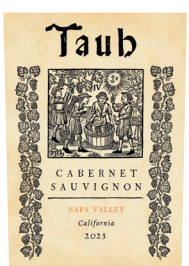
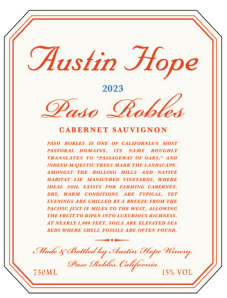
96 Lytle-Barnett 2021 Le Mélangeur Pinot Meunier (Yamhill-Carlton). Be sitting down when you sip this traditional-method sparkling wine for the first time, as it might just make you weak in the knees. It is that good. The opening aromas of citrus and baked goods will have you pining for a lemon tart housed in a butter crust. Elevated acidity and ticklish bubbles then light up the wine's lemon, lime, rosemary, and almond flavors. This 100% Pinot Meunier, a rarity in Oregon, spent four years en tirage, with a disgorgement date in March 2026. *Editors' Choice.* —M.A.
abv: 12.5% **Price:** $90

96 Morgan 2024 G 17 Syrah (Santa Lucia Highlands). This Syrah, which includes 8% Mourvèdre and 6% Grenache, is a bit shy at first but then reveals aromas of violets, lilacs, and clean purple fruit. The palate offers a similarly purple combo of fruit and flower flavors, but fresh and lively pepper spice gives it compelling detail. —M.K.
abv: 14.1% **Price:** $28



96 Taub Family Vineyards 2023 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley). Aromas of fresh raspberries, dark cocoa, and purple flowers waft from the glass on the nose of this wine. The palate possesses bright acidity and nice depth of tannin, with flavors of freshly crushed plum, espresso, mint, tobacco, and sandalwood that linger for over a minute on the finish. Loving the price-quality ratio on display here: For Napa Valley, this wine represents exceptional value. *Hidden Gem.* —T.R.C.
abv: 14.7% **Price:** $64

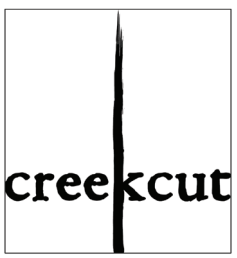
95 Aperture 2023 Cabernet Sauvignon (Sonoma County). Aromas of dark berries, pencil, mint, and roses waft from the glass on the nose of this Cabernet. The palate delivers powder-fine tannins and juicy acid framing flavors of black plum, cracked pepper, sage, and espresso across the generous finish. Yummy now, this will soften nicely for a decade. —T.R.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** $75



95 Austin Hope 2023 Cabernet Sauvignon (Paso Robles). Potent aromas of black plum, fig, vanilla cookie, and spice cake make for a lavish nose on this reliably satisfying Cab from a prominent Paso player. That lush style cruises into black cherry and milk chocolate flavors on the palate, with creamy tannins encasing them all. —M.K.
abv: 15% **Price:** $62

95 Brancaia 2022 Brancaia Gran Selezione (Chianti Classico). Perfumed, spice-laden aromas make for a heady, rich, indulgent nose. The palate stays luxe, with pomegranate seeds and red plums popping over a foundation of dark chocolate ganache garnished with candied orange peel, all hemmed in by sleek yet powerful tannins. Gallo. —D.C.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** $80

95 Brassfield Estate Winery 2023 Block 14 Single Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon (High Valley). The single-vineyard selections from this producer display how soils dictate the flavor profile of a wine. This delectable beauty is lush, with aromas of dark berries, eucalyptus, sagebrush, cardamom, French oak, and crushed florals on the elegant nose. The flavors on the palate are fresh boysenberries, blueberries, rhubarb, fennel, allspice, and tobacco leaf, morphing into sweet dark chocolate and mouthwatering tannins. Cellar until 2034 or drink now and decant. *Cellar Selection.* —T.P.
abv: 14.5% **Price:** $65



95 Creekcut Winery 2023 Syrah De Saule Syrah (Paso Robles Willow Creek District). The aromas on this rich Syrah, of which 80% was aged in new French oak, recall a molten lava cake oozing with blackberry coulis. That blackberry core persists on the hefty palate, where it benefits from hints of wild thyme and lilac. —M.K.
abv: 15.1% **Price:** $80

95 Davies Vineyard 2022 Jamie Cabernet Sauvignon (Diamond Mountain District). Bombastic aromas of candied cherry, plum liqueur, mint leaf, and licorice explode from the glass on the nose of this wine. The palate is equally expressive with flavors of raspberry jam, blueberry coulis, chopped herbs, cinnamon, and chocolate mingling all throughout a long finish. Fans of a riper, more concentrated style will love this. —T.R.C.
abv: 15.5% **Price:** $275