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Wine Spectator names Château Giscours Margaux 2022 its No. 1 wine of 2026

The Bordeaux bottle topped the Top 100 at 95 points and $68 despite several higher-scoring wines on the list

Monday, November 16, 2026



On Monday, November 16, Wine Spectator released its Top 100 Wines of 2026, naming Château Giscours Margaux 2022 as the No. 1 wine on its annual list of the bottles it considers the most exciting in the world market.

The ranking, one of the wine trade's most closely watched lists, is not based on score alone. Wine Spectator said its editors choose from wines reviewed over the previous 12 months and weigh four factors: quality, value, availability in the United States and what it calls the "X-Factor," or a wine's ability to generate excitement. Every wine on the list must have scored at least 90 points.

That approach was clear at the top of the 2026 ranking. Château Giscours Margaux 2022 took the top spot with 95 points and a suggested price of $68, even though a number of lower-ranked wines carried higher scores. The No. 2 wine was Aubert Chardonnay Sonoma Coast UV-SL Vineyard 2023 at 96 points and $100. Ridge Lytton Springs Dry Creek Valley 2023 was No. 3 at 95 points and $56. Williams Selyem Pinot Noir Russian River Valley Eastside Road Neighbors 2023 ranked No. 4 at 96 points and $72, and Château Beau-Séjour Bécot St.-Emilion 2022 was No. 5 at 96 points and $85.

The rest of the Top 10 also showed the mix of prestige, geography and price that defines the list. Clos Apalta 2021 from Chile ranked No. 6 at 96 points and $170. Produttori del Barbaresco Barbaresco 2021 was No. 7 at 94 points and $57. Wayfarer Pinot Noir Fort Ross-Seaview Wayfarer Vineyard The Estate 2023 placed No. 8 at 95 points and $100. Castello di Ama Chianti Classico San Lorenzo Gran Selezione 2021 was No. 9 at 95 points and $90. Famille Isabel Ferrando Châteauneuf-du-Pape St.-Préfert 2022 rounded out the top tier at No. 10 with 94 points and a price of $108.

California was the strongest single force in the Top 10, with Aubert, Ridge, Williams Selyem and Wayfarer all making the upper tier. France placed three wines in the Top 10, including the No. 1 bottle, while Italy had two wines and Chile had one.

The broader list again showed how much Wine Spectator values range as well as status. Some wines with 97 points were ranked outside the Top 10, including Bedrock Vineyard Heritage Sonoma Valley 2023 at No. 12 for $60, Castello di Monsanto Chianti Classico San Donato in Poggio Il Poggio Gran Selezione 2020 at No. 45 for $85, and Château Smith-Haut-Lafitte Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2022 at No. 85 for $169. Those placements underscored that the ranking is meant to highlight market impact and consumer appeal, not simply the highest scores.

Italy had a deep showing throughout the Top 100, especially from Tuscany and Piedmont. In addition to Castello di Ama at No. 9 and Produttori del Barbaresco at No. 7, the list included Viticcio Chianti Classico Riserva 2019 at No. 14, Ruffino Chianti Classico Ducale Riserva 2021 at No. 17, Camigliano Brunello di Montalcino 2020 at No. 21, Il Poggione Brunello di Montalcino Vigna Paganelli Riserva 2019 at No. 52 and Damilano Barolo Cannubi 2021 at No. 55. Other Italian entries ranged from Taurasi and

Etna Rosato to Prosecco and Vermentino.

The United States also had broad representation beyond the California wines at the top. Oregon appeared repeatedly with pinot noirs from Cristom, Lingua Franca, Penner-Ash, Ken Wright and Stoller. Washington state was represented by Reynvaan's Syrah Walla Walla Valley In The Rocks 2022 at No. 89. New York made the list with Ravines Riesling Finger Lakes Dry 2022 at No. 36. California itself covered a wide span of styles and regions, from Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and Sonoma Coast Chardonnay to Santa Barbara County GSM and Clarksburg Chenin Blanc.

France's presence extended well beyond Bordeaux. The ranking included Châteauneuf-du-Pape wines from Le Vieux Donjon, Famille Isabel Ferrando, Domaine de la Vieille Juliane and Bois de Boursan; Gigondas from Château de Saint-Cosme; Sancerre from Claude Riffault; Muscadet from Famille Lieubeau; Cassis from Clos Ste.-Magdeleine; and white Savennières from Domaine du Closel. Champagne also appeared with Ployez-Jacquemart Extra Quality Brut NV at No. 38.

Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, Austria and South Africa were also represented. Spain placed wines from Rioja, Ribera del Duero, Campo de Borja and Sierra de Gredos. Portugal's entries included Graham's 20 Year Old Tawny Port NV at No. 57 and Symington Family's Altano Douro 2022 at No. 48. Argentina had bottles from Bodega Catena Zapata, Zuccardi, Lamadrid and Cheval des Andes. New Zealand's wines included sauvignon blanc and pinot gris, while Austria appeared with Bernhard Ott Grüner Veltliner Niederösterreich Fass 4 2023 at No. 94.

The list mixed luxury bottles with lower-priced wines that are more widely accessible. Among the least expensive were Symington Family's Altano Douro 2022 at $13, Castello Banfi Toscana Centine 2022 at $15, Pine Ridge Chenin Blanc-Viognier California 2024 at $16 and Marisco The Ned Pinot Gris Marlborough 2024 at $17. At the upper end were Freemark Abbey Cabernet Sauvignon Rutherford Cabernet Bosché 2022 at No. 100 for $225, Clos Apalta 2021 at No. 6 for $170 and Château Smith-Haut-Lafitte Pessac-Léognan Blanc 2022 at No. 85 for $169.

Wine Spectator said the 2026 ranking came out of a large tasting base. The magazine reported that it tasted more than 10,900 newly released wines, awarded 90 points or more to 7,295 of them, reviewed 2,889 wineries and covered 787 appellations. The publication has produced the Top 100 list each year since 1988.

The full ranking is available on Wine Spectator’s Top 100 website, and detailed profiles of the selections are scheduled for the magazine’s December 31 issue, which is due on newsstands December 2.