

fierce now, and the wine shows a precocious immaturity that makes it somewhat coarse. But it clearly has the structure to age well. Should glide through the next dozen years with ease. Production was 875 cases. **Cellar Selection.** —S.H.

94 Yates Family Vineyard 2007 Alden Perry Reserve (Mount Veeder); \$55. Impressive from start to the very long finish, and even better than the splendid '06. Rich and full-bodied, this Bordeaux blend is marked by soft, sweet tannins and concentrated, oak-infused flavors of blackberries, black currants and chocolate, with complexing notes of olives and smoked meats. Should develop for up to a decade. —S.H.

93 Joel Gott 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon (Stags Leap District); \$45. Rich and elaborate, a crowd pleaser to satisfy just about any Cabernet lover. Although it's potent in classic blackberry and cassis flavors, it shows a dryness and balance that you could call Bordeaux-style. Should develop easily for a decade in the cellar. **Cellar Selection.** —S.H.

93 JR Wine 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Rutherford); \$65. One taste is all it takes to know this is a fine, dramatic and important Cabernet, but it's also an immature one. The tannins leap up and lock down the palate with dusty astringency. The cherry fruit is fresh and primary, almost jammy in its immediate sweetness. There are notes of blackberries and blueberries. All the parts are obviously there to maintain this wine for a good ten years in the cellar. **Cellar Selection.** —S.H.

93 Phifer Pavitt 2007 Date Night Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley); \$75. This is an elaborately constructed wine, rich in fruit and tannins, and far better than the rather ordinary 2006. But it's nowhere near ready to drink now. Erupts with ripe, juicy blackberries, black cherries, minerals and sweet cassis. The grapes are from the Pope Valley region. Very big, bold and dramatic, but immature. Hold for a good six years. **Cellar Selection.** —S.H.

93 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2007 Fay Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley); \$105. This is a very strongly flavored Cabernet, most notable for the intensity of its blackberry, cherry and raspberry fruit. It's almost sweet, an impression furthered by the caramel of toasted oak, although in reality the wine is fully

and appropriately dry. Delicious and flashy, it should evolve in the bottle over the next dozen years. —S.H.

92 Clif Family 2007 Kit's Killer Cab Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley); \$38. A dark, big, gutsy wine, full-bodied and dry, and filled with ripe, exuberant flavor. Blackberries, cherries, cassis and smoky oak flood the mouth, bright, delicious and complex, and with a very long finish. This is a serious Cabernet Sauvignon that will evolve in the bottle, but is fine to drink now. —S.H.

92 John Anthony 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Oak Knoll); \$56. Young and vigorous, with immature primary fruit flavors of blackberries and cherries. The oak is sweet and elaborate, but unintegrated, while the tannins are perfect Napa, all rich and complicated. This fine bottle needs at least five years in the cellar to begin to come around. **Cellar Selection.** —S.H.

92 Michael-Scott 2006 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley); \$35. A terrific 100% Cabernet, and a relative bargain at this price. It's a rich wine, smooth and soft in blackberry, cassis, cedar and spice flavors, with a milk chocolate finish. Appealing now. Production was 600 cases. —S.H.

92 Shafer 2006 Hillside Select Cabernet Sauvignon (Stags Leap District); \$215. Young, tannic and juicy, filled with sweet blackberry, cherry and cassis flavors, and well oaked, having been aged in 100% new French barrels. Those are the raw facts. The wine itself shows the pedigree of this fine estate, and will no doubt pick up bottle nuances over the years. But it seems to lack the precision of the great 2001, 2003 and 2004 vintages. Try after 2012. **Cellar Selection.** —S.H.

92 Stag's Leap Wine Cellars 2007 Cask 23 Cabernet Sauvignon (Napa Valley); \$195. Made from 100% Cabernet Sauvignon and aged in mostly new French oak, this is a very elaborate wine. It's quite good, a full-bodied, powerful Cab with a molten core of blackberries and black currants and, of course, a thick, dry layer of firm tannins. It does not seem to have quite the depth of vintages from certain earlier vintages, but it should develop nicely in the cellar over the next decade or longer. —S.H.

92 Summers 2006 Checkmate (Napa Valley); \$100. Held back for four-plus years before release, this Bordeaux blend has become softly gentle and approachable. It's rich in cherry, raspberry and cassis flavors, with a gorgeous, plump coating of sweet, toasted oak. Drink over the next five years. —S.H.

92 Swanson 2007 Alexis Cabernet Sauvignon (Oakville); \$75. Made with 19% Merlot, this Cabernet's tannins are quite hard and firm, giving it a tight astringency. Even so, the underlying fruit is so powerful, it breaks through in a mouthburst of blackberries, black cherries, black raspberries and an oaky, smoky richness that's almost chocolate. A very fine, intense and ageworthy wine that should develop bottle complexity over the next decade or more. **Cellar Selection.** —S.H.

92 Vinum Cellars 2007 The Scrapper Cabernet Franc (El Dorado County); \$30. A 100%-Cabernet Franc from mountainous El Dorado County! This wine's crazy good with tons of varietal character—woody tannins, touch of green pepper, vials of violets—that's also packed with plenty of great plum, cassis and savory notes of leather and mocha, all in a memorable package. With plenty of grip and acid, enjoyed over a meal, it gets better by the minute and has the depth to age 5–10 years, too. —V.B.

92 Y Rousseau 2008 Le Roi Soleil Cabernet Sauvignon (Mount Veeder); \$65. An interesting wine you can call intellectual. Its appeal is as much conceptual as hedonistic. It's the opposite of today's soft, sweet fruit bombs, being bone dry and somewhat austere, showing a tightly knit tannic structure. With an explosive, but controlled, central core of blackberries, it's a cellar candidate. It will be fascinating to try this wine after 2014. **Cellar Selection.** —S.H.

92 Yates Family Vineyard 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon (Mount Veeder); \$48. Tastes immature now, an awkward combination of ripe, intense mountain fruit, oak, tannins and acidity, none of which has come together yet. It's a bold, masculine wine, rich in blackberries, cherries and minerals, but it wants a good 5–6 years to meld. —S.H.

91 Concannon 2007 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (Livermore Valley);