

Wine Spectator Insider

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THE *Wine Spectator Insider* features four classic-rated West Coast wines this week, and another three classics from Italy. From California, James Laube reviews 17 more Pinot Noirs from the increasingly impressive 2007 vintage. (For more 2007 California Pinot Noir reviews, see the May 26, June 1 and June 8 California Tasting Highlights.) Three of the Pinots featured in this issue earn 96 points; you'll find them among the Hot Wines, on page 4. Also here are a pair of 2006 California Pinots, as well as an outstanding Napa Merlot reviewed by Tim Fish.

The top-scoring wine in this report, however, comes from Washington, where Harvey Steiman awards 98 points to a limited-production dessert wine with a track record for classic ratings. Syrahs, Cabernets and other red blends round out this week's selection of Washington wines. Finally, James Suckling reviews a half-dozen Barolos from the outstanding 2005 vintage in Italy's Piedmont region.

California

FOXEN

Pinot Noir Sta. Rita Hills Sea Smoke Vineyard 2007
94 points | \$75 | 475 cases made | Red

Beautifully crafted, with pure, rich, supple and layered dark berry fruit built around blueberry, blackberry and huckleberry flavors that hold their focus, ending with a delicate, detailed finish. Drink now through 2014.—J.L.

FULCRUM

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Split Rock Vineyard 2007
94 points | \$54 | 50 cases made | Red

A gorgeous young wine with impeccable balance, this zeros in on a tight core of ripe cherry and wild berry fruit, with shades of mineral, pebble and loamy earth. Full-bodied, well-structured, complex and persistent. Drink now through 2014.—J.L.

LANDMARK

Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast Kanzler 2007
94 points | \$65 | 350 cases made | Red

Very ripe, with great depth, touching on berry jam. Yet this is balanced, complex, focused and pure, with lively wild berry and black cherry fruit framed by spicy notes and firm tannins. Drink now through 2014.—J.L.

PETER MICHAEL

Pinot Noir Santa Lucia Highlands Le Moulin Rouge Pisoni Vineyard 2007

94 points | \$95 | 332 cases made | Red

Delicious, rich and concentrated, with tiers of pure black cherry, plum and wild berry flavors that are intense and well-structured, ending with a long, full finish. Drink now through 2015.—J.L.

BLACK KITE

Pinot Noir Anderson Valley Redwoods' Edge 2007
93 points | \$52 | 219 cases made | Red

Offers a delicious core of ripe, firm wild berry and blackberry fruit, with a touch of anise, raspberry and sage. Full-bodied, focused, sleek and refined, this keeps the fruit front and center from start to finish. Drink now through 2012.—J.L.

BLACK KITE

Pinot Noir Anderson Valley River Turn 2007
93 points | \$52 | 195 cases made | Red

Elegant and refined, offering spicy plum, raspberry and wild berry fruit that's pure and delicious. Full-bodied, with hints of sage, wilted rose and loamy mineral notes that gain traction on the finish. Drink now through 2013.—J.L.