

CONNOISSEURS' GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA WINE



Cabernet Sauvignon



Huge Bear



🌸🌸 91 HUGE BEAR Sonoma County 2006

Huge bear on the label. Huge wine in the bottle. Inky in color, full and fleshy in feel, incredibly rich in oak with lots of outgoing black fruit and coffee tones in both nose and mouth, this wine is nothing if it is not outsized. It is bound to bother purists because it owes little to classic structure, and despite its evident tannins, the wine is one for the here and now. Just be sure to pair it up with savory hunks of meat.



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"super seconds", places like Bejeune, Las-Cases and Pichon Lalande—not all that surprising considering that their wines sell for multiple hundreds of dollars.

But, what one does see is a eight dozen or so red wines from producers whose offerings sell in a range from \$30 to \$100 and occasionally more. These are wines that compete on a price basis directly with the majority of California

and... grapes and... wine in the... winery are always going to rise to the... top. It is the rest of the list that tells us how good a vintage is.

And even though there are distinct differences in style between Bordeaux-grown and California Cabernet-based wines in depth, structure, richness, there is also a competition between them for consumer dollars. In the last

...potential both here and there. But the wines are as different as they are likely to be in such vintages. Bordeaux 2006s are more structured than in some past, riper vintages while California wines, except for the very best, are somewhat less deep. The choice then will come down to price and to stylistic preference. For our part, we will partake in wine from both sides of the pond. One set is not better than the other this year—just different.

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