

# WINE NEWS

December/January 2004-05

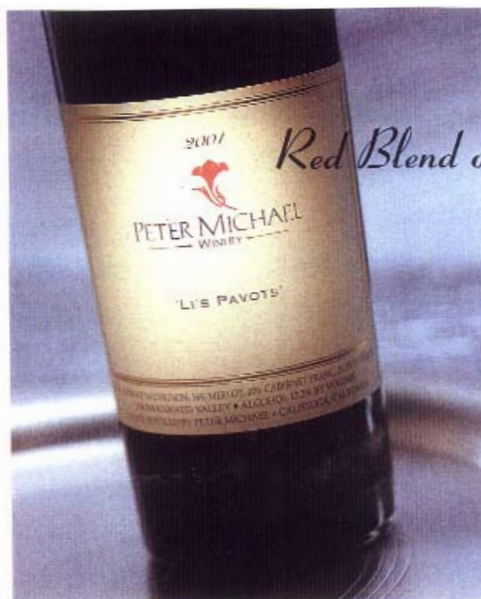
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## California's best wines of the year

Text by STEVE PITCHER • Photographs by MITCHELL SHENKER

### RED Blends

1. *Peter Michael, 2001 Les Pavots, Knights Valley*  
— \$115 (*Red Blend of the Year*): A blend of 72 percent cabernet sauvignon, 16 percent merlot, 10 percent cab franc and, making its debut in the *cuvée*, 2 percent petit verdot, Les Pavots reveals intense, complex aromas of ripe blackberry and blueberry, a hint of meatiness, black licorice, lavender and roasted coffee bean. Very generous and extracted on the palate, the wine's opulent flavors echo the nose, accented by subtle minerality and bolstered by ripe, velvety tannins woven in a voluptuous texture; the wine finishes long with a note of white chocolate. Exciting to drink now, Les Pavots has the richness, extract and structure to age gracefully over the next ten to twelve years. (1,853 cases)



### CHARDONNAY

*Peter Michael, 2002 Belle Côte, Sonoma County*  
— \$65: Seductive nose of apricot, lime zest, apple, mango, toasted hazelnut and a distinct mineral note. This densely textured, mountain-grown Chardonnay offers complex flavors that echo the nose, particularly the mineral component, enhanced by notes of nutmeg and lychee. (1,800 cases)

### SAUVIGNON Blanc

*Peter Michael, 2003 L'Après-Midi, Sonoma County* — \$42: Attractive, elegant aromas of honeydew melon, juicy pear, lime zest, gooseberry and minerals. Lively on the palate with crisp acidity, this mountain-grown Sauvignon is elegant and poised with rich flavors that replicate the nose, especially the mineral and citrus notes; subtly grassy. (1,770 cases)

## Wines Worth Seeking

*Peter Michael, 2002 Ma Belle-Fille, Sonoma County* — \$75 (881 cases)  
*Peter Michael, 2002 Point Rouge, Sonoma County* — \$150 (260 cases)

## Best Value ZINS

*Three Thieves, 2002 California*  
— \$10/1L (30,000 cases)