

Stephen Tanzer, IWC Scores June, 2009

2007 Zepaltas Wines Chardonnay Russian River Valley

Bright yellow-gold. Spicy lemon and green apple aromas are complemented by dusty minerals and quinine. The very fresh palate offers nervy citrus, bitter pear and apple skin flavors, with a subtle touch of anise. Strong mineral notes add vibrancy to the long, penetrating finish. I like this wine's clarity and sneaky power.

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2007 Zepaltas Wines Chardonnay Babushka Russian River Valley

Pale chartreuse color. Pineapple and melon aromas are underscored by dusty minerals and quinine. Brighter citrus and green apple on the palate, which is given a dry edge by lemon pith and mineral qualities. I like this wine's blend of richness and vivacity. This fruit came from the Keefer Ranch vineyard.

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2007 Zepaltas Wines Pinot Noir Sonoma Coast

(\$39) Hazy red. Fresh strawberry and black raspberry aromas are complemented by smoky Indian spices and dried rose. Light-bodied, strikingly pure red berry flavors stain the palate and gain weight with air. Finishes brisk and nicely focused, with the suave red berry flavors repeating.

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2007 Zepaltas Wines Pinot Noir Suacci Vineyard Sonoma Coast

Light red. Spicy red berries and herbs on the nose, with a subtle mineral underpinning. Firm redcurrant and bitter cherry flavors are given spine by nervy acidity and framed by dusty tannins. Becomes more tangy on the slightly peppery finish, which is precise and nicely persistent.

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2007 Zepaltas Wines Pinot Noir La Cruz Vineyard Sonoma Coast

(\$47) Bright red. Fresh raspberry and cherry on the nose, with complicating notes of brown spices and smoky minerals. Midweight red berry and bitter cherry flavors soften and gain sweetness with air, picking up a suave cola note on the back end. Tangy raspberry and cherry skin notes linger on the long, spicy finish. I'd give this a couple more years to loosen up.

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2007 Zepaltas Wines Pinot Noir Barton Vineyard Russian River Valley

Light red. High-pitched red berry and cherry aromas are complicated by fresh rose, lavender and cinnamon. Strikingly fresh pinot, offering pure red fruit and brown spice flavors and a sexy undertone of candied flowers. The spiciness lingers on the long, gently sweet finish, which strongly echoes the red berry note.

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2007 Zepaltas Wines Pinot Noir W.E. Bottoms Russian River Valley

Medium red. Bright, finely etched red fruit and floral aromas are deepened by a riper bitter cherry note. Tangy raspberry and cherry flavors stain that palate, with silky tannins providing grip. Refreshing, focused and pure, with impressive finishing sweetness and punch.

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2006 Zepaltas Wines Syrah Rosella's Vineyard Santa Lucia Highlands

Deep red. Smoky red and dark berry aromas are complemented by classic syrah notes of olive, minerals and cracked pepper. Tangy, spice-laced black raspberry and bitter cherry flavors are braced by dusty tannins, picking up an exotic floral note on the back. Taut, focused and fresh, with excellent finishing cut and peppery persistence. (JR)

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