

# WONDERFUL WORLD OF WINE

With more than three decades of tasting experience, **James Suckling** has visited countless wineries around the world. He is always venturing into new territories to experience the people, places and tastes of each wine destination. Anyone looking for great wine, charming landscapes and a warm welcome should check out some of his favourite bottles and the properties that stock them

## CHÂTEAU SMITH HAUT LAFITTE PESSAC-LÉOGNAN BLANC 2015, FRANCE

**98 points**

Very subtle and complex, with sliced cooked apples, pie crust and hints of oyster shell as well as iodine. Full-bodied, tight and layered with mineral and true terroir character. Just a touch of seamless tannins.

Solid and fresh. Needs decanting young. Serious for ageing. Better in 2020.

Bordeaux's prestigious Château Smith Haut Lafitte is one of the few châteaux in the region that makes superb dry whites and reds. The five-star hotel Les Sources de Caudalie is just next door and boasts a Michelin-starred restaurant and a luxurious spa. You'd be hard-pressed to find a better place to enjoy a top glass of wine against a scenic backdrop of vineyards.



## CLOS APALTA VALLE DE APALTA 2014, CHILE

**100 points**

Aromas of fresh herbs, and dark berry and floral undertones. Hot stone character. Full body, very linear and ultra-fine tannins. The precision and perfection here is impressive, as it has always been. A blend of carménère, cabernet sauvignon and merlot. Drink or hold.

The Clos Apalta Residence is the private home of the owner of Chile's iconic Clos Apalta, which is the only wine in South America to receive two back-to-back 100-point scores from James Suckling. The small hotel boasts beautiful views of the Colchagua Valley, as it is nestled in the hills of Apalta, and has an excellent restaurant.



## VIK VALLE DE COLCHAGUA VIK 2015, CHILE

**98 points**

Great class on the nose with violet, lavender, currant and blueberry. Very perfumed. Full body, ultra-fine tannins with great finesse and polish. So long and focused. Subtle complexity. One of the new cult wines of Chile. 2020 release.

85% cabernet sauvignon and 15% cabernet franc. Drink in 2021.

Vik produces beautiful and silky wines and is vying with some of the best wines in Chile. Its futuristic winery and hotel is designed by local architect Smiljan Radic. Its undulating roof made of bronzed titanium is inspired by the surrounding mountains.



## CHÂTEAU LAFAURIE-PEYRAGUEY SAUTERNES 2015, FRANCE

**97 points**

Try to imagine the most beautiful exotic-fruit coulis and you have an idea of how this new style of Sauternes smells. Stunning concentration and purity of flavour. The knife-edge acidity electrifies the palate and turns the finish into a fireworks display of fruit and mineral freshness. You could drink this now but it's got enormous ageing potential.

The Lalique hotel and restaurant at Chateau Lafaurie-Peyraguey is one of the newest chateau hotels in Bordeaux. It opened in June and its restaurant, which has an extensive cellar, is tipped to be recognised quickly by Michelin. It shares the same ownership as the esteemed French crystal maker Lalique.

## CASTIGLION DEL BOSCO BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO ZODIAC RISERVA 2011, ITALY

**96 points**

A beautiful and tensioned 2011 with full to medium body, superfine tannins and a long, tangy and polished finish. Fresh acid backbone. Wonderfully crafted, showing a deft hand in winemaking for a very hot year. Drink now or hold.

The luxurious Rosewood Castiglion del Bosco is the brainchild of Massimo Ferragamo, one of the board members of the famous Tuscan fashion company.

Built around an ancient villa, the gorgeous property features a fantastic restaurant and an 18-hole golf course.

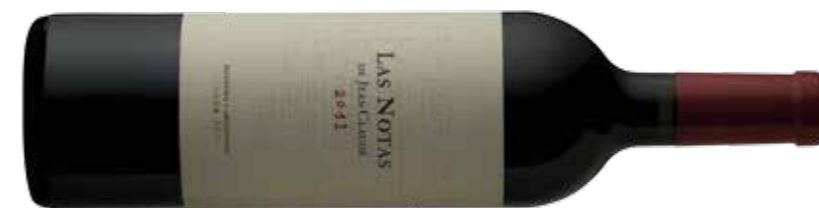


## SAN FELICE TOSCANA PUGNETELLO 2013, ITALY

**95 points**

This is layered and structured, with excellent ripe tannins and fruit. Full and softly textured yet with a vibrant end to it. One to watch. Very Super Tuscan. Drink or hold.

Located about half an hour's drive from Siena, San Felice is one of the top wineries in the region and makes excellent Chianti Classicos as well as vibrant Super Tuscan. Equally compelling is its luxury hotel and restaurant attached to the winery, Borgo San Felice.



## TAPIZ MENDOZA LAS NOTAS DE JEAN CLAUDE 2012, ARGENTINA

**95 points**

A really exciting new wine. Love the intensity and richness, with lovely ripe fruit and lightly toasted oak character. Black olive and berry. Full body, firm and silky finish. 91% merlot with petit verdot, cabernet franc and cabernet sauvignon. Better in 2019.

Bodega Tapiz, about half an hour's drive from Mendoza, is an eco-friendly winery with a small boutique hotel called Club Tapiz, which has an excellent restaurant.

**T** To see more top wines from around the world, visit [jamesuckling.com](http://jamesuckling.com)

## TAYLOR FLADGATE VINTAGE PORT VARGELLAS VINHA VELHA 2011, PORTUGAL

**96 points**

Beautiful nose of flowers with plum and cherry; more like a fine table wine on the nose. Full body, medium sweet, with super-refined tannins and a long, superb finish. Only 310 cases produced of this foot-trodden wine from 19th-century vines at the Vargellas estate. Try in 2022.

Port collectors know that Taylor is one of the best names in fortified wine, and just opposite one of its main port lodges in Vila Nova de Gaia is a fantastic property, the Yeatman Hotel. The views from the rooms looking across the Douro River to the city of Porto are as spectacular as Taylor's 100-point 2016 Vintage Port.



## MARQUÉS DE RISCAL RIOJA 150 ANIVERSARIO GRAN RESERVA 2010, SPAIN

**95 points**

Nothing showy about this on the nose, although the discreet black fruit and chocolate notes are appealing. Excellent ripeness and concentration. Very polished and refined. Drink now.

Hotel Marqués de Riscal is one of the most amazing buildings on a winery in the world. It was designed by Frank Gehry, and its multicoloured facade of metals is a bold contrast to the colonial architecture of the winery. The restaurant serves solid local cuisine with aged bottles from the bodega. They might even have your birth year available.



## IL BORRO VALDARNO DI SOPRA PETRUNA 2015, ITALY

**95 points**

Fantastic aromas of crushed berry and walnut follow through to a full body, soft and silky tannins and a savoury, gorgeous finish. One year on the skins in Tuscan ceramic amphora, 450 litres. 3,000 bottles. The village and 400-hectare Il Borro estate were once the private hunting grounds of the Italian royal family. It took the head of the Ferragamo fashion group to transform it with the winery and the luxurious Il Borro Relais & Châteaux. The winery produces exciting reds primarily from sangiovese and syrah.

