

FOOD & WINE

The Buyer's Guide to 75 of the Best California Wines

By [Ray Isle](#)

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California has a reputation as a place where anyone can prosper and anything can grow. Yet while there are plenty of ambitious winemakers, there are only a few grapes that can produce world-class wines. The following six have what it takes. F&W executive wine editor Lettie Teague, senior editor Ray Isle and frequent contributor Richard Nalley tried hundreds of wines made from these grapes to find the 75 best.

CABERNET SAUVIGNON

The best and most expensive Cabernet Sauvignon in America, by and large, comes from Napa Valley. Other places grow great Cabernet—sites in Sonoma's Alexander Valley, for instance—but no other region produces Cabs of such consistency and sheer profundity. Cult bottlings like Screaming Eagle or Harlan Estate, along with a few of the amazing wines below and on the following page, are really only available at auctions and top restaurants. But the value wines we recommend are easy to find, and delicious.

INSIDER'S FAVORITES

2013 Hourglass Estate Napa Valley (\$163)

Jeff Smith's tiny Hourglass vineyard occupies some of Napa Valley's best real estate, with neighbors that include cult names like Colgin, Grace Family and Vineyard 29. Top winemaking consultant Tony Biagi made this plush but muscular Cabernet.

Hourglass



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