

# Wine Spectator

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## California Pinot Noir THE GREAT 2009 VINTAGE

- > How Pinot Became Sonoma's Signature
- > James Laube's 20 Favorites

**SPANISH REDS:  
MORE THAN 100  
RATE 90+**

**VALUES: NEW VS.  
OLD WORLD**

**EUROPE'S BEST  
CITY FOR FOOD?**

OCT. 15, 2011



# VALUE

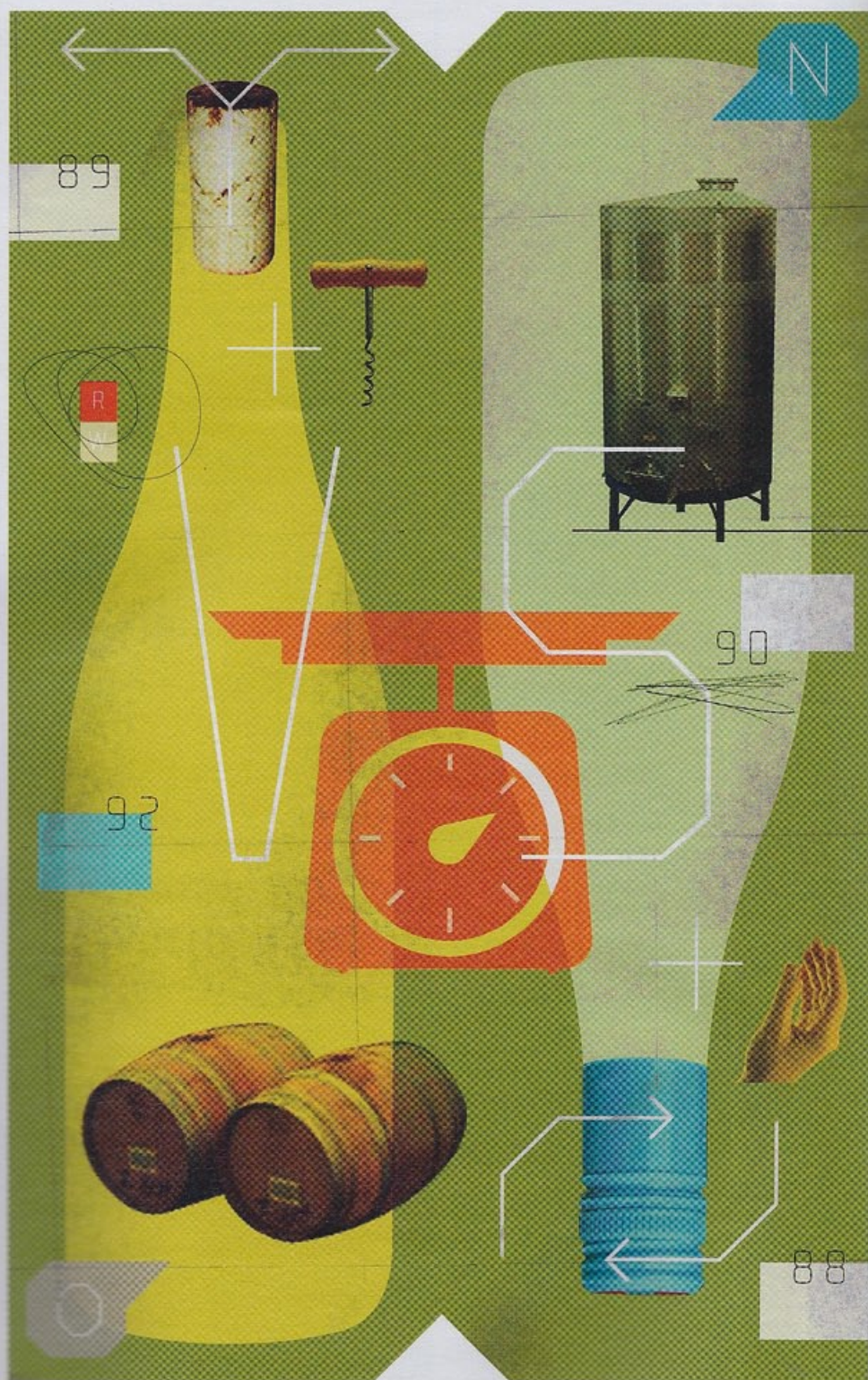
A matchup of Old World and New World wines yields 200 winners for \$25 or less  
By Kim Marcus

# ROUNDUP

**T**he rivalry between Old World and New World wine cultures is a source of spirited debate. Arguments over the tension between tradition and modernity, authenticity and innovation—all relating to the hundreds of data points influencing grapegrowing and winemaking—make for lively discussion. More often than not, the opinions are based on long-held beliefs and predispositions that usually say more about the parties involved than about objective outcomes.

For those who merely want to find the best wines for the money, no matter where they're from, the route to enjoyment is easier. We sifted through the more than 5,000 wines we've tasted in the past four months to see how the New World and Old World compare when it comes to delivering values. To level the playing field, we kept the criteria straightforward. A wine had to score at least 88 points on the *Wine Spectator* 100-point scale and cost \$25 or less. And it had to be produced in sufficient quantities to make it reasonably available in the marketplace.

In the following charts, you will find the results: scores and prices for 200 reds and whites. (WineSpectator.com members may access complete reviews using our online Wine Ratings search.) Despite the weakness of the dollar, the Old World makes a strong showing, and its diversity is notable as well. However, the New World wines have the advantage when it comes to overall production levels—and thus availability. In the end, it comes down to your personal taste as to the types of wines you want to drink. But there's little doubt that you can enjoy the best of both worlds without breaking the bank.



## WINESPECTATOR.COM

**BONUS VIDEO:** Discover a source of great values from southern France as managing editor Kim Marcus chats with vintner Michel Chapoutier about his Bila-Haut wines. Watch it at [www.winespectator.com/101511](http://www.winespectator.com/101511).



**Columbia Valley 2008 \$18** Dense with raspberry, cherry, mineral and high pear peel tannins. Shows un-

**Columbia Valley 2008 \$38** Firm core of currant and blackberry peppery note. Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. Best after

**Merlot Columbia Valley 2008** Offering a lively mouthful of rasp-

**Michelle Merlot Columbia 2009 \$18** Light and silky, with

**Écume Rouge Columbia Valley** Generous, with a stony edge to

**Merlot Columbia Valley 2008** and lean on balance, with savory

**Merlot Washington 2008 \$15** with a lively feel to the ripe cherry

**Merlot Washington 2009 \$7** ting flavors of raspberry and cherry

**WASHINGTON**

**Michelle Riesling Columbia Vineyard 2010 \$15** Silky, with

**89 Efeste Riesling Columbia Valley Evergreen Vineyard Evergreen 2010 \$16** Light and bright, with pretty apple, honey and floral flavors, finishing with a crisp balance of acidity. Drink now through 2015. 970 cases made.—H.S.

**88 Snoqualmie Riesling Columbia Valley Wine-maker's Select 2010 \$8** See Best Values, page 97.

**88 Stonecap Riesling Columbia Valley 2009 \$8** Bright and jazzy, this is lightly sweet but lively, with apple, peach and floral flavors that linger easily on the finish. Drink now through 2015. 3,461 cases made.—H.S.

**87 Chateau Ste. Michelle Riesling Columbia Valley 2010 \$9** See Best Values, page 98.

**86 NXNW Riesling Horse Heaven Hills Wallula Benches 2010 \$12** Fresh and open-textured, with pretty melon and citrus flavors, finishing on a floral note. Drink now. 5,000 cases made.—H.S.

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**Syrah & Blends**

**92 Hestia Syrah Columbia Valley 2008 \$30**

Dark this is that g now t  
**92 \$30**  
leaf a black come 586 e  
**89**  
Tight flavo

**WASHINGTON Other**

**89 Mercer Sauvignon Blanc Columbia Valley 2009 \$15** Bright and tangy, showing lemony apple and herb flavors that remain lively through the deftly balanced finish. Drink now. 1,563 cases made.—H.S.

**89 L'Ecole No. 41 Syrah Columbia Valley 2008 \$25** Sandy tannins wrap around a supple core of blackberry, tobacco, dry grass and licorice flavors in this focused red, coming together smoothly as the finish lingers. Best from 2012 through 2016. 2,261 cases made.—H.S.

**89 Stonecap Syrah Columbia Valley 2009 \$8** Firm in texture, this is lively with blueberry and spice flavors, dancing seductively through the expressive finish. Drink now. 3,930 cases made.—H.S.

**87 Goose Ridge G Red Columbia Valley 2008 \$18** Fresh and lively, this is juicy with blueberry and spice flavors, finishing with deft balance. Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. Drink now through 2014. 10,623 cases made.—H.S.

**87 Pine & Post Red Blend Washington NV \$7** See Best Values, page 98.

**WASHINGTON**

**Other**

**92 DeLille Chaleur Estate White Columbia Valley 2009 \$36** This barrel-fermented style has rich, silky texture and layers of pear, orange peel, pineapple and fig flavor. This isn't weighty, but is wrapped in spicy oak on the finish. In the end, this keeps its balance. Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon. Drink now through 2013. 1,700 cases made.—H.S.

**91 Francis Tannahill Gewürztraminer Washington Dragonfly 2008 \$25** Tastes dry, but the flavor profile brims with honey and spice around a soft core of pear and grapefruit, lingering easily. Drink now through 2015. 317 cases made.—H.S.

**Yakima Valley 2010** with grapefruit and drink now. 675 cases

**Washington 2009** is juicy with pear, the palate and glide Drink now. 431 cases

**Yakima Valley** is supple in texture, d flavors, hinting at almond blossom on the long finish. Roussanne, Viognier and Marsanne. Drink now through 2014. 450 cases made.—H.S.

**90 Tamarack Cabernet Franc Wahluke Slope 2009 \$28** Lithe, generous and refreshing for its palate-cleaning tannins, as a sense of refinement enlivens the cherry and floral flavors. Drink now through 2016. 834 cases made.—H.S.

**89 Mercer Sauvignon Blanc Columbia Valley 2009 \$15** Bright and tangy, showing lemony apple and herb flavors that remain lively through the deftly balanced finish. Drink now. 1,563 cases made.—H.S.

**89 Waterbrook Sangiovese Columbia Valley Rosé 2010 \$17** This gentle rosé is shocking pink in color but subdued in its strawberry and rhubarb flavors. Flavors pick up intensity on the dry finish. Drink now. 1,657 cases made.—H.S.

**88 Charles & Charles Rosé Columbia Valley 2010 \$17** This tangy rosé is appealing for its strawberry and lemon peel flavors, which linger on the dry finish. Shows a touch of fizz. Syrah. Drink now. 10,300 cases made.—H.S.

**88 The Magnificent Wine Company Sauvignon Blanc Columbia Valley Fish House 2010 \$17** A lively white, litling with grapefruit, pineapple and pear fruit, showing a hint of herb on the finish. Drink now. 3,200 cases made.—H.S.

**86 Boomtown Pinot Gris Washington 2010 \$13** Light and crisp, with melon and lemon flavors. Drink now. 1,800 cases made.—H.S.

**Some Wines In This Issue Caught Your Eye?**

...ck of them with  
**personal Wine List**  
Spectator.com

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...Contents of Your Cellar

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