

WINE PRESS N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

By Andy Perdue, editor-in-chief
Wine Press Northwest

Holly Turner certainly has come into her own.

The former Chateau Ste. Michelle assistant winemaker followed Charlie Hoppes to Three Rivers Winery in Walla Walla, Wash., in 2000, then took over as head winemaker when Hoppes left to consult and start his own operation.

Now, with a Double Platinum and two Platinum wines in our sixth annual Platinum Judging — on top of three Platinums in last year's judging — Turner has established herself among the Northwest's elite winemakers. Perhaps just as impressive, Turner's top three wines use grapes from three Washington appellations: Horse Heaven Hills, Yakima Valley and Columbia Valley. Additionally, the other four wines she had in our year-end judging all earned Double Golds.

Turner's wines aren't the only big story here, however. Our group of judges — two from the Northwest and two from elsewhere — awarded six wines Double Platinum, meaning they unanimously agreed these wines were Platinums. The top wine of the judging was a Cabernet Franc from a tiny producer in Lake Chelan, Wash. Vin du Lac made just 100 cases of this wine, and you would be hard pressed to find any left, as fans of this boutique operation knew pretty quickly just how good this wine was.

As usual, British Columbia wines shined near the top, with Jackson-Triggs, Sumac Ridge and Gehringer Brothers earning Platinums. And another small producer, Robert Karl Cellars in Spokane, brought home two Platinums.

For our sixth annual Platinum Judging, we gathered 233 wines from Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and Idaho and put them before our panel, which included: Parks Redwine of Atlanta, Ga., wine importer and director of the Northwest Wine Summit competition; Dan Berger of Santa Rosa, Calif., wine writer and director of the Riverside International and Long Beach Grand Cru wine competitions; Ken Robertson of Kennewick, Wash., Wine Press Northwest columnist; and Coke Roth of Richland, Wash., Wine Press Northwest panelist and international wine judge.

There are many story lines in this judging, including:

— Syrah emerged as the dominant variety, with 37 entered. Cabernet Sauvignon was second with 26, followed by Merlot with 23. The largest category for white wines was Chardonnay with 16.

— Rob Griffin of Barnard Griffin in Richland, Wash., earned his sixth Platinum in three years.

— We were delighted to see Columbia Winery's 2001 Merlot win a Double Platinum. Not only is it inexpensive (\$15), but there's lots of it (nearly 22,000 cases).

— Thurston Wolfe Winery was a first-time Platinum winner and produced the top Syrah of the competition.

— Several established wineries rose to the top (L'Ecole, Domaine Ste. Michelle, Erath, Kiona, Covey Run), as did several newcomers (Zerba, Freja, Melrose, Viento, Novelty Hill).

On to the results, with one caveat: These wines won gold medals throughout 2005, so many will be difficult to find. Start with your favorite local wine merchant, then check with the winery. Many of the Canadian wines will be available only in British Columbia. But don't despair if you cannot find that Three Rivers Champoux Cab, as there's always the next vintage. And if Holly Turner made the wine, it's as good as gold — or Platinum.

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DOUBLE PLATINUM

Vin du Lac, \$23

2003 Cabernet Franc, Yakima Valley We have kept a close eye on Vin du Lac (formerly Chelan Wine Co.) for the past two years. Led by winemaker/owner Larry Lehmbecker, Vin du Lac has quickly made a reputation as one of the brightest new boutique wineries in the Northwest. This Cabernet Franc was the top wine in this year's Platinum and for good reason. Its generous oak is held in check with red fruit components and distinctive herbal components. Moderate tannins and bright acidity balance the beautiful fruit flavors. Rich dark flavors and chocolate linger on the superb finish. Medals earned: Pacific Rim International Wine Competition (Gold), Riverside International Wine Competition (Gold), Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 100 cases

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$70 CAD

2003 Grand Reserve Sparkling Riesling Ice Wine, Okanagan Valley Winemaker Bruce Nicholson is turning Jackson-Triggs into one of the Northwest's most dominant wineries. While his portfolio of gold-medal wines is well rounded, Nicholson's greatest success comes from rare ice wines, and this sparkling version is one of the rarest. It is richly aromatic with notes of poached fruit, honey and spice, followed by amazing flavors of baked pears and plenty of sweetness, all balanced with beautiful acidity. A triumph in winemaking. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold), L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — 50 cases

Sumac Ridge Estate Winery, \$30 CAD

2003 Gewürztraminer Ice Wine, Okanagan Valley It is extremely difficult to make a great dessert wine from the fickle Gewürztraminer grape, but Sumac Ridge has managed to create a beautiful ice wine. This opens with inviting aromas of amazing spices and something that might remind you of a sachet of rose petals. On the palate are soft, sweet, delicious flavors backed with proper acidity. This is a complex wine with great varietal character. Wine Press Northwest Ice Wine Judging (Outstanding). — 600 cases

Three Rivers Winery, \$39

2002 Champoux Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley Winemaker Holly Turner crafts our competition's finest Cabernet Sauvignon from a Horse Heaven Hills vineyard most recognize as one of the Northwest's best. It has a lot to offer, beginning with undertones of toasty oak interlaced with bold dark fruit, black tea and black licorice. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 294 cases

Best Buy!

Columbia Winery, \$15

2001 Merlot, Columbia Valley David Lake and his team of winemakers have a big winner on their hands with this large-production, nicely priced red that shows off everything good about Washington Merlot. It opens with delicious aromas of bright red fruit and hints of vanilla and oak. Its juicy, upfront flavors are balanced with modest tannins, good acidity and light herbal notes. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Gold). — 21,823 cases

Thurston Wolfe Winery, \$20

2003 Burgess Vineyard Syrah, Washington This longtime boutique Yakima Valley winery is on the move. Winemaker Wade Wolfe is retired from nearby Hogue Cellars to focus full time on Thurston Wolfe, and he and wife Becky Yeaman are relocating their winery in Prosser to more permanent digs than the incubator building they are in. Now they've crafted the finest Syrah in our judging (out of 37 gold-medal Syrahs in the competition). This complex red opens with aromas of fresh cedar, spices, game meat, leather and traces of black pepper, followed by rich, intense flavors of black fruit. After a fairly lean entry, it provides a lush midpalate that leads to a lengthy finish. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold/Best Syrah). — 280 cases

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PLATINUM

Best Buy!

Domaine Ste. Michelle, \$12

NV Blanc de Noir, Columbia Valley The good news is this sparkling wine is widely available and inexpensive (usually under \$10). The better news is it's a marvelous bottle of bubbly. We have come to expect amazing wines from Rick Casqueiro, but we're still stunned that so much quality can be made in such massive quantities. This pink sparkler shows off aromas and flavors of lightly roasted nuts, as well as racy notes of cranberries, strawberries and rhubarb. It's beautifully balanced with bright acidity, a creamy midpalate and an elegant finish. Cheers! Northwest Wine Summit (Best Sparkling Wine), Washington State Wine Competition (Double Gold). — *15,000 cases*

Best Buy!

Gehring Brothers Estate Winery, \$14 CAD

2004 Private Reserve Riesling, Okanagan Valley Simply put, the Gehring boys are making some of the Northwest's finest white wines. Their humble facility just north of the border near Oliver, B.C., is home to crisp, delicious and well-made wines. This is a classic example of great Riesling, thanks to aromas of white peaches, pears and slate and clean, dry flavors of minerals, apples and pears. Its salivating acidity pairs perfectly with the sweetness of the fruit. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — *1,100 cases*

L'Ecole No. 41, \$20

2003 Seven Hills Vineyard Semillon, Walla Walla Valley Marty Clubb has made his reputation with classy Cab blends and sultry Syrahs. Yet he also shows a passion for Semillon, one of the noble white grapes of Bordeaux. This version, from estate-owned vineyards south of Walla Walla, is one of four Semillons Clubb crafts at L'Ecole. It opens with aromas of spicy butter and oak and is loaded with intense flavors of vanilla, fresh figs and ripe pears. A creamy white wine with a complex finish. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Gold). — *440 cases*

Robert Karl Cellars, \$26

2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley Winemaker Joe Gungelman has quickly developed into one of Washington's hottest new winemakers. This affordable Cab is one of two Platins this year for Robert Karl, thanks to its big, dark aromas of ripe fruit, hints of black pepper, judicious oak and loads of complexity. This is followed by well-balanced flavors of sweet fruit, great acidity and moderate tannins. An elegant wine to enjoy with grilled meats. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — *500 cases*

Three Rivers Winery, \$39

2002 Meritage, Columbia Valley Taking advantage of grapes from six top Washington vineyards (including Champoux, Katherine Leone and Alder Ridge), this complex blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Malbec is richly deserving of Platinum. It opens with rich, dark, elegant aromas of black currants and dark chocolate, followed by flavors of blackberries and rich bittersweet chocolate on the finish. Mature tannins and balanced tannins make this a wine for the long term. Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold). — *594 cases*

Zerba Cellars, \$28

2003 Syrah, Walla Walla Valley The Walla Walla Valley's only winery on the Oregon side of the border has turned out one of the Northwest's finest Syrahs. The grapes for this delicious red were harvested from two vineyards near Milton-Freewater, Ore. It opens with intense aromas of red fruit and hints of oak, followed by intense flavors of dark fruit. A racy black pepper plays out throughout the rich, opulent palate. This is a superb Syrah that is ready to drink now. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — *418 cases*

Best Buy!

Erath Vineyards, \$14

2004 Pinot Blanc, Willamette Valley Dick Erath launched his Dundee, Ore., winery in 1972, and Erath Vineyards still is turning out some of the Northwest's best wines. This superb Pinot Blanc provides clean, tropical fruit aromas and refreshing flavors of citrus and orchard fruits. This will pair well with a number of dishes, including trout. Said one judge: "I want to encourage this kind of wine." Indy International Wine Competition (Gold). — *1,132 cases*

Novelty Hill Winery, \$20

2002 Merlot, Columbia Valley This Woodinville, Wash., winery is headed by former Chateau Ste. Michelle winemaker Mike Januik (who also owns his Januik Winery). Januik relies heavily on Novelty Hill's estate vineyard, Stillwater, which is in the Frenchman Hills in Eastern Washington. This superior Merlot reveals aromas of cranberries, cherries, vanilla and milk chocolate, followed by youthful fruit-driven flavors of ripe cherries and berries. Perfectly balanced between fruit, acidity and viscosity, this is perfect for drinking now or hiding in the cellar for a few years. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — *1,520 cases*

Robert Karl Cellars, \$17

2002 Claret, Columbia Valley You have to hand it to the folks at this small Spokane, Wash., winery: Last year, the '01 version of this wine won an astonishing four gold medals in various competitions, yet the price of the '02 didn't change. This blend of Cab, Merlot and Cab Franc is a stunning and affordable red with aromas of berries, oak and herbs. On the palate, it's a big wine with assertive tannins balanced with rich flavors and bold acidity. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold). — *1,100 cases*

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Kiona Vineyards & Winery, \$20

2004 Chenin Blanc Ice Wine, Red Mountain This longtime Red Mountain winery has been crafting a Chenin Blanc ice wine for several years. Using grapes naturally frozen on the vine, winemaker Scott Williams has produced a stunning dessert wine with aromas of flowers, melons, pears and butterscotch and clean, bright, balanced flavors of fresh pears with a creamy entry. Not as big and syrupy as many British Columbia ice wines. Seattle Wine Society Wine Competition (Gold/Grand Prize). — *650 cases*

Covey Run Winery, \$21

2002 Reserve Semillon Ice Wine, Yakima Valley Covey Run is best known for its solid, widely distributed wines. But Kerry Norton also crafts some specialty wines, such as this rare ice wine made with Semillon, a grape famous for its dessert wines in the Sauternes region of Bordeaux. In fact, our judges thought this ice wine was as close to a Sauternes as anything they had tasted in North America, thanks to its aromas and flavors of baked fruit and rich yet balanced mouth feel. West Coast Wine Competition (Gold/Best of Class). — *1,340 cases*

Best Buy!

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$13 CAD

2004 Proprietors' Reserve Gewürztraminer, Okanagan Valley Gewürztraminer can be such a beautiful and delicate white wine. It can be sweet or dry and is best known for its aromas of grapefruit and sweet spices. In the Northwest, some of the best Gewürztraminer comes from British Columbia, as Jackson-Triggs proves on a regular basis. This graceful wine shows off classic lychee, pear, grapefruit and spice aromas and flavors. Its bright acidity is what separates this Gewürztraminer from others. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Gold), Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold), L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold).

Barnard Griffin, \$30

2002 Reserve Merlot, Columbia Valley This is Rob Griffin's sixth Platinum in three years, as he continues to solidify his position as one of the Northwest's best and most versatile winemakers. This reserve-style Merlot comes from grapes on Washington's Wahluke Slope and Red Mountain, two of the state's warmest growing regions. The resulting wine is rich in aromas of blackberries, tobacco and oak, followed by flavors of black cherries, ripe berries, black chocolate and hints of licorice. A complex wine that can be enjoyed in its youth or aged for a few years. Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold), San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Gold). — *665 cases*

Freja Cellars, \$30

2001 Winemaker's Reserve Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley Pinot Noir lovers should be putting this Hillsboro, Ore., winery on its annual list, as owner/winemaker Willy Gianopoulos is developing into one of the state's best boutique producers. Relying on grapes from estate vineyards on Chehalem Mountain in the northern Willamette Valley, Freja produces a superior wine with classic aromas of strawberry jam, cranberries and a hint of mint. On the palate, bright acidity balances flavors of strawberries, cherries and vanilla. This Pinot has plenty of finesse, as all the elements come together in this superior bottling. Wine Press Northwest Pinot Noir Judging (Outstanding). — *125 cases*

Three Rivers Winery, \$39

2003 Boushey Vineyard Syrah, Yakima Valley Some of Washington's most-prized grapes come from Dick Boushey, a longtime Yakima Valley grower who focuses on red varieties. Three Rivers has worked with Boushey fruit since its inaugural 1999 vintage, so it's no surprise to find it near the top of our list. It's beautifully opulent from the beginning, with aromas of blackberries, boysenberries and a trace of gamey spiciness. Its intense and beautiful flavors include sweet black fruit and a hint of white pepper. Carefully managed tannins balance with impressive acidity to make this a complete wine. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold). — *361 cases*

Viento Wines, \$18

2004 Lonesome Spring Ranch Viognier, Columbia Valley Rich Cushman has been crafting wine in Oregon for more than two decades, though he rarely relies solely on Oregon grapes. This gorgeous Viognier is a great example, as its grapes come from Lonesome Spring Ranch, a vineyard near Benton City, Wash. This elegant white wine is perfectly balanced, thanks to aromas of tropical fruits, peaches and orange zest, followed by intense flavors of pears and citrus. Seattle Wine Society Wine Competition (Gold).

Melrose Vineyards, \$22

2003 Syrah, Umpqua Valley A number of high-quality wineries and vineyards are helping Southern Oregon to raise its profile among wine lovers. And this Syrah from a young Roseburg winery only adds to the region's reputation. Complex aromas of violets, dried thyme, spicy berries, cranberries and black pepper lead to bold, intense flavors of black fruit and black pepper that balance out bold tannins. Said one judge: "This is the closest thing to the Rhône we've tasted here." Oregon State Fair (Gold). — *192 cases*

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DOUBLE GOLD

Best Buy!

Wild Goose Vineyards, \$16

2004 Stony Slope Riesling, Okanagan Valley Canadian Winemaking brothers Hagen and Roland Kruger are best known for their crisp, Germanic-style white wines, and they prove why with this superb vineyard-designated Riesling from the Okanagan Valley. Aromas of minerals, apples and powdered ginger lead to flavors of juniper, pineapples and apples. A complex and succulent white that our judges thought would age beautifully. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold/Best of Class). — 500 cases

Best Buy!

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$13 CAD

2004 Proprietors' Reserve Sauvignon Blanc, Okanagan Valley Winemaker Bruce Nicholson's Sauvignon Blanc grapes are some of the earliest picked in the Okanagan Valley, and we see why here: Its aromas of herbs and melons quickly give way to intense flavors of apples and subtle herbs. Its breadth, length and true varietal characteristics help make this one of the best in the Northwest. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 14,000 cases

Best Buy!

Silvan Ridge, \$14

2004 Semi-Sparkling Early Muscat, Oregon Silvan Ridge has made this classic Moscato d'Asti-style white for a number of years with great success (including a Platinum two years ago). It's a semi-sparkling wine with plenty of sweetness and provides gorgeous aromas of rose petals and spices. Its generous flavors include oranges, pears and apples, and the slight spritz props up all the flavors. As a bonus, it's low in alcohol (6.2%), which gives it extra lightness. Oregon State Fair (Gold), Seattle Wine Society Wine Competition (Gold). — 4,200 cases

Barnard Griffin, \$17

2003 Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley The '01 version of this wine won a Platinum two years ago, and this vintage nearly did, too. Its aromas of dark cherries, mint and chocolate lead to rich, dark flavors of black fruit and mocha. Elegantly handled tannins provide balance to juicy fruit flavors. A well-structured wine meant for drinking sooner rather than later, this often is priced at \$12 or less in groceries and liquor stores. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold/Best of Show). — 5,269 cases

Dunham Cellars, \$45

2002 Syrah, Columbia Valley Winemaker Eric Dunham has two Platins under his belt for Syrah ('01 and '00), and this wine further solidifies his place as one of the Northwest's finest Syrah producers. Classic aromas of intense dark fruit, bacon fat and violets lead to well-structured flavors of blackberries, ripe plums and black pepper. This balanced Syrah should age well for a half-decade or more. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 1,956 cases

Best Buy!

Hogue Cellars, \$9

2004 Pinot Grigio, Columbia Valley Hogue's first vintage of white wines under screwcap have been a success, and this Pinot Grigio is leading the way, thanks to aromas and flavors of fresh apples and grapefruits. A hint of residual sugar rounds out the palate and allows the fresh fruit flavors to shine. Enjoy with shellfish. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold/Best White). — 22,244 cases

Best Buy!

Hyatt Vineyards, \$7

2004 Black Muscat, Yakima Valley This longtime Yakima Valley producer has been crafting rosés and ice wines from the somewhat obscure Black Muscat grape variety for years. This rosé is absolutely gorgeous from first glance through the stunning finish, thanks to aromas of cloves, cinnamon, pears and roses and flavors of fresh peaches and well-balanced sugar and acidity. A tasty wine for just about any occasion. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 1,030 cases

Best Buy!

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$13 CAD

2003 Proprietors' Reserve Sauvignon Blanc, Okanagan Valley Jackson-Triggs shows great consistency from year to year with most of its wines, as demonstrated with Sauvignon Blanc. This slightly older vintage still is showing beautifully, thanks to aromas and flavors of clean tree fruits, gooseberries and herbs. Bright acidity draws out the wines flavors and provides backbone and a lengthy finish. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold). — 9,000 cases

L'Ecole No. 41, \$20

2003 Fries Vineyard Semillon, Columbia Valley Winemaker Marty Clubb reaches into the Wahluke Slope, a region of Washington's Columbia Valley that one day will be its own appellation. This white wine reveals plenty of oak treatment with aromas and flavors of smoky butter and butterscotch, yet the fresh fruit flavors of figs and apricots shine through. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 432 cases

Reininger Winery, \$32

2002 Syrah, Walla Walla Valley Winemaker Chuck Reininger is making his reputation with suave red wines, and this Syrah is what his fans love to see. It opens with gorgeous aromas of cranberries, loganberries and plums, followed by flavors of ripe blackberries and raspberry jam. Supple tannins and solid acidity back up all the fruit in this rich, juicy wine. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Double Gold), Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 474 cases

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Three Rivers Winery, \$19

2003 White Meritage, Columbia Valley This blend of Sauvignon Blanc (70%) and Semillon (30%) from Red Mountain's Klipsun Vineyards reminded our judges of a classic Graves-style white Bordeaux. This luscious white opens with aromas of fresh orchard fruit and hints of oak. On the palate, this boldly structured wine provides flavors of melons and a melody of tree fruits. It isn't shy on oak, but the fruit easily carries the weight. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Gold). — 539 cases

Troon Vineyard, \$100

2002 Reserve Vintage Select Zinfandel, Applegate Valley Easily the most expensive red wine in our tasting, this rare Northwest Zin has captured a lot of attention this year with three gold medals. It opens with aromas of dark fruit, hints of earth and sweet herbs, and judicious use of oak adds complexity. On the palate, this is a dark, viscous wine with smooth tannins, lovely acidity and long, rich fruit. New World International Wine Competition (Gold/Best New World Zinfandel), Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold), Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 138 cases

Best Buy!

Viento Wines, \$14

2004 Chukar Ridge Vineyard Sangiovese Rosé, Columbia Valley Sangiovese, the classic red wine of Italy's Chianti Classico region, is a difficult wine for the New World to grow and make successfully. But this rosé from a boutique Hood River, Ore., winery is a beautiful wine, prompting one judge to remark that it could be the best use of Sangiovese in the country. It provides aromas and flavors of fresh strawberries, and its structure is clean and refreshing. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 140 cases

Zerba Cellars, \$19

2003 Wild Thing, Walla Walla Valley A red blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Franc, this has become a fast favorite for fans of this young Walla Walla Valley winery. It's loaded with aromas and flavors of ripe cherries and backed up with good structure. Smooth tannins give this youthful approachability. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — 1,130 cases

Amity Vineyards, \$16

2004 Gamay Noir, Oregon Gamay Noir is most famous for its use in the Beaujolais region of France. In Oregon, Gamay plays a minor role as a red wine, but Amity Vineyards in Yamhill County takes it seriously. This a delicious example, thanks to aromas of wild strawberries and clean, bright flavors of cranberries and black pepper. A good dinner wine with broad food applications. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — 646 cases

Best Buy!

Chateau Ste. Michelle, \$14

2004 Cold Creek Vineyard Riesling, Columbia Valley Ste. Michelle is the king of Riesling production in the United States, and this vineyard-designated white from one of its estate vineyards is a beautiful example. It opens with aromas of minerals, pears, white pepper and a hint of juniper, followed by clean, bright flavors of fresh apples, pears and pineapples. A well-balanced wine. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Gold). — 7,000 cases

Coeur d'Alene Cellars, \$25

2002 Syrah, Washington The first vintage of this new North Idaho producer is a great effort. Using grapes from Pepper Bridge (Walla Walla) and Elephant Mountain (Yakima), CDA Cellars has crafted a Syrah with intense dark fruit aromas and ripe, well-balanced flavors of blackberries and plums. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — 700 cases

Columbia Crest, \$30

2001 Reserve Merlot, Columbia Valley Columbia Crest's reserve program has been a tremendous asset for the Northwest's largest winery. Under winemaker Ray Einberger, these small-production lots have flourished. This superb Merlot uses grapes from the Wahluke Slope and Horse Heaven Hills and reveals aromas of plush red fruit, black tea and mocha. Big, juicy flavors of blackberries, marionberries and black licorice make this a wine worth drinking now, but the balanced tannins and acidity give it long-term cellar potential. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 3,000 cases

Fidélitas Wines, \$35

2001 Meritage, Columbia Valley The second release of Charlie Hoppes' signature wine is a classic Bordeaux-style red, a blend of Cab, Merlot, Cab Franc and Malbec. It is a fruit-dominated wine with aromas of black cherries and a complex touch of oak. The seductive flavors of black currants, coffee and chocolate. Unassertive tannins allow this well-balanced wine to shine in its youth. Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold). — 660 cases

Five Star Cellars, \$30

2002 Merlot, Walla Walla Valley We are no longer surprised by the superb wines from this boutique Walla Walla winery, especially for its Merlots. This vintage reveals aromas of rich dark fruit, cedar and chocolate, followed by flavors of blackberries, dark chocolate and hints of licorice. Steady tannins provide structure without asserting themselves, giving way to a lengthy and complex finish. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 675 cases

Best Buy!

Flying Fish, \$15

2002 Merlot, Columbia Valley Produced by Click Wine Group of Seattle (which owns such international wine brands as Jackaroo and Fat Bastard), Flying Fish Merlot is an affordable red that reveals clean berry and chocolate aromas and rich, delicious flavors of silky fruit. An elegant, well-made wine with balanced acidity and a delightful mouth feel. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 5,000 cases

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Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$70 CAD

2004 Grand Reserve Sparkling Riesling Ice Wine, Okanagan Valley Jackson-Triggs' newest vintage of sparkling Riesling ice wine unveils aromas of spicy apples and lush flavors of maple syrup and poached pears. Delicious depth of flavor is balanced with beautiful acidity. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold), Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 50 cases

Kestrel Vintners, \$22

2002 Merlot, Yakima Valley Taking advantage of estate vineyards in Washington's Yakima Valley, Kestrel has crafted a Merlot that reveals aromas of fresh cherries and sweet herbs and lively flavors of bold fruit and beautifully balanced tannins. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 1,057 cases

Best Buy!

Kiona Vineyards & Winery, \$8

2004 Chenin Blanc, Columbia Valley Thanks to its use as an overcropped, undervalued white wine in California, this noble white variety has gotten little respect in the New World. It would get plenty if more Chenins were as good as this one, which reveals aromas of sweet herbs and fresh orchard fruit and flavors of pears and melons with clean, bright acidity and just enough sweetness to balance the flavors. Wine Press Northwest Uncommon Whites Judging (Outstanding). — 1,800 cases

Best Buy!

Lang Vineyards, \$14 CAD

2004 Farm Winery Reserve Riesling, Okanagan Valley From a Naramata Bench producer comes a fruit-driven Riesling. It is loaded with aromas of fresh apples and pears, along with sweet spices. The clean, bright flavors of exotic fruits, minerals and mint are rounded out with a bit of refreshing residual sugar. A balanced, crowd-pleasing wine. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold). — 800 cases

Reininger Winery, \$32

2001 Cabernet Sauvignon, Walla Walla Valley This suave red is all about elegance. It opens with aromas of classic black currants and dark cherries with hints of mocha and earth. Its well-balanced flavors of dark fruit, dark chocolate and a bit of oak are integrated with controlled tannins. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 961 cases

Columbia Crest, \$30

2002 Reserve Syrah, Columbia Valley Relying solely on an estate vineyard for its grapes, this complex Syrah reveals aromas of gamey spices, rosemary and loganberries. Intense blueberry and black currant flavors lead to bittersweet chocolate notes on the supple finish. A delicious, mouth-filling wine. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold), Seattle Wine Society Wine Competition (Gold). — 4,000 cases

Best Buy!

Columbia Crest, \$11

2002 Grand Estates Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley Columbia Crest's Grand Estates brand has been wildly successful for its price point as well as its quality. This superb Cab is loaded with aromas of big, dark fruit, chocolate and sweet spices, followed by flavors of blackberries, black cherries and dark chocolate. Mild tannins give this youthful approachability. International Eastern Wine Competition (Double Gold). — 97,000 cases

Colvin Vineyards, \$23

2003 Camenere, Walla Walla Valley Winemaker Mark Colvin has led the mini-revival of this obscure red Bordeaux variety, and thank goodness. This delicious red reveals telltale aromas and flavors of black pepper, leather and black cherries. The nicely resolved tannins are chewy without being too big, providing impressive balance. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 650 cases

Gehringer Brothers Estate Winery, \$17 CAD

2004 Late Harvest Riesling, Okanagan Valley A tasty dessert wine from one of British Columbia's top wineries, this offers clean, spicy aromas of honey, ripe apples and sweet grapefruits, followed by flavors of rich tropical fruit, apples and pears. Good acidity balances the sweetness. Indy International Wine Competition (Gold). — 1,050 cases

Gordon Brothers Family Vineyards, \$18

2001 Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley Using grapes from the estate vineyard overlooking the Snake River, this Cab opens with aromas of suave black fruit, coffee and black tea, followed by flavors of blackberries, chocolate and coffee. A clean, well-balanced wine. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 2,659 cases

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$20 CAD

2003 Grand Reserve White Meritage, Okanagan Valley This blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon opens with aromas of fresh figs, gooseberries and apples and clean flavors of figs and apricots. A well-balanced wine that should improve with age. Pacific Rim International Wine Competition (Gold/Best of Class). — 500 cases

Quails' Gate Estate Winery, \$55 CAD

2004 Riesling Icewine, Okanagan Valley The pure Riesling character of this luscious dessert wine shines through. Aromas of apples, pears and hints of citrus lead to flavors of bright, ripe fruit and plenty of sweetness on the midpalate. Wine Press Northwest Ice Wine Judging (Outstanding). — 250 cases

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Saviah Cellars, \$30

2003 Syrah, Red Mountain Winemaker Richard Funk is quietly making his mark in the increasingly crowded Walla Walla Valley with well-crafted red wines (including a Platinum last year). This Syrah — one of three Funk makes — uses grapes from famed Red Mountain and reveals aromas of black pepper, blackberries, leather and sizzling bacon. On the palate, intense flavors of blackberries, black pepper and chocolate give us plenty to enjoy. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *150 cases*

Best Buy!

Van Duzer Vineyards, \$15

2004 Pinot Gris, Willamette Valley Van Duzer, it seems, sometimes gets lost amid other Willamette Valley wineries. But this Dallas, Ore., producer should not be overlooked because all it does is craft one delicious wine after another. Take, for example, this Pinot Gris, which exemplifies the Oregon version of this grape: aromas of minerals, white peaches and dried apricots, followed by graceful flavors of ripe apples and pineapples. Just a mere hint of sweetness is expertly balanced with refreshing acidity. Grand Harvest Awards (Double Gold). — *1,500 cases*

Walter Dacon Wines, \$28

2003 C'est Syrah Belle, Columbia Valley Newcomer Lloyd Anderson burst onto the Washington wine scene this year with three superb Syrahs. This version reveals opulent fruit on the aromas and flavors, including blackberries and boysenberries. This is an intense wine with creamy texture and carefully managed tannins. Anderson's tiny Shelton winery is certainly one to watch. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *370 cases*

Zefina Winery, \$30

2002 Alder Ridge Vineyard Serience Red, Columbia Valley Zefina, the flagship winery for Seattle-based Corus Estates and Vineyards, produces this Southern Rhône-inspired blend of Grenache, Syrah, Counoise and Mouvedre. It reveals aromas of oak and red fruit and flavors of racy black pepper and opulent ripe cherries and raspberries. It offers good intensity on the midpalate and well-managed tannins. A delicious wine to enjoy within the next half-decade. Long Beach Grand Cru (Gold/Best of Class). — *875 cases*

Zerba Cellars, \$30

2003 Cabernet Sauvignon, Walla Walla Valley Zerba is the only winery to take up residence on the Oregon side of the Walla Walla Valley, and all of the grapes for this suave Cab come from nearby vineyards. Aromas of black cherries, blackberries and mocha mingle with rich, juicy flavors of dark fruits and black pepper. Well-managed tannins provide structure without getting in the way of all the ripe fruitiness. Seattle Wine Society Wine Competition (Gold). — *418 cases*

Best Buy!

Gehring Brothers Estate Winery, \$14 CAD

2004 Private Reserve Pinot Gris, Okanagan Valley British Columbia's Okanagan Valley is establishing itself as one of the great places to grow Pinot Gris, and this wine does nothing to alter that thinking. It opens with zippy aromas of limes, orange zest and sweet spices, followed by round, lush flavors of ripe fruit and hints of juniper. A structured, seafood-friendly wine. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), Indy International Wine Competition (Gold), All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold). — *1,900 cases*

Best Buy!

Gehring Brothers Estate Winery, \$15 CAD

2003 Dry Rock Vineyards Cab-Merlot, Okanagan Valley While Gehring Brothers tends to focus on German-style whites, it also crafts delicious reds under its Dry Rock label, named after its estate vineyard near the winery. This Bordeaux-style blend provides plenty of ripe cherry and oak aromas, followed by intense fruit flavors with subdued oak notes. A graceful — even silky — finish offers broad food-pairing potential. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *1,730 cases*

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$60 CAD

2003 Grand Reserve Riesling Icewine, Okanagan Valley This delicious, top-of-the-line ice wine from Jackson-Triggs is everything one could hope for in a bold dessert sipper. Bold, spicy aromas of baked apples and pears give way to outrageously rich flavors of honey and ultra-ripe fruit. An enormous wine. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold), Grand Harvest Awards (Gold), Pacific Rim International Wine Competition (Gold). — *250 cases*

Best Buy!

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$13 CAD

2003 Proprietors' Reserve Unoaked Chardonnay, Okanagan Valley As American fascination with overoaked Chardonnays begins to ever-so-slowly fade, we are seeing more wineries promote these kinds of wine, which emphasize fruit over weight. This white wine from Jackson-Triggs reveals aromas of fresh pears and citrus and flavors of dried pineapples and cleansing acidity. Pair with grilled chicken, pork or seafood. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold/Best of Class). — *1,000 cases*

Best Buy!

L'Ecole No. 41, \$13

2004 Walla Voila Chenin Blanc, Washington First the story behind the name: L'Ecole (French for "school") is in an old schoolhouse in Lowden, Wash., once known as Frenchtown. "Voila," roughly translated, is French for "Here it is!" and is pronounced "wa-LA." So this wine is called "Walla wa-LA." Cute, eh? Well, the wine is darned good, too, thanks to aromas and flavors of crisp green apples, peaches and pears. It has a sweet entry that is balanced with refreshing acidity. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *1,262 cases*

WINE PRESS

N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging

Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

Northstar, \$52

2001 Merlot, Columbia Valley Ste. Michelle Wine Estates has access to more than half the fruit grown in Washington, so winemaker Gordy Hill often gets his pick of some of the state's best fruit for this high-end (and high-profile) blend of Merlot (75%) and Cab (25%). In fact, Hill dipped into nine vineyards from four appellations for his '01 wine. The complexity shows, thanks to aromas of spicy cherries and blackberries and well-managed oak and big, juicy flavors of ripe fruit. West Coast Wine Competition (Double Gold/Best of Class), Northwest Wine Summit (Gold).

Best Buy!

Paul Thomas, \$7

2003 Chardonnay, Washington If you're looking for an everyday white wine, here is a great place to start. This Constellation-owned brand produces reds and whites at bargain prices. This Chardonnay is plenty good, too, thanks to aromas and flavors of ripe pears, fresh-cut apples, cinnamon and dried pineapples. A well-balanced wine that deserves a place on the table with grilled chicken or seafood. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 6,843 cases

Tsillan Cellars, \$17

2004 Pinot Grigio, Columbia Valley In the fast-growing Columbia Cascade wine region of Washington, Tsillan Cellars is making the biggest splash, thanks to a gorgeous Tuscan-style facility and some excellent wines. This racy white provides aromas of limes and minerals, followed by flavors of ripe, delicious tree fruit. Refreshing acidity give this length and would make it a great match with scallops or halibut. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 104 cases

Walter Dacon Wines, \$35

2003 C'est Syrah Beaux, Columbia Valley This boutique producer west of Olympia, Wash., is well on its way after its initial release of 2003 vintage wines. This succulent Syrah shows off complex aromas of black tea, black pepper and ripe dark fruit and intense flavors of black plums and blackberries. Well balanced with a rich mouth feel. Capital Food & Wine Competition (Gold/Best of Show). — 170 cases

Anne Amie Vineyards, \$42

2003 La Colina Vineyard Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley Winemaker Scott Huffman continues to transform the former Chateau Benoit into one of Yamhill County's better Pinot Noir producers. This vintage was not typical by any stretch of the imagination, as warm temperatures through harvest left Oregon Pinot Noir riper than ever. Huffman handles the challenge well in this vineyard-designated wine, which reveals aromas and flavors of black cherries and blackberries with hints of elegant oak. A well-structured wine that will pair well with roasted meats. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 214 cases

Belle Vallee Cellars, \$26

2003 Syrah, Rogue Valley This young Corvallis, Ore., winery is in just its second vintage with this Southern Oregon Syrah. It unveils aromas of black cherries and black tea and rich, bold, upfront flavors of dark fruit and hints of chocolate. An intense wine whose sweet fruit keeps up with moderate tannins. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 350 cases

Best Buy!

Bridgeview Vineyards, \$11

2003 Blue Moon Pinot Gris, Oregon One of Oregon's largest wineries continues to produce delicious and affordable wines. This crisp white reveals aromas and flavors of fresh-cut apples, peaches, pink grapefruits and even a hint of limes. Bright acidity backs up all the fruit, giving this plenty of food-pairing opportunities. Oregon State Fair (Gold).

Best Buy!

Chateau Lorane, \$10

2003 Gamay Noir Rosé, Oregon This small winery in the southern Willamette Valley focuses on grapes that often are out of the mainstream, especially in Oregon. An example is this delicious and fruit-driven rosé using Gamay grapes. It shows off aromas and flavors of strawberries and cranberries with just a hint of white pepper on the finish. A crisp, dry rosé to enjoy with ham, turkey or pork. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — 130 cases

Chateau Ste. Michelle, \$22

2004 Eroica Riesling, Columbia Valley For six years, Ste. Michelle has paired up with Germany's best-known winemaker, Ernst Loosen, to craft this delicious Riesling from Washington grapes. Aromas of Jonagold apples, pears and starfruit give way to flavors of orchard fruits and mineral notes. A bit of sweetness rounds out this balanced and food-worthy wine. International Eastern Wine Competition (Double Gold), San Francisco International Wine Competition (Gold). — 23,000 cases

Chatter Creek, \$30

2002 Clifton Hill Syrah, Washington Fewer than four barrels of this vineyard-designated Syrah from winemaker Gordy Rawson were made. Blended with 5% Viognier (a tradition in the Northern Rhône Valley), this Syrah reveals aromas and flavors of blackberries, black pepper and even a hint of huckleberries. Moderate tannins are tempered by great fruit intensity for a wine that is delicious now and will drink well for a half-decade or more. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Double Gold). — 95 cases

Best Buy!

Covey Run Winery, \$9

2003 Syrah, Columbia Valley We stand in awe of Covey Run and winemaker Kerry Norton for producing a Syrah that is utterly amazing in its quality and price. This silky Syrah is loaded with aromas and flavors of rich blackberry jam, boysenberries and dark chocolate. It's sweet and luscious and — dare we say — Aussie-like, only better. There is little subtlety here, nor is there meant to be. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold). — 25,227 cases

WINE PRESS

N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging

Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

Gordon Brothers Family Vineyards, \$18

2002 Syrah, Columbia Valley Jeff Gordon's 100-acre vineyard overlooking the Snake River is a superb spot to grow Bordeaux and Rhône varieties. This Syrah reveals dark, smoky aromas of blackberries and black pepper, followed by bold, juicy flavors of intense blackberries, exotic spices and vanilla. International Eastern Wine Competition (Gold). — 1,862 cases

Best Buy!

Hogue Cellars, \$15

2004 Genesis Riesling, Columbia Valley Hogue's mid-priced Riesling is a delicious dry white wine that shows off aromas of minerals, apples and citrus and clean, bright flavors of pineapples and apples. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold/Best of Class). — 2,000 cases

Mount Baker Vineyards, \$20

2003 Late Harvest Viognier, Yakima Valley It's rare to find a late-harvest Viognier, but when we do they are usually marvelous. Such is the case with this dessert wine from a winery north of Bellingham, Wash. It opens with aromas of maple syrup and tropical fruit and follows with flavors of maple nut, caramel, creme brulee and vanilla bean. A fascinating and complex wine. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold/Best Dessert Wine). — 193 cases

Olympic Cellars, \$16

2003 Dungeness Red Lemberger, Columbia Valley The fun-loving folks at this Port Angeles, Wash., winery have produced their Dungeness Red for several years, and this vintage is delicious, thanks to aromas and flavors of warm, ripe berries and hints of vanilla. A balanced wine with moderate tannins and plenty of flavor. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold).

Three Rivers Winery, \$24

2002 Syrah, Columbia Valley Holly Turner's mainstream Syrah is a delicious red with aromas and flavors of blackberry jam and fresh black cherries with hints of spices. A well-structured and balanced wine with rich intensity. West Coast Wine Competition (Gold). — 1,600 cases

Whitman Cellars, \$28

2003 Syrah, Walla Walla Valley Blending Syrah from three Walla Walla Valley vineyards (Cougar Hills, Pepper Bridge and Spofford Station), winemaker Steve Lessard has crafted a balanced red wine with aromas and flavors of raspberry jam, oak and a hint of chocolate. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 596 cases

Winter's Hill Vineyard, \$29

2002 Reserve Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley This boutique Yamhill County producer has been crafting delicious and affordable Pinot Noirs for a number of years. This reserve Pinot provides superb aromas and flavors of strawberry jam, ripe cherries and hints of chocolate. A well-structured wine with complex aromas on the finish. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 50 cases

Cave B Estate Winery, \$35

2002 Cuvee du Soleil, Columbia Valley This Bordeaux-style blend (Cab, Merlot, Cab Franc) reveals aromas of black cherries and oak spices and flavors of dark fruit, chocolate and black pepper. The tannins are plentiful without overwhelming the wine. Seattle Wine Society Wine Competition (Gold). — 125 cases

Chateau Ste. Michelle, \$29

2001 Reserve Syrah, Columbia Valley Taking advantage of grapes primarily from the winery's estate Cold Creek and Canoe Ridge vineyards, this dark and intense Syrah reveals aromas and flavors of blackberries and raspberries with hints of violet and exotic spices. A big wine with assertive tannins and a bold finish. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 3,000 cases

Best Buy!

Columbia Crest, \$11

2003 Grand Estates Chardonnay, Columbia Valley Produced on a mass scale, this white wine from Columbia Crest still is given first-class treatment. Amazingly, this Chardonnay is oak-aged, with the wine's lees stirred weekly by hand for six months (that's something like 9,000 barrels!). The resulting wine reveals something greater than the price tag, with aromas of spicy oak, fresh apples and caramel, followed by approachable flavors of apples, citrus and spices. A balanced, easy-to-drink wine. Long Beach Grand Cru (Gold). — 225,000 cases

De Ponte Cellars, \$28

2002 Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley This small producer in the Dundee Hills area of Oregon's Yamhill County is proving to be one of the brightest young stars on the Pinot Noir landscape. This elegant red wine reveals aromas and flavors of black cherries, cranberries and hints of black pepper. A balanced and delicious wine. Wine Press Northwest Pinot Noir Judging (Outstanding). — 1,275 cases

Best Buy!

Hogue Cellars, \$10

2004 Fumé Blanc, Columbia Valley Hogue's dedication to Sauvignon Blanc on a large scale is commendable and pays off with every release. This is a textbook example of the variety, thanks to aromas and flavors of melons and sweet herbs. Good raciness on the palate leads to a good finish. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 48,500 cases

WINE PRESS

N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging

Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

Hogue Cellars, \$30

2003 Reserve Chardonnay, Columbia Valley Hogue's upscale Chardonnay provides aromas of spicy pears, fresh-cut apples and oak, followed by flavors of freshly picked orchard fruit with tropical notes. Well-managed oak provides creamy texture on the palate. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold/Best White Wine). — *615 cases*

Best Buy!

Hoodspout Winery, \$13

NV Raspberry, Washington This Olympic Peninsula winery has produced delicious fruit wines for a number of years, and this is a great example of raspberry wine. Raspberry aromas and flavors are bold without being too sweet. A rare fruit wine that will pair well with savory entrées, such as duck breast. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — *5,900 cases*

Best Buy!

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$13 CAD

2003 Proprietors' Reserve Chardonnay, Okanagan Valley This tasty and affordable Chardonnay from one of B.C.'s largest producers offers aromas and flavors of fresh orchard fruit tempered with butter and oak. A well-balanced and harmonious wine in which all elements are in check. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold).

Koenig Vineyards, \$18

2003 Estate Vineyard Merlot, Idaho Greg Koenig's efforts are helping to put Idaho on the winemaking map. This superb Merlot is a complex wine with aromas of black cherries, black olives and smoke, followed by flavors of blackberries, blueberries, black pepper and chocolate. A boldly structured wine with plenty of fruit to back up the tannins. International Eastern Wine Competition (Gold), Florida State Fair (Gold). — *350 cases*

Best Buy!

LaVelle Vineyards, \$14

2004 Riesling, Willamette Valley In the mid-'90s, Doug LaVelle took over the former Forgeron Vineyards and launched his new winery near Eugene, Ore. He crafts a number of wines, including this luscious Riesling that shows off aromas of gala apples, pears and vanilla. On the palate are ripe, viscous flavors of apples, pears and orange oil. Low alcohol and bright acidity remind us of a well-made German Riesling. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — *1,164 cases*

Best Buy!

Maryhill Winery, \$14

2003 Gewürztraminer, Columbia Valley Gewürztraminer was one of Washington's early successes, and it continues to be a delicious alternative white wine. This version shows off what is so likable about Gewürz: sweet spices, flowers and citrus on the nose and gentle sweetness and spicy citrus on the palate. A silky, approachable wine that would make a good introduction to the variety. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — *1,370 cases*

Saviah Cellars, \$30

2003 Une Vallee, Walla Walla Valley A Bordeaux-style blend of Cab, Merlot and Cab Franc from three Walla Walla Valley vineyards, this shows off rich, upfront fruit aromas and flavors, including blackberry jam with hints of vanilla. This delicious and well-structured wine offers ample acidity and tannin and has the fruit to pull it off. It's good now but will be even better in a couple of years. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — *250 cases*

Silvan Ridge, \$20

2002 Del Rio Vineyard Syrah, Rogue Valley Del Rio has quickly developed into one of the Northwest's most celebrated vineyards. Along Interstate 5 near Medford, Ore., Del Rio caters to a number of Willamette Valley producers, including Silvan Ridge. This superb Syrah is succulent and seductive, thanks to aromas and flavors of blackberry and boysenberry jam, followed by hints of cherries, plums, black pepper and chocolate. A luscious, forward wine. Seattle Wine Society Wine Competition (Gold). — *215 cases*

Snoqualmie Vineyards, \$23

2002 Reserve Merlot, Columbia Valley It seems Washington's top winemakers gravitate toward the warm Wahluke Slope for Merlot. Joy Andersen, who has been Snoqualmie's winemaker since the early '90s, loves the area, and we can see why in this beautiful Merlot. Aromas and flavors of cherries, sweet spices and chocolate are backed with good length and balance. Florida State Fair (Gold). — *1,200 cases*

Best Buy!

Snoqualmie Vineyards, \$15

2002 Rosebud Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley This Wahluke Slope vineyard has been the backbone for Snoqualmie wines for several years, especially in Joy Andersen's reserve program. This vineyard-designated Cab is delicious and affordable. Aromas and flavors of black cherries and blackberries lead to notes of dark chocolate and black pepper. Well-managed oak doesn't get in the way of the abundant fruit. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — *1,500 cases*

Sumac Ridge Estate Winery, \$25 CAD

2002 Black Sage Vineyard Meritage, Okanagan Valley Sumac President Harry McWatters planted this vineyard on the southern end of the Okanagan Valley (just north of the U.S. border) in the early '90s. Now, the Black Sage Bench is considered by many to be Canada's finest area for growing warm-climate grape varieties. This Bordeaux-style blend offers gorgeous aromas of black currants, blackberries and vanilla, as well as bold black cherry and ripe berry flavors. Assertive tannins give this cellar potential — or just pair it with a thick steak. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold). — *550 cases*

WINE PRESS

N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging

Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

Three Rivers Winery, \$17

2003 Chardonnay, Columbia Valley If you're looking for a Chardonnay to actually enjoy with food, this is a good place to start. It opens with aromas of fresh apples and citrus, followed by flavors of fruit and refreshing acidity. There is some oak here, but it doesn't dominate the wine. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — *1,002 cases*

Best Buy!

Township 7 Vineyards, \$15 CAD

2003 Semillon, Okanagan Valley This small winery in British Columbia's Lower Mainland has opened a second location near Penticton in the Okanagan Valley, where most of its grapes come from, including this Semillon. This tasty white wine provides aromas and flavors of fresh apples and pears, along with good tartness. Pair with seared scallops or lime chicken. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold). — *197 cases*

Vin du Lac, \$20

2003 Cuvee Rouge, Columbia Valley This delicious Bordeaux-style blend provides aromas and flavors of bright cherries and ripe berries with hints of bitter-sweet chocolate on the finish. A well-balanced wine with ample tannins but plenty of fruit. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold), Riverside International Wine Competition (Gold). — *250 cases*

Zefina Winery, \$20

2003 Alder Ridge Vineyard Serience White, Columbia Valley This Rhône-inspired white blend is a combination of Viognier and Roussanne from Corus Estates' Alder Ridge Vineyard in Washington's Horse Heaven Hills. It's a delicious and richly structured wine with aromas and flavors of fresh apples and orange zest. Bold ripe fruit is rounded with just a whisper of sweetness. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold/Best of the Class). — *1250 cases*

Zerba Cellars, \$24

2002 Merlot, Columbia Valley Zerba certainly off to a great start, as it launched its Walla Walla Valley winery with the 2002 vintage. This luscious Merlot is loaded with aromas and flavors of plums, cranberries and black cherries. Its plushness on the palate gives it youthful approachability. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — *296 cases*

Best Buy!

Covey Run Winery, \$9

2003 Chardonnay, Columbia Valley Here's another delicious and affordable wine from one of Washington's largest producers. This Chardonnay arrives with aromas of butterscotch and ripe pears, followed by flavors of ripe, round orchard fruit. A well-balanced, easy-to-drink white wine. Riverside International Wine Competition (Gold). — *55,578 cases*

Gordon Brothers Family Vineyards, \$45

2000 Tradition, Columbia Valley This red blend of Cab (50%), Merlot (44%) and Syrah (6%) is a beautifully put-together wine with aromas and flavors of big dark fruit, cedar, leather and a hint of black olives. The plush midpalate is balanced with moderate tannins and solid acidity. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — *540 cases*

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$53 CAD

2003 Proprietors' Reserve Riesling Ice Wine, Okanagan Valley This dessert wine is all about flavor. It's loaded with aromas of succulent baked fruit, spices, honey, walnuts and a slice of lime, followed by rich flavors of poached pears drizzled with honey and sprinkled with cinnamon. A hugely sweet wine with surprisingly good balance. Pacific Rim International Wine Competition (Gold), All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold). — *375 cases*

Best Buy!

Kiona Vineyards & Winery, \$12

2004 Chardonnay, Washington Oak plays nothing more than a bit part in this Chardonnay, which provides plenty of fruit on the aromas and flavors. It opens with notes of ripe pears and apples, followed by clean, bright flavors of orchard fruits. A well-balanced wine with a lengthy finish. International Eastern Wine Competition (Double Gold). — *800 cases*

Best Buy!

Kiona Vineyards & Winery, \$12

2002 Lemberger, Columbia Valley Kiona has been dedicated to this somewhat obscure red variety for better than two decades. Consumers should be pleased with the quality and the price. It is loaded with fruit aromas and flavors, including ripe cherries and raspberries. Its fruit-driven flavors are backed with plenty of structure. Enjoy this with barbecued ribs or pizza. Florida State Fair (Gold). — *900 cases*

L'Ecole No. 41, \$37

2003 Seven Hills Vineyard Syrah, Walla Walla Valley L'Ecole's Syrahs are perennial medal detectors, and this big red from estate grapes is no slouch. It might remind you of a Côte-Rôtie, thanks to aromas of sizzling bacon and broad flavors of blackberries, loganberries and black pepper. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *1,241 cases*

WINE PRESS

N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging

Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

Best Buy!

Maryhill Winery, \$14

2003 Fort Rock Red, Columbia Valley This red blend of Cab Sauv, Syrah, Cab Franc and Merlot commemorates the arrival of the Corps of Discovery some 200 years ago. We are certain they would have appreciated a good glass of wine as they floated down the Columbia. This shows off aromas and flavors of black cherries, black pepper and dark chocolate and would have paired well with many of the game meats the boys cooked along the trail. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), Grand Harvest Awards (Gold). — *6,000 cases*

Maryhill Winery, \$34

2002 Proprietor's Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley Maryhill's Reserve Cab is a big wine with aromas of dark fruit and tobacco and flavors of bold black currants and blackberries. It's boldly structured and has yet to reveal its full potential. Hide in the cellar for a couple of years or enjoy now with grilled beef. New World International Wine Competition (Gold/Best of Class), San Francisco International Wine Competition (Gold). — *1,122 cases*

Montinore Estate, \$18

2003 Winemaker's Reserve Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley This longtime northern Willamette Valley wineries is one of Oregon's most-improved operations the past five decades. This Pinot Noir is testament to that, thanks to aromas and flavors of spices, cherries and hints of chocolate. A suave wine with good balance and a lengthy finish. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — *1,075 cases*

Montinore Estate, \$30

2003 Parson's Ridge Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley This single-vineyard Pinot Noir from Montinore has consistently been one of this Forest Grove, Ore., winery's best offerings. Well-managed oak melds with aromas and flavors of ripe raspberries and cherries. Succulent tannins allow the elegant fruit to shine through. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — *194 cases*

Best Buy!

Quails' Gate Estate Winery, \$16 CAD

2004 Limited Release Dry Riesling, Okanagan Valley Quails' Gate near Kelowna, B.C., has been producing top wines for several years, and this dry Riesling is a great example. It opens with Germanic aromas of minerals, limes and petrol, followed by flavors of apples, limes and oranges. A crisp, nicely balanced white. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold).

Reininger Winery, \$20

2002 Helix Pomatia, Columbia Valley Chuck Reininger's new brand, "Helix," allows this talented winemaker to reach outside of the Walla Walla Valley. This is the new release under the Helix label, and it's been an instant hit. It's a blend of Merlot, Syrah, Cab and Cab Franc from Wahluke Slope vineyards and provides juicy flavors of spicy black cherries and raspberries, along with hints of vanilla. A wine meant to drink young. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Gold). — *1,400 cases*

Reininger Winery, \$35

2002 Carmènere, Walla Walla Valley Reininger is one of three Walla Walla wineries to make this rare Bordeaux variety. This is his first release of Carmenere, and it is delicious, thanks to classic aromas and flavors of black and white pepper, Bing cherries and plum jam. It's a pretty wine with beautiful balance. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), San Francisco International Wine Competition (Gold). — *112 cases*

Best Buy!

Winter's Hill Vineyard, \$12

2004 Pinot Noir Rosé, Willamette Valley It is rosés like this that will get more wine drinkers to take them seriously. From first whiff, this is an inviting pink wine with aromas of ripe cherries, raspberries and a whiff of wild strawberries. On the palate, the refreshing flavors of bright red fruit were well balanced with crisp acidity. A perfect foil for ham, pork or turkey. International Eastern Wine Competition (Double Gold), Northwest Wine Summit (Gold/Best Rosé). — *197 cases*

ADEA Wine Co., \$30

2002 Dean-o's Pinot, Willamette Valley Winemaker Dean Fisher planted his vineyard in 1990 and launched the winery a half-decade later. This Gaston, Ore., operation has been thriving since, thanks to one elegant Pinot Noir after another. This offering is classic Oregon, with aromas and flavors of ripe cherries and complex spices, backed up with velvety tannins. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *504 cases*

Fidèlitas Wines, \$35

2002 Syrah, Columbia Valley Here is a Syrah ready to make some noise. Its fine-tuned aromas of spicy dark fruit and chocolate meld with persistent flavors of blackberries, ripe plums and complex spices. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold). — *240 cases*

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$23 CAD

2002 Grand Reserve Meritage, Okanagan Valley This Bordeaux-style red blend from one of B.C.'s biggest and best producers arrives with aromas and flavors of dark, ripe fruit with complex spices and hints of bittersweet chocolate. There is a lot of tannin here, but the plentiful fruit keeps up with it. Pair with a rare steak. Grand Harvest Awards (Gold), Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *800 cases*

WINE PRESS

N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging

Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

Sumac Ridge Estate Winery, \$50 CAD

2001 Pinnacle, Okanagan Valley Sumac Ridge takes great care with this Bordeaux-style blend of Merlot, Cab and Cab Franc, and it shows in the bottle. This opens with complex aromas of black currants and spices and dark, brooding flavors of blackberries. A big wine with plenty of structure. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *400 cases*

Three Rivers Winery, \$39

2003 Pepper Bridge Vineyard Sangiovese, Walla Walla Valley In addition to two gold medals, we already awarded this an “Outstanding” rating nine months ago. Restrained oak allows the aromas and flavors of red fruit and black tea to shine through. Well balanced with moderate tannins. One judge thought it was reminiscent of a Chianti Classico Riserva. Long Beach Grand Cru (Gold), L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — *272 cases*

Torii Mor Winery, \$25

2003 Pinot Noir, Oregon Launched in 1993 by Donald Olson, this Yamhill County winery has gained a reputation for silky Pinot Noirs. This is Torii Mor’s mainstream Pinot, and it provides aromas and flavors of elegant oak and ripe cherries. Bold tannins provide plenty of structure. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — *4,809 cases*

Camaraderie Cellars, \$28

2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley Winemaker Don Corson is known for making suave Bordeaux-style reds. This elegant Cab provides good intensity from the aromas of pie cherries and oak to the flavors of black currants and sweet herbs. A well-structured wine that will improve with another two years in the cellar. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Gold). — *773 cases*

Chateau Ste. Michelle, \$22

2002 Canoe Ridge Estate Merlot, Columbia Valley This estate vineyard is in Washington’s newly designated Horse Heaven Hills appellation and overlooks the Columbia River. This luscious Merlot shows off aromas and flavors of black cherries and bittersweet chocolate with complex smoky undertones. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — *12,000 cases*

WINE PRESS N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

GOLD

Erath Vineyards, \$30

2002 Estate Selection Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley. Indy International Wine Competition (Gold). — 2,080 cases

L'Ecole No. 41, \$45

2002 Seven Hills Estate Vineyard Perigee, Walla Walla Valley. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 1,160 cases

E.B. Foote Winery, \$18

2003 Milbrandt Vineyards Zinfandel, Columbia Valley. New World International Wine Competition (Gold). — 202 cases

Elk Cove Vineyards, \$24

2003 Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — 9,000 cases

Elk Cove Vineyards, \$36

2003 Mt. Richmond Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 484 cases

Seia Wine Cellars, \$22

2003 Clifton Hill Vineyard Syrah, Columbia Valley. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 73 cases

Spangler Vineyards, \$25

2001 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Southern Oregon. West Coast Wine Competition (Gold). — 338 cases

Gehring Brothers Estate Winery, \$45 CAD

2004 Signature Series Riesling Icewine, Okanagan Valley. Wine Press Northwest Ice Wine Judging (Outstanding). — 500 cases

Hogue Cellars, \$17

2001 Genesis Merlot Columbia Valley. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold) — 32,525 cases

Best Buy!

Preston Premium Wines, \$15

2001 Merlot, Columbia Valley. Tasters Guild Wine Judging (Gold). — 2,500 cases

Williamson Vineyards, \$25

2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, Idaho. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold/Best Idaho Wine). — 24 cases

Basel Cellars, \$36

2002 Pheasant Run Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, Walla Walla Valley. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 450 cases

Basel Cellars, \$32

2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold).

Bitner Vineyards, \$20

2002 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Idaho. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 200 cases

ElvenGlade Vineyard, \$16

2003 Chardonnay, Yamhill County. Oregon State Fair (Gold).

Best Buy!

Hawthorne Mountain Vineyards, \$17 CAD

2003 See Ya Later Ranch Chardonnay, Okanagan Valley. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold). — 1,200 cases

San Juan Vineyards, \$23

2002 Syrah, Columbia Valley. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 440 cases

Stag Hollow Wines & Vineyards, \$38

2002 Reserve Pinot Noir, Yamhill County. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold/Best Oregon Wine). — 147 cases

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$53 CAD

2004 Proprietors' Reserve Riesling Icewine, Okanagan Valley. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold). — 375 cases

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Best Buy!

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$18 CAD

2002 Proprietors' Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Okanagan Valley. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold). — 11,500 cases

Kiona Vineyards & Winery, \$35

2002 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Red Mountain. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 1,800 cases

Maryhill Winery, \$18

2003 Syrah, Columbia Valley. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 1,872 cases

Mount Baker Vineyards, \$28

2001 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Yakima Valley. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold). — 482 cases

Novelty Hill Winery, \$20

2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 1,800 cases

Best Buy!

Pasek Cellars, \$12

NV Blackberry Dessert Wine, Washington. Finger Lakes Wine Competition (Gold).

Recline Ridge Winery, \$19 CAD

2003 Pinot Meunier, Okanagan Valley. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 217 cases

Best Buy!

Sawtooth Winery, \$15

2001 Cabernet Sauvignon, Idaho. Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold), Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 1,250 cases

Battle Creek Winery, \$50

2002 Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley. Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold). — 335 cases

Belle Vallee Cellars, \$38

2003 Pinot Noir Port, Willamette Valley (half-bottle). Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 700 cases

Chateau Ste. Michelle, \$20

2002 Canoe Ridge Estate Chardonnay, Columbia Valley. Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold). — 5,500 cases

Jackson-Triggs Vintners, \$24 CAD

2002 Grand Reserve Shiraz, Okanagan Valley. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold).

Kana Winery, \$25

2002 Gamacha, Columbia Valley. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold).

Best Buy!

Kiona Vineyards & Winery, \$15

2004 Late Harvest White Riesling, Yakima Valley. Florida State Fair (Gold), New World International Wine Competition (Gold). — 1,200 cases

Olympic Cellars, \$25

2002 La Dolce Vida Syrah, Columbia Valley. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold).

Best Buy!

Preston Premium Wines, \$15

2001 Cabernet Sauvignon, Columbia Valley. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 1,500 cases

Silvan Ridge, \$19

2002 Merlot, Rogue Valley. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — 535 cases

Silvan Ridge, \$28

2002 Reserve Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley. Wine Press Northwest Pinot Noir Judging (Outstanding). — 330 cases

Amity Vineyards, \$30

2002 Sunnyside Vineyards Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 316 cases

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Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

Barnard Griffin, \$30

2003 Handcrafted Syrah, **Columbia Valley**. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold/Best of Class). — 425 cases

Columbia Crest, \$35

2001 Walter Clore Private Reserve, **Columbia Valley**. Florida State Fair (Double Gold). — 5,000 cases

Best Buy!

Covey Run Winery, \$8

2004 Riesling, **Columbia Valley**. San Diego International Wine Competition (Gold), Pacific Rim International Wine Competition (Gold). — 57,750 cases

Dusted Valley Vintners, \$20

2003 Viognier, **Columbia Valley**. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Gold). — 246 cases

Fidélitas Wines, \$40

2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, **Walla Walla Valley**. Hilton Head WineFest (Gold). — 360 cases

Gamache Vintners, \$28

2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, **Columbia Valley**. L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — 440 cases

Best Buy!

Hawthorne Mountain Vineyards, \$15 CAD

2003 Pinot Gris, **Okanagan Valley**. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 750 cases

Best Buy!

Hogue Cellars, \$10

2004 Late Harvest White Riesling, **Columbia Valley**. Washington State Wine Competition (Double Gold), Northwest Wine Summit (Gold), New World International Wine Competition (Gold). — 69,000 cases

Best Buy!

Hogue Cellars, \$10

2003 Cabernet Sauvignon, **Columbia Valley**. Indy International Wine Competition (Gold). — 10,586 cases

Best Buy!

Hogue Cellars, \$9

2004 Johannisberg Riesling, **Columbia Valley**. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 55,000 cases

Best Buy!

Kiona Vineyards & Winery, \$12

2001 Cab-Merlot, **Washington**. Dallas Morning News Wine Competition (Gold).

Best Buy!

Kiona Vineyards & Winery, \$8

2004 White Riesling, **Washington**. New World International Wine Competition (Gold), Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 1,800 cases

Best Buy!

Koenig Vineyards, \$14

2004 Williamson Vineyard Viognier, **Idaho**. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 220 cases

Namaste Vineyards, \$30

2003 Prosperity Block Reserve Pinot Noir, **Willamette Valley**. Wine Press Northwest Pinot Noir Judging (Outstanding). — 97 cases

Snoqualmie Vineyards, \$23

2002 Reserve Syrah, **Columbia Valley**. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold). — 500 cases

Best Buy!

Two Mountain Winery, \$13

2004 Riesling, **Yakima Valley**. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 370 cases

Airlie Winery, \$18

2003 Marechal Foch, **Willamette Valley**. Oregon State Fair (Gold).

Best Buy!

Covey Run Winery, \$9

2002 Cabernet Sauvignon, **Washington**. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 27,900 cases

WINE PRESS N O R T H W E S T

2005 Platinum Judging Best of the Best in the Great Northwest

Dusted Valley Vintners, \$24

2003 Stained Tooth Syrah, **Columbia Valley**. San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition (Gold), Washington State Wine Competition (Gold). — 200 cases

Best Buy!

Hawthorne Mountain Vineyards, \$20 CAD

2002 See Ya Later Ranch Pinot Noir, **Okanagan Valley**. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold/Best of Class), San Francisco International Wine Competition (Gold). — 500 cases

Red Rooster Winery, \$36 CAD

2002 Chardonnay Ice Wine, **Okanagan Valley**. Wine Press Northwest Ice Wine Judging (Outstanding). — 700 cases

Stag Hollow Wines & Vineyards, \$20

2002 Pinot Noir, **Yamhill County**. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 200 cases

Anne Amie Vineyards, \$42

2003 Hawks View Vineyard Pinot Noir, **Willamette Valley**. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold).

Gamache Vintners, \$28

2003 Syrah, **Columbia Valley**. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 390 cases

Maryhill Winery, \$18

2002 Merlot, **Columbia Valley**. Northwest Wine Summit (Gold). — 1,248 cases

Best Buy!

Firesteed Cellars, \$10

2003 Pinot Gris, **Oregon**. Oregon State Fair (Gold). — 14,500 cases

Kestrel Vintners, \$20

2002 Old Vine Chardonnay, **Yakima Valley**. Grand Harvest Awards (Gold). — 373 cases

Best Buy!

Sky River Meadery, \$13

NV Sweet Mead, **Washington**. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Gold).

Spangler Vineyards, \$25

2000 Reserve Merlot, **Southern Oregon**. West Coast Wine Competition (Gold), L.A. County Fair Wines of the World Competition (Gold). — 491 cases

Camaraderie Cellars, \$32

2002 Grace, **Columbia Valley**. San Francisco International Wine Competition (Double Gold). — 246 cases

Domaine Ste. Michelle, \$23

1999 Luxe, **Columbia Valley**. Indy International Wine Competition (Gold). — 3,000 cases

Best Buy!

Fox Estate Winery, \$5

NV Mystic Gold, **Washington**. Washington State Wine Competition (Gold).

Quails' Gate Estate Winery, \$21 CAD

2002 Old Vines Foch, **Okanagan Valley**. All Canadian Wine Championships (Gold/Best of Class).

Best Buy!

Whidbey Island Winery, \$15

2003 Viognier, **Yakima Valley**. Wine Press Northwest Uncommon Whites Judging (Outstanding). — 330 cases