

# Wine & Spirits

21ST ANNUAL BUYING GUIDE

100  
BEST  
BUYS

100  
WINERIES  
OF THE YEAR

## 100 BEST WINES



WINTER 2007

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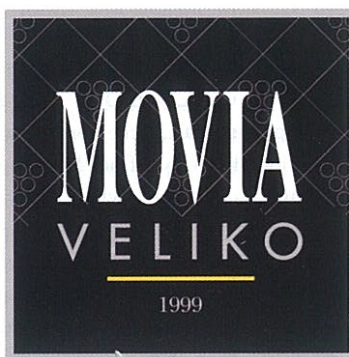
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Wine & Spirits

**94** | Taylor Fladgate \$233  
**2004 Porto Vargellas Vinha Velha** (Labeled as a cask sample.) From the oldest vines at Vargellas, some dating to the 1920s, this limited bottling is more concentrated than Taylor's quinta wine, with more immediate clarity of fruit. It's packed with blackberry and blueberry flavor, with aromas of sour black cherries and dark chocolate. Mineral tannins and glycerol completely coat the mouth, shutting down the flavors and turning the wine into a textural impression: heady, black, luscious, sleek. Check back on this 20 to 25 years from the vintage. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*

### SLOVENIA | Best White



**93** | Movia \$33  
**1999 Goriska Brda Veliko Bianco** The deep golden color and initial scents imply this wine might be heavily oaked, but the fruit is so potent that it absorbs the wood into complex layers of flavor. Those flavors derive from ribolla, chardonnay, sauvignon and pinot grigio, the blend offering exotic scents of white peach, preserved lemon, green melon and narcissus. The flavors and textures overlay one another in a sustained chord with a dynamic intensity that soars. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*

### SOUTH AFRICA Best Dessert

**93** | Klein Constantia \$50  
**2000 Constantia Vin de Constance** A classic dessert style, reinvented by Klein Constantia in the 1980s, Vin de Constance is a golden, lusciously sweet wine that can withstand the kind of heat and oxidation that could challenge a lesser wine in a long sea journey from the Cape. This modern version is neither maderized nor oxidized. Instead, it's fresh and voluptuous, with com-

plex aromas that meld beeswax, papaya, pear and bay laurel into smokier notes. There's a cool, saline-mineral tension that keeps it firm and brisk, even with all the sweetness. Though this will last for months after it's been opened, it will go quickly at dinner with seared foie gras and quince paste. *Cape Classics, NY*

### SPAIN | Best Bierzo

**93** | Descendientes de J. Palacios \$50  
**2004 Bierzo Corullón** From high-altitude vineyards in the Corullón Mountains, this combines the depth of old-vine fruit with the refreshing grace of mencia. Scents of red fruit and a seductive violet tone lead into black mineral and black currant flavors. The texture is gentle yet firm, the tannins supporting the fruit concentration with grace. Acidity keeps the wine bright and juicy through a long and profound finish. Suited to age, or to decant now for slow-smoked beef ribs. *The Rare Wine Co., Sonoma, CA*

### Best Priorat

**94** | Capafons-Ossó \$55  
**2003 Priorat Masos d'en Cubells** Behind the violet, fig and black currant aromas of this single-vineyard Priorat, there is an intriguing lamb note emerging from the fruit, adding a savage tension. The palate is full of wild, rustic tannins and earthy tones, a bullfighting arena where everything feels primal and tense. A complex blend of old-vine garnacha and cariñena with syrah, cabernet sauvignon and merlot, this is seductive now with lamb chops and well worth cellaring for a decade. *Folio Fine Wine Partners, Napa, CA*

### Best Ribera del Duero

**95** | Emilio Moro \$170  
**2003 Ribera del Duero Malleolus de Valderramiro** More severe and mineral than Sanchomartín, the other single-vineyard wine from Emilio Moro, this comes from a ten-acre plot of clay and gravel soil. It's black and ripe, as fleshy as good '04s tend to be, but also distant and shy on its approach. Even with a day of aeration, this tinto fino remains a dense wall of minerality built from pungent acidity and lean tannins. Probably the best Valderramiro Moro has produced,