

Wine & Spirits

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in its bright scents. It's curvaceous but controlled, with a rich, plush texture that gives the wine the stuffing for turkey breast. (80 cases) —P.J.C.



91 | Tablas Creek \$25
2018 Paso Robles Patelin de Tablas Blanc (Best Buy) Blended from estate-grown and purchased fruit, this is based on grenache blanc, along with viognier, roussanne, marsanne and clairette blanche. It starts off plump, with sweet pear and peach flavors, then finishes firm and wheaty, with a pleasing bitterness. Chill it for poached chicken breast and endive. (2,300 cases) —P.J.C.

90 | Epiphany \$22
2017 Santa Barbara County Inspiration (Best Buy) Viognier, marsanne, roussanne and grenache blanc combine in this well-priced blend, which leads with pineapple and biscuit scents. It's round and succulent, but with a bright edge of lemony acid and fruit-blossom phenolics that give the wine grip and savor. (247 cases) —P.J.C.

90 | Robert Hall \$24
2018 Paso Robles Cavern Select Vermentino An invigorating white, this is bright with notes of lemon, lime and orange zest and a grassy topnote. There's a slightly flinty, mineral-dust tinge that would play well off of salt prawns. (250 cases) —P.J.C.

90 | Scheid \$26
2018 Monterey San Lucas Vineyard Grenache Blanc (Best Buy) Scents of lemon and orange peel overlay juicy golden-apple flavor. A fine salinity in the background gives the wine a subtle elegance; for lemon sole. (389 cases) —P.J.C.

89 | Lion Ranch \$29
2018 Santa Clara Valley Picpoul (Best Buy) Notes of sour citrus, pith included, adorn flavors of juicy pineapple in this picpoul. It's juicy and fresh, with zippy acidity; for clams. (90 cases) —P.J.C.

SAUVIGNON BLANC

90 | Green & Red \$24
2017 Napa Valley Catacula Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc (Best Buy) Jay Heminway purchased this parcel in the late 1970s; he used it to extend his zinfandel plantings, and added some petite sirah and sauvignon blanc, mostly the musqué clone. The site produces a rich sauvignon, this vintage packed with lemon flavor, smoothly delivered with an underline of acidity. A gentle celery-root-like savor balances the sweet fruit, the wine ready for scallop ceviche. (310 cases) —J.G.

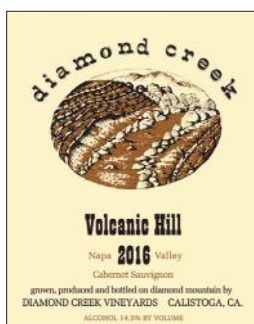
90 | King Chancho \$18
2018 Central Coast Sauvignon Blanc From Terravant, a custom-crush facility, this wine is all about the lees at first go, until the fruit kicks in, bright and snappy, the grapefruit notes lined with talc and lemon zest. It's zippy and mineral, a wine for afternoon sipping. (5,000 cases) —P.J.C.

CALIFORNIA RED

CABERNET FRANC

90 | Lang & Reed \$85
2016 Napa Valley Two-Fourteen Cabernet Franc John and Tracey Skupny source the fruit for this wine from the Sugarloaf Vineyard in the cool southeastern reaches of Napa Valley. The name references Clone 214, derived from vines in the Loire Valley, which fits with the Skupny's fresh and herbal style of franc. It's tense and tight, with black currant flavor and earthy tannins, their gamey side suggesting a match with roast squab or dark-meat turkey. (225 cases) —J.G.

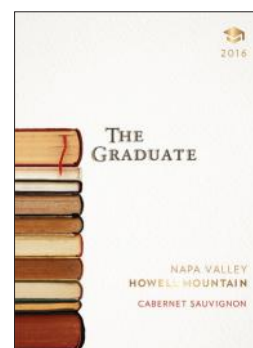
CABERNET SAUVIGNON



95 | Diamond Creek \$250
2016 Diamond Mountain District Napa Valley Volcanic Hill Cabernet Sauvignon As the 2016 Diamond Creek cabernets emerge from several years of rest in barrels

and bottles, it's Volcanic Hill that shows the best and brightest. "There's a volcanic-soil character adding texture to the palate, with less grape and oak tannins and more minerality" said Ryan Bailey of *NoMad LA*, comparing it to the other top cabernets of the tasting. It's an elegant vintage of Volcanic Hill, a cabernet of high-intensity fruit that calms to cool red- and black-currant generosity. Crushed-mineral tannins seem to clarify the fruit, bringing out the light and air in the wine, so that it ends on an impression of blue skies. —J.G.

94 | Inglenook \$100
2016 Rutherford Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon While Rubicon, the Inglenook estate's top selection, emphasizes cabernet sauvignon, this second selection from the estate includes a wider range of varieties (7 percent cabernet franc, 6 percent merlot, 4 percent petit verdot and 1 percent malbec). And, given a lower percentage of new French oak barrels in its aging (50 percent, as compared to 75 percent for Rubicon), it is more readily accessible on release. More than accessible, it's a bright, pretty cabernet that's easy to love. The fruit feels ripe and supple, with scents of sweet plums and tart cherries. The tannins have a cool richness, like the bitterness of Mexican chocolate, along with a green herbal edge of cilantro and hibiscus. That coolness feels like mountain air descending off the Mayacamas into the benchlands of Rutherford, bringing you closer to the vineyard with each taste. —J.G.



94 | Roots Run Deep \$150
2016 Howell Mountain Napa Valley The Graduate Cabernet Sauvignon In 2017, Macario Montoya joined Mark Albrecht's team at Roots Run Deep as winemaker, responsible for blending four different "Higher Education" cabernets. Each originates at a different block in the vineyard, which ranges in elevation from 1,700 to 2,000 feet; each is fermented with a different strain of yeasts and aged in different cooperage.