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Coming to Las Vegas on April 29

TASTING HIGHLIGHTS

8 Springtime Wines at 90+ Points

California Chardonnay, New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, Cava and more feature in these new reviews of white and sparkling wines from across the globe, most priced less than \$30



Founded in the 1980s, Domaine Carneros is one of the most acclaimed sparkling wine houses in California. (Courtesy of Domaine Carneros)



By Rachel Whiteman

Apr 27, 2023

Tasting Highlights' wine reviews are fresh out of the tasting room, offering a sneak peek of our editors' most recent scores and notes to WineSpectator.com members.

Spring is here and summer is on the horizon, which means that crisp, refreshing wines are officially in season. We made it! From \$12, 90-point Sauvignon Blanc to 93-point California bubbly, this week's selection features white and sparkling wines from around the world. United by their liveliness, they represent a diverse range of climates, *terroirs* and winemaking techniques.

With its hallmark white pepper and stone fruit notes, Grüner Veltliner is Austria's signature white grape. Below, you'll find a version from **Winzer Krems** [<https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Winzer+Krems>] , an Austrian **cooperative** [<https://www.winespectator.com/glossary/show/id/cooperative>] of more than 800 growers, encompassing nearly 3,000 acres in the Kremstal region. Thanks to its ripe fruit and herb notes, the Kremser Wachtberg bottling is like spring in a glass, and would be tasty alongside vegetables and sharper cheeses. Winzer Krems' Riesling is also fresh and concentrated, and could make for a delicious side-by-side tasting alongside the Grüner Veltliner.

Like Kremstal, Spain's Rueda appellation has a continental climate; here, warm days and cooler nights are great for making complex wines from the Verdejo grape. **Jorge Ordoñez & Co.**

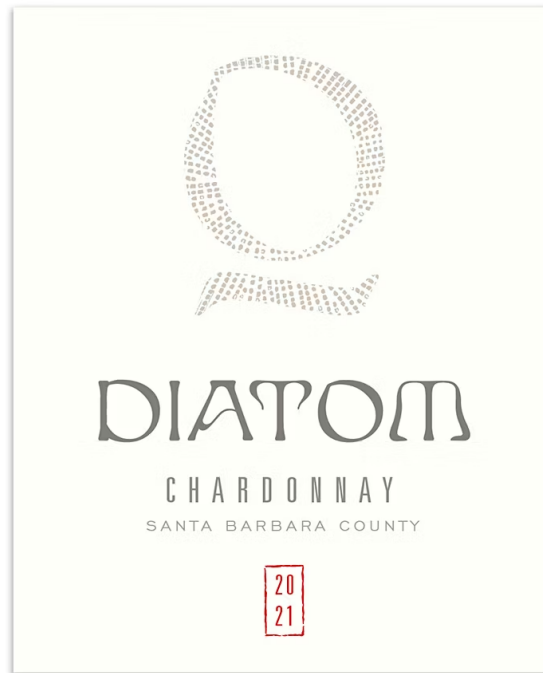
[<https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Jorge+Ordo%C3%B1ez>] 's Nisia Verdejo uses grapes from old vines with southeastern exposure; it was aged for 12 months in French oak **on its lees**

[<https://www.winespectator.com/glossary?page=1&submitted=Y&word=Sur+Lie>] , and shows an enticing combination of richness and minerality.

But what about bubbles? For years, Spain's Cava was seen as a more affordable alternative to Champagne. Today, these sparklers are celebrated in their own right, and the **U.S. market shows it**

[<https://www.winespectator.com/articles/cava-bubbles-up>] ; between 2020 and 2021, shipments of Cava into the country increased 40 percent. Yet, these impressive wines still offer fantastic value. For instance, **Juvé y Camps**

[<https://www.winespectator.com/wine/search?submitted=Y&scope=ratings&winery=Juv%C3%A9+y+Camps>] —one of Cava's leading producers—has made a 2018 **brut nature** [<https://www.winespectator.com/glossary?page=1&submitted=Y&word=brut+nature>] bottling that bursts with lively acidity and flavor at just \$23.



DIATOM

Chardonnay Santa Barbara County 2021

Score: 93 | \$25

WS review: This has a wonderful sense of restraint, with powerful Meyer lemon, yuzu and tangerine flavors mingling with peppery white flower notes and an appealing thread of sea salt crunchiness. Energetic, showing plenty of verve on the finish. Drink now. 9,000 cases made. From California.—*MaryAnn Worobiec*



DOMAINE CARNEROS

Brut Carneros Estate 2018

Score: 93 | \$38

WS review: Creamy and sumptuous, with delicately layered baked apple, brioche and toasty spice flavors that glide on the vibrant finish. Drink now. 4,250 cases made. From California.—*Tim Fish*



JORGE ORDOÑEZ & CO.

Verdejo Rueda Nisia Las Suertes Old Vines 2021

Score: 92 | \$35

WS review: A rich and creamy white in a graceful frame, with well-honed acidity enlivening flavors of nectarine, passion fruit and preserved lemon, plus delicate, aromatic notes of herb and white blossom. Hints of chalk and saline play on the lingering finish. Drink now through 2028. 1,500 cases made, 750 cases imported. From Spain.—*Alison Napjus*



WINZER KREMS

Riesling Kremstal Kremser Kreuzberg Reserve 2021

Score: 92 | \$28

WS review: A crushed gravel minerality provides the framework for peach, green pear, lychee and elderflower notes in this elegant, concentrated white. Focused and salty, with a juicy roundness that opens up on the palate, plus a thread of smoke weaving through. Laserlike acidity and fresh chive notes keep the profile very refreshing. Drink now through 2032. 1,200 cases made, 650 cases imported. From Austria.—*Kristen Bieler*



JUVÉ Y CAMPS

Brut Nature Cava Reserva de la Familia Gran Reserva 2018

Score: 91 | \$23

WS review: This is distinctive for its abundantly fragrant notes of medicinal herbs and spices, on the nose and then carried on the palate by the lively, delicate mousse. Well-knit, with vivid acidity framing flavors of macerated cherry and apricot with notes of salted almond. Macabeo, Xarel-lo and Parellada. Drink now through 2026. 208,333 cases made, 10,000 cases imported. From Spain.—A.N.

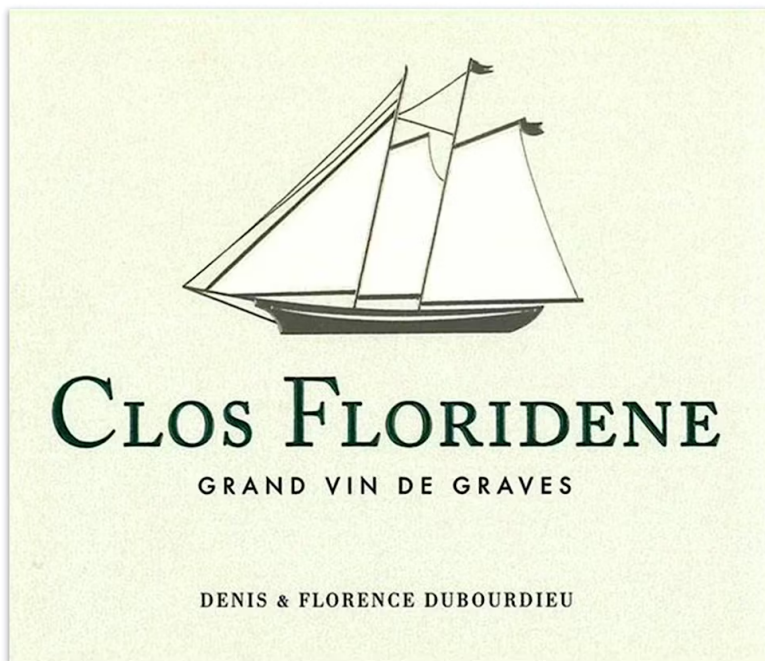


WINZER KREMS

Grüner Veltliner Kremstal Ried Kremser Wachtberg
Reserve 2021

Score: 91 | \$29

WS review: There's nice depth to the sweet pear, white peach and honey-coated green melon flavors in this white. A beam of succulent acidity and an herbaceous thread pulse through, with pink grapefruit pith marking the close. Stylish and long. Drink now through 2028. 1,500 cases made, 450 cases imported. From Austria.—*K.B.*



CLOS FLORIDÈNE

Graves White 2021

Score: 90 | \$26

WS review: A lively offering, with [i]mâche[n] and white peach notes darting through. Superclean and refreshing in feel. Sauvignon Blanc and Sémillon. Drink now. 3,500 cases made, 830 cases imported. From France.—*James Molesworth*

LOBSTER REEF

Sauvignon Blanc Marlborough 2022

Score: 90 | \$12

WS review: Tropical, with guava, pineapple and mango flavors that are generous and concentrated, while vibrant acidity runs through the core. Reveals accents of lemongrass and honeycomb on the finish. Drink now. 80,000 cases made, 42,000 cases imported. From New Zealand.—*M.W.*