## YEAR'S BEST US CABERNET & BLENDS

ality coating the cedar-frond and cassis flavors. With plenty of resinous oak to frame the wine and give it some tannic oomph, it could use some cellar time to integrate. (218 cases) Januik Winery, Woodinville, WA 439605

92 L'Ecole Nº 41

\$50

2012 Walla Walla Valley Perigee Seven Hills Vineyard The power of a warm vintage comes roaring through L'Ecole's Perigee in 2012, a concentrated and chewy blend of cabernet sauvignon, merlot, franc, malbec and petit verdot. Leading with leafy spice and cassis accents, this is dark and mineral, with enough fruit to carry forward all of its ferrous tannins. (W&S 10/15; 1,040 cases) L'Ecole Nº 41, Lowden, WA

92 | L'Ecole Nº 41

\$32

2012 Columbia Valley Cabernet Sauvignon Powerful and broad shouldered, this robust cabernet shows a softer side with air, bringing scents of cedar frond and gravelly minerality to go with the dark black cherry fruit. The flavors are weighty, but acidity courses through to lend them structure. Give it time to mature, then serve with lamb. (W&S 8/15) L'Ecole Nº 41, Lowden, WA 439012

92 | Mark Ryan Winery \$50 2012 Red Mountain Long Haul Mark McNeilly routinely teases complexity out of the blunt power of fruit from Red Mountain, and this blend focused on merlot and franc does not disappoint, with its scents of pepper and pine, as well as its graphite-sleek tannins. The flavors are dark and spicy, hidden behind the structure at the moment. Cellar it, then serve with a black-and-blue steak. (WざS 8/15; 1,225 cases) Mark Ryan Winery, Kirkland, WA

440665

92 | NxNW

\$40

2011 Walla Walla Valley Cabernet Sauvi**gnon** This powerful cabernet, blended from Seven Hills and Les Collines vineyard fruit, reads like a blockbuster, its dark blue cassis fruit lent complexity by a sage-like herbal note. The textures are suave and driven at once, the plum flavors in a firm but velvety frame. Impressive for the vintage. (414 cases) NxNW Winery, Eugene, OR

437895

92 | Owen Roe

\$42

2012 Yakima Valley Cabernet Sauvignon Showing a purple cast of fruit at the outset, this takes a complex turn with a day of air, the flavors exhibiting a leafy savor. Hints of mocha and other oak elements complement its cool Yakima Valley character. Impressive now, it will benefit from some aging; then serve with skirt steak. (W&S 4/15; 1,382 cases) Owen Roe, Wapato, WA

436088

92 | Sleight of Hand 2012 Columbia Valley The Illusionist Cabernet Sauvignon' As it develops in the glass, this wine's dark scents of violet petals and cassis take on a delightfully savory tinge of tar and olive, with just a hint of the umami, sun-dried tomato savor found in Horse Heaven Hills and Walla Walla fruit. The flavors are assertive and concentrated, plump and delicious up front, then faintly herbal. with evergreen accents on the close, and a supple texture that seems perfect for spring lamb dishes. (W&S 6/15) Sleight of Hand Winery, Walla Walla, WA

92 | Spring Valley Vyd. \$50 2011 Walla Walla Valley Uriah A blend of merlot, cabernet franc, petit verdot, malbec and cabernet sauvignon, this estate wine has an old-school feel-in its cedar scents and Walla Walla leafiness; in its cherry flavors and dusty tannins; and mostly in its weighty, comforting texture. The cool 2011 vintage has lent this an elegance that will gain even more definition in the cellar, if you can wait. Or pour it with a marbled steak. (W&S 2/15) Spring Valley Vineyard, Walla Walla, WA



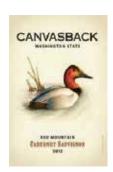
91 | Amavi

\$32

2012 Walla Walla Valley Cabernet Sauvignon' Scents of mocha and black cherry provide a generous introduction to this stylish red. With some air, the oak is more prominent, combining with the fruit and the firm, supple tannins to lend a savory impression. Give this time to knit, then serve it with shaking beef. (WざS 8/15) Amavi Cellars, Walla Walla, WA

440228 **91** Baer

2012 Columbia Valley Star Dark fruited and vinous, with a plum-skin chewiness and plenty of ripeness, this merlot blend has light tannins and a Right Bank grace that feels elegant. Pour with braised beef. (W&S 10/15; 605 cases) Baer Winery, Woodinville, WA



438956 91 | Canvasback

2012 Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon A wine that matches the power of Red Mountain tannins with the power of oak, this is a dark and spicy red, as heady and powerful as it is simple and direct, its dark plum and prune flavors marked by brown spice notes of mace and nutmeg. Give it time to grow into its structure. (W&S 8/15; 2,100 cases) Canvasback, Walla Walla, WA

439607 91 L'Ecole No 41

2012 Walla Walla Valley Apogee Pepper Bridge Vineyard Dense and fairly opaque at first pass, this cabernet-driven blend leads with a savory cherry-skin firmness and density. Dominated by tannins, with heady plum fruit pulling into view after long exposure to air, this could use time in the cellar. (W&S 10/15; 1,060 cases) L'Ecole No 41, Lowden, WA 441031

91 | Mullan Road

2012 Columbia Valley A blend of cabernet sauvignon (51 percent) with merlot and cabernet franc, this has a pretty spice that hints at the wine's complexity. With air, the core of dark cherry fruit starts to plump up the middle, a mingling of cedary oak tannins and fruit tannins lending complexity to the finish. Give it a bit of time to integrate in the cellar. (1,550 cases) Mullan Road Cellars, Walla Walla, WA

## 91 Native Sun

2010 Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon The power in this wine is Red Mountain through and through, from its dense, charry oak scents to the dark fig-cake core of fruit. The wine's dry extract is tongue staining. With air, enough of a vinous savor peeks through the density to suggest a long future. This needs years in the cellar; then serve with brisket. (W&S 6/15; 128 cases) Native Sun, Prosser, WA