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Selections from Local Connoisseurs

2005 BUMGARNER CABERNET SAUVIGNON

• A few winemakers in El Dorado County are determined to produce world-class Cabernet Sauvignon and Bumgarner Wines is certainly one of them. The 2005 Bumgarner Cabernet Sauvignon is an outstanding example of a soft, complex Cabernet Sauvignon. It is intense and full of dark cherry and cocoa aroma and drinks like it is much older. The tannins are smooth and the finish leaves you begging for another sip, and this classic pairs well with any choice cut of beef. The Bumgarner 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon was handmade in a very small batch, with the bottle bearing the fingerprints of the winemaker Brian Bumgarner.

This easiest way to find their wines is direct from bumgarnerwines.com, as this is a brand new label. Share this find with your friends who only drink Cabernet from Napa and watch them become believers in the Sierra Foothills!

— Russell Reyes

Russell Reyes is a freelance writer who hosts monthly Dolce Vino Wine University in Cameron Park. His blog is foothillwinereview.com.



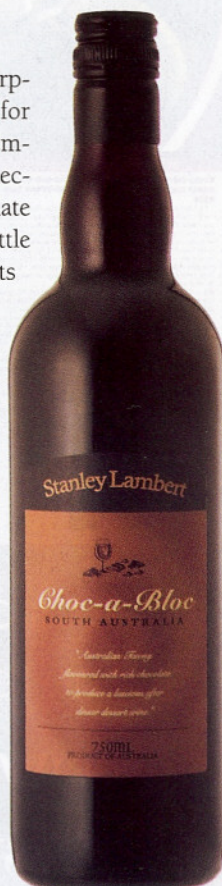
STANLEY LAMBERT'S CHOC-A-BLOC PORT

• Okay all you wine snobs – I've been harping about getting out of the wine "box" for a while now. Many of my wine club members, upon finding out that one of the selections for this past December was a chocolate port, wrinkled their noses. A book, or bottle for that matter, shouldn't be judged by its "cover."

If you haven't already, start with Stanley Lambert's Choc-a-Bloc Chocolate Port to take those baby steps out of the "box." This is a luscious port from Australia's famed Barossa Valley. This chocolate-infused tawny port is made with quality chocolate which makes a decadent after dinner treat. There are no artificial chocolate aromas or flavors like in many chocolate dessert wines. The alcohol is very balanced and the flavors are rich without being sickly sweet. The Choc-a-Bloc has converted many-a-snob. As your mama used to say, "Try it, you'll like it!"

— Julie Moreland

Julie is the owner and Wine Psychic of WineStyles – Granite Bay.



NOMAD 2005 CHILEAN RED WINE

• NOMAD is a fascinating blend of red wines made with four varieties coming from three vineyards in two areas. Young California winemaker, Jessica Tomei, produced this wine after completing the Davis Viticulture and Enology program. She worked her first harvest in California in 2000; then at Antinori in Italy in 2001; Mondavi 2002; and from 2003 to 2006 worked in Chile, managing 100 hectares of vineyard. 2004 was the first vintage of NOMAD, made by winemakers living without a home in Chile.

The blend is Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Carmenere, and Merlot, from Chile's Rapel and Isla de Maipo, from vineyards in Cachapoal, Requinoa and Alto Cachapoal. NOMAD is a deep colored wine with a distinctive Carmenere scent, medium to full body, and juicy acidity with ripe flavor, all textured by nicely tamed tannins. This is wine for drinking, but it will also do well with bottle age.

—Rick Mindermann

Rick is a 30-year veteran grocer with Corti Brothers, personal assistant to Darrell Corti, and "The Good Taste Guy" for oodleboxtv.com.

