

# COTTAGES & GARDENS

## Wine Collectors' Holiday Gift List

16 swoon-worthy bottles.

This year's Holiday Gift List has evolved into a collector's list for the wine connoisseur who wants to splurge on distinctive vintage Champagne and top-notch red wines. Expensive wines with pedigree generally have a good story, which makes wines at this level so compelling. For every bottle on this list, I sat down with the winemakers or wine estates directors when they came to New York and asked them to reveal what goes into creating their swoon-worthy bottles.

### Champagne Bollinger PN AYC 18 (\$170)



Bollinger has always been known for its Pinot Noir-dominant blend and in recently years added a new cuvée, Blanc de Noirs, using 100% Pinot Noir, which is aged in huge oak barrels. While this new category Blanc de Noirs is NV, each release showcases Pinot Noir from a different village to highlight its distinctive terroir and taste in that vintage year. More than half of the grapes for PN AYC18, the fourth release of this series, are sourced from the Grand Cru village of Aÿ, in the 2018 vintage, and about 20% reserve wines are added to the blend. PN AYC18 has beguiling aromas of marzipan and blood orange with sweet spices and a hint of menthol on its fresh citrusy finish. General Director of the Maison Charles-Armand de Belenet told me that planning is well underway for the Bollinger's bicentennial birthday in 2029, and thousands of bottles, many in large formats, are aging on their lees in preparation.

### E. Guigal Côte-Rôtie La Mouline 2020 (\$725)



With grapes grown in a steeply terraced walled vineyard, the oldest site in Côte-Rôtie, this co-ferment of mainly Syrah and Viognier from old vines averaging 90 years is known for its beguiling violet and blackberry aromas and characteristics of softness and roundness. The aging regime of 42 months in new oak barrels results in a voluptuous silky texture. La Mouline from the Côte-Blonde is the most feminine of the three “La-La wines,” as the E. Guigal single vineyards are known. The others are: La Landonne from the Côte Brune, the most masculine; and La Turque, which sits between the other two and possesses both the virility of the Côte Brune and the femininity of the Côte Blonde. Considered the most collectible of the Rhône Valley, the La-La wines will soon add a fourth “La,” Philippe Guigal, third generation owner and winemaker, told me when I tasted 2020 vintages with him. Planted in 2010 when Philippe Guigal's twin sons were born, the new single vineyard wine will be called La Reynarde and will be first released in 2026.