

58

## CALIFORNIA

*St. Francis Chardonnay Sonoma Valley Estate Reserve 1992*

91 \$15

The first St. Francis Chardonnay to clear the bar into the outstanding category since 1986 is a beautifully crafted wine that finishes smooth and creamy. (2,500 cases)

SARA MATTHEWS



HERMITAGE DOESN'T GET MUCH BETTER THAN THE 1990 J.L. CHAVE FROM ICONOCLAST GÉRARD CHAVE.

DEC. 31, 1994 • WINE SPECTATOR



59

## CALIFORNIA

*Truchard Chardonnay Napa Valley Carneros 1992*

91 \$16

After a few bumpy attempts, this Napa Valley winery found the key to outstanding Chardonnay with its 1991 and takes it up a notch with this intense, lively wine. (682 cases)

60

## CALIFORNIA

*Beringer Chardonnay Napa Valley Private Reserve 1992*

91 \$17

Beringer Private Reserve Chardonnay struggled in the mid-1980s, but winemaker Ed Sbragia hit his stride in the '90s, regularly producing bold, ripe and deftly balanced wines like this one. (12,000 cases) Sbragia Limited Release 1992 (93, \$25) is even smoother and creamier (but only 300 cases).

61

## SPAIN

*Pesquera Ribera del Duero Crianza 1991*

91 \$18

This is the fifth Top 100 appearance for Pesquera, a perennial favorite for its deep color, rich flavor and ripe fruit character, which this one has in profusion. (18,000 cases)

62

## SPAIN

*Cune Rioja Viña Real Gran Reserva 1985*

91 \$18

A much more traditional Spanish wine than Pesquera, offering the sort of coffee and spice overtones that Rioja gains with age. Yes, Cune is just releasing its 1985 Gran Reserva. (2,000 cases)

63

## NEW ZEALAND

*Cloudy Bay Chardonnay Marlborough 1992*

91 \$19

A big bopper of a Chardonnay, built around pure fruit and an overlay of oak, a fascinating alternative to the swirling flavors of Kumeu River (No. 53), the other Kiwi contender. (10,000 cases)

64

## AUSTRALIA

*McWilliams Chardonnay South Eastern Australia Mount Pleasant 1992*

90 \$10

This is the sort of Chardonnay that put Australia on the wine-shop shelf in the United States—ripe, generous and broad, layering pear and grapefruit flavors nicely, and the price is downright cheap. (18,000 cases)

65

## WASHINGTON

*Paul Thomas Chardonnay Columbia Valley 1993*

90 \$10

Columbia Winery took over this previously uneven producer last year and promptly put this fresh, gorgeously fruity, easy-drinking wine into the bottle. At this price, we want more! (6,200 cases)

66

## CALIFORNIA

*Forest Glen Chardonnay Sonoma County 1992*

90 \$10

A négociant wine, this one came out of nowhere to show bold, ripe flavors. Could be a flash in the pan, but at \$10 it's worth grabbing. (12,000 cases)