

WINE ENTHUSIAST BUYING GUIDE DECEMBER 2023

THIS MONTH

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The Chapelle de Chevennes in the middle of Beaujolais vineyards

FOR ADDITIONAL RATINGS AND REVIEWS, VISIT WINEENTHUSIAST.COM/RATINGS

CELLAR SELECTIONS

Accessible, ageworthy wines inspire us to explore.

Anna-Christina Cabrales is Wine Enthusiast's tasting director and reviews the wines of Burgundy and the Rhône Valley.

Within the wine world, there exists a category known as collectible wines. These bottles typically hail from esteemed producers who craft limited quantities of these masterpieces. Among these storied treasures. you'll find Bordeaux First Growths, Super Tuscans, pedigreed Burgundy and cult Napa wines, Once relatively accessible, these bottlings have long been cherished companions on my wine journey. Now they are growing increasingly elusive and are often stratospherically priced, placing them out of reach for many enthusiasts.

The pandemic played a role in this development. During the past three years, prices surged due to economic flux,

along with rising production and transportation costs. However, winemakers were gifted with time to refine their craft. Vineyards benefited from meticulous hands-on attention worthy of the most exacting neurosurgeon. Globally, wine quality soared, continuing a trend that has built momentum over the past two decades.

That included quality at every price point. Since we understand that price isn't always the arbiter of quality, and since our reviewers evaluate wines without knowing their brands or prices, we've methodically turned up some bang-for-your-buck discoveries in the past year alone.

Enter the Cellar Selections. These are the wines that make us raise our evebrows and say, "You've got potential." They possess a balanced structure and complexity that are



Anna-Christina Cabrales

These wines...make us raise our eyebrows and say, "You've got

potential."

talizing core of aromas and flavors, Greatness awaits, but only time can unveil its full splendor.

crafted for the long haul.

Some of their qualities

might not be immediately

evident and will require

ers commonly describe

sensing a reservoir of

untapped energy-one that

no amount of quick decant-

ing can release. Think of it

as akin to antique shop-

ping. Your intuition tells

you that you have found

something special, but it's

covered in dust. Yet after

several rounds of detailed

cleaning and polishing, a

treasure is revealed. In the

same vein, a wine can pres-

ent with youthful and per-

haps overwhelming tannins

or acidity that blanket a tan-

Our discerning review-

time in the cellar.

When you come across the Cellar Selection designation in our Buying Guides, particularly in this issue, it sparks your curiosity, regardless of price points. Yes, cellarable wines can be found at \$40 a bottle, even \$30. Often you'll find an under-the-radar Cellar Selection standing shoulder to shoulder with a more familiar and more expensive brand, a testament to the diversity and quality that the wine world offers.

We hope that our Cellar Selections help answer the question, "What do I pay attention to next?" We're here to inspire you to explore new wine frontiers and embrace different styles, no matter the price. Cheers to new and endless wine adventures!

—Anna-Christina Cabrales

The Wine Enthusiast **Buying Guide**

The Buying Guide includes ratings and reviews of new-release and selected older beverage alcohol products evaluated by Wine Enthusiast magazine's editors and other qualified tasters.

STAFF EDITORS Burgundy, Rhône Valley

Anna-Christina Cabrales: Jim Gordon: Craig Chambertain: Stacy Briscoe:

Napa, Sonoma Nothern California & California AVA

Jacy Topps: Languedoc-Roussillon, Provence, Vin de France

WRITERS AT LARGE

Michael Alberty: Danielle Callegari: Mike DeSimone: John Holl: Matt Kettmann: Kara Newman:

Oregon, Washington, Canada Tuscany & Southern Italy Spain, Croatia, Israel, Turkey, Lebanon, Armenia, Hungary Beer, Hard Seltzer Central & South Coast California

Christina Pickard: Australia, New Zealand, England, New York Jeff Porter: Piedmont & Northern Italy Emily Saladino: Greece, Georgia Reggie Solomon: Beaujolais, Loire Valley Jesica Vargas: Roger Voss:

Spirits, RTD

South America & South Africa Portugal, France: Bordeaux, Champagne, Southwest & Other France

Aleks Zecevic: Alsace, Austria, Germany

TASTING METHODOLOGY AND GOALS

All tastings reported in the Buying Guide are performed blind. Typically, products are tasted in peer-group flights of from 5-8 samples. Reviewers may know general information about a flight to provide context—vintage, variety or appellation—but never the producer or retail price of any given selection.

ABOUT THE SCORES

Ratings reflect what our editors felt about a particular product. Beyond the rating, we encourage you to read the accompanying tasting note to learn about a product's special characteristics.

Classic 98-100: The pinnacle of quality. Superb 94-97: Excellent 90-93: A great achievement. Highly recommended.

Often good value; well recommended. Very Good 87-89: Good 83-86: Suitable for everyday consumption: often good value

Acceptable 80-82: Can be employed in casual, less-

critical circumstances. Products deemed Unacceptable (receiving a rating below 80

points) are not reviewed. SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

Editors' Choice products are those that offer excellent quality at a price above our Best Buy range, or a product at any price with unique qualities that merit special attention.

Cellar Selections are products deemed highly collectible and/or requiring time in a temperature-controlled wine cellar to reach their maximum potential. A Cellar Selection designation does not mean that a product must be stored to be enjoyed, but that cellaring will probably result in a more enjoyable bottle. In general, an optimum time for cellaring will be indicated.

Hidden Gems are products which are not your typical regional finds, but should not be missed. These fun, esoteric wines are priced above \$20 and score above 87 points

Best Buys are products that offer a high level of quality in relation to price. Wines meriting this award are generally priced at \$20 or less, and are designated Best Buys after surpassing a specific quality-to-price ratio benchmark

SUBMITTING PRODUCTS FOR REVIEW

Products should be submitted as detailed in our FAQ, available online via Wine Enthusiast/submit-for-rating, Inquiries should be addressed to tastings@wineenthusiast.net. There is no charge for submitting products.

LABELS

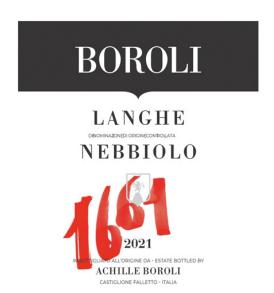
Labels are paid promotions. Producers and importers are given the opportunity to submit labels only after the reviews have been finalized and assigned to a specific issue. Labels are reproduced and printed along with tasting notes and scores. For information on label purchases, contact Denise Valenza at 813.571.1122; or email dvalenzai@wineenthusiast.net.

Find all reviews on our fully searchable database at wineenthusiast.com/ratings

AS SEEN IN DECEMBER 2023 BUYING GUIDE

WINE ENTHUSIAST.

94 Points



Boroli 2021 1661 Nebbiolo (Langhe). This evocative wine opens with aromas of fresh cherries, rosebud, thyme and mixed spices. Polished and almost pristine on the palate, the purity of red berried fruit is sublime. Fine tannins give grip but never detract from the openness of fruit, herbs, earth and minerality. Drink now–2035. Winebow Imports. *Editors' Choice.*—J.P.

abv: 14% Price: \$30