

Canada

White

92 Bachelder Wismer Vineyard Chardonnay 2012, Twenty Mile Bench (\$44.95)

Of Bachelder's two single vineyard Chardonnays, it is this one which shows the best in warm vintages, as was the case in 2012. Medium to full body, the aromas of toast, apple, roasted hazelnut, baked apple and spice mesh with cream and citrus on the long aftertaste. Hold until 2016 and then drink until 2020. (ES)

91 Bachelder Saunders Chardonnay 2012, Beamsville Bench (\$44.95)

Possessing a moderate 12.5% alcohol, this Chard reveals of bouquet of banana, peach, caramel, toast and cinnamon apples. Further complexity arrives in the form of minerals, earth and anise on the on- going finale. Drink over the next 3 to 4 years. (ES)

91 Vineland Estates Elevation Riesling 2008, Niagara Escarpment (\$30)

For me, 2008 was one of the best vintages ever for Riesling in Niagara. That said, Brian Schmidt, Vineland's winemaker, saw something special in this wine, and decided to age a few cases so as to allow nuance to develop in the bottle – a judicious call! Perfumed,

the bergamot, honey, peach, lime, crushed rock and white flowers beguile. The balance, crisp acidity, concentration and a long finale will ensure another a decade of aging, at least. If you are a Riesling lover, do not miss out on this beauty! (ES)

90 Mike Weir Family Vineyard Limited Edition Unoaked Chardonnay 2012, Niagara Peninsula (\$19.95)

This non-forested Chardonnay offers up generous aromas of peach, honey, mango, banana, pineapple and sweet apple. The palate is ripe and concentrated, adding dashes of spice and cream, as well as a long finale. It is ready to drink tonight with a filet of mahi mahi topped with a fruit salsa or roast chicken. (ES)

90 Peller Estates Signature Series Riesling Icewine 2013 (\$72/375ml)

This is a refined Icewine with a personality of honey macerated peaches, lime, minerals, petrol and wet leaves. Excellent length and a wonderful acidity provides grace and symmetry. (ES)

Red

91 Jackson-Triggs Grand Reserve Cabernet Franc Icewine 2012, Niagara (\$59.95/375ml)

Copious amounts of strawberry and cherry jam, raisins, plums and cocoa leap out of the glass and onto the taste buds. It is luscious with excellent length. A top notch stickie! (ES)

90 Ravine Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 2012, St. David's Bench (\$35)

Elegant, the opaque black colour heralds the cassis, vanilla, spice, mint, violets, cocoa and smoke which are framed on a refined, medium bodied frame. There is great length and suave tannins, so drink until 2020. Pair with rack of lamb. (ES)

89 Vineland Estates Cabernet Bo-Teek Vineyard 2012, Niagara Escarpment (\$25)

This blend of 80% Cabernet Franc and 20% Cabernet Sauvignon doles out smokey tobacco, cassis, violets, cocoa, toast, graphite and a slight animal quality. The palate is ripe, with lots of fine tannins, fresh acid and great length. Drink until 2021. (ES)

89 Jackson-Triggs Winery Grand Reserve Meritage 2012, Niagara (\$24.95)

Almost equal parts of all three major Bordeaux red grapes were used to make this polished medium to full-bodied red. There is a bouquet of plum, spice, cassis, cherry, raspberry, violets and black olive. The palate adds smokey tobacco and vanilla notes. Excellent length. (ES)

88 Peller Estates Private Reserve Meritage 2012, Niagara (\$22.95)

This delightful Meritage spent twelve months in a combination of French and American barrels, of which 20% were new. It serves up plum, cherry, cocoa, spice, earth and floral notes on a smooth as silk texture. Very good length and ready to drink.

France

91 Bachelier Nuits St. Georges La Petite Charmotte, Burgundy (\$65)

A single vineyard Pinot Noir with a heady perfume of cherry, plum, toast, earth, thyme, iron and spice. The palate is linear, but long, with a slightly dry finish which will work well when matched up against a medium rare magret de canard. (ES)

Italy

91 Fontanafredda Barolo Serralunga d'Alba 2010 (\$39.95)

A wonderful perfume of dark chocolate, plum, dark cherry, violets, leather, tobacco smoke and spice beguile the senses. It is full-ish with ample persistency and Nebbiolo tannins rounding out the experience. Braised lamb shank required. Time frame: 15 years of cellaring.

90 Marchesi di Barolo Barolo 2010 (\$34.95)

This mid-weight red delivers cherry, vanilla, spice, cocoa and violets on the nose, which transitions to the palate and melds with a long raspberry cream finish. Tannins are in proportion and there is a splendid persistency. A Barolo to be drunk over the next decade.

90 Vietti Barolo Castiglione 2010 (\$59.95)

This wine is still shy right now, but given its track record and underlying density, it will open up and start to strut its stuff by 2017 and then should be drunk until 2028.

Strawberry, cherry, rose petals, licorice, tar and herbs weave together on the medium body. Excellent length.

89 Ascheri Barolo Pisapola (\$44.95)

This wine is a solid Nebbiolo offering, but not of the elite status. Strawberry, earth and dried flowers are present. It is mid weight, with a lean structure and very good length. Tannins dive in on the finish, but based on the depth of the wine, my suggestion would be to drink it over the next 8 to 10 years.

89 Fontanafredda Barolo 2010 (\$30)

This is probably the best bang for the buck Barolo you will ever come across. Not a powerhouse, but a good mouthful of cherry, licorice, dried flowers, spice and chestnut. Solid length and tannins. Drink until 2020. It is made for osso bucco and harder, saltier cheeses. (ES)