

91 Recchia 2001 Cà Bertoldi (Amarone della Valpolicella Classico); \$NA. The Recchia brothers, Riccardo and Roberto, are among the area's largest private owners. They sell fruit and juice but keep the best selections for their own production. The 2001 Amarone boasts a pretty ruby color and is redolent of cherry, cedar wood, almond paste, cola, resin and coffee. It has a chewy, sticky consistency and excellent purity of flavors. —M.L.

91 San Rustico 2003 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico; \$45. Founded in 1870, San Rustico has recently done a lot of work in the winery and vineyard to maintain a quality edge. This Amarone boasts great intensity and delicacy of aromas. You'll get layers of apple, cherry cola, mint, blue flowers, licorice, raisin and almond. In the mouth, those flavors are lively and fresh and the mouthfeel is caressing and long-lasting. Imported by John Given Wines. —M.L.

91 Zeni 2003 Barriques (Amarone della Valpolicella); \$NA. This historic estate on the shores of Lake Garda is one of Amarone's biggest ambassadors when it comes to foreign markets. Good fruit sourcing has shaped a pretty 2003 vintage wine with a nice full nose and no sharp points. You'll encounter plum, black cherry, roasted nut, vanilla-coffee and exotic spice. —M.L.

90 Bertani 2004 Villa Arvedi (Amarone della Valpolicella Valpantena); \$25. The Valpantena Valley produces hearty, structured wines that are usually priced more competitively than those from the Classico zone. Bertani's Villa Arvedi is a case in point. It delivers all the qualities you look for in excellent Amarone: intensity and diversity of aromas such as almond paste, currant berry, Indian spice and deep oak tones. It has polished tannins and a playful note of sour cherry on the finish. Imported by Palm Bay International. *Editors' Choice.* —M.L.

90 Cantina di Negrar 2004 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico; \$NA. Cantina di Negrar is an ambitious, quality-minded cooperative with 200 members totaling 1,200 acres of vineyard. Here is a base Amarone with plum, fresh prune, almond, mineral notes and distant Porcini mushroom. It has dried fruit flavors, chewy tannins and very good intensity over a long finish. —M.L.

90 Cantina Sociale della Valpantena 2003 Torre del Falasco (Amarone della Valpolicella); \$40. The Cantina's top wines are from its Falasco line and this Amarone delivers

90 Castellani Michele & Figli 2003 I Castei Campo Casalin (Amarone della Valpolicella Classico); \$80. Celebrated for its excellent Recioto dessert wine, this quality-minded producer presents a big, brawny red with deep concentration, oversized wood notes, toasted nut, sizzling bacon fat and barbecue aromas. It's so modern, but also so lively, it definitely represents a departure from traditional Amarone. Imported by Bedford International. —M.L.

90 Corte Sant' Alda 2003 Amarone della Valpolicella; \$100. Marinella Camerani's dedication to tradition (with organic and biodynamic farming principles) is legendary. Hers are delicate, sometimes difficult wines, yet they are always prized for authenticity. Distinctive aromas include crushed raspberry, raisins, almond cookie, molasses and cooked pears in reduction sauce. The wine ends with lively, refreshing acidity. Imported by Domaine Select Wine Estates. *Cellar Selection.* —M.L.

90 Cuslanus 2003 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico; \$NA. Introducing the newest player in Valpolicella: Cuslanus is a fresh start-up with a fresh approach. The vineyard is located 400 meters in altitude, which is high by Valpolicella standards. That altitude has helped safeguard aromas of wild apple, white cherry, vanilla-spice, nutmeg and peppercorn. Keep your eye on this producer. —M.L.

90 Dal Forno Romano 2002 Vigneto di Monte Lodoletta (Amarone della Valpolicella); \$535. Winemaker Romano Dal Forno fearlessly confronted the soggy 2002 vintage with high extraction techniques and barrique aging (36 months). This is an inky, dense wine (more syrupy than it is vinous) with black currant, peppercorn, chocolate fudge and big firm wood tannins. It is so monolithic, a viable food match is virtually impossible. As always, Dal Forno straddles a fine line between brilliance and exaggeration. Imported by Vias Imports. *Cellar Selection.* —M.L.

90 Domini Veneti 2003 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico; \$NA. Like the vineyard select Vigneti di Jagò by the same producer, this wine showcases heavily toasted notes of oak, nut and spice, although here they seem more balanced. The wine has solid tannins and a chewy consistency that is pleasantly accented by cherry-berry flavors. —M.L.

baked winery and three enormous barrels cated to grape apponiments. This amive delivers black berry fruit, chocolate, ch drop and a smidgeon of cooked fruit and both barrique and oak oak. Imported by Wines LLC. —M.L.

90 Giuseppe Lonardi 2003 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico; \$5 background in the hospitality industry. Lonardi started making wine in 1954 tonneaux-aged Amarone with deep com elegance. Chocolate, red apple skin, cher dried figs, cardamom spice, eucalyptus cough drop add brilliance and depth. It Small Vineyards LLC. —M.L.

90 Manara 2003 Postera (Amarone della Valpolicella Classico); \$40. I generational change, Manara is another ducer who sparks buzz and renewal in V Made with carefully selected fruit, Poste fident, sassy wine with baked apple, roo petal, mineral notes and characteristi intensity. Imported by Italia Wine Impo

90 Masi 2003 Costasera (Amarone della Valpolicella Classico); \$5! solid, steady wine that deftly delivers pe sured doses of cherry, plum, black cur sugar, chocolate dust and almond nut. I are integrated seamlessly and come on the wine's solid structure. Drink it with roast or pasta with a meat reduct Imported by Remy Cointreau USA. —

90 Monte dall'Ora 2003 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico; \$NA! the wine lacks overall intensity, its mea posed approach is very refreshing in powerhouse wines. Dig deep and giv allow for sweet chocolate, black fruit cherry liquor. The wine is smooth, chocolate flavors, and excellent length.

90 Montecariano 2003 Amarone della Valpolicella Classico; \$3 ripe, sun-drenched Amarone with big heat and mature aromas of raisin, resi prunes, coffee and dried apple. It t thanks to sweet fruit flavors and a ch Imported by Wooden Ships. —M.L.

90 Novaia 2003 Corte Vaona Amarone della Valpolicella Classico; \$40. Brothers Cesare and Giampaolo Vaor