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11 Juicy California Sauvignon Blancs

New reviews of whites from Napa, Sonoma and beyond for under \$30



Photo by: Courtesy of Cattleya

Bibiana González Rave started her own venture, Cattleya, in 2011. Alma de Cattleya offers value bottlings; the 2016 Sauvignon Blanc earned 90 points.

Augustus Weed

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

Sauvignon Blanc is enjoying a revival in California. Vintners are treating the grape more seriously in their vineyards and cellars, stepping away from the heavily oaked versions often associated with the Golden State. Reach for a Sauvignon these days and you'll just as likely find a crisp, juicy version as a rich, succulent one. The best play their ripe flavors and fleshy textures off the grape's mouthwatering acidity, as is evident in this selection from Northern California.

At the top of the list is a supple, racy example from Cattleya. Founder Bibiana González Rave produces Chardonnay and Pinot Noir for the Pahlmeyer family's Wayfarer label as well as her own brand. Here she takes on Sauvignon Blanc with her Alma de Cattleya bottling.

Sauvignon Blanc does well throughout California, including in Napa Valley. Clif Family owners Gary Erickson and Kit Crawford, the couple behind organic food firm Clif Bar & Company, moved to Napa in the late 1990s. They launched their winery in 2004, tapping Laura Barrett to make the wines. The RTE Blanc is fruit-forward, with lip-smacking flavors. Contrast that with Provenance's single-vineyard version, which is rich and succulent in style.

For value, look for Two Angels from the High Valley in Lake County and Parducci's refreshing bottling from Mendocino.

CATTLEYA Sauvignon Blanc Sonoma County Alma de Cattleya 2016 Score: 90 | \$24

Distinctive, with a whiff of lanolin and coconut water to the crisp core of citrus flavors. Supple and juicy, finishing with a hint of lime. Drink now. 455 cases made.—*M.W.*

ANDIS Cuveé Blanc Amador County 2016 Score: 89 | \$20

Appealing, with a supple texture and a medley of citrus, stone fruit, floral and tropical flavors. Juicy, set on a light body. Sauvignon Blanc, Sémillon and Viognier. Drink now. 250 cases made.—*M.W.*

CLIF FAMILY Sauvignon Blanc Napa Valley RTE Blanc 2016 Score: 89 | \$28

Lip-smacking Meyer lemon, peach and green apple flavors are fruit-forward and expressive, showing persistence on the finish. Drink now. 700 cases made.—*M.W.*

PROVENANCE Sauvignon Blanc Rutherford Wildwood Vineyard 2015 Score: 89 | \$28

Rich and succulent, with smoky, toasty overtones to the poached pear, honey and Meyer lemon flavors. Elegant and complex, finishing aromatically. Drink now. 244 cases made.—*M.W.*

BALLETTO Sauvignon Blanc Russian River Valley 2016 Score: 88 | \$19

Offers mouthwateringly vivid grapefruit and green apple flavors, accented with fresh lemon thyme notes. Drink now. 1,200 cases made.—*M.W.*

DECOY Sauvignon Blanc Sonoma County 2016 Score: 88 | \$20

Shows plenty of harmony to the pear, yellow apple and lemon zest flavors, with sturdy acidity and citrus blossom accents on the finish. Drink now. 43,530 cases made.—*M.W.*

KOKOMO Sauvignon Blanc Dry Creek Valley Timber Crest Vineyard 2016 Score: 88 | \$22

Lemon and lime sherbet flavors are fresh, with a note of lemon verbena. Appealingly juicy. Drink now. 950 cases made.—*M.W.*

SHANNON RIDGE Sauvignon Blanc Lake County High Elevation Collection 2016 Score: 88 | \$18

Lean and crisp, with a tight mix of lemon, lime and grapefruit flavors. Juicy and vivid on the finish. Drink now. 13,000 cases made.—*M.W.*

DRAXTON Sauvignon Blanc Dry Creek Valley Nelson Vineyards 2016 Score: 87 | \$18

Dried chamomile and toasted hay aromas give way to a lean, vibrant and mouthwatering core of lime and grapefruit flavors, set on a light, sleek body. Drink now. 440 cases made.—*M.W.*

TWO ANGELS Sauvignon Blanc High Valley 2016 Score: 87 | \$17

Green papaya, melon and lime skin notes are balanced, fresh and juicy. Drink now. 2,000 cases made.—*M.W.*

PARDUCCI Sauvignon Blanc Mendocino County Small Lot 2016 Score: 86 | \$13

A floral note lingers in the background, with citrus and peach flavors that are juicy and refreshing. Drink now. 4,000 cases made.—*M.W.*

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