

THE TASTING PANEL

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Publisher's PICKS

In each issue THE TASTING PANEL's Publisher and Executive Editor, Meridith May, selects her favorite wines and spirits of the month. Check here for the latest arrivals in our offices, the

WINES

The initial supercharged strike of acidity is flavored with tea, tannins and unsweetened cranberry. The scenery amazingly takes a different shape: A silkiness evolves, with cherry and rose formation a fashion-forward Pinot 93



90

SakéMoto Premium Junmai Saké. Japan

(\$11) A gentle breeze of peach and mandarin and newly blossomed night jasmine soothes on the nose. Take a sip and the baby clove feather turns into ethereal liquid. Clean dew drops of tangerine and fresh linen work with a natural acidity.

SAKÉ ONE



Worthy of a smooch.
French-style double bizou.
Wildly infatuated.
Seriously smitten.
Head over heels in love.



Strawberries push up through earth and are spiced with clove and cinnamon. A straw of cocoa pulls through, weaving into the ripe red fruit, again and again. Wonderful mouthfeel. 91

STRANGE WINES

Benziger 2011 de Cielo Pinot Noir. Quintas Vineyard, Sonoma Coast (\$50) The 25-acre certified Biodynamic estate vineyard, divided into two blocks, sits on a rugged hilltop five miles from the Pacific. Unfiltered and fermented with native yeast, de Cielo rests in French oak for 16 months. Therein lies some of the story behind this startling and changeable red.



Rutherford, Oakville, Stags Leap, Yountville and Coombsville, Buçella—the name means "moon in Latin—is just that. Candied grape notes come alive in a luxurious setting, under a wash of extreme supple tannins. Espresso notes of a roundness, and for a Napa Cab, a unique occurrence: A garden of violets bloom and cherries blossoms. Rhubarb pie is smattered with hints of cinnamon and nutmeg. I was lucky enough to enjoy this on my birthday. 96

Sammy's B latest vent

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