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9 Powerful Reds from Paso Robles

New reviews of Rhône-style wines from the 2012 and 2013 vintages

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Tasting Highlights bring the best wines from our editors' most recent tastings to WineSpectator.com members.

If California's Rhône-style reds have been off your radar in recent years, then you've been missing out. The 2012 wines have plenty of generous, rich and plump fruit, with the top wines delivering depth and structure.

The 2012 growing season was one of the easiest California vintners have experienced in many years—a relief, since 2011 was among the most problematic. In 2012, every major growing area found success with red Rhône.

The standout region continues to be Paso Robles, in California's Central Coast, as this week's collection of new releases demonstrates. Just about every red grape from the Rhône Valley is planted there, whether it's Syrah, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Carignane, Counoise or Cinsault.

Winemakers in Paso have a particular knack for mixing those grapes in various combinations to create red blends that are as distinctive as the names they bear. Some, such as Caliza's Sympatico, blend in non-Rhône grapes like Tempranillo for additional spice. At Calcareous, winemaker Jason Joyce blends in a dollop of Petit Verdot (a Bordeaux grape) to add structure and power to the aptly named Moose.

Calcareous, in fact, has an excellent showing this week and leads the pack with the silky Trés Violet, as well as impressive bottlings of Syrah and Grenache.

For more on these wines and other winning reds, check out *Wine Spectator's* annual report, "California Rhône's Come on Strong," in the March 31 issue.

CALCAREOUS Trés Violet Paso Robles 2012 Score: 92 | \$48

Supple and vibrant, with a focused core wrapped in a silky texture. Aromas of rose petal, raspberry and cigar box lead to layered flavors of blueberry, cracked pepper and smoky cinnamon. Mourvèdre, Grenache and Syrah. Drink now through 2023. 870 cases made.—*T.F.*

CALCAREOUS Grenache Paso Robles 2012 Score: 91 | \$40

A rich and racy red, with bold aromas of smoky raspberry and lusciously layered flavors of black cherry, cinnamon and spiced toffee. Drink now through 2021. 370 cases made.—*T.F.*



Tim Grubb

Paso Robles Rhône specialist McPrice Myers made an outstanding GSM in 2012.

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15 Food-Friendly Reds from Puglia

Monday, April 13, 2015

8 Well-Priced Sonoma Cabernets

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More from California:

Sunday, May 31, 2015

Napa's Dazzling 2013 Cabernets

Sunday, May 31, 2015

CALCAREOUS Moose Paso Robles 2012 Score: 91 | \$48

Offers power and personality, with blackberry, tobacco and crushed rock notes, featuring intense flavors of smoky dark plum, licorice and graphite. The tannins are big but ripe, with a mineral accent. Syrah and Petit Verdot. Drink now through 2024. 615 cases made.—*T.F.*

In Brief: A Scandalous Glass and New Investors in Pinot

Sunday, May 31, 2015
Pan American

CALCAREOUS Syrah Paso Robles Devil's Canyon 2012 Score: 91 | \$45

Offers power and grace, with supple, layered flavors of floral raspberry and blueberry fruit, showing polished accents of cracked pepper, smoke and loamy mineral. Drink now through 2022. 540 cases made.—*T.F.*

Friday, April 17, 2015
The Making of Phelps' Insignia

Thursday, April 16, 2015
Joseph Phelps, Pioneering California Wine Producer, Dies at 87

CALIZA Sympatico Paso Robles 2012 Score: 90 | \$54

Distinctive and fairly gutsy, with black raspberry and dried herb aromas and deep flavors of dried cherry, smoky anise and tobacco. The tannins are big but ripe on the finish. Tempranillo and Grenache. Drink now through 2020. 250 cases made.—*T.F.*

More from topic California

MCPRICE MYERS Luna Matta Paso Robles 2012 Score: 90 | \$48

Dense and quietly potent, with spicy red and black fruit accents and layered flavors that show smoky cracked pepper, mineral and grilled herb nuances. Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2022. 130 cases made.—*T.F.*

TABLAS CREEK Côtes de Tablas Paso Robles 2013 Score: 90 | \$35

Supple and balanced, with pretty wild flower and raspberry aromas and sleek flavors of smoky red plum, herbes de Provence and loamy mineral. Grenache, Syrah, Counoise and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2020. 1,580 cases made.—*T.F.*

TABLAS CREEK Esprit de Tablas Paso Robles 2012 Score: 90 | \$55

Graceful and delicately complex, with a lively core of bright acidity that plays up a floral boysenberry aroma. Offers sleek flavors of raspberry, smoked spice and subtle bitter chocolate. Mourvèdre, Syrah, Grenache and Counoise. Drink now through 2021. 4,400 cases made.—*T.F.*

EBERLE Côtes-du-Rôbles Paso Robles 2012 Score: 87 | \$23

Appealing, with smoky plum aromas and briary flavors of cherry, tobacco and spice. Grenache, Syrah, Mourvèdre, Durif. Drink now through 2019. 566 cases made.—*T.F.*