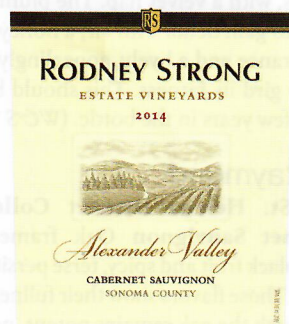


91 | Raymond \$45
2015 Napa Valley Reserve Selection Cabernet Sauvignon Recently, during a meeting of young Napa Valley winemakers at Larkmead, the discussion turned to the price of cabernet grapes and how it was becoming increasingly difficult to offer a varietally labeled cabernet from Napa Valley at a price that might encourage new wine drinkers to buy it. The least expensive cabernet anyone in the room had on offer was \$60. So I was interested to taste this \$45 wine and find a fresh, generous, full-on cabernet sauvignon. It grows at Raymond's organically farmed vineyards in Rutherford and includes some purchased fruit from Calistoga and Coombsville. Yes, it's a little heady and a touch sweet, but there's plenty of cracked-black-pepper and cardamom spice to dust the fruit in the end. And if the tough tannins yield to a softer, chocolatey note, they still hold their shape, open and ready for grilled pork. (W&S 10/18)



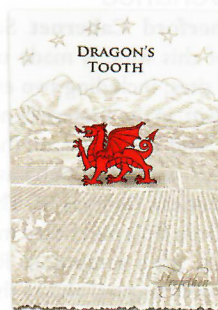
91 | Rodney Strong \$28
2014 Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (Best Buy) From four estate vineyards on the hillsides and benchlands of Alexander Valley, this is an elegant cabernet with a lean frame. The floral scents turn toward ripe plum and dark berries, while the spicy tannins have a dark walnut-skin bitterness. Rather than being weighty with extract, this has tension and motion, a counterpoint to seared duck breast or grilled portobello mushrooms. (W&S 8/18)

91 | Sebastiani \$40
2016 Sonoma County Gravel Bed Red This is a brisk cabernet sauvignon (79 percent) blended with merlot and malbec. Its cool tannins carry a dark, resinous herb character, providing a zesty counterpoint to the lush fruit sweetness. The texture is full and mellow, enlivened by fresh mineral acidity that provides a sandstone-like abrasion to the finish. Pour it with pork rillettes or other charcuterie.

91 | Spring Mountain Vineyard \$150
2014 Spring Mountain District Elivette This cabernet-based blend emphasizes floral notes of lilac, cool eucalyptus forest scents and lean tannins. Those tannins bring a bitter-chocolate and cola flavor, holding the wine youthfully tight. Built to cellar, this will become more expansive with bottle age. (W&S 10/18)

91 | Stag's Leap Wine Cellars \$145
2014 Napa Valley S.L.V. Cabernet Sauvignon The rocky soils at the Stag's Leap Vineyard produced a 2014 cabernet with fresh cut to its rich black fruit. Oak dominates the wine until air begins to bring out the detail, taking it toward vinous scents, along with notes of conifer and eucalyptus that add to the breezy freshness. For the cellar. (W&S 2/18; 3,000 cases)

91 | Stags' Leap Winery \$100
2014 Stags Leap District The Leap Cabernet Sauvignon This is 100 percent cabernet sauvignon from the Stags' Leap Winery estate, a vineyard at the base of the escarpment. It's a prime spot in Napa Valley, where cool air from the San Pablo Bay meets the warm, rocky soils, allowing cabernet to grow rich and ripe while still holding onto its freshness. This vintage is long on red fruit, clean and lasting, if strongly marked by the oak in which it aged (50 percent of the barrels were new). Yet there's plenty of juicy saturation of flavor to live past the oak. For the cellar. (W&S 10/18; 2,400 cases)



91 | Trefethen \$60
2015 Napa Valley Dragon's Tooth Focused on malbec (47 percent), this blend includes petit verdot and cabernet sauvignon, all from the Trefethen ranch in Oak Knoll. Its fruit is cool and generous, with some tobacco notes melding into darker graphite and chocolate richness in the tannins. It's a big, dense wine that carries itself with grace. (W&S 6/18; 3,800 cases)

91 | True Myth \$24
2015 Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon (Best Buy) The Niven family of Edna Valley's Paragon Vineyard base True Myth on purchased fruit from growers in Paso Robles for this cabernet. It's dark and smoky, with some restrained green-pepper notes lending a cool feeling. The toasty oak doesn't get in the way of the flavors; instead, it adds tannic richness without impeding the direction and elegance of the wine. An impressive cabernet, and a great buy at \$24. (W&S 8/18)

90 | Acumen \$150
2014 Napa Valley Peak Edcora Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon Eric Yuan purchased the Attelas Vineyard in 2012, a 32-acre site planted in 1992 by Jan Krupp. He used that property to found his winery on Atlas Peak, then added Edcora, an 84-acre vineyard 350 feet above Attelas, in 2014. Both sites are certified organic. Garrett Buckland grows the grapes and Henrik Poulsen makes the wines, including this bright, violet-scented cabernet from Edcora. Its purple fruit and petulant mountain-grown tannins will need several years in the bottle to evolve, but there's a tightly structured cabernet lying in wait, as witnessed by the long, earthy finish. (99 cases)

90 | Addendum \$90
2015 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon This is a tense, black wine with feral, gamey scents. Underneath the tannins, there's sweet, juicy and generous fruit, but for now the flavor is tied to the extract. Cellar it to let the fruit and structure align. (76 cases)

90 | Beaulieu Vineyard \$145
2014 Rutherford Georges de Latour Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon This has classic BV style written all over its elegant weight and texture, with no effort toward hyperextraction or excess. It's a black cabernet with gripping tannins that don't relent willingly with air. What's lacking is the lift that more freshness would give, but it may reveal more layers in time as the tannins release the fruit. (W&S 10/18)

90 | Charles B. Mitchell \$28
2015 El Dorado Reserve Goltz Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon A mountain wine with structure and rustic verve, this cabernet's fruit brings red tones of rhubarb and pomegranate to brighten the tannins. It ends clean, with refreshing simplicity. (100 cases)