

Margaret River (Australia) Cabernet Sauvignon 2010 (\$150):

Will Berliner is either a visionary or has beginner's luck. An American married to an Australian and settled in Western Australia's Margaret River area, Berliner has no formal education or real background in wine. Nonetheless, what he is producing is nothing short of amazing. I loved his 2011 Chardonnay (reviewed previously) and this 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon, a blend of Cabernet (93%) and Malbec, is its equal. His first release, this red wine is gorgeously complex and refined. All the more surprising is that the vines are young, planted in 2005 and 2006. Of course, there's a mixture of black and red fruit flavors, but it's the non-fruit notes that are intriguing. The herbal nuances don't indicate under ripeness; they just lend a seemingly never-ending excitement. I have no idea what the Malbec adds to the final blend, but it certainly doesn't overwhelm and obliterate the wine's finesse. This balanced mid-weight red conveys extraordinary flavor without resorting to over ripe grapes. The tannins are present, yet suave. You can enjoy it now, but its balance and structure suggests it will develop nicely.

95 Michael Apstein Nov 5, 2013