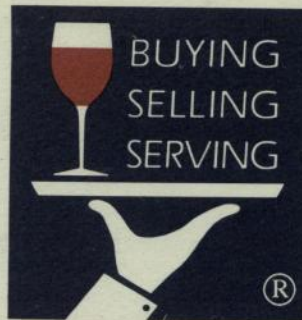


RESTAURANT WINE

The Full Service Guide to On Sale Beverage Profits



The Top Rated Best Value Wines

Looking Back & Looking Ahead at Wines from
Around the World

The market was awash in wine in 1991, much of it extremely good. Top vintages and top values from Washington state to Western Australia and from Chile to Chianti made the wine buyer's selection in 1991 among the best, and most challenging, ever encountered.

In this issue, we are pleased to provide an overview of the wines that made it to the top of our tastings as a result of the value and quality they represented. For the record, we tasted more than 4,500 new releases for the 1,210 reviews we published in 1991. Of these, only 136 wines (or 3% of the total) received our "exceptional" or 5-star (★★★★★) rating.

This designation is given to those wines which we believe are truly remarkable for their respective types, within a designated price category. By country, the USA received the most 5-star ratings (68, or 50% of the total), followed by Italy with 23 (16.9%), France with 16 (11.7%), Australia with 11 (8%), Chile with 9 (6.6%), and Germany with 3 (2.2%). Greece, Portugal, and New Zealand each had wine rated 5-star. Of the 136 wines, 103 were tasted from each country, those from Australia and Chile on average scored highest. These two countries are responsible for some of the top wine values available.

Our 1991 5-star wines are listed below, grouped by country of origin, price, winery and importer's phone numbers. Although some of the older releases are not available in many markets. Prices listed are original release prices; issue prices are in brackets, e.g., [#23]. As top-performing as these wines are, however, they represent only 10.3% of total wines tasted and 185 (4% of total wines tasted), respectively.

We have also included commentary and observations about the wine types and their styles and pricing in 1992 and beyond.



Italy

White & Red Wines

An amazing array of quality wines poured out of Italy in 1991. Good vintages (1988-1990), coupled with improving wine quality, made it a banner year for many types. However, relentless price increases eventually stifled enthusiasm for all but the best-value and most sought-after wines, a situation which is likely to repeat itself in 1992.

- CA' DEL BOSCO, 1988 "MAURIZIO ZANELLA", LOMBARDY, \$400 (\$50) [Issue 22] 45% Cabernet Sauvignon; 25% Cabernet Franc; 30% Merlot Agent: Brian Larky, St. Helena, CA (707) 963-3453