

Taster's Choice

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Long popular with California's oldest grower producers — Foppiano, Parducci and Livermore Valley's Concannon — petite sirah has recently been championed by boutique producers. . . and stalwart Napa wineries. . .

The boutique producers have gallantly defended old plantings of the grape that produce the best wine and produce blockbuster petite sirahs in the \$30 to \$50 range, while Parducci, Foppiano, Concannon, and Lodi-based Bogle Winery produce great utilitarian petite sirahs for \$10 or less.

No matter which end of the spectrum you troll for wine, there are some eye-opening petite sirahs that you should try. Just keep in mind that a great \$30 petite sirah will be dense and likely from very old vines. A cheaper bottle might be delicious, but lighter and fruitier and from younger vines.

The following reviewed wines are produced by P.S. I Love You Members . . .

• **Mettler Family 2001 Petite Sirah Lodi** (\$32). Deep and bold with characteristically rough petite sirah edges to the blackberry, mint, currant and espresso flavors and gravelly minerality. It's Port-like in density, and like Port, somewhat alcoholic, but the fruit keeps up valiantly. Powerful, rustic and all petite sirah. *** (Bellboy Corp.)

• **Bogle 2001 Petite Sirah California** (\$10). The seductive rhubarb-blackberry pie nose lets you know right away that you're about to bite into a dense, fruity wine. Sure enough, there's ample dark berry and cherry fruit, licorice, cinnamon, vanilla, toast and herb flavors for two bottles of wine. This one is always a crowd pleaser. *** (Paustis Wine Co.)

**** Exceptional

*** Highly recommended

** Recommended

* Satisfactory

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