

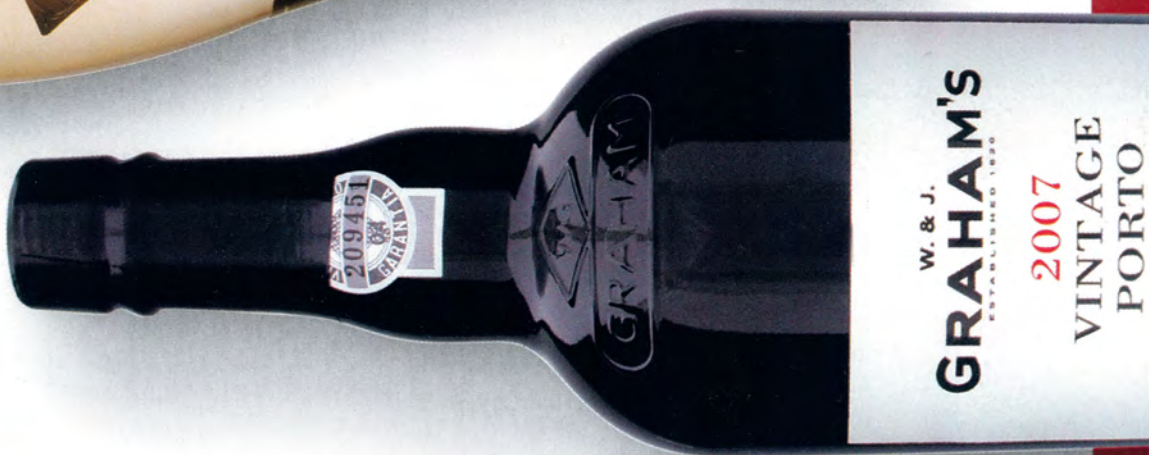
# Wine & Spirits

SPECIAL ISSUE  
24TH ANNUAL BUYING GUIDE

## TOP 100 WINERIES OF THE YEAR



# 100 BEST WINES



# 100 BEST BUYS



WINTER 2010  
wineandspiritsmagazine.com  
US \$7.99 • CANADA \$8.99





# Lamoreaux Landing

ESTATE



Mark Wagner

Founded: 1990

Winemaker/Viticulturist:

Mark Wagner

Acres owned: 110

Annual production: 15,000 cases

Estate grown: 100%

Owners: Mark Wagner &amp; Josh Wig

Known for: Finger Lakes riesling with nuanced vineyard inflections

Location: Lodi, NY

Website: lamoreauxwine.com

This is Lamoreaux Landing's first *Winery of the Year* honor, and you could say it's been a long time coming. The family of partner/winemaker Mark Wagner has been in the Finger Lakes wine business in one form or another since the early 1940s. In 1949, his father planted grapes on the eastern shores of Seneca Lake, where Wagner continues the tradition; his niece's husband, Josh Wig, is a partner and bridge into the next generation.

Wagner has steered the winery almost exclusively toward vinifera (he makes a small quantity of ice wine from the hybrid vidal). He has expanded vineyard holdings to more than 100 acres (of which about a quarter is planted to riesling) and built a spectacular destination winery in a Greek Revival style.

Lamoreaux Landing has seven vineyard blocks dotting a central stretch of Highway 414, which winds along Seneca Lake, and its west-facing vines produced exceptional dry rieslings in the 2009 vintage. Two of the best came from Red Oak and Round Rock vineyards, both planted less than five years ago. Wines from Red Oak, where the soil is composed largely of Honeoye silt loams, have exhibited a flinty character in the vineyard's short life. Rieslings from Round Rock, whose soil is composed of Honeoye and Lansing gravelly silt loams, give off a brighter, more mineral character. While these two wines are dry in style, they're remarkably different, the Red Oak leading with stony, citrus scents, the Round Rock possessing more floral and peach accents, yet both scintillating in their mineral-driven acidity.

Compare Lamoreaux's Dry and Semi-Dry 2009 rieslings for evidence of Wagner's blending skills. The dry wine is lean and mineral, with parsley notes in its scent and flavors of wet stone and green apple. It's expressive and coursing with energy. The semi-dry possesses the same vibrancy, but the flavors are deeper and more generous, marked by sensuous accents of caramel and sweetened peach, and bearing a sumptuous length. —P.J.C.



## TOP-SCORING WINES

**92** '09 Finger Lakes Dry Riesling \$13 (10/10)

**92** '09 Finger Lakes Red Oak Vineyard Riesling \$20 (10/10)

**92** '09 Finger Lakes Round Rock Vineyard Riesling \$20 (10/10)

# 100 BEST BUYS OF THE YEAR

At *Wine & Spirits*, our panels tasted 10,200 wines between December 2009 and October 2010. These 100 wines offer the best ratio of quality to price. They all fall at or below the median price for the wines we tasted within their category, while performing far above average for that category.

We've grouped them by country first, then region or variety. **Joshua Greene, Patrick J. Comiskey and Wolfgang M. Weber** reviewed the American wines; **Greene, Peter Liem, Patricio Tapia, Tara Q. Thomas and Weber** reviewed the imports.

## UNITED STATES

### SPARKLING

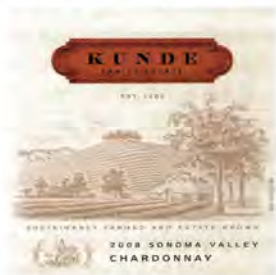
**92 | Roederer Estate** \$23  
**NV Anderson Valley Brut** Fragrant fruit ripeness lends this wine penetrating flavors of raspberry essence, tart pear and green apple, a fine mesh of pinot noir and chardonnay. The texture is smooth, the bubbles bringing a touch of yeastiness and almond flavor to balance the freshness of the fruit. A lovely, tightly structured Brut to serve with wood-roasted snapper and hen of the woods. *Roederer Estate, Philo, CA*

### CHARDONNAY

**93 | Alma Rosa** \$28  
**2007 Santa Rita Hills El Jabali Vineyard Chardonnay** Richard and Thekla Sanford founded Alma Rosa in 2005, after 24 years at Sanford Winery. They based their new project on 100 acres of organically farmed vineyards in the Santa Rita Hills. This chardonnay is a selection from vines planted in 1983, cold fermented without malolactic. Only 30 percent of it rests in new oak. The fruit comes through in citrusy flavors of pink grapefruit, orange and a hint of salted caramel. It's clean and firm, with the warm/cool

zest of the Santa Rita Hills. A beautiful young chardonnay to chill for any fresh shellfish. (500 cases) *Alma Rosa Winery & Vineyard, San Luis Obispo, CA*

**92 | Clos du Val** \$24  
**2008 Carneros Chardonnay** There's exceptional focus to this wine, its richness checked by acidity that delivers a laser beam of flavor down the tongue. Lemon zest, lime, mint and chalk combine in pale layers, the oak present in the structure of the wine without flavoring it overtly. A tangy white to accompany a salad of calamari, carrots and mint. *Clos du Val Wine Co., Napa, CA*

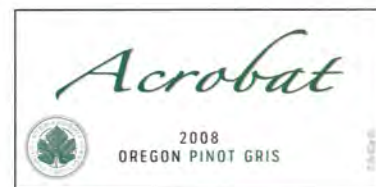


**90 | Kunde** \$17  
**2008 Sonoma Valley Chardonnay** This has the citrus creaminess of lemon curd, tart, simple and fresh. There are Rainier cherry and sweet orange notes to the flavor, juicy

and clean. For roast chicken. *Kunde Family Estate, Kenwood, CA*

**88 | A to Z** \$14  
**2008 Oregon Chardonnay** This wine is impressively bright for the price, with lemon flavors and leesy scents balancing angular, high-toned acidity. It is ideal to chill for cocktail hour. *A to Z Wineworks, Newberg, OR*

### PINOT GRIS



**89 | Acrobat** \$12  
**2008 Oregon Pinot Gris** This bright, fresh white leads with scents of apple blossoms. It's clean, with finely wrought flavors of dried pear and a hint of citrus. *King Estate Winery, Eugene, OR*

**89 | O'Reilly's** \$12  
**2008 Oregon Pinot Gris** A savory wine, this has leesy scents of biscuits broadening lean apple notes. Its fresh mineral flavors lift



the wine to a brisk finish. (1,149 cases)  
O'Reilly's, St. Paul, OR

## RIESLING

**92 | Heron Hill Winery** \$13  
**2008 New York Semi-Sweet Riesling** With its scents of peach and tangerine, this wine has a warm and welcoming tone. For all its warmth the flavors are fresh and angular—golden apple spritzed by lemon. Serve it with white sausages. (1,929 cases) *Heron Hill Vineyards, Hammondsport, NY*



**92 | Lamoreaux Landing** \$13  
**2009 Finger Lakes Dry Riesling** Lamoreaux's dry riesling has a leafy scent of parsley to go along with notes of green apple and grilled peach. Its flavors fall toward leaner peach notes, with a fresh acidity and minerality that suggest a lively pairing with lake trout. (1,753 cases) *Lamoreaux Landing Wine Cellars, Lodi, NY*

**91 | O'Reilly's** \$9  
**2007 Yakima Valley Riesling** A terrific value, this has classic aromas of green apple and crème brûlée, its apple and pear flavors grounded by talc-like minerality. Great for sipping or pairing with poached trout. (2,744 cases) *O'Reilly's, St. Paul, OR*

## SAUVIGNON BLANC

**91 | Rancho Zabaco** \$18  
**2008 Russian River Valley Reserve Sauvignon Blanc** The fruit in this wine is fat enough to battle past the onion-skin reduction character, emerging clean and brisk as rainwater. It feels pure and stony, the flavors melding tart lime pith with lasting peach and pear skin. Delicious with shellfish stew. (3,500 cases) *Zabaco Vintners, Healdsburg, CA*

**91 | Sonoma Coast Vyds.** \$18  
**2009 Sonoma Coast Sur Lees Selection Laguna Vista Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc** This sauvignon has the fatness of gooseberries and litchi nuts. Its firm edge of lemon-grass will accent gingery Cantonese dishes, like steamed flounder. (1,143 cases) *Sonoma Coast Vineyards, Sebastopol, CA*

## WHITE BLEND

**90 | Sleight of Hand** \$17  
**2008 Columbia Valley The Magician** A blend of gewurztraminer and riesling, this floral white has scents of apple blossom and pineapple. It is plush yet firm, with the mouthwatering immediacy for spicy Asian fare, like Szechuan shrimp. (500 cases) *Sleight of Hand Cellars, Mattawa, WA*

## RED BLEND

**94 | Seven Hills** \$32  
**2007 Red Mountain Ciel du Cheval Vineyard** This powerhouse blend of cabernet, merlot and a bit of franc has all you'd want in a Red Mountain red: density, purity of fruit, intensity and length. Its deep, inky violet color sets it off, presaging scents of plum, tar and a hint of eucalyptus. The flavors are ripe, fleshy and powerful, with a vinosity that keeps the wine earthbound and on point. For a steak. (645 cases) *Seven Hills Winery, Walla Walla, WA*

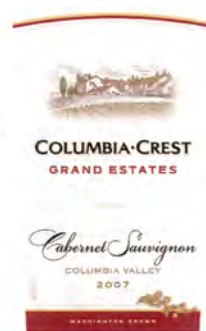
**92 | Columbia Crest** \$15  
**2007 Horse Heaven Hills H3 Les Chevaux** Mostly cabernet and merlot, this blend starts out a little reticent, with faint scents of chocolate ganache and dark plum. But as soon as it hits the palate it's completely seductive, with mouthfilling flavors of red cherry, mocha and tobacco—at once rich and balanced, broad and elegant. At this price, buy it by the case. (200 cases) *Columbia Crest Winery, Paterson, WA*

## CABERNET SAUVIGNON

**94 | Frog's Leap** \$42  
**2007 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon** John Williams at Frog's Leap is not out to make the ripest cabernet in the valley. He's a grower, and it appears that he tuned his organically farmed vines precisely to the long, moderate 2007 season, producing a wine that stretches from the roots to the leaves and reaches toward cool, pure, tightly balanced fruit. It's an elegant cabernet, the fruit transparent enough to show the character of Rutherford through the lens of woodland strawberries and red and black currants. Delicious on release, this gets better with air, as it will in bottle. A wine to cellar for ten years and enjoy along the way with lamb. *Frog's Leap, Rutherford, CA*



**90 | RouteStock Cellars** \$20  
**2007 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon** This wine has simple goodness—lean black currant tartness in a straightforward and delicious cabernet. It's firm and complete without being sweet. Buy a case to enjoy this winter with any roast meats. (2,600 cases) *RouteStock Cellars, Napa, CA*



**87 | Columbia Crest** \$11  
**2007 Columbia Valley Grand Estates Cabernet Sauvignon** Rich mocha and brown sugar notes accent this wine's black cherry flavors. For barbecue. *Columbia Crest Winery, Paterson, WA*

## MERLOT



**92 | Chateau Ste. Michelle** \$18  
**2007 Columbia Valley Indian Wells Merlot** This simple, wonderfully balanced merlot from vineyards throughout the Wahluke Slope melds oak, soft cherry and tobacco leaf into a seamless aroma. On the palate it's lightly spicy, the flavors of plum and black cherry dense, with a savory bottom note of