



California's North Coast

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By Stephen Tanzer

Following the challenging, short 2011 vintage, the North Coast's growers and winemakers got exactly what they needed in 2012: a return to classic California weather and a copious crop, followed by a very early and highly successful harvest in 2013 that some cabernet growers are already calling better than 2012. That's not to say that the wines of a

Recommended North Coast Wines



89 Casey Flat Ranch

By Josh Reynolds

2010 Estate Red Wine Capay Valley
(\$35) (44% cabernet sauvignon, 33% syrah, 19% cabernet franc and 4% mourvedre): Deep ruby. Smoke- and spice-laced dark berry and licorice aromas show an energetic quality and pick up a floral nuance with air. Pliant and gently sweet on the palate, offering lively blackberry and bitter cherry flavors, along with a suggestion of cola. Finishes tangy and long, with sneaky tannins adding structure. (JR)

do not currently appear to have the intensity, grip and structure to be serious cellar classics. It is a New World style of vintage, whereas the much cooler 2011 vintage, and 2010 before it, are more Old World.

Of course, controlling yields was at least as important for pinot noir production as it was for cabernet and chardonnay. Anthony Filiberti, winemaker at Anthill Farms and Knez, reported that in cooler areas like Anderson Valley yields were generally up by a third to a half while in warmer sections of the Russian River Valley crops could be double the size of 2011, or even higher. In these areas too, the natural tendency of the wines in 2012 is to be fleshy, fruit-driven and sweet. Healthier clusters enabled many winemakers to vinify with stems, whereas this was tricky in the rot-affected 2011 harvest.