



## **Uncovering the Best Values in California Cabernet Sauvignon**

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Every fall I publish my big Napa Valley report and every year I hear the same comment from readers. Quite understandably, consumers are increasingly frustrated by the continuing escalation of prices for Napa Valley's finest wines. But top-flight California Cabernet doesn't have to cost a fortune. These are three rules of thumb for getting the most out of your budget, along with a selection of wines that deliver exceptional quality for the money.

### **1) Focus on Napa Valley's 'Super-Seconds'**

A total obsession with quality and heated competition has pushed Napa Valley's most ambitious estates to bottle only the very best under their top label(s). What about the rest of the production? At the top properties, it is often terrific. These wines all deliver superb quality and relative value. The best of the wines below compare favorably to the flagship labels at many other estates. With the exception of David Abreu's red blend Rothwell Hyde, all of these wines can be had for less than \$100 a bottle.

#### **Top Picks**

Abreu Rothwell Hyde

Blankiet Prince of Hearts

Bryant Family Vineyards DB4

Dalla Valle Collina dalla Valle

Dominus Cabernet Sauvignon Napanook

Joseph Phelps Cabernet Sauvignon

O'Shaughnessy Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Shafer Cabernet Sauvignon One Point Five

Spottswoode Cabernet Sauvignon Lydenhurst

Seavey Cabernet Sauvignon Caravina



*Blankiet's Paradise Hills Vineyard, Yountville*

## **2) Stretch Your Horizons**

There is no getting around the fact that top Napa Valley Cabernets are often expensive, sometimes painfully so. Readers willing to look beyond Napa Valley's high-rent district will find plenty of far more affordable choices. Knights Valley, which lies in Sonoma County and borders Napa Valley's Calistoga AVA, is a terrific source for affordable Cabernet Sauvignon, as is nearby Alexander Valley. The same is true of Sonoma's newly created Moon Mountain AVA, which is perched on the Sonoma side of Mt. Veeder. The Santa Cruz Mountains produces Cabernets of rare distinction, minerality and pedigree. In Santa Barbara, Cabernets can be deep, pungent and full of earthy/savory character, while Paso Robles yields Cabernets rich with voluptuous, racy fruit. In short, the choices are many.

### **Top Picks**

**Sonoma:** Anakota Cabernet Sauvignon Helena Montana, Arnot-Roberts Cabernet Sauvignon Montecillo Vineyard, Beringer Cabernet Sauvignon Knights Valley Reserve, Dehlinger Cabernet Sauvignon, Kamen Cabernet Sauvignon

**Santa Cruz Mountains:** Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon Estate, Mount Eden Cabernet Sauvignon, Arnot-Roberts Cabernet Sauvignon Fellom Ranch

**Santa Barbara:** foxen 7200 Cabernet Sauvignon Vogelzang, Goodland Wines Cabernet Sauvignon Happy Canyon, Star Lane Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon, The Paring Red Blend

**Paso Robles:** DAOU Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve, Foxglove Cabernet Sauvignon, Viña Robles Cabernet Sauvignon Estate



*One of the fermentation rooms at Heitz Cellar, St. Helena*

### **3) Go Old-School**

Much of the explosion in pricing of Napa Valley has been driven by small-production, high-octane Cabernet Sauvignons made by owners with deep pockets. It's only within the last five years or so that some of the more traditionally leaning producers have been rediscovered. Prices of the best wines in this style have gone up in recent years, but there is still plenty of value to be found.

#### **Top Picks**

Corison Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Dunn Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Dyer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon

Forman Cabernet Sauvignon

Frog's Leap Cabernet Sauvignon

Heitz Cellar Cabernet Sauvignon

Mayacamas Cabernet Sauvignon



*The view from the newly renovated tasting rooms at Joseph Phelps, St. Helena*

### **The Best Values in California Cabernet**

★ wines that deliver an especially compelling combination of quality, personality and value

#### **\$100 and under**

Anakota Cabernet Sauvignon Helena Dakota

Anakota Cabernet Sauvignon Helena Montana

Antica Napa Valley – Antinori Cabernet Sauvignon Townsend Vineyard

Arnot-Roberts Cabernet Sauvignon Fellom Ranch

★ Arnot-Roberts Cabernet Sauvignon Montecillo Vineyard

Barnett Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Cyrus Ryan Vineyard

Behrens Family Winery Cabernet Sauvignon Moulds Vineyard

★ Blankiet Prince of Hearts

Brandlin Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon

★ Bryant DB 4 (Proprietary Red)

★Carter Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon Fortuna Vineyard  
Chimney Rock Winery Cabernet Sauvignon Clone 7  
Cimarossa Cabernet Sauvignon Rian  
★Clos du Val Cabernet Sauvignon Stags Leap District  
Corison Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley  
★Dalla Valle Collina dalla Valle  
Davies Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon J. Davies  
★Dyer Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon  
Fisher Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Mountain Estate Vineyard  
★Forman Cabernet Sauvignon  
Kamen Cabernet Sauvignon  
Keever Cabernet Sauvignon  
★Mayacamas Cabernet Sauvignon  
Moone-Tsai Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley  
★Nickel & Nickel Cabernet Sauvignon John C. Sullenger Vineyard  
Oakville Ranch Cabernet Sauvignon  
Paul Hobbs Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley  
Pride Mountain Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Vintner Select  
Robert Craig Winery Cabernet Mt. Veeder  
★Shafer Cabernet Sauvignon One Point Five  
Mark Herold Cabernet Sauvignon (Brown Label)  
★O'Shaughnessy Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain  
★Outpost Cabernet Sauvignon  
★Stonestreet Cabernet Sauvignon Rockfall  
The Grade Cabernet Sauvignon Estate

Wallis Family Estate Cabernet Sauvignon

**\$75 and under**

Ampère Cabernet Sauvignon Ampère Pine Mountain Vineyards

Anderson's Conn Valley Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon Estate Reserve

Beringer Cabernet Sauvignon Knights Valley Reserve

Beta Cabernet Sauvignon Chuy Vineyard

★Chappellet Cabernet Sauvignon Signature

Cliff Lede Cabernet Sauvignon Stags Leap District

David Ramey Cabernet Sauvignon

★DAOU Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve

David Arthur Cabernet Sauvignon Tre Vigneti

★Detert Cabernet Sauvignon

★Dominus Cabernet Sauvignon Napanook

Drinkward-Peschon Cabernet Sauvignon Entre Deux Meres

★Dunn Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Emerson Brown Cabernet Sauvignon

★Frog's Leap Cabernet Sauvignon

Grassini Cabernet Sauvignon

★Jack Quinn Cabernet Sauvignon Agave Rose Vineyard

Joel Gott Wines Cabernet Sauvignon

★Joseph Phelps Cabernet Sauvignon

La Jota Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon Howell Mountain

Lail Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Blueprint

Mt. Brave Cabernet Sauvignon Mt. Veeder

★Mount Eden Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon

Myriad Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon Three Twins Vineyard

★O'Shaughnessy Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Ramey Cabernet Sauvignon

★Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon Estate

★Rivers-Marie Cabernet Sauvignon

★Seavey Cabernet Sauvignon Caravina

Spottswoode Cabernet Sauvignon Lyndenhurst

★Teeter-Totter Cabernet Sauvignon

Turley Cabernet Sauvignon Montecillo

Vineyard 29 Cabernet Sauvignon Cru

**\$50 and under**

Arrowood Cabernet Sauvignon Sonoma County

Beckmen Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon

★Bedrock Wine Co. Cabernet Sauvignon Montecillo Vineyard

Brander Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve

Crossbarn rossbarnSauvignon Reservevignon (Sonoma)

★Dehlinger Cabernet Sauvignon

Dehlinger Claret

★Domaine Eden Cabernet Sauvignon

★Goodland Wines Cabernet Sauvignon Happy Canyon

Grassi Cabernet Sauvignon

foxen 7200 Cabernet Sauvignon Vogelzang

★Heitz Cellar Cabernet Sauvignon

Inglenook Cabernet Sauvignon 1882

Kendall-Jackson Cabernet Sauvignon Grand Reserve

Lewelling Vineyards Cabernet Sauvignon Wight Vineyard

Lone Madrone Cabernet Sauvignon

Peter Franus Wine Company Cabernet Sauvignon

Philip Togni Cabernet Sauvignon Tanbark Hill Vineyard

Robert Mondavi Winery Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley

Somerston Cabernet Sauvignon

Scherrer Cabernet Sauvignon Scherrer Vineyard

★Star Lane Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon

Stonestreet Cabernet Sauvignon Estate

**\$25 and under**

★Foxglove Cabernet Sauvignon

Louis Martini Cabernet Sauvignon

★The Paring Red Wine

Viña Robles Cabernet Sauvignon Estate

<http://www.vinous.com/articles/uncovering-the-best-values-in-california-cabernet-oct-2015>