

HOT PICKS FROM OUR CRITICS • ARGENTINA: BEST MALBEC • TEQUILA TERROIR

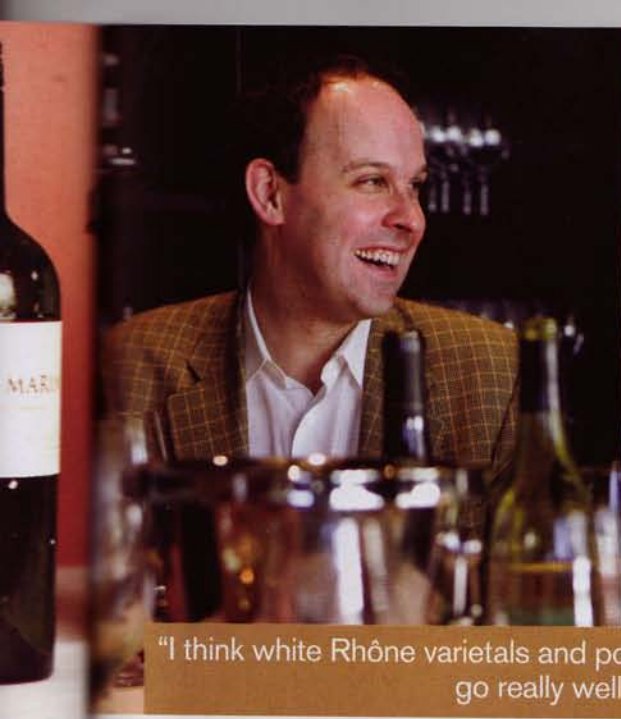
# Wine & Spirits



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"I think white Rhône varietals and pork, savory pork, go really well together."—Jake Kosseff, *Qube*



"This is a great rich white wine that's not a chardonnay. It's made for cheese and charcuterie." — J. Marvin

**Zaca Mesa**

2006 Santa Ynez Valley Roussanne \$25

"Zaca Mesa makes cool wines across the board—it's a great property. The roussanne and other white Rhône varieties are planted on north-facing slopes, so they get a little less ripe." —E. Kelley

"Zaca Mesa's Roussanne is how I got my mother to try something besides California chardonnay." —W. Weber

"I think white Rhône varietals and pork, savory pork, go really well together."

—J. Kosseff

**Domaine Olivier Pithon**

2006 Cotes du Roussillon Cuvée Laïs \$28

"This is a regal, rich white, like an Hermitage Blanc if Hermitage were bathed in Roussillon's warm light. But it's a fraction of the cost of a great Hermitage Blanc. (It's also the best wine I've ever tasted that's named after a Jersey cow.)" —T.Q. Thomas

"A wine for the people who don't like white wine." —R. Pierce

"The oak seems almost like a bridge to the wines of Burgundy." —E. Porto Carreiro

"There's a little honey to the flavor. It's so pure. I'd pair it with skate wing fried in butter." —R. Clement

**Hogue**

2006 Columbia Valley Chardonnay \$9

"For people looking for chardonnay it's got everything; this is the sort of wine that would work in every state in the country. That fleshy mouthfeel, that bit of tropical fruit. It's a crowd-pleaser." —R. Pierce

"It's the right white for a cocktail party, or a ham and gruyère panini." —J. Greene

**Santa Barbara Crossing**

2005 Santa Barbara County Chardonnay \$10

"This is a Thanksgiving white. It could also work with a dish of scallops, with a little cinnamon and butternut squash." —A. Weil

"It's Central Coast chardonnay all the way, with big, full flavors backed up by salty acidity. A lot of wine for ten bucks." —W. Weber

**Iron Horse**

2005 Green Valley Chardonnay \$27

"I've always liked the Iron Horse wines. It's a very California style of chardonnay, but these have more acidity that most, which keeps them interesting. It would go with salmon, lobster, crab, and lighter meats." —A. Weil

"Creamy and rich, with that vibrant acidity. I'd love to see this paired with seared day-boat scallops with an edamame purée and truffled kabayaki sauce..." —N. Daquip

**L'Ecole No. 41**

2006 Columbia Valley Semillon \$16

"From the nose to the mouth to the acidity, this wine's fruit is well balanced, not overpowering. It's a great summer patio wine."

—B. Gillespie

"This would be a good roast turkey wine; it's appealing." —E. Kelley

"I'd serve it with smoked fish—salmon, trout." —J. Marvin

**R. López di Heredia**

1996 Rioja Viña Gravonia Crianza \$27

"I would thank this operation one million times if I could. This is the reward for patience. Almond...marzipan... Amazing

wine. It's the best value here without question." —R. Pierce

"An Old School white, the kind of wine only López de Heredia and few others produce. Waxy, mineral and fresh...a white for fried sardines." —P. Tapia

"Or Marcona almonds. You don't want to get too complicated. I could see a nice bowl of polenta with some Manchego cheese."

—R. Clement

**SHERRY**

**Lustau**

Jerez Puerto Fino Solera Reserva \$14

"I jumpstart my appetite with fino. It makes me want to eat. This is a wine that gets people hungry." —E. Porto Carreiro

"I really like the briny, clean flavors. It's so crisp. I'd have it with oysters or some charcuterie." —Steve Goldun

**Hidalgo**

Jerez Amontillado Napoleón \$19

"This has the complexity of an aged amontillado while retaining the dry, austere finesse and liveliness of a fino." —P. Liem

"Upfront, it's really briny, and it has an almond sort of flavor. It's really a time and place wine. The real beauty of certain wines is in their context. You're starting the evening, the sun's going down in the summer...Sherry in this context is one of the most beautiful things in the world." —A. Weil

"I'd want this with a dry salty cheese and almonds, or on the back porch, with some nuts." —E. Railsback