

Volcanic Island • The World's Best Rose • Albariño & Vinho Verde

Wine & Spirits

Sparkling Summer Recipes

Simple
snacks for
bubbles



2015
winesmagazine.com
Canada \$6.99
August 31, 2015



SLOVENIA

94 | Movia \$50

2006 Brda Ceglo Puro Rosé Ales Kristancic matures the base wine for Puro in barrels for four years and then bottles it with a small amount of must from the new vintage to kick off the second fermentation. The wine has an onion-skin hue and retains clouds of sediment; drink it that way, or follow Kristancic's disgorgement instructions (on a YouTube video). We tasted it both ways, finding the non-disgorged bottle muscular and dense, with fresh cider and savory tomato-skin flavors. The disgorged bottle showed delicate flavors of wild strawberry and Rainier cherry, with pronounced seashell minerality and notes of caraway, cardamom and rosewater, ending on a savory note. Both were delicious, with flavors lingering delicately on the palate and inviting you to take another sip. Savor this fascinating wine with an earthy dish like sautéed mushrooms over linguini. *Domaine Select Wine Estates, NY*

SOUTH AFRICA

90 | Graham Beck \$26

2009 Western Cape Brut Blanc de Blancs Premiere Cuvée This chardonnay grows in the limestone soils of the Breede River Valley. Half the blend is fermented in French oak barrels; the other half ferments in stainless steel; then the wine is blended and put in bottles for the second fermentation, resting for 36 months before disgorgement. The time on the lees gives it a rich, biscuity flavor, and the fruit is as concentrated as a lemon marmalade. It ends fresh, a robust, sunny blanc de blancs for roast lobster. *Maritime Wine Trading Collective, San Francisco, CA*

SPAIN

CAVA

93 | German Gilabert \$15

Cava Brut Nature Reserva German Gilabert sources the grapes for this Brut Nature from an organic vineyard in the Alt Penedès, one of the highest altitude sites in Catalonia for Cava. The vines were planted 35 years ago on sandy and chalky soils. Macabeo makes up 50 percent of the blend, which seems to amp up the body of this Cava, making it powerful enough to serve with fried anchovies. There's finesse as well—fine bubbles, delicate aromas of green and red apples and mineral notes. The wine's acidity is crystalline and sharp, the flavors deep and focused on fresh lime. *Vinos and Gourmet, Richmond, CA*

92 | Alta Alella \$36

2011 Cava Laietà In 1991, Josep Maria Pujol-Busquets and his wife, Cristina Guillen, began planting their vineyard in the Serralda Marina Natural Park, one mile from the Mediterranean, in the DO Alella. Ten years later, they started to bottle their first wines and Cavas. Laietà is based on xarel.lo, blended with chardonnay and pinot noir; it rests on its lees for 30 months developing mineral tones tinged with the scents of flowers and citrus that are classic xarel.lo. It is tense with acidity, firm in texture, bone dry with elegant, fine bubbles. Pour it with an *esquixada de bacalao*, a cod salad with peppers and olives. *Avant-Garde Wine & Spirits, NY*

92 | El Xamfra \$15

Cava Mercat Brut Nature (Best Buy) From vines planted on clay and limestone around the village of Sant Sadurni d'Anoia, this is a classic blend of 50 percent xarel.lo, 40 percent macabeo, with parellada making up the rest. It aged for 18 months on its lees and developed slight hints of *flor*, as if it were a bubbly interpretation of a Fino. It moves through the mouth in cool waves of flavor, the texture firm yet creamy. It's a rich, layered sparkler to serve with *suquet de peix*, a classic Catalan fish soup with clams. *Valkyrie Selections, San Francisco, CA*

91 | Juvé y Camps \$16

2010 Cava Brut Nature Gran Reserva de la Familia (Best Buy) First produced in 1921, the Gran Reserva de la Familia is one of the most traditional Cavas. It has always been aged long on its lees, sometimes up to four years. In this blend of xarel.lo, parellada and macabeo, with 10 percent chardonnay, that long aging comes through in the deep flavors of spice and brioche. However, it contrasts that richness with refreshing citrus and herb notes—a perfect match for oysters or sea urchin. *MundoVino/The Winebow Group, NY*

90 | Avinyó \$17

2012 Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) This is delicate and elegant, with a gentle prickle of bubbles, each pop a little memory of freshness. The wine's citrus and herb aromas balance a slight bitterness in the end that seems underline its freshness. *De Maison Selections, Chapel Hill, NC*

90 | Naveran \$16

2012 Cava Brut Nature Vintage (Best Buy) From organic vineyards planted between 1970 and 1995, in the area of the Alt Penedès, this is filled with mineral notes mixed with

aromas of limes and black pepper spice. It feels nervous and tight, focused on acidity and freshness. It's ready to pour with shrimp cocktail, or could age for three years or more. An incredible price for a vintage Cava. *Old Imports, New Rochelle, NY*

89 | Albet i Noya \$22

2011 Penedès Brut Reserva (Best Buy) Made with xarel.lo, chardonnay, macabeo and parellada, and aged on its lees for 18 months, this Cava is marked by notes of herbs and nuts. It has enough freshness to enhance a raw seafood plate or, perhaps better, to accompany goat cheese. *Opici Wines, Glen Rock, NJ*

88 | Alta Alella \$22

2013 Cava Brut Nature Privat Reserva Organic (Best Buy) Floral, rich in citrus flavors enveloped by a cloud of soft bubbles, this wine needs trout to best show off its assets. *Avant-Garde Wine & Spirits, NY*

88 | Mont-Ferrant \$15

2010 Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) This feels bright and fresh, the vibrancy of its bubbles combined with limey acidity making it a cheerful Cava for the terrace in summer. *Maritime Wine Trading Collective, San Francisco, CA*

88 | Mont-Marçal \$15

2011 Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) Nutty notes and scents of black pepper are scattered among the bubbles of this wine. Its citrus acidity is refreshing and crisp, ideal for abalone with mayonnaise. *Classical Wines, Seattle, WA*

88 | Ramon Canals Canals \$18

2012 Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) Charming in its freshness, this wine's acidity brings to mind abalone ceviche or something parallel in acidity that would accompany its crisp and lively bubbles. *South River Imports, Edgewater, MD*

87 | Sonim \$14

Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) With soft mineral touches and plenty of citrus fruit, this wine's needling bubbles will play against salmon tartar. *Aviva Vino, NY*

85 | Casas del Mar \$11

Cava Brut Blanc de Blancs (Best Buy) This simple Cava is soft with foamy bubbles lifting the fruit flavor. A refreshing wine to pour around the grill. *HB Wine Merchants, NY*

85 Segura Viudas

\$10

Cava Brut (Best Buy) Chill this Cava to pour as an aperitif with seafood. Its smooth texture and fine acidity make it the perfect partner for smoked mussels. *Freixenet USA, Sonoma, CA*

CAVA ROSE

90 German Gilabert

\$15

Cava Brut Nature Rosat While most producers use pinot noir to add color to their rose Cava, the local trepat is slowly gaining ground—not only for its color, but also to provide freshness and acidity. This wine blends trepat with 20 percent garnacha, all from very old vines. It feels delightfully saturated in red fruit flavor, with an inner energy, a vibrance that seems to light it from within. The bubbles are soft and round, enhancing the freshness. Ready to pour with smoked salmon. *Vinos and Gourmet, Richmond, CA*

86 Caves El Cep

\$18

2011 Cava Marqués de Gelida Rosé Brut Reserva (Best Buy) Packed with nervous acidity and scents of herbs and flowers, this

medium-body Cava needs sea bass ceviche. *Fine Estates from Spain, Dedham, MA*

CONCA DEL RIU ANOIA

92 Raventos i Blanc

\$21

2012 Conca del Riu Anoia Brut L'Hereu (Best Buy) The Raventos family doesn't label their wine as Cava. In 2012 they decided to leave the DO as they consider it too generic, preferring to focus on a tighter geographic identity: the calcareous and sandy soils of the Conca del Riu Anoia, where they grow most of their grapes. L'Hereu is their basic blend of the three native grapes of Catalonia, aged on its lees for 18 months. What's impressive is how crystalline and cool the flavors feel, with herbal notes over delicate citrus fruit. The bubbles feel fine and refreshing, the wine cool and vibrant, a memory of sweet spice that brings you back for a second glass. *Michael Skurnik Wines, NY*

92 Raventos i Blanc

\$24

2012 Conca del Riu Anoia Brut Rosé For this cuvée, in addition to the three traditional white Catalàn varieties, Pepe Reventos

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added five percent monastrell from 40-year-old vines, providing the pale hue of this wine. Its flavor melds nut and citrus tones with herbs in a generous, smooth texture. Its lively bubbles combine with the acidity to refresh everything in their path. *Michael Skurnik Wines, NY*

UNITED KINGDOM

90 Nyetimber

2010 England Brut Classic Cuvée From the first vineyards planted in 1988, Nyetimber has grown to 375 acres across eight sites in West Sussex and Hampshire. The vines are planted on a seam of chalk and green clay, entirely focused on chardonnay, pinot noir and meunier. Cherie Spriggs uses only estate-grown fruit, vinifying the wines in stainless steel with a secondary fermentation in bottle. Her 2010 has a fine mousse that keeps it tailored, refreshing in a pointedly British sort of way. It's dry and biscuity in the middle, a little softer in the end, where scents of pear nectar meld with brisk notes of quince and apple. *Not yet imported* ■

JUNE 2015

Raventós i Blanc Hereu 2012 and De Nit 2012 selected as CONCA DEL RIU ANOIA in the **Year's Best Summer Sparklers Guide** of the prestigious american magazine Wine & Spirits.



YEAR'S BEST SUMMER SPARKLERS

SLOVENIA

94 | Movia \$60

2006 Rieda Cegón Puro Rosé Alex Krizanec matures the base wine for Puro in barrels for four years and then bottles it with a small amount of must from the new vintage to kick off the second fermentation. The wine has an extraordinary hue and retains clouds of sediment; drink it that way, or follow Krizanec's disgorgement instructions (on a YouTube video). We tasted in both ways, finding the non-disgorged bottle muscular and dense, with fresh cider and savory tomato-skin flavors. The disgorged bottle showed delicate flavors of wild strawberry and Rainier cherry, with pronounced seashell minerality and notes of catnip, cardamom and rosewater, ending on a savory note. Both were delicious, with flavors lingering delicately on the palate and inviting you to take another sip. Save this fascinating wine with an earthy dish like sautéed mushrooms over linguini. *Domestic Select Wine Estate, NY*

SOUTH AFRICA

90 | Graham Beck \$26

2009 Weissenau Cape Brut Blanc de Blancs Prestige Cuvée This chardonnay grows in the limestone soils of the Breede River Valley. Half the blend is fermented in French oak barrels, the other half ferments in stainless steel; then the wine is blended and put in bottles for the second fermentation, resting for 16 months before disgorgement. The time on the lees gives it a rich, viscous flavor, and the fruit is as concentrated as a lemon marmalade. It ends fresh, a robust, saucy blanc de blancs for meat lobster. *Maritime Wine Trading Collective, San Francisco, CA*

SPAIN

CAVA

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Cava Brut Nature Reserva German Gilabert sources the grapes for this Brut Nature from an organic vineyard in the Alt Penedès, one of the highest altitude sites in Catalonia for Cava. The vines were planted 35 years ago on sandy and chalky soils. Maschen makes up 50 percent of the blend, which seems to jump up the body of this Cava, making it powerful enough to serve with fried anchovies. There's finesse as well—fine bubbles, delicate aromas of green and red apples and mineral notes. The wine's acidity is crystalline and sharp, the flavors deep and focused on fresh lime. *Vinos and Gourmet, Richmond, CA*

92 | Alta Aella \$36

2011 Cava Llaetà In 1991, Josep Maria Puigdomènech and his wife, Cèlia Guàrdia, began planting their vineyard in the Serra de Marina Natural Park, one mile from the Mediterranean, in the DO Xarel·lo. Ten years later, they started to bottle their first wines and Cava Llaetà is based on xarel·lo, blended with chardonnay and pinot noir; it rests on its lees for 30 months developing mineral tones tinged with the scents of flowers and citrus that are classic xarel·lo. It is tense with acidity, firm in texture, bone dry with elegant, fine bubbles. Pour it with an *escudat de llagostins*, a cold salad with peppers and olives. *Assa-Garcia Wine & Spirits, NY*

92 | El Xamfrà \$15

Cava Mercat Brut Nature (Best Buy) From vines planted on clay and limestone around the village of Sant Sadurn d'Noya, this is a classic blend of 50 percent xarel·lo, 40 percent macabeu, with parellada making up the rest. It aged for 18 months on its lees and developed slight hints of flow as if it were a bubbly interpretation of a Fino. It moves through the mouth in cool waves of flavor, the texture firm yet creamy. It's a rich, layered sparkling to serve with *caviar de pin*, a classic Catalan fish soup with clam. *Vallée Selections, San Francisco, CA*

91 | Juvé y Camps \$16

2010 Cava Brut Nature Gran Reserva de la Família (Best Buy) First produced in 1921, the Gran Reserva de la Família is one of the most traditional Cavas. It has always been aged long on its lees, sometimes up to four years. In this blend of xarel·lo, parellada and macabeu, with 10 percent chardonnay, that long aging comes through in the deep flavors of spice and brioche. However, it contrasts that richness with refreshing citrus and herb notes—a perfect match for oysters or sea urchin. *Mandelstam/The Winehouse Group, NY*

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2012 Cava Brut Nature Vintage (Best Buy) From organic vineyards planted between 1970 and 1995 in the area of the Alt Penedès, this is a blend with mineral notes mixed with

aromas of limes and black pepper spice. It feels nervous and tight, focused on acidity and freshness. It's ready to pour with shrimp cocktail, or could age for three years or more. An incredible price for a vintage Cava. *CG Imports, New Rochelle, NY*

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2013 Cava Brut Nature Private Reserva Organic (Best Buy) Floral, rich in citrus flavors developed by a cloud of soft bubbles, this wine needs rest to best show off its assets. *Assa-Garcia Wine & Spirits, NY*

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2010 Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) This feels bright and fresh, the vibrancy of its bubbles combined with honey acidity making it a cheerful Cava for the terrace in summer. *Maritime Wine Trading Collective, San Francisco, CA*

88 | Mont-Margal \$15

2011 Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) Nutty notes and scents of black pepper are scattered among the bubbles of this wine. Its dry acidity is refreshing and crisp, ideal for alone with mignonette. *Claudia Wine, Seattle, WA*

88 | Ramon Canals Canals \$18

2012 Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) Clinging in its freshness, this wine's acidity brings to mind alone ceviche or something parallel in acidity that would accompany its crisp and lively bubbles. *South River Imports, Edgewater, MD*

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Cava Brut Reserva (Best Buy) With soft mineral touches and plenty of citrus fruit, this wine's receding bubbles will play against salmon tartar. *Assa Wine, NY*

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YEAR'S BEST SUMMER SPARKLERS

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added five percent monastrell from 40-year-old vines, providing the pale hue of this wine. Its flavor melds nut and citrus tones with herbs in a generous, smooth texture. Its lively bubbles combine with the acidity to refresh everything in their path. *Michael Skurnik Wines, NY*

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