

Dive into the World of Organic and Biodynamic Wines

Whether you enjoy white, red, sparkling, rosé or all of the above, here are some organic and biodynamic bottles to introduce you to this booming wine category.

BY WINE ENTHUSIAST



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It's clear that there's a growing demand for natural products, with an increasing selection showing up on store shelves and entire wine shops dedicating themselves to the category. That demand has certainly seized the attention of winegrowers, as more and more producers around the world have begun tending to their vineyards with biodynamic farming techniques and producing bottles made with organically-grown grapes. Here's a selection of bottles to help you jump into this exciting and growing group of wines.

White

Pascal Jolivet 2015 Sauvage (Sancerre); \$73, 95 points. Produced from organically grown grapes and aged for 12 months on lees, this is a concentrated wine. It has rich apple and quince fruit and a layers of strong mineral texture. All these elements combine into a dense wine that is ready to drink. Frederick Wildman & Sons, Ltd. **Editors' Choice.**—Roger Voss

Domaine Vigneau-Chevreau 2016 Cuvée Silex (Vouvray); \$23, 93 points. This is a beautiful, ripe, honeyed wine. Produced from organically grown grapes, it has richness as well as a touch of spice from partial oak aging. The wine will age further to give a sumptuous richness from 2019. Michael Corso Selections. **Editors' Choice.**—R.V.

Loveblock 2017 Sauvignon Blanc (Marlborough); \$22, 92 points. Loveblock is the label of Erica and Kim Crawford, former owners of one of New Zealand's most famous labels. Their latest Sauvignon Blanc from organically grown fruit displays subtlety and complexity. The nose is a soft synthesis of peach, cantaloupe, lemon-lime, watermelon rind and warm stone minerality, while the palate is all about texture. It's tight, structured and chalky, with prickly acidity and a long citrus and mineral finish. Drink now with an array of seafood and cold salad dishes. Terlato Wines International. **Editors' Choice.**—Christina Pickard

Bonterra 2015 The Roost Blue Heron Vineyard Chardonnay (Mendocino County); \$45, 92 points. A deep gold color and bold buttery aromas set up an expectation for rich flavors, which come in the form of butter, butterscotch, vanilla and cream, with some tasty Anjou pear underneath. The wine was made from biodynamic grapes and matured in French oak barrels, making it full bodied, mouthfilling and indulgent.—Jim Gordon

Red

Brick House 2015 Les Dijonnais Pinot Noir (Ribbon Ridge); \$52, 95 points. It's difficult to pick a favorite out of the marvelous Brick House 2015s, but this is it. Native yeasts, biodynamic farming and minimal handling all contribute to an old-school method, though it's a cutting edge wine. From the opening aroma, the complexities compound, offering pepper, spice, cranberry, candied rose petal, red berry and cherry notes. Simply a stunning value. **Editors' Choice.**—Paul Gregutt

Pence 2015 Unum Estate Pinot Noir (Sta. Rita Hills); \$60, 95 points. This organically farmed ranch on the eastern edge of the Sta. Rita Hills is producing amazing wines, including this bottling, which combines boysenberry, forest moss, gamy meats and a mud-pit earthiness on the nose. Focused and intense flavors of earth, ripe elderberry, sagebrush and a hint of truffle show on the sip, where the tannins are

polished but structurally sound. Drink now–2030. **Cellar Selection.**—Matt Kettmann

Richard Rottiers 2016 Moulin-à-Vent; \$29, 94 points. Made from organically grown grapes, this wine comes from vines that are between 40 and 80 years old. It has structure, tannins and concentration as well as richness, powerful blackberry flavors and a balance with acidity. The wine will age, so drink from 2019. **Cellar Selection.**—R.V.

Casa al Vento 2015 Aria (Chianti Classico); \$20, 92 points. Made with organically grown Sangiovese, this elegant red opens with enticing aromas of iris, red-skinned berry and a whiff of new leather. The vibrant juicy palate gives red cherry, cinnamon, white pepper and tobacco alongside bright acidity and refined tannins. Enjoy 2019–2023. **Editors' Choice.**—Kerin O'Keefe

Château du Ballandreau 2014 Cuvée Excellence (Bordeaux Supérieur); \$15, 90 points. This wine is dense, with spice from wood aging and rich fruit. Black plum and berry flavors partner with a tannic structure in this concentrated wine. The organically grown grapes add their own purity. Drink this age-worthy wine from 2019. Vinamericas Selections. **Best Buy.**—R.V.

La Selva 2014 Maremma Toscana; \$26, 89 points. Made entirely with organically grown Ciliegiolo grapes, this opens with aromas of violet, raspberry and baking spice. On the vibrant palate, velvety tannins support red cherry, cinnamon and vanilla.—K.K.

Rose

Sokol Blosser 2017 Estate Cuvée Rosé of Pinot Noir (Dundee Hills); \$25, 91 points. Too many rosés go for power over finesse; this takes the lighter path, to good effect. Made from all organic estate fruit fermented entirely in stainless steel, it's fragrant and spicy at just 12% alcohol. But there's no lack of flavor: fresh strawberry, pink grapefruit and blood orange. A hint of pepper spices up the finish. **Editors' Choice.**—P.G.

Wild Thing 2017 Rendezvous Rosé (Mendocino County); \$15, 90 points. A deep pink color and bold fruit and spice flavors help this wine stand out from the pack. Made from mostly old-vine Carignan, it is full bodied, rounded and rich on the palate, yet has good acidity and a glimmer of tannin to add structure. Winemaker Carol Shelton achieves concentration that helps the flavors hang in there for a lingering finish. **Best Buy.**—J.G.

Sparkling

Von Buhl 2015 Riesling Brut Sekt (Pfalz); \$45, 94 points. Delicate biscuit and brioche accent concentrated yellow apple and pear in this dazzling Riesling sekt. Made in the traditional method, its petillance is fine and persistent, filling the palate with a rich but yielding mousse. Racy lime and lemon acidity guides a piercing finish. The finish is exceptionally long, lingering with a silken honeyed cling. **Editors' Choice.**—Anna Lee Iijima

Corte Bianca 2011 Rosé (Franciacorta); \$42, 92 points. Made with organically grown Pinot Nero, this vibrant sparkler has subtle aromas of wild berry, crushed herb and an apple orchard in bloom. Structured and elegant, the savory palate delivers tart red cherry, raspberry compote, baking spice and a hint of brioche set against bright acidity. Small continuous bubbles provide the refined perlage. Artisanal Cellars.—K.K.

Raventós I Blanc 2013 Textures de Pedra Conca del Riu Anoia Sparkling (Penedès); \$30, 91 points. There's a light pink color to this airy sparkler along with fresh aromas of celery and rose water. A clean, tangy palate is well balanced and fresh, offering flavors of pink grapefruit, nectarine and citrus peel. A steady, long finish closes out this high-quality vintage bubbly. Skurnik Wines, Inc.—Michael Schachner

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