

Italy

95 Allegrini Amarone 2000 (\$100)

Without a doubt Allegrini is one of the superstars of Amarone. The wines from 97 of to 00 are some of the most powerful and concentrated that I have ever tasted out of the north east corner of Italy. It is more like dry port than wine, with enough tannin to warrant taking out extra dental insurance. Hold off for a few years to let everything come together. From 2008 to 2025. (ES)

92 Maculan Fratta 2000, Veneto (\$68)

Made in a new world/Aussie style, focusing on intense fruit. The blend is 54% Cab Sauv and 46% Merlot. The attack is jammy and delivers loads of black cherries, blackberries, plums, tobacco and roasted herbs. Long finish with some heat. Drink over the next decade.

95 Arnaldo Capri 25 Anni Sagrantino di Montefalco 2001, Umbria (\$100)

To enjoy young Sagrantino, you have to be in a Masochistic frame of mind. To be honest, I was scared to death after this opaque wine was poured into my glass, knowing what was in store. Simply put, it is a monster! Huge depth and even huger tannins. Aromas of plums, spice and vanilla are discernable at this young age. Hold of until 2010 and drink until 2030. (ES)

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92 Arnaldo Capri Collepiano Sagrantino di Montefalco 2001, Umbria (\$40)

Here is one for you wine trivia buffs- what is the most tannic grape in the world?

Answer-Sagrantino. Gentle is the not an adjective I would use for this wine, as it is fiercely tannic yet beautifully concentrated, with superb length. Drink over the next 15 years with meat, preferably rare to still mooing. (ES)

90 Fattoria di Felsina Chianti Classico Berardenga Rancia 2001, Tuscany (\$60)

The nose is cherries, plums, spice and fresh bread, while the mouth is laced with humus and menthol notes. Nicely concentrated with firm tannins and excellent length. Now to 2014. (ES)

90 Zenato Amarone 2000, Veneto (\$48.95)

The combination of grapes being dried for 4 months and aging in new barrels has produced a bouquet of plums, vanilla, black cherries, blackberries, chocolate and allspice. Excellent quality, the wine is ripe and long in the mouth with some alcohol on the backend. Now to 2016. (ES)

89 Fattoria di Felsina Chianti Classico Berardenga 2001, Tuscany (\$34.36)

A touch lighter than the "Rancia." Black fruits, spice, vanilla and toasted bread are present in this medium to full bodied wine. Drink now to 2011. (ES)

89 Fontodi Flaccianello 2000, Tuscany (\$70)

This 100% Sangiovese bottling delivers cherries, buttered popcorn, cassis and earthy flavours. Medium to full bodied with excellent length. Now to 2011. (ES)

89 Antinori Tiganello 2001, Tuscany (\$90)

Rather disappointing when tasted recently in Italy. Medium bodied with cherry, hummus and charred oak aromas. There is lots of tannin, but the finish is airy, so I would prefer to drink it over the next 5 years. Maybe it is just in a dumb phase, but my gut tells me otherwise. Not worth the money. (ES)

88 Fontodi Chianti Classico 2001, Tuscany (\$32.47)

Medium ruby with a pink rim. Cherry, earth and vanilla on the nose with sweet cherries on the palate. Dry with nice length. Now to 2010. (ES)

Canada

White

90 Thirty Bench Riesling Limited Yield 2003, Niagara (winery, \$19.95)

"Limited Yield" refers to a certain amount of grapes clusters removed from the vine during the growth cycle so as to concentrate the flavour in the remaining bunches. Moderately aromatic with an Auslese level of sweetness. There is a concentrated mouthful of peaches, honey, lemon, lime, minerals and green apples which envelops the crisp acid. Now to 2011. (ES)

89 Lakeview Cellars Chardonnay Reserve 2002, Niagara (\$25)

The heat of the 2002 vintage, coupled with 18 months aging in new french oak has produced a full bodied Chard with a bouquet of caramel, banana, figs, citrus and green apple. The texture is creamy with spice, apples and nuts appearing on the finish. Drink over the next 4 years as the acid is low and the wine is a already enjoyable .(ES)

86 Birchwood Estates Auxerrois 2002, Niagara (winery, \$12.95)

One of the most aromatic Auxerrois out of Ontario. Peaches, cream, tutti frutti and honey served up. Light bodied, but perfectly ideal as an aperitif or with a poached fish dish. Drink now. (ES)

85 Pelee Island Late Harvest Scheurebe 2002, Pelee Island (\$9.00)

A nose of peaches, white pepper and honey. Sweet with good length and easy drinking. (ES)

Red

88 Lakeview Cellars Pinot Noir Reserve Butlers Grant Vineyard 2002 (\$24.95)

A fruit driven style of Pinot with a nose of cherries, raspberries, blackfruits and rich vanilla. The palate is chock full of berry fruits which are interwoven with vanilla. Now to 2009. (ES)

87 Pelee Island Winery Pinot Noir Reserve 2002, Pelee Island (\$14.04)

The wine displays a deep ruby colour and a nose of black cherries, black raspberries and vanilla bean. The same is reciprocated on the palate. Dry with very good length and a somewhat firm finish. Now to 2008.

86 Birchwood Estates Baco Noir 2002, Niagara (winery, \$10.95)

A good value Baco with aromas of plums, vanilla and spice. Dry with medium length and a roasted nut finish. Drink over the next 2 years.