2000					
SOUTH EASTERN, AUS	IE A, B+, B	PV	WPL W	\$15	B+
Penfolds, 2000	<i>Cabernet Sauvignon-Shiraz, Bin 389</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL S	\$26	A-
Penfolds, 1999	<i>Bin 407</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A	PV	WPL S	\$26	A
Rosemount, 2000	<i>Hill of Gold, Mudgee</i>				
NEW SOUTH WALES, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$19	A-
Rosemount, 2000	<i>Show Reserve, Coonawarra</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$24	A-
Rosemount, 2000	<i>Orange Vineyard,</i>				
NEW SOUTH WALES, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$24	A-
Rosemount, 1999	<i>Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot-Petit Verdot, Traditional, McLaren Vale-Langhorne Creek</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL S	\$26	A-
Sandalford, 1999	<i>Mount Barker, Margaret River</i>				
WESTERN, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$22	A-
Sticks, 2000	<i>Yarra Valley</i>				
AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$13	A-
Tim Adams, 1999	<i>Clare Valley</i>				
SOUTH, AUS	IE A-	PV	WPL	\$22	A-

GLOSSARY OF WINE TERMS

This glossary of wine terms covers basic wine types, growing regions, and technical and tasting terms, providing you with the essential information you'll need to decipher wine labels and tasting notes, or easily translate from "wine-ese" if you find yourself questioning the intent or meaning of a particular wine writer or critic.

Though Wine PocketList guides don't focus on the descriptors most wine writers use to communicate their experience with a particular bottle of wine, it is helpful to understand the basic "verbal building blocks" used to articulate the highly personal experience of enjoying wine.

A

ACETIC ACID All wines contain acetic acid or vinegar, normally the amount is quite small, somewhere between .03 percent–.06 percent, and not noticeable to taste or smell. Once wines reach .07 percent to just under .10 percent, a sweet, sour vinegary smell and taste becomes noticeable. At low levels, acetic acid can enhance the flavor of a wine, while at higher levels—over 0.1 percent—this flavor can dominate and flaw the wine.

ACID An essential component of wine, that preserves it, enlivens, shapes its flavors, and helps prolong its aftertaste. There are four major kinds of acids—tartaric, malic, lactic, citric—found in wine. Acid contributes to the crispness and longevity of a wine, particularly white wine. Acid is identifiable by the crisp, sharp character it imparts to a wine.

ACIDIC A term used to describe wines whose total acid is so high that they taste tart or sour and have a sharp edge on the palate.

AERATION The process of letting a wine 'breathe' in the open air or the swirling of wine in a glass. It's a cause for debate whether aerating bottled wines, usually reds, improves their quality, as aeration can soften young, tannic wines, but fatigue older ones.

AFTERTASTE The taste or flavors that linger in the mouth after tasting or swallowing wine. Also known as a wine's finish, the aftertaste or finish is one of the most important factors in judging a wine's character or quality. Some say great wines have rich, long, complex aftertastes. Aftertastes may also be harsh, hot, soft, lingering, short, smooth, tannic or non existent.

ALBARIÑO (*Ahl-ba-REE-n'yo*) Albariño is a premium white wine grape grown in the Galicia region of Spain. The skin is so thick, that only a small amount of juice can be squeezed from it. The results are often creamy citrus and peachy. Albariños are crisp, refreshing and light bodied.

ALCOHOL This integral component of wine is a natural by-product of fermentation, and one of the mainstays of perceived flavor. Most wines range from 7 percent to 14 percent alcohol by volume.

ALEATICO (*ah lay AH tee co*) A red member of the Muscat family of grapes and a popular variety in Italy, where it produces an array of table and dessert wines, also found in California