

The Cork Report

Wine of the Month

Genesis Riesling 2005

This fairly sweet Riesling from Washington's venerable Hogue is at once refreshing yet somewhat complex. Perfect for a hot summer night by itself or with food. **91**



Dopff & Irion Grand Cru Schoenenbourg Riesling 2002

True to the French Alsatian style, a fairly dry Riesling. Flavorful and rewarding from start to finish. **89**



Starling Castle Riesling 2004

This is a simple, basic, slightly sweet, easy-to-drink and affordable German Riesling. And, as we've noted before, a bottle to match the beauty of the wine. **88**



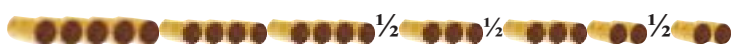
Wente Riesling 2003

A very unique blend of peachy fruit flavors and a hint of caramel. Slightly sweet with a lingering finish. Certainly a Riesling that helps set California apart from other regions. Way to go, Wente. **88**



Guide to the Cork Report

90-100	<i>Outstanding</i>
80-89	<i>Very Good</i>
70-79	<i>Good</i>
Below 70	<i>Really bad and probably won't even be mentioned</i>



John Breitlow's Picks



Ch. Ste. Michelle 2005 Dr. Loosen Columbia Valley "Eroica" Riesling

Ch. Ste. Michelle 2005 Dr. Loosen Columbia Valley "Eroica" Riesling – racy mineral notes, brisk acidity, juicy ripe peach fruit, luxurious viscosity, elegant styling, impressive balance, and a long ambrosial finish in this hemisphere's premier Riesling. **95**

Other Recommended Recent Releases (As usual, the wines have a 'California' appellation unless another is listed):

Ch. Ste. Michelle 2003 Canoe Ridge Estate Columbia Valley Cabernet Sauvignon – an exceptionally rich and round Cab with impressive length, tasty cherry fruit deftly spiced with soft subtle cinnamon and a long elegant, dusty finish: a fine premium value in an inviting and memorable estate-quality red meat wine. **94**

Clos du Val 2004 Carneros Chardonnay – impressive balance in an elegant, complex, well-made and substantial premium dinner and aperitif wine with Burgundian styling, lively citrus and tropical fruit, crisp acidity and a long tasty toasty finish. **93**

Sebastiani 2004 Russian River Dutton Ranch Vyd. Chardonnay – ultra-rich and impressive crafted premium preprandial or dinner Chardonnay with complex, buttery apple and citrus fruit, neatly balanced, round, full and elegant, superb with shellfish. **92**

Dashe 2003 Dry Creek Valley Louvau Vyd. Zinfandel – delicious full-bodied and full flavored premium red wine with luscious spicy black raspberry fruit in an elegant, long and complex single-vineyard gem from Zin's best appellation. **92**

Northstar 2003 Columbia Valley Merlot – an elegant svelte and potent super-premium red dinner wine with distinct flavors and fragrances of currants, plums, and black cherries with smooth texture whose somewhat lean entry may bloom with bottle age. **92**

Rosenblum 2005 'Kathy's Cuvée' Viognier – classy, lush, distinctive and exotic all-purpose premium white wine elegant but full and balanced with a complex panoply of fruit flavors and fragrances, great with rich cheeses, poultry, salads and veggies. **91**

Cycles Gladiator 2004 Central Coast Syrah – new Hahn Estates brand: peppery, oaky and fruity nose, rich smoky, spicy red fruit, soft tannins, mellow acidity, good with grilled lamb or ribs, distinctive, flamboyantly eye-catching Belle Epoch label. **90**

Ch. Ste. Michelle 2003 Columbia Valley Merlot – well-crafted, serious but approachable red wine with abundant ripe cherry fruit, good balance, smooth texture, mild acidity and tannins, ideal for grilled salmon, beef, lamb or hearty pasta, good premium value. **90**

Dry Creek Vyd. 2002 Sonoma Merlot – mellow and tasty, an artful St. Emilion-styled premium blend of ripe lush Merlot with firm Cabernets, displaying ample ripe berry fruit and impressive balance with a silky mouthfeel and long finish. **90**

Gallo 2003 Sonoma Coast Pinot Gris Reserve – rich and ripe, good value white cocktail and dinner wine, with inviting, blossomy peach and pear fruit, hints of spice, pleasant companion for fish, salads, pasta and veggies, lush texture. **90**

Hahn Estates 2004 Monterey Merlot – well-modulated general-purpose red dinner wine with rich bright cherry fruit, hints of blueberries, mellow tannins, lively acidity in the finish, ideal for barbecued ribs or summer picnic fare. **89**

Ch. Ste. Michelle 2003 Columbia Valley Pinot Gris – crisp acidity nicely balances a smooth mellow texture, with flavors and fragrances of honeydew melons and green apples plus an elegant floral finish, ideal with creamy shellfish, good value. **88**

McWilliam's 2005 Hanwood Estate SE Australia Riesling – drier styling in a good-value all-purpose Riesling with fragrant citrus acidity and nice balance, clean finish, good with mild cheeses, veggies, shellfish, and Asian fare. **88**

Georges Duboeuf 2004 Pouilly-Fuissé – a pleasant and attractive all-purpose premium white Burgundy wine, just off-dry with fine balance, roasted almond fragrances, amply fruity, racy acidity, classic green-golden color, nice regional character. **88**

Kendall-Jackson 2003 Vintner's Reserve Zinfandel – clean, medium-bodied perky but serious red wine with zesty raspberry and zingy blackberry fruit with hints of oak and spice in the lively finish ideal with Italian cuisine or picnic fare, good value. **88**

Canyon Road 2004 Chardonnay – smooth, pleasant, all-purpose good-value white carafe and table wine with decent varietal character, medium body, melon-citrus-tropical fruit, subtle oak, especially good with fish or shellfish. **86**

See past wine reviews at
www.wineheads.com