

IMPORTED NEW RELEASES

Our blind panels tasted **341** new-release imported wines for this issue. Our critics rated **37** as exceptional (90+) and **31** as Best Buys. **Joshua Greene** reviews wines from Italy and Portugal; **Peter Liem** reviews wines from Austria, France (Alsace) and Germany; **Tara Q. Thomas** reviews wines from Greece. Find a complete list of wines tasted and all reviews at wineandspiritsmagazine.com.

AUSTRIA WHITE

GRÜNER VELTLINER

91 | Machherndl \$23
2009 Wachau Kollmitz Grüner Veltliner Smaragd (Best Buy) Unusually savory in tone, this shows bold flavors of lentil, white pepper, chicken broth and dried citrus, enlivened by a spicy stoniness. It's big in body but well balanced, its aromas on the finish feeling focused and persistent. *Broadbent Selections, San Francisco, CA*

88 | Machherndl \$15
2009 Wachau Kollmütz Grüner Veltliner Federspiel (Best Buy) The apricot and apple-like fruit is underlined by a firmly stony minerality, feeling zesty despite its rich body. It turns peppery on the finish, showing a pleasing harmony. *Broadbent Selections, San Francisco, CA*

SAUVIGNON BLANC

89 | Wohlmuth \$26
2009 Südsteiermark Klassik Sauvignon Blanc (Best Buy) Typical Styrian sauvignon: This is round and fragrant, its vivacious flavors of apple and lemon underlined by a softly stony minerality. *The Artisan Collection, NY*

AUSTRIA RED

BLAUFRANKISCH

86 | Wohlmuth \$19
2007 Burgenland Hochberg Blaufränkisch (Best Buy) This shows ripe, juicy flavors of raspberry and cherry tomato, backed by a softly creamy texture and light, supple tannins. *The Artisan Collection, NY*

FRANCE WHITE

ALSACE: BLENDS

92 | Marcel Deiss \$49
2007 Alsace Premier Cru Engeltgarten The warm, plush flavors of papaya, melon and roasted peach are rich without being

monolithic, shaped by a tense core of acidity and complex, stony minerality. While riper in feel than usual, it holds itself together well, increasing in intensity the further back it moves on the palate. *Vintus, Pleasantville, NY*

GEWURZTRAMINER

90 | Jean-Baptiste Adam \$25
2009 Alsace Réserve Gewurztraminer Round and plush, this is driven by ripeness, its opulent flavors of peach, grapefruit and rose petal feeling assertive and confident. It balances the sweetness well, feeling rich without being over the top. *Winebow, NY*

PINOT GRIS

88 | Helfrich \$25
2008 Alsace Grand Cru Steinklotz Pinot Gris (Best Buy) Made in a plush style, this shows luscious notes of litchi, mango and yellow peach, underlined by soft, chalky minerality. *Underdog Wine Merchants, Livermore, CA*

RIESLING

91 | Kuentz-Bas \$42
2008 Alsace Grand Cru Pfersigberg Riesling Grapefruity and harmoniously poised, this wine feels brisk and zesty, its citrusy, apple-like flavors showing excellent balance and length. It's notable for its refreshingly dry finish. *Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant, Berkeley, CA*

89 | Domaines Schlumberger \$20
2007 Alsace Les Princes Abbés Riesling (Best Buy) This is youthful and tightly wound, its flavors of pink grapefruit, tangerine and baked peach backed by stony minerality. *Maisons Marques & Domaines USA, Oakland, CA*

89 | Gustave Lorentz \$24
2008 Alsace Réserve Riesling (Best Buy) With cool, clean flavors of green apple, kiwi and lime that are light and crisp, this feels

focused, balanced and restrained. *Quintessential, Napa, CA*

88 | Domaine Rémy Gresser \$24
2008 Alsace Kritt Riesling (Best Buy) This is fresh and inviting, showing crisp, uncomplicated flavors of lemon zest, apple skins and pink grapefruit. *Martine's Wines, Novato, CA*

FRANCE DESSERT

ALSACE

92 | Jean-Baptiste Adam \$59
2008 Alsace Gewurztraminer Vendanges Tardives (Best Buy) Velvety and intense, this has opulent and pillowy peach and grapefruit flavors contrasted by pungently assertive notes of brown spice. It's made in a plush style, kept focused by lively acidity. *Artisans & Vines, Richmond, VA*

92 | Domaines Schlumberger \$82/375ml
2007 Alsace Cuvée Anne Gewurztraminer Sélection de Grains Nobles The honeyed, caramelized flavors of peach and apricot are intensely concentrated and opulent in feel, marked by a glossy texture and powerful richness. The finish remains buoyant, with complex, dark notes of spiced plum and dried fruit that help to keep everything in check. *Maisons Marques & Domaines USA, Oakland, CA*

91 | Kuentz-Bas \$150
2007 Alsace Cuvée Jérémy Gewurztraminer Sélection de Grains Nobles This thrives on concentrated richness, its syrupy flavors of quince, jackfruit and canned peach feeling dense and powerful. It's dominated by botrytis at the moment, but its underlying depth shows the potential for further development with time. *Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant, Berkeley, CA*

GERMANY WHITE

90 | Herbert Messmer \$20
2009 Pfalz Muskateller QbA feinherb (Best Buy) Intense and extroverted in character, this contrasts its plush flavors of pink grapefruit and nectarine with spicy undertones, feeling shapely and clearly delineated despite its ripeness. *Terry Theise Selections/Michael Skurnik Wines, Syosset, NY*

90 | Pfeffingen \$30
2009 Pfalz Scheurebe Spätlese trocken (Best Buy) The lusciously ripe, peachy fruit feels full in body, infused by the musky, spicy notes of the variety. Brisk acidity holds it in place, focusing and enlivening the flavors. *Rudi Wiest Selections, San Marcos, CA*

87 | Schloss Saarstein \$18
2009 Mosel Pinot Blanc QbA (Best Buy) Ripe and round, this wine's pear and apple flavors are unusually full bodied for a Saar wine. With its depth and alcohol, this could stand up to pork. *Valckenberg Int'l., Tulsa, OK*

GERMANY RED

SPATBURGUNDER

91 | Bernhard Huber \$80
2007 Baden Alte Reben Spätburgunder QbA trocken The dusty red fruit flavors are creamy and fragrant, tethered by fresh acidity and an earthy minerality. It finishes with finely poised structure, both mineral and fruit aromas persisting with excellent length. *Valckenberg Int'l., Tulsa, OK*

91 | Oekonomierat Rebholz \$45
2007 Pfalz Spätburgunder Spätlese trocken This has a distinctive mineral personality, feeling stony and stern under the velvety, cherry-like aromas. It gains complexity from hints of game and brown spice, showing a fine balance from start to finish. *Rudi Wiest Selections, San Marcos, CA*

90 | Bernhard Huber \$73
2007 Baden GG Hecklinger Schlossberg R Spätburgunder QbA trocken Lively and inviting, this shows clean, fresh flavors of red cherry and strawberry, full in fragrance yet relatively light in body. It turns spicy on the finish, its aromas maintaining a vibrant harmony. *Valckenberg Int'l., Tulsa, OK*

89 | Dr. Pauly-Bergweiler \$30
2009 Mosel Graacher Domprobst Spätburgunder QbA trocken (Best Buy) The floral aromas of wild cherry and strawberry

are underlined by an intense, slatey minerality that's unusual for pinot noir. This isn't complex, but it's highly terroir expressive and delicious to drink. *Winesellers, Niles, IL*

88 | Bernhard Huber \$50
2007 Baden Malterdinger Bienenberg R Spätburgunder QbA trocken (Best Buy) This wine's sweet red cherry fruit feels creamy and luscious. Bright acidity keeps it clean and fresh. *Valckenberg Int'l., Tulsa, OK*

88 | Bernhard Huber \$59
2007 Baden Sommerhalde R Spätburgunder QbA trocken (Best Buy) This is dark and deep in tone, with a stern, earthy minerality that adds interest to the dark cherry and raspberry fruit. *Valckenberg Int'l., Tulsa, OK*

GREECE RED

87 | Achaia Clauss \$13
2006 Nemea (Best Buy) Light and earthy, this tastes of baked, tart cherries with a licorice coolness. It's ready for risotto with mushrooms. *Stellar Importing Co., Astoria, NY*

ITALY WHITE

PIEDMONT

92 | Ceretto \$26
2009 Langhe Blangé Arneis Ceretto farms 173 acres of arneis in the towns of Vezza d'Alba and Castellinaldo—claiming to make one in every five bottles of this local Piedmont specialty. Given the significant level of production, it's remarkable that the wine is consistently among the best. Their farming and careful winemaking maintain the freshness of the grapes, presenting exotic fruit flavors—loquat and kumquat—as well as brisk apple and pear. Acidity brings a seashell minerality to the wine, accompanying fresh almond flavors in the finish. For crudo, especially scallops or fluke. *Wilson Daniels, St. Helena, CA*



90 | Damilano \$21
2009 Langhe Arneis Tart Rainier cherry flavors add depth to the nut scents and lemony

IMPORTED NEW RELEASES

acidity of this wine. It's light and clean, opening with air to match plump littleneck clams. *Vias Imports, NY*



87 | Antica Casa Ricossa \$17
2009 Gavi di Gavi (Best Buy) A tart, floral Gavi, this wine is rustic and flavorful. It finishes on bitter melon scents and acidity, for pan-roasted trout. *Touchstone Wines, Santa Cruz, CA*

ITALY RED

PIEDMONT: BARBERA

92 | Gianni Gagliardo \$40
2006 Barbera d'Alba La Matta Grown at Gagliardo's estate vineyard in La Morra, this is aged for a year in small oak barrels. It's not pushed as far as many contemporary barberas—the extract is more restrained, the fruit as juicy as fresh cherries, the finish complex with the earthen spice of the Barolo soils. A gentle, lively wine without a lot of pretense, this is ready to enjoy with a peppery, herb-rubbed pork tenderloin. *Enotec Imports, Denver, CO*

91 | Poderi Aldo Conterno \$38
2006 Barbera d'Alba Conca Tre Pile From 45-year-old barbera vines grown at an estate vineyard in Bussia Soprano, this wine ages in new French barriques. The fruit gains intensity and focus from the oak, rather than being subsumed by it. The texture is smooth and gentle, the finish harmonious. This has the meatiness of beef bouillon, a blackness to the fruit augmented by the char of the barrel. It should age with grace. *Massanois Imports, Washington, DC*

91 | Coppo \$19
2006 Barbera d'Asti Camp du Rouss Scents of plums and cherries mix with heady new oak perfume in this clean and supple barbera. The new oak adds a little dazzle while earthiness places it directly in Piedmont, with black-rooted truffle spice. Meanwhile, the fruit itself is bright and beautiful, carrying a linden-like itch that makes you want to drink more. Delicious with pasta in a meaty boar ragù. *Winebow, NY*

IMPORTED NEW RELEASES

91 | Vietti \$45
2007 Barbera d'Alba Scarrone From Vietti's Scarrone Vineyard in Castiglione, this barbera's time in French oak seems to have intensified its purple color while lifting its violet perfume. The wine has a youthful firmness and fineness to its juicy, tart cherry fruit, ready to enjoy with red-sauced pasta and grilled fennel sausages. *Dalla Terra, Napa, CA*

91 | Massimiliano Vivalda \$29
2004 Barbera d'Asti Amistà Superiore This wine gains its tension and nerve pulling in two directions, with spicy, high-toned acidity and earthen depths of black fruit flavor. The acidity lifts a spicy tobacco and rose scent, the earthy tannins bring on complex textures in the finish. Made for pasta with fennel sausage and broccoli rabe. *Testa Wines of the World, Oyster Bay, NY*

90 | Palladino \$26
2006 Barbera d'Alba Bricco delle Olive Whimsical Italian funk enlivens this earthy wine—for those who don't mind a touch of barnyard in their barbera. Its sweet fruit bristles with acidity, ready to decant for boar ragù. *Enotec Imports, Denver, CO*

90 | Sandrone \$43
2007 Barbera d'Alba Zesty black fruit-skin flavors edge this wine's substantial extract, its intensity driven by mineral spices like cardamom and cumin. This is a substantial barbera, with tannins that need a year or two to mellow, or a thick-cut steak to tame them. *Vintus, Pleasantville, NY*

89 | Fattoria San Giuliano \$23
2008 Barbera d'Alba Fiore di Marcorino (Best Buy) Tarry and bold, this wine is a bit reductive for now, completely black in its fruit and peppercorn flavors. The quality of the wine is apparent in its smooth texture and cleanness. Give it a year or two in bottle to evolve. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*

89 | Hilberg-Pasquero \$23
2008 Barbera d'Alba (Best Buy) International in style, both in its major scale and rich new oak tannin, this is a crowd-pleasing barbera. It finishes as smoky as a fine cigar, and may well develop more complexity as it ages. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*

87 | Giacomo Fratelli \$16
2007 Barbera d'Alba Bussia (Best Buy) Smooth and clean in the initial aroma, this is black and sweetly raisined on the palate, a

gritty barbera to serve with beef brisket. *Bedford International, Larchmont, NY*

87 | Giuseppe Stella \$17
2009 Barbera d'Asti (Best Buy) Peppery spice contrasts candied cherry flavors in this soft, sweet barbera. It's a light red for pepper-rubbed roast pork. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*

86 | Nuova Cappelletta \$15
2008 Barbera del Monferrato (Best Buy) The warm, grapey fruit of this barbera melds sweetness with mineral tannins that last. For salumi. *Chartrand Imports, Rockland, ME*

DOLCETTO



92 | La Querciola \$21
2007 Dolcetto di Dogliani Cornole A joyous dolcetto bursting with red fruit, this has the structure and firmness to carry all its flavors with spicy energy. It smells like fresh raspberries, cured beef and dark chocolate, the tannins ready to smash into braseola. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*



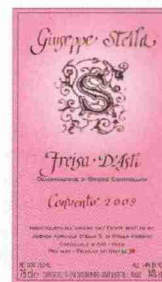
91 | Pecchenino \$20
2008 Dolcetto di Dogliani San Luigi Wild blueberry and tart sour cherry flavors fill out the juicy middle of this wine and last. The tannin feels ripe and the acidity backs up all the fruit, creating a mouthwatering match for grilled chopped sirloin. *Vias Imports, NY*

90 | Agricola Brandini \$19
2009 Dolcetto d'Alba Vigna Sant'Anna Bright and youthful, this is a purple dolcetto with carbonic juiciness to its fruit—part meaty, part sweet. It finishes with the tight, red cast of fruit skin, like a ripe peach. The flavors have staying power, ready to take on spicy braised pork. *Dark Star Imports, NY*

90 | Elvio Cogno \$23
2008 Dolcetto d'Alba Vigna del Mandorlo Scents of fennel, fig and cured meat combine in this earthy dolcetto, its flavors limpid and mouthwatering. A dusting of tannin and tight acidity makes this a fine partner to grilled fennel sausages. *Vias Imports, NY*

88 | Renato Ratti \$17
2009 Dolcetto d'Alba Colombè (Best Buy) Honeyed plum and cherry flavors fill out this lush young dolcetto, a juicy red to serve with landjäger sausages or other cured meats. *Dreyfus, Ashby & Co., NY*

FREISA D'ASTI



90 | Giuseppe Stella \$19
2009 Freisa d'Asti Bright red cherry and raspberry flavors meet austere tannin in this meaty freisa. That tannin will open with air, making for a delicious accompaniment to seared duck breast. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*

GATTINARA

91 | Alessandro Anzivino \$32
2005 Gattinara This light, fragrant nebbiolo has zesty cherry-skin flavors deepened by savory earth and sausage meat tones. It's firm and smoky, intriguingly long in its gentle flavor. A classic match for agnolotti del pin. *Villa Italia Wines, S. San Francisco, CA*

LANGHE

91 | Pasquale Pelissero \$23
2008 Langhe Pasqualin Nebbiolo This nebbiolo recalls a casual style of Barolo, before it became chic. Everyone on the panel agreed that it's the sort of wine you just want to drink. One taster noted "a flinty and cool, mica-like minerality, bright, bitter and fresh." That intriguing tannic edge firmed up tart cherry flavors, hinting at anise, rose and pink grapefruit. It's a light wine with enough inner strength to match braised short ribs. *Massanois Imports, Washington, DC*

91 | Produttori del Barbaresco \$25
2008 Langhe Nebbiolo (Best Buy) Made from declassified Barbaresco lots at this legendary cooperative winery, this outperforms many more ambitious wines—without trying to be anything that it's not. That said, the wine is brisk and clean. The tannins have a hint of pomegranate-seed bitterness, but don't interfere with the length of the tart cherry flavor. It's the sort of wine Italians would eat with song birds caught from the wild, when there were still song birds to catch. Now they might decant it for farm-raised roast squab. *Vias Imports, NY*

88 | Agricola Brandini \$20
2004 Langhe (Best Buy) This wine's vibrant raspberry perfume is as spicy as a bowl of fennel seeds. It's a tart blend of nebbiolo and barbera, the tannin matured to a fine-grained earthiness, the fruit light and juicy. Serve it with braised tripe. *Dark Star Imports, NY*

NEBBIOLO D'ALBA

89 | Giacomo Fratelli \$16
2008 Nebbiolo d'Alba (Best Buy) Touches of chestnut in the aroma give this an old-fashioned feel. It's juicy and simple, with earthy tannin suppressing the fruit without stopping its glow in the finish. Decant a bottle for *agnolotti* stuffed with mushrooms and veal. *Bedford International, Larchmont, NY*

ITALY DESSERT

MOSCATO D'ASTI

90 | Ca' dei Mandorli \$17/500ml
2008 Moscato d'Asti dei Giari (Best Buy) There's intriguing complexity to this moscato: It's full of fruit and while there's plenty of residual sugar to build the texture of the wine, it is balanced rather than bluntly sweet. Fin-

ishing fresh and clean, this would be delicious with apple cobbler. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*

90 | Castello del Poggio \$16
Moscato d'Asti (Best Buy) This spicy moscato tastes fresh and cool. It feels full and rich, but not sugary—the fruit is what lasts, with hints of nectarine and kumquat. Delicious chilled on its own or with hazelnut biscotti. *Zonin USA, Charlottesville, VA*

86 | Fattoria San Giuliano \$17
2009 Moscato d'Asti (Best Buy) Clean scents of orange, apricot and nectarine fill this bright, simple moscato. Serve it well chilled with biscotti. *Vignaioli Selection, NY*

PORTUGAL DESSERT

PORTO

93 | Fonseca \$60
2008 Porto Quinta do Panascal Fresh plum scents meld with the sappy green-herb character of *esteva* to distinguish this wine as a classical Cima Corgo Port. The beauty of that aroma matches the textural give of the tannin, the wine's tight, restrained power in service to the length of its flavor—the bright blue fruit, dark schist and herbal savor last on and on. A graceful, accommodating Porto, one to enjoy 12 to 15 years from the vintage. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*

93 | Quinta do Noval \$100
2008 Porto Noval wins on aroma alone, with beautiful clarity and precision to its plush fruit. The flavors have a bandwidth that stretches from green herb to luscious, purple-black berries. The lasting impression is pretty delicious—clean, supple and cool—a wine to savor while you wait for the 2007 Noval to mature. *Vintus, Pleasantville, NY*



92 | Dow's \$62
2008 Porto Quinta Senhora da Ribeira Right from the moment it is poured, this tastes of Douro schist and wild purple fruit. It feels cool, even as it blasts all that mineral spice into flavors of currant, cranberry and apricot. There's also something gamey, as well as green

IMPORTED NEW RELEASES

hints of nettles and *esteva* adding complexity. A pleasing, spicy, short-term Port to enjoy around a decade from the vintage. *Premium Port Wines, San Francisco, CA*

91 | Taylor Fladgate \$60
2008 Porto Quinta de Vargellas Black and smoky, this vintage from the arid steeps of Vargellas locks its sweet purple fruit behind austere tannin. There's suppleness in the room beyond, and a range of intriguing spices that seems to derive from the tannins of the Douro's otherworldly grapes. Long and intense, this needs 12 to 15 years to mellow. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*

90 | Croft \$55
2008 Porto Quinta da Roeda Purple in color and in its touriga-like scent of wild blueberries and raw Marcona almonds, this is bright and succulent Port. The tannins are silky, the fruit covering their earthiness in sweet reds and blues. This is the kind of modern vintage that's enjoyable on release, and probably at its best within ten years. *Kobrand, Purchase, NY*



90 | Quinto do Vesuvio \$62
2008 Porto A luscious, velvety Port, this is draped in black, plummy fruit flavor. The fruit is warm and spicy, the structure soft underneath. A sweet vintage of Vesuvio, this will likely be at its best around ten to 12 years of age. *Premium Port Wines, San Francisco, CA* ■