

### 2012 Ridge Merlot Estate

Made from 100% Merlot and checking in at 13.5% natural alcohol, the 2012 Merlot Estate sports an inky purple color to go with terrific notes of black cherries, crème brulee, spice, smoked herbs and licorice. Fabulously pure with medium to full-bodied richness, no hard edges, and both freshness and richness, it's one of the top Merlots I've tasted from the Santa Cruz Mountains; it will have upwards of 10-15 years of longevity.

This was a terrific set of wines from Ridge. The 2012 Bordeaux releases all have brilliant purity of fruit, with surprising freshness and focus. They'll need short term cellaring to be approachable, especially the Monte Bello. The 2013s are similar in style to the 2012s, with tight, fresh profiles and solid tannic grip. I think the 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon Monte Bello has slightly more depth than the 2012 (the ble...

- Jeb Dunnuck (October, 2015)

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### 2012 Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon Estate

Another terrific wine, the 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon Estate (incorporates 24% Merlot) is an inky, structured effort that has lots of blackberry, cassis, scorched earth and toasted spice notes giving way to a full-bodied, concentrated and tannic profile on the palate. Beautifully concentrated, it still has a serious amount of tannin and I wouldn't touch a bottle for another 4-5 years. It will have an easy two decades or more of overall longevity.

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### 2012 Ridge Monte Bello

Inky colored, the sensational 2012 Monte Bello comes all from the Santa Cruz Mountains and is a blend of 64% Cabernet Sauvignon, 22% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc and 6% Petit Verdot. It's backwards and tight, with classic black cherry, crushed violets, cassis, espresso roast and crème brulee notes all flowing seamlessly to a full-bodied, concentrated, structured and layered Bordeaux blend that has bright acidity, a stacked mid-palate and firm tannin. It needs 5-6 years of cellaring and will hold for two decades beyond that.

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### 2012 Ridge Chardonnay Monte Bello

The 2012 Chardonnay Monte Bello is a beauty. Ripe, concentrated and still fresh, with lots of golden fruits, toasty oak, crème brulee and minerality, it's medium to full-bodied, concentrated and layered, with a classy, balanced fruit and integrated acidity. Full, complete, concentrated and balanced, it will have a decade or more of longevity.

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### 2013 Ridge Lytton Springs

A blend of 74% Zinfandel, 16% Petite Sirah, 8% Carignan and 2% Mataro (Mourvèdre), the 2013 Lytton Springs is a sexy, plump and gorgeously rich effort that has lots of bramble, plums, violets and licorice on the nose. Medium to full-bodied, deep, rich and concentrated, it has a solid kick of tannin and will benefit from short term cellaring. 15-20 years of longevity isn't out of the question here.

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### 2013 Ridge Three Valleys

A blend of 80% Zinfandel, 11% Carignan, 8% Petite Sirah and a splash of Alicante Bouschet, the 2013 Three Valleys has lots of berry fruits, bramble, spice-box and licorice in its medium-bodied, supple, nicely textured and delicious profile. It doesn't have the structure or depth of the Lytton Spring, but it's a full-flavored, delicious wine to drink over the coming 7-8 years.

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### 2013 Ridge Geyserville Proprietary Red Wine

Made from 73% Zinfandel, 17% Carignan, 9% Petite Sirah and a splash of Mourvèdre, the 2013 Geyserville Proprietary Red Wine is a sexy, voluptuous, concentrated and hedonistic beauty that offers tons of plum, licorice, roasted herbs and leather like aromas and flavors. One of the more ripe and decadent wines in the lineup, it has the mid-palate depth and concentration to evolve for 15+ years.

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### 2004 Ridge Chardonnay Monte Bello

A sensational Chardonnay that's drinking at point, the 2014 Chardonnay Monte Bello offers a ripe, voluptuous and full-bodied style to go with ample mature Chardonnay fruit, flower oil, orange blossom, and apricot-like aromas and flavors. Still lively, fresh, and incredibly pure with just a touch of nuttiness on the finish, I see no reason to hold off, yet it will no doubt continue to hold nicely going forward.

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### 2013 Ridge Monte Bello

Tasted out of bottle, the 2013 Monte Bello is a blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Petit Verdot, 7% Cabernet Franc and just 5% of Merlot (Merlot struggled in 2013 due to the drought). Surprisingly, given the higher Cabernet content, it's more voluptuous and layered than the '12, and has awesome concentration and depth on the palate to go with classic creme de cassis, vanilla bean and violets. Reminding winemaker Eric Baugher of the 1985 (sorry, before my wine drinking time), I suspect this beautifully pure, elegant and seamless beauty will drink nicely in 3-4 years, and have upwards of three decades of overall longevity.

This was a terrific set of wines from Ridge. The 2012 Bordeaux releases all have brilliant purity of fruit, with surprising freshness and focus. They'll need short term cellaring to be approachable, especially the Mon...

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### 2005 Ridge Monte Bello

While in a good year there's normally 4,000 cases of the Monte Bello, there was a scant 2,200 cases produced of the 2005 Monte Bello. Thick, massive, and concentrated with ample currants, lead pencil, licorice and chocolate aromas and flavors, this full-bodied beauty is just now at the early stages of adolescence, and has plenty of underlying tannic grip still present. It should hit full maturity in another 4-5 years and hold for 2-3 decades after that.

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### 1997 Ridge Monte Bello

A vintage that had big yields and a hectic harvest, the 1997 Monte Bello is a sexy, supple and layered beauty that's drinking beautifully today. Cassis, toasted spice, cigar and dried herbs all flow nicely to a full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon that has solid textured, good mid-palate depth and still present tannin. I thought the tannin could be cause for concern at first, but they sweetened up with time in the glass; nevertheless, I see no need to delay gratification and would drink while the getting is good.

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### 1991 Ridge Monte Bello

Absolutely spectacular, the 1991 Monte Bello comes from a low tannin year where the estate was wondering how well the wine would age. I'm happy to report it has aged brilliantly! Fully mature, yet still youthful and lively, it offers tons of cassis, underbrush, spice and dried herbs to go with a full-bodied, utterly seamless, sexy feel on the palate that just keeps you coming back to the glass. Given the balance, it will hold nicely going forward, but there's no upside to further cellaring.

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### 1984 Ridge Monte Bello

Fully mature, yet still beautiful, the 1984 Monte Bello offers classic mature Bordeaux notes of currants, truffles, underbrush and cured meats to go with a medium to full-bodied, elegant, silky and completely integrated feel on the palate. It's a beautiful, layered and classy wine to drink on a special occasion over the coming 5-10 years.

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### 1999 Ridge Lytton Springs

Made from 70% Zinfandel, 17% Petit Verdot and the rest Carignan and Mataro, the 1999 Lytton Springs is a gorgeous wine that's a testament to the ageability of the Zinfandels made at this estate. Supple, sexy, and ready to go with lots of blackberry, cedary spice and truffle, it's medium to full-bodied, has ample mid-palate fruit and a seamless, silky texture. It's drinking at point and not going to get any better, but it should have no problems holding nicely going forward either.

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### 1999 Ridge Geyserville Proprietary Red Wine

More fruit forward and sexy than the Lytton Springs, the 1999 Geyserville Proprietary Red Wine sports a youthful ruby color to go with complex notes of sweet plums, licorice, cinnamon and exotic spices. Made from 68% Zinfandel, 16% Carignan, and 16% Petite Sirah that checks in at just under 15% alcohol, it's aging brilliantly and has full-bodied richness, a full, layered mid-palate and a great finish. It's fully mature, but will evolve gracefully going forward.

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### 2013 Ridge Zinfandel East Bench

Made from 100% Zinfandel, the 2013 Zinfandel East Bench is a concentrated, if not backwards, effort that has lots of plum and currant fruits, licorice, incense, and spice cake aromas and flavors. Medium to full-bodied, juicy, lively and tannic, I'd like some more mid-palate flesh, but it's still a beautiful bottle of wine that will evolve for a decade.

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### 2013 Ridge Zinfandel Pagani Ranch

A Zinfandel dominated blend that incorporates 16% Alicante Bouschet and 7% Petite Sirah, the 2013 Zinfandel Pagani Ranch has a decadent, sweet profile and shows lots of black raspberry, sweet cassis, licorice, candied violets and spice on the nose. Sweet, full-bodied and layered on the palate, it has a kiss of residual sugar, a full texture and a great finish. It's a hedonistic, sexy red to drink over the coming 5-6 years.

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### 2013 Ridge Petite Sirah Lytton Estate

Incorporating 3% Zinfandel, the inky colored 2013 Petite Sirah Lytton Estate is a concentrated, rich, yet streamlined and focused red that gives up a lot of scorched earth, asphalt, licorice and perfumed black fruits. While it's deep and concentrated, it doesn't expand on the palate and has a straight, narrow feel. Nevertheless, it's admirably concentrated, pure and elegant, with good acidity and structure, all of which will allow it to evolve gracefully for 10-15 years.

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