

WINE ENTHUSIAST

OCTOBER 2016

viewpoint

CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL COAST UPS ITS LUXURY GAME

As more vintners from this land of value are pricing bottles at \$100 or more, who wins?

Good wines for a great price. That's been the hallmark of California's Central Coast ever since it was planted in the 1960s and '70s. These wines often punch way above their weight class, and there are dozens of bottlings for around \$35 that would TKO Napa Valley wines retailing for \$100 or more.

But more and more Central Coast winemakers are confident enough to start charging more than \$100 (in some cases, almost \$300) for their top wines. This isn't entirely new: Sine Qua Non, Sea Smoke and other cult estates tipped this scale long ago, but the tide is rising faster than ever.

The results are most noticeable in the density and depth of these wines, which will age for decades to come.

Leading the pack is Patrimony, the \$275 Cabernet Sauvignon about to be released by the Daou brothers of Paso Robles. Then, there are two \$185 wines (a Cab and a blend called Relevant Red) by Crown Point in Happy Canyon, a project owned by entrepreneur Roger Bower and run by Harlan Estate alum Adam Henkel. Broadside's \$125 Ephemera, a Cab from Paso, is another, and there are certainly more to come.

Aside from ego and the desire to compete directly with Napa's knee-knocking prices, the higher price relates directly to the meticulous production regimes of each wine.

"I was hired to develop the land and plant [a] vineyard and build out a winery where we can make the best wine we can possibly make," says Henkel. He's planted exclusive clones, installed a range of top-shelf fermenters and barrels, uses hot and cold glycol lines to

help with "cool picks grapes in a barrel for 24 hours." Daniel Daou isolating his own clones ages the wine in one made from in France.

To me, the density and depth of the wine and grace for decades.

These prices. But there remain from the region grocery stores and Chardonnay up. The high-impact on you wines out.

So long as those from big-ticket win on the global grab the attention London, and the And maybe one stop asking if "near Napa."



BUDGET BUSTERS FOR THE CELLAR

95 Points

Broadside 2013
Ephemera Cabernet Sauvignon
(Paso Robles)

Deep black spice and fruit, sexy chocolate and espresso notes; massages the palate with tannins. Drink 2017-2033, \$125



2013
Paso Robles
Cabernet Sauvignon
EPHEMERA
produced & bottled by
BROADSIDE
Paso Robles, California

