

star selections



2003 Cloudline Willamette Valley Pinot Noir (\$19) Dreyfus Ashby, the importer for the long-established Burgundy *négociant* Joseph Drouhin, asked Véronique Drouhin-Boss of Oregon's Domaine Drouhin to help it produce this affordable, compelling Pinot Noir. The 2003's sweet berry fruit is balanced by its supple tannins.



2003 Potel-Aviron Morgon Côte du Py Vieilles Vignes (\$20) Burgundy producer Nicolas Potel and partner Stephane Aviron match Burgundian winemaking techniques—oak aging, open-top fermentation rather than sealed vat—with fruit from the top Beaujolais *crus* for wines like this ageworthy Morgon.



2002 Jean-Claude Boisset Chambolle-Musigny (\$51) In 2002 Jean-Charles Boisset hired winemaker Grégory Patriat, formerly of the renowned Domaine Leroy, to help revamp this underperforming *négociant* label into an ambitious hybrid of *négociant* and grower. The '02 Chambolle-Musigny is lithe and taut, its raspberry flavors touched with anise notes.

2004 3 Rings Barossa Valley Shiraz (\$20)

Australian cult winemaker Chris Ringland, grape-grower David Hickinbotham and American importer (and F&W contributing editor) Dan Philips are the talents behind the new *négociant* project 3 Rings. They scoured Australia's Barossa Valley for the right vineyards to produce this intensely aromatic Shiraz loaded with black raspberry flavor.

2002 Cameron Hughes Lot 7 Knights Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (\$20)

Cameron Hughes escaped from a job managing the distribution of million-case-production bargain wines—"It was like selling dog food," he recalls—to establish his own San Francisco-based company, which buys surplus lots of high-quality wine from top California estates to create bottlings like this juicy, curranty Cabernet.

2001 Oriol Alma de Llicorella (\$35)

Josep Maria Fuentes of Spain's Priorato region is just one of the star winemakers enlisted by Oriol owner John Hunt to produce designer cuvées from vineyards in Europe, Australia and America. The ripe '01 Alma de Llicorella—a blend of Garnacha, Cariñena, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah from Priorato vineyards—shows black plum fruit and mineral tannins.

2001 Paisajes VII (\$32)

Barcelona's top wine merchant Quim Vila works with Rioja producer Miguel Ángel de

Gregorio of Finca Allende to create an evolving selection of single-vineyard Riojas. The Paisajes VII, from the great 2001 vintage, is made with 100 percent Garnacha grapes from a tiny, ancient vineyard near the village of Aguilar. It's dark and powerful, lifted by hints of mint.

2003 Deux Montille Rully Blanc 1er Cru Rabourcée (\$35)

Brother and sister Etienne and Alix de Montille (children of Burgundy legend Hubert de Montille) focus primarily on white wines, signing long-term contracts with growers to assure themselves more viticultural control. The results are impressive: The bright apple and mineral flavors of this profound Rully unfurl gracefully with each sip.

2003 Dujac Fils & Père Puligny-Montrachet (\$55)

Fils (son) Jérémy and *père* (father) Jacques Seysses of Domaine Dujac fame draw on carefully selected grapes from seven local estates for their *négociant* project founded in 2000. This gentle Puligny has the lush, low acidity of the vintage, and ends on a note of stony earth.

2004 Lost Highway Project Bindi Macedon Ranges Pinot Noir (\$75)

Vine Street Imports owner Ronnie Sanders enlists top American and Australian winemakers for his one-off Lost Highway Project bottlings, creating extravagant wines like this velvety, earthy Pinot Noir from sought-after boutique Australian producer Bindi.