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WINE ENTHUSIAST[®]

DECEMBER 2019

TOP 100 CELLAR SELECTIONS OF 2019

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BLUE-CHIP BOTTLES

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NORTHERN RHÔNE



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THE COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

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2019

42

These ageworthy beauties are built for a lifetime of memories.

BY THE EDITORS OF
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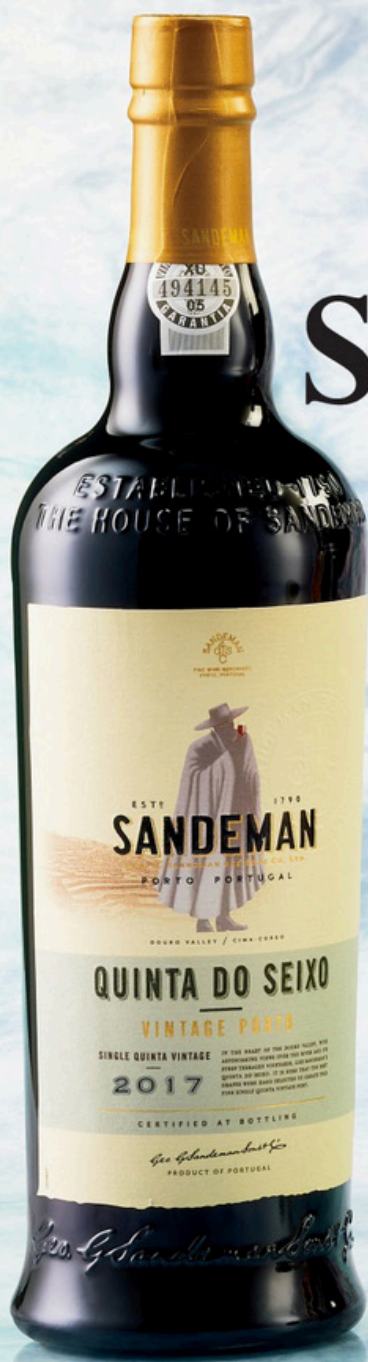
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TOP 100 CELLAR SELECTIONS 2019

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Stashing away bottles for later is not common practice for every wine lover. We generally live in the here and now, opting for immediate gratification over delayed. However, in some cases, popping open a special bottle of well-aged wine can be much more transcendent than enjoying it young.

Beyond the fact that aged bottles can show immense depth, complexity and balance, we can't forget about wine's ability to transport you to a certain time and place. Celebrating a fifth wedding anniversary might be made more nostalgic by enjoying a bottle that was served on the momentous occasion. Reliving a past trip to a winery could be enhanced by popping open procured bottles five, 10 or 15 years later. The aromas, flavors and impressions of wine can help you revel in your past experiences.

To guide you with finding the special bottles that will stand the test of time, every year we release our Top 100 Cellar Selections list—a ranking of the best wines to age that are available now. This year's list boasts eight 100-point wines from the iconic regions of Bordeaux, Champagne and the Douro Valley in Portugal. However, the full collection is stocked with options from around the globe, including Argentina, California, Italy and beyond.

While some selections carry a hefty price tag, more than 80 of them are \$100 or under, making this list not only incredibly quality driven—the average score is 95 points—but also immensely value conscious.

So, with that in mind, turn the page for a list of the best wines to buy now and age that we hope will offer a gateway to creating new memories in the years to come.



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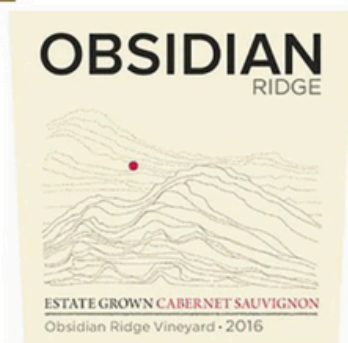
96 Isole e Olena 2016 Cepparello (Toscana).

Cedar, pipe tobacco, black-skinned fruit and balsamic aromas shape the nose along with French oak and iris. Full bodied and elegant, the savory palate has nice weight, doling out mature Marasca cherry, black plum, espresso, orange zest and spice while fresh acidity keeps it balanced. It's still young, with tight-knit tannins, and needs time to come into its own. Drink 2023–2036. Petit Pois. —K.O.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$95

42

**94 Obsidian Ridge 2016 Estate Grown Cabernet Sauvignon (Red Hills).**

A deep, dark color and generous black-fruit aromas lead to well-extracted flavors of blackberry, blueberry and black currant on the palate, while a thick blanket of fine-grained tannins wraps it all in. It is huge in structure but matched by luxurious, layered fruit and spice flavors. Best from 2023–2033. —J.G.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$32

43

96 Cockburn's 2017 Port. This wine's opulent

intensity comes from the powerful tannins. A jammy blackberry flavor shines through and is lifted by bright acidity. Depth and structure ensure long-term aging. Drink from 2030. Premium Port Wines, Inc. —R.V.

abv: 20.5%

Price: \$95

44

**95 Travaglini 2013 Riserva Gattinara.**

Focused and loaded with finesse, this wine opens with aromas of rose, wild herbs, camphor and a whiff of dark spice. The bright palate offers precision and youthful tension, delivering sour cherry, cranberry, licorice, orange rind and iron notes alongside fine-grained tannins and vibrant acidity. Drink 2021–2033. Taub Family Selections. —K.O.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$60

45

94 Harper Voit 2016 Maresh Vineyard Old Vine Riesling (Dundee Hills).

Stunning aromatics combine spicy citrus, tangy tropical fruit and spun sugar notes. It's tart, racy and complex, with the structure to age for 15 years or longer, but delicious already. The vines date back to the early 1970s. Drink through 2034. —P.G.

abv: 12.6%

Price: \$30

46

95 Bucci 2016 Villa Bucci Riserva (Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi Classico).

Delicate, enticing scents of Spanish broom, botanical herbs, beeswax and ripe citrus shape the nose. Linear and supremely elegant, the vibrant palate delivers ripe yellow peach, apricot, grapefruit and mineral alongside tangy acidity. A classic varietal note of bitter almond graces the lingering finish. Hold for even more complexity. Drink through 2026. Empson USA Ltd. —K.O.

abv: 13.5%

Price: \$61

47

**98 Realm Cellars 2016 Houyi Vineyard (Napa Valley).**

This wine is deeply red-fruited in rich flavors of currant and cherry that are complemented by accents of pencil shavings, dried herb and turned earth. The wine evolves constantly in the glass, and is confounding in its grippy, wide tannins and firm structure. Enjoy 2026–2036. —V.B.

abv: 14.6%

Price: \$250

48

94 Château de Montmirail 2016 Cuvée de Beauchamp (Gigondas).

Hints of crushed stone, savory dried thyme and lavender accent lush blackberry and cherry flavors in this wine. A blend of Grenache, Mourvèdre and Syrah, it's lavishly textured but anchored by restraint and earthiness. It drinks beautifully already but should improve through 2028. Kindred Vines. —A.I.

abv: 14.5%

Price: \$35

49

**94 Trisaetum 2018 Wichmann Dundee Riesling (Dundee Hills).**

This wine shows superb concentration and pinpoint focus. It's loaded with flavors of Meyer lemon, grilled pineapple and lemon drop candy. Delicious already, it could easily last through 2035. —P.G.

abv: 11.1%

Price: \$32