

# Robb Report

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WHAT TO COLLECT NEXT  
Expert Insights on the Latest Luxury Investments



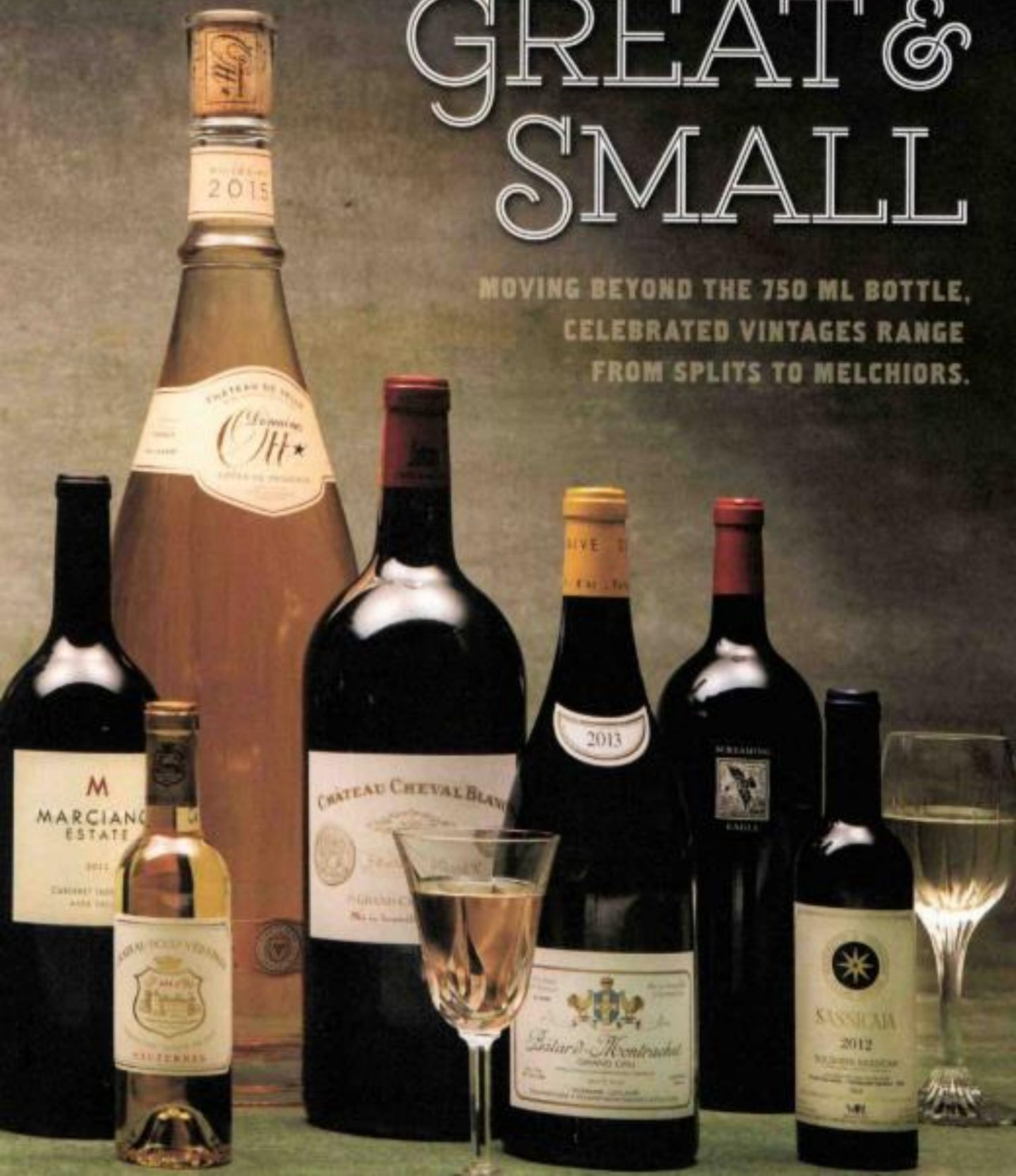
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*Plus*  
THE NEW FERRARI GTC4LUSSO  
Maranello's Practically Perfect Four-Seater



# WINES GREAT & SMALL

MOVING BEYOND THE 750 ML BOTTLE,  
CELEBRATED VINTAGES RANGE  
FROM SPLITS TO MELCHIORS.





**T**HERE IS AN OLD SAYING that everything is better in magnum. Certainly that is true of wine. But magnums, or 1.5-liter bottles, are not the only size with advantages. The half bottle, for instance, is one of the great wine formats, for two occasions in particular: when one craves just a glass of wine and opening a whole bottle will lead to either waste or feeling compelled to finish it (which might not be wise for early next-day appointments), and when one plans to have a glass of both white and red with a meal. It also makes for the perfect stocking stuffer.

The main advantage ascribed to larger formats is longevity, which is of particular value to collectors. Large bottles, especially those 3 liters and greater, slow down the aging process. Oxidation is both the friend and foe of wine. In the beginning it is a friend; as a bottle rests on its side, oxygen slowly seeps in through the cork and ages the liquid within. With a bigger bottle, there is a cork of the same size, but with a greater volume of wine, that oxidation is an even slower, smoother process.

Champagnes are especially wonderful in a larger format: There is a bigger bottle spray when the cork is popped and still plenty left to drink. The only difference with Champagne is that the bubbles reduce over time, so in a 40-year-old Champagne there may be only a slight effervescence.

The other, more fun advantage of larger bottles is that they are the ideal party format. Something unique happens when you bring out a 5-liter or larger bottle—the wow factor is genuine. And there is something about sharing out of the same bottle that brings a togetherness that just can't be achieved by serving single bottles. When each guest is tasting the exact same wine in his or her glass, it unites everyone and adds an extra dimension to the gathering.



## **KRUG NV GRANDE CUVEE**

For this wine, Krug takes great wines from multiple vintages and blends them so 1 plus 1 equals not 2, but 3. It has a richness and balance unlike any other, with its toasty flavor and bright tones that have a nectarine edge, yet it is still creamy and full. This Champagne is consistent year after year. It has a fine, tiny pinpoint bubble and is the color of golden straw. Krug is one of the Champagne houses designed for connoisseurs, and its wines are coveted by collectors. It will age well even in this small bottle. (\$95)

## **THE MASCOT 2011 CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

This is a blend of young vines from Harlan family holdings, which have some of the best vineyards in Napa Valley's Oakville region. The wine produces some similar flavors to Promontory or Harlan Estate labels, but in a more optimal drinking component. The 2011 vintage is opulent and perfect right now in a half bottle. Notes of deep, dark cassis and red fruit are balanced with slight tannins. (\$60)

## **CHÂTEAU DOISY-VÉDRINES 2012 SAUTERNES**

The demi-bottle is ideal for dessert wines; a small glass makes for a perfect end to an evening. This wine is pale yellow and has an aroma of apricot and a flavor of honeysuckle. The viscous liquid flows along your palate. This vineyard is an old estate,



producing great wine for decades, and 2012 was a very good vintage in France. (\$24)

**TENUTA SAN GUIDO 2012 SASSICAIA**

This Tuscan legend comes from the Bolgheri region, the cream of Italian vineyards. Made primarily with Cabernet Sauvignon, it has a dark ruby red fruit flavor with a touch of Tuscan soil, and aromas of tobacco. This is a great wine with Italian food and grilled fare. The year 2012 had a perfect balance of rain and sun and was dry and warm just before harvest. (\$125)



end the year, start the new year, or just begin breakfast. (\$700)

**CHIMNEY ROCK 2010 CABERNET SAUVIGNON GANYMEDE**

Chimney Rock, founded in 1981, is now considered to be a grande dame in the Stag's Leap district of Napa. The 2010 growing season yielded a fantastic vintage. The single vineyard has the oldest vines of the whole property and makes the best wines from this estate. The blend of hillside and benchland fruit creates a balance of power and grace that will allow it to age seamlessly. (\$390)

**THE CALLING 2013 PINOT NOIR RUSSIAN RIVER**

A quintessential California Pinot Noir at its best. This is purity from the Russian River region, the hub for the best Pinot Noirs in America. The delicate varietal can't handle Napa's heat, but Sonoma's sea breeze allows grapes to develop longer on the vine. This wine has a velvety quality that glides on your palate. (\$90)

**MARCIANO ESTATE 2012 CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

If this is not *the* greatest new property in Napa, it is one of the top two or three. In today's world, discovering new things is becoming more difficult. So when an exciting new estate does come along, it is a special treat. Notes of velvet chocolate milk, smooth, plush, and rich, make this wine simply delicious. (\$500)



**DOM PÉRIGNON 2005**

When you think of Champagne, you think of Dom Pérignon. It is almost unfathomable that one house has consistently produced this level of quality in vast amounts for decades upon decades. It is considered the best from Fresno to Kuala Lumpur to London. The 2005 vintage is the most recent issue from the house, and it will be one of the best beverages to ever touch your lips. It has a faint yellowish-green tint, and that is an important characteristic to understand; it hints of a full yet citrusy and bright character. The wine is made with Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Meunier grapes. Over the holidays, if you give it or drink it, you know you're special. It is a great way to

**DOMAINE LEFLAIVE 2013 BÂTARD-MONTRACHET**

This is one of the special wines of Burgundy; some of the most legendary whites in France hail from this house. This vineyard produces intense, searing, beautiful Chardonnays from vines that are 30 to 50 years old. The wine explodes in your mouth with flavors of tropical and stone fruits along with a mineral quality that goes on and on along your palate. This flavor from the soil is infused into the wine, and the mineral steam of rock comes into your glass. (\$1,400)



**CHÂTEAU  
PALMER 2012**

This wine is from one of the great estates of the Margaux area of Bordeaux. Château Palmer has been making incredible wines since the early 1900s. This blend of primarily Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon is amazing because it seems soft on the palate yet rich, and it has an incredible acidity that will age for decades and decades. Its balance is second to none. (\$630)

**SCREAMING  
EAGLE 2012**

The rarest and most sought-after Cabernet Sauvignon in America, this exemplifies the phrase "cult wine." Its plot of land is the perfect place for growing this varietal. This intense, long-aging wine tastes of blueberry and black fruit. You'll be grateful for the magnum format. (\$12,000)

**VEGA-SICILIA 1996 ÚNICO**

Vega-Sicilia, considered to be the greatest wine of Spain, is the estate that all other Spanish wines are measured by. The 1996 is its most current release. The estate believes in holding back the wine until it is ready to be consumed. That said, this will age gracefully for another three to four decades. It is rich and full bodied with a dusty olive-tree character. (\$850)



**DOMAINE DE L'ARLOT 2009  
NUITS SAINT GEORGES  
CLOS DES FÔRETS**

As you open this bottle, a beautiful cherry and raspberry aroma fills the air. Those notes follow through on the palate. This wine, made with 100 percent Pinot Noir, is well balanced and delicate, yet full and fine at the same time. (\$800)

**CHÂTEAU CHEVAL  
BLANC 2012**

Cheval Blanc is the king of Saint-Émilion. The estate is widely known for producing the very best wine. The large component of Cabernet Franc gives a wonderful earthy tone to this wine, along with very rich black fruit, and the two together create a harmony that will age for decades. It will drink well today and 10,000 days from now. Balance drives this wine. (\$2,800)

**VALDICAVA 2010  
BRUNELLO DI MONTALCINO**

This is from my favorite Brunello producer, one of the true stars of Italy. The estate's vineyards receive the exact right amount of sunlight, as Brunello is a varietal that needs a lot of sun, to create these dusty, earthy, and dried fruit flavor components. This wine will age well for five to 10 years. (\$600)

**LOUIS ROEDERER 2002  
CRISTAL SPECIAL EDITION**

When a great vintage comes along, Roederer makes this incredible limited-edition bottle—and 2002 was

one of the best years in memory for Champagne. The medallion bottle was designed by the artist Philippe Di Meo and represents his thoughts on the reflections of the sun. Only 400 bottles were made, released in 2013. Cristal is famous for having super-fine bubbles, so you get the sparkle, but it is so smooth it is almost a wine at the same time. (\$25,000)

**DARIOUSH 2013 SIGNATURE  
CABERNET SAUVIGNON**

A relative newcomer in Napa, Darioush has rapidly risen to the higher ranks of quality, and it has become known for offering such quality at a very fair price. The flavors of this wine are rich and precise. It will drink well now but will get better over the next five to 10 years. (\$500)







**ALTESINO 2010 BRUNELLO  
DI MONTALCINO  
MONTOSOLI**

Montosoli is one of the top two vineyards in Brunello—it gets a breeze that creates the perfect ripening conditions for the dark, rich Montalcino grapes. (\$700)

**CHÂTEAU MOUTON  
ROTHSCHILD 2000**

This is one of the estate's best vintages of the last 100 years. The year 2000 was a home run for the Puisseac region and completely magical for Mouton Rothschild, one of the top five properties in Bordeaux. Along with loads of Cabernet Sauvignon fruit, an essence of eucalyptus runs through that lifts the wine; the house is legendary for that. This vintage, in this format, could age 100 years. This is one to drink on your golden wedding anniversary, or your child's 20th wedding anniversary. (\$18,000)



**DOMINUS ESTATE  
2011 DOMINUS**

This vineyard is owned by Christian Moueix, one of the most famous Bordeaux personalities. He traveled to Napa in the early 1980s, found the perfect winegrowing plot, and started planting grapes. Those vines are just now hitting their peak, and

this is one of the darlings of the 2011 vintage. It consists of Cabernet Sauvignon primarily and is made in a Bordeaux style. It takes the rich, dark soils of the region and the essence of the Old World and becomes something you've never seen in the Napa Valley. (\$2,600)

**CHÂTEAU HAUT-BRION 2012**

This estate is one of the five first growths but it has the smallest production among that group. The quality is nearly peerless. The property is one of three wine estates owned by Domaine Clarence Dillon, whose namesake was an American financier who fell in love with Bordeaux and purchased the Haut-Brion estate there in 1935. Prince Robert of Luxembourg, a descendant of Clarence Dillon, is now the company's president. This wine exemplifies briary, black, stewed red fruit along with very rich black soil and a cigar-box tone. It is an incredible wine to accompany food. (\$4,200)

**DOMAINES OTT 2015  
CHÂTEAU DE SELLE CÔTES  
DE PROVENCE ROSÉ**

The perfect warm-weather wine. The 6-liter format of it is poured like water at Nikki Beach and Club 55 in Saint-Tropez. In fact, you should drink this instead of water. Along the Côte d'Azur, Domaines Ott is what you do. It has hints of dried watermelon, a touch of citrus, and is very light. (\$950)

**DOMAINE FRANÇOIS  
LAMARCHE 2013 LA  
GRANDE RUE**

Made from 100 percent Pinot Noir, this wine is one of the grand crus in Burgundy, from one of the top vineyards. It has deep, rich

blackberry and blueberry flavors with strawberry compote. It is so smooth and so plush. (\$4,000)



**DOMAINE DU PEGAU  
2007 CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-  
PAPE CUVÉE DA CAPO**

This bottle weighs as much as a case of wine, about 30 to 35 pounds. In one of the best years in the Southern Rhône, the capo (boss) made this blend of grapes he picked by hand himself. This wine is wild. So many flavors—smoked meats, rich black fruits, earth, and fireplace all together. It is super rare, made only in great vintages, and is one of the treasured treats around the world. (\$7,000)



**CHÂTEAU DUCRU-  
BEAUCAILLOU 2009**

This format is approximately the size of a 7-year-old child. The 2009 vintage is the best of the last 10 years. This Ducru, from Saint-Julien in Bordeaux, is a 100-point wine in a format that is rarely seen, a Melchior, which yields about 140 glasses. The intense flavors go on and on. Beaucaillo means "beautiful stone," and the flavor is of blackberry juice strained through the region's ancient rocks. This is a wine, and a bottle, that begs to be shared at a grand soiree. (\$25,000) III