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THE tastingpanel MAGAZINE

WHAT MAKES GREAT WINEMAKING?

THE WINEMAKING TEAM AT GRUPPO MEZZACORONA, WHICH OVERSEES THREE WINERIES AND THREE DIFFERENT BRANDS

PHOTO: MATTEO DESTEFANO

Lucio Matricardi works with five fellow winemakers at Gruppo Mezzacorona to produce the wines of Mezzacorona, Rotari and Stemmari.

Anthony Dias BLUE *REVIEWS*

Presented by BLUE LIFESTYLE

In each issue, Editor-in-Chief Anthony Dias Blue selects a wide range of the best wines and spirits from among the more than 500 he samples over the course of a month. The reviews are subjective editorial evaluations, made without regard to advertising, and products are scored on a 100-point scale:

85-89: VERY GOOD

90-94: OUTSTANDING

95-100: CLASSIC

Once products are selected for publication, producers and importers will be offered the option of having their review accompanied by an image (bottle photo or label art) for a nominal fee. There is no obligation to add an image, nor does the decision affect the review or score in any way.

The "twisty" icon indicates wines sealed with a screwcap closure.

For additional Blue Reviews, go to www.bluelifestyle.com.

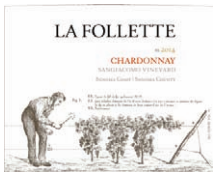
Prices are for 750 ml. bottles unless otherwise noted.

DOMESTIC

91 Robert Mondavi Winery 2014 Merlot, Napa Valley ($25) Tangy plum and juicy fruit; long, balanced and stylish in the best Robert Mondavi tradition.

CONSTELLATION WINES U.S.

91 Stoller Family Estate 2016 Chardonnay, Dundee Hills ($25) Entrepreneur Bill Stoller, co-owner of Chehalem Winery, planted ten acres of Chard and Pinot in 1995 and never looked back. Charmingly bright, juicy and crisp with racy acidity and tangy citrus.



94 La Follette 2014 Chardonnay, Sangiacomo Vineyard, Sonoma Coast ($38) Greg La Follette is a star winemaker and this is one of his best; silky, high-toned and refined; juicy and balanced.

WINE CREEK LLC

91 Trefethen 2014 Merlot, Oak Knoll, Napa Valley ($40) The Napa Valley Merlots keep on coming—this one delivers ripe plum, fresh style and great balance.

93 Résonance 2014 Pinot Noir, Résonance Vineyard, Yamhill-Carlton ($65) Maison Louis Jadot's exciting Oregon project. Deep, rich color; lush and dense with tangy berry fruit and savory flavors.

KOBRAND

93 Roger Roessler Wines 2015 Pinot Noir, 3 BBL Vineyard, Sonoma Coast ($70) As if we needed more proof that the Sonoma Coast is ideal Burgundian-variety terroir. Silky and smooth with crisp acidity and racy acid structure.

R2 WINE COMPANY

96 Sea Smoke Cellars 2014 Ten Pinot Noir, Sta. Rita Hills ($82) Bright, silky and juicy with tangy cherry fruit; fresh, elegant and balanced with depth, style and finesse; the role model for California Pinot.

94 Gamble Family Vineyards 2013 Paramount, Napa Valley ($90) A stellar Bordeaux-style blend with ruby color, rich plum and deep berries and spice; lovely with generous style and elegant depth; layered and complex with classic structure. 33% Cabernet Sauvignon, 31% Merlot, 30% Cabernet Franc, 6% Petit Verdot.

IMPORTS

92 Parparoussis Winery 2015 Assyrtiko, Achaia, Greece ($23) One of several impressive Greek wines I've tasted recently. Aromatic, smooth and lush with fresh apple and pear tones; intense and complex.

CAVA SPILIADIS

90 St. Urbans-Hof 2015 Nik Weis Riesling, Alte Reben, Mosel, Germany ($18) It's hard to beat the price on this crisp Riesling with lime and sweet, tangy fruit.

HB WINE MERCHANTS

90 VieVité 2015 Rosé Extraordinaire, Côtes de Provence, France ($30) Pale salmon color; lush and smooth with depth and finesse; dry, elegant and fresh. 85% Grenache, 10% Cinsault, 5% Rolle.

TURQUOISE LIFE

92 Pascual Toso 2014 Barrancas Toso, Mendoza, Argentina ($20) Lush and ripe with smooth plum and fresh black raspberry; ripe, elegant and balanced with refined flavors. Another Paul Hobbs triumph. 60% Malbec, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon.

QUINTESSENTIAL WINES

92 Parparoussis Winery 2012 Nemea Reserve, Greece ($47) Lush, smooth, rich nose; deep with elegance and aromatic fruit; rich, lovely and full-bodied. Made from the Agiorgitiko grape.

CAVA SPILIADIS

91 Massolino 2012 Barolo, Italy ($52) Smooth, bright and racy with elegant texture and flavors of cranberry and plum; silky and balanced, long and graceful.

VINEYARD BRANDS

93 Masi 2012 Costasera, Amarone della Valpolicella Classico DOCG, Italy ($64) Dark and luscious with dense blackberry and spice; concentrated and intense. Another stellar wine from Sandro Boscaini. 70% Corvina, 25% Rondinella, 5% Molinara.

KOBRAND

VALUE AND BY-THE-GLASS RECOMMENDATIONS

88 Snoqualmie Vineyards 2015 Winemaker's Select Riesling, Columbia Valley ($8) Juicy, fresh and charming with length and balance. Great bang for the buck, as always with Snoqualmie.

STE. MICHELLE WINE ESTATES

88 Tercos 2016 Torrontés, Salta, Argentina ($14) Silky and fresh with aromatic style and bright; smooth and lush; clean and rich; dry and tangy; long and balanced.

GLOBAL VINEYARD

Spanish Vermouths

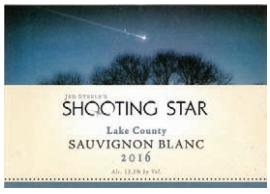
Drink over ice as an aperitif or use in cocktails to give your Martini an Iberian twist.

90 González Byass NV La Copa Vermouth, Spain ($10) Deep, caramel color; spicy, bitter nose; smooth, silky and botanical; silky, sweet and rich.

GONZALEZ BYASS USA

91 Lustau NV Vermut, Jerez, Spain ($22) Caramel color; intense spice nose; smooth, juicy and crisp with notes of orange, coriander and gentian.

SKURNIK WINES



88 Shooting Star Winery 2016 Sauvignon Blanc, Lake County ($14) Jed Steele's second label delivers again with bright acidity, nice balance and long flavors.

88 Wither Hills 2016 Pinot Noir Rosé, Marlborough, New Zealand ($14) The Kiwis jump on the rosé bandwagon with this charmer. Deep pink color; dense, rich and dry with tangy style.

DISTINGUISHED VINEYARDS & WINE PARTNERS

88 Finca El Encinal 2014 Tempranillo Crianza, Ribera del Duero, Spain ($15) Clean and fresh with juicy style and crisp acidity; silky and bright with balance and tangy berry fruit.

VISION WINE & SPIRITS LLC