

2007 California Chardonnay

The newly released vintage brings high quality—and plenty of well-priced wines

By [James Laube](#)

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The 2007 vintage of California Chardonnay offers a great range of quality across the board. The year is anchored by especially strong showings from Sonoma County, Carneros and Napa Valley, but a diversity of appellations throughout the state contribute to the overall richness of the vintage.

In a vintage as ripe as 2007, the mix of flavors can be fascinating. And, as usual in exceptional vintages, there are also scores of values to be mined, many of them comparing favorably with the top wines yet selling for one-half or one-third the price.

Based on tastings of nearly 400 Chardonnays—about half of them 2007s—since our last report ("[A Mixed 2006 for California Chardonnay](#)," July 31, 2008), I consider 2007 a grand slam for Carneros, Napa and Sonoma, with each appellation receiving a classic rating of 96 points on the Wine Spectator 100-point scale. Santa Barbara County has plenty of good wines too, but the region did not perform up to the level of the northern counties; I rate it 89 points for the vintage. (An [alphabetical list of all wines tasted for this report](#) is available.)

My favorite 2007s, all rated at 95 points, are the Lewis Russian River Valley (\$48), the Londer Anderson Valley Corby Vineyards (\$30), the Peter Michael Sonoma County Ma Belle-Fille (\$85) and the **Tor Sonoma Valley Durrell Vineyard Wente Clone (\$60)**. These are sensational expressions of the grape, uncommonly complex and concentrated.

Napa-based senior editor James Laube is Wine Spectator's lead taster on the wines of California.