

HOT PICKS FROM OUR CRITICS • ARGENTINA: BEST MALBEC • TEQUILA TERROIR

Wine & Spirits



100 top
values
of the
year

JUNE 2008 • \$4.99
wineandspiritsmagazine.com

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit 184
Dulles, VA

scents of game hanging in the barn, of cherry bark and violets, all woven into a lovely richness, the gaminess cut by crushed black pepper spice. Decant this for venison. *Vineyard Brands, Birmingham, AL*

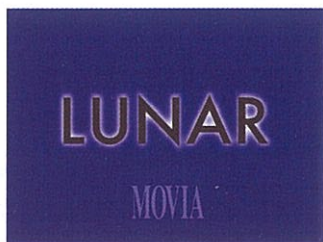
91 | Pegasus Bay \$43
2006 Waipara Pinot Noir Dark in tone, fresh and comfortable in its balance, this comes on rich with ripe cherry flavor and carries straight through to a lasting finish. It's round, substantial pinot, ready to drink now with grilled King salmon. *Empson USA, Alexandria, VA*

SLOVENIA SPARKLING

92 | Movia \$50
Goriška Brda Puro Brut Rosé Puro is Movia's highly individual sparkling wine. Made from pinot noir that undergoes secondary fermentation in the bottle (and is shipped undischarged), this is vibrant and lifted, with citrus and strawberry aromas that lead to a ciderlike taste. Those fruit flavors become savory with air, showing a salty mineral character that lasts for minutes. This is compelling wine that may well challenge your expectations. Try it with razor clams. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*

SLOVENIA WHITE

93 | Movia \$35
2005 Goriška Brda Lunar As a leader in the natural wine movement, Ales Kristancic tends to ignore conventions when it comes to making wine. Lunar is his effort to produce a wine that's mostly free from human intervention and uses very little sulfur. Made from ribolla gialla, the '05 is initially vibrant and bright, with flavors of peach and kumquat. Savory tannins emerge with air, framing the fruit and helping to focus the wine's structure. It's both fascinating and completely delicious. Pair it with grilled weisswurst. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*



92 | Movia \$45
2006 Goriška Brda Lunar Movia's '06 Lunar is more subdued than the '05. This veers towards citrus flavors and zest, with a

mouthwatering saline quality that drives the wine. It becomes more aromatic with air, taking on a floral character. The texture, meanwhile, is silky and broad; in many respects, this behaves more like a red wine than a white, drawing power from its rich midpalate to finish savory and dry. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*

SLOVENIA DESSERT

90 | Batic \$60/375ml
2003 Rebula Valentino Rich and warm, with flavors of apricot and caramel balanced by a toasted almond quality, this tastes nutty rather than sweet. Pair it with an almond tart. *Blue Danube Wine Co., Los Altos Hills, CA*

SOUTH AFRICA RED

91 | Vilafonté \$50
2005 Paarl Series M Zelma Long and Phil Freese base this blend on merlot (52 percent) from vines they farm on the northern side of the Simonsberg Mountains. While it also includes cabernet sauvignon and malbec, it's the merlot that provides the fragrance, with fresh red cherry flavors that last. Oak tamps down the front of the wine, then the fruit comes up, lithe and light. An elegant red for prime rib or roast game birds. *Broadbent Selections, San Francisco, CA*

SPAIN SPARKLING

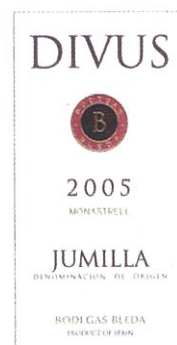
90 | Maria Casanovas \$42
2004 Cava Brut Nature Gran Reserva Tiny bubbles lift this Cava's scents of peaches and cream. The robust, nutty flavors are dry and austere, finishing clean. Delicious with roast hake. *Grapes of Spain, Lorton, VA*

90 | Paul Cheneau \$16
Cava Brut Blanc de Blancs Classical Cava scents of nuts and citrus give this a burst of flavor. It hints at pear and anise in a sweet middle, then cleans up in the end. Complex, with layers of fruit. For roast sturgeon. *Pasternak Wine Imports, Harrison, NY*

90 | Naveran \$40
2006 Cava Perles Roses The light, salmon-pink color and smoky, mineral scents show subtlety in this wine. Its light froth packs tart wild strawberry flavors. A touch of elegance for sushi, this is fresh and mouthwatering. *Olé Imports, NY*

SPAIN RED

Monastrell



90 | Bodegas Bleda \$25
2005 Jumilla Divus Monastrell Coffee and red cherry flavors support a refined structure of tannins and bright, clean acidity. With air it gains in depth and elegance, a sophisticated and refined monastrell. *South River Imports, Edgewater, MD; Michael Lerner Selections, NY*

90 | Rafael Cambra \$40
2004 Valencia Uno Monastrell With rustic tannins lifting dark cherry and fig flavors, this is all that you would expect in a Levante monastrell. Cellar this for a couple of years, as the wine should gain in complexity and charm, or pour it now with duck confit. *Frontier Wine Imports, Dover, NJ*

Red Blends

90 | Bernabé Navarro \$38
2005 Alicante Leva Daniel's This blend based on cabernet sauvignon and tempranillo (with syrah and merlot) offers an intriguing juxtaposition of bright red fruit flavors on a rustic texture. It's juicy and *sauvage*, refreshing in its way. The tannins are aggressive on their own, but a pleasure with lamb. *Grapes of Spain, Lorton, VA*

90 | Licinia \$50
2006 Madrid Located 25 miles southeast of the city, Licinia is one of the rising stars of the Vinos de Madrid D.O. This blend of syrah (40 percent), cabernet (30) and tempranillo (30) is ripe with a lasting scent of red flowers and deep flavors of black cherry and cinnamon. The medium-weight tannins will match veal stew. *Olé Imports, NY* ■