



50 Great Wines of 2014

January 7, 2015
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Unbate your breath, My Readers, today I present the annual “50 Great Wines” entry, this edition for 2014. I posted to BiggerThanYourHead 135 times in 2014 and reviewed 582 wines. These 50 Great Wines represent 8.6 percent of the wines I reviewed last year. How do I choose the 50 wines for this honor? First, any wine that I rated Exceptional automatically gets a berth in the roster. After that, the selection process involves going back over every post, looking at the reviews of the wines that received an Excellent rating, reading the notes again and looking for the words or phrases signifying that I felt a wine was exciting, provocative, intriguing, highly individual. You can be sure that this list probably isn’t definitive; how could such a selection of wines be? I cut from the field many wines that could easily have been included, but the limit is 50 and they had to be sacrificed. Even as I clicked on the “Publish” button on WordPress I thought, “Oh no, how could I leave out?”

Going through these wines, many of My Readers may cry “Foul!” because some of them were produced in severely limited quantities, but that’s often the case with great wines. Think of the situation as a challenge wherein you face a sort of scavenger hunt in tracking such wines down. Some of these wines were made by well-known winemakers for prominent wineries or estates; others are far more obscure, but I enjoy bringing attention to young, small, family-owned and -operated properties that otherwise might not receive the exposure they deserve. The usual suspect grapes are included, of course — chardonnay and sauvignon blanc, cabernet sauvignon and pinot noir — but you will also find on this list proponents of trousseau gris and grenache gris, carignane and cinsault, crafted by brave pioneers of the unusual, even rare grapes. With one exception — the Dolce 2005 — these products are the current releases from their wineries, or close to it. I think all of them were samples for review or were tasted at the property. I hope this

list of 50 Great Wines inspires you to look for the ones that capture your interest and to try wines you never encountered before. Prices, by the way, range from about \$22 to \$120. Coming in a few days will be my annual list of 25 Great Bargain Wines \$20 and Under.

Phifer Pavitt Date Night Sauvignon Blanc 2013, Napa Valley. 14.5% alc. 588 cases. Exceptional. About \$30.<http://biggerthanyourhead.net/.../07/50-great-wines-of-2014/>