

2007 BRUNELLO: OVER 149 REVIEWED! 69



WINE ENTHUSIAST

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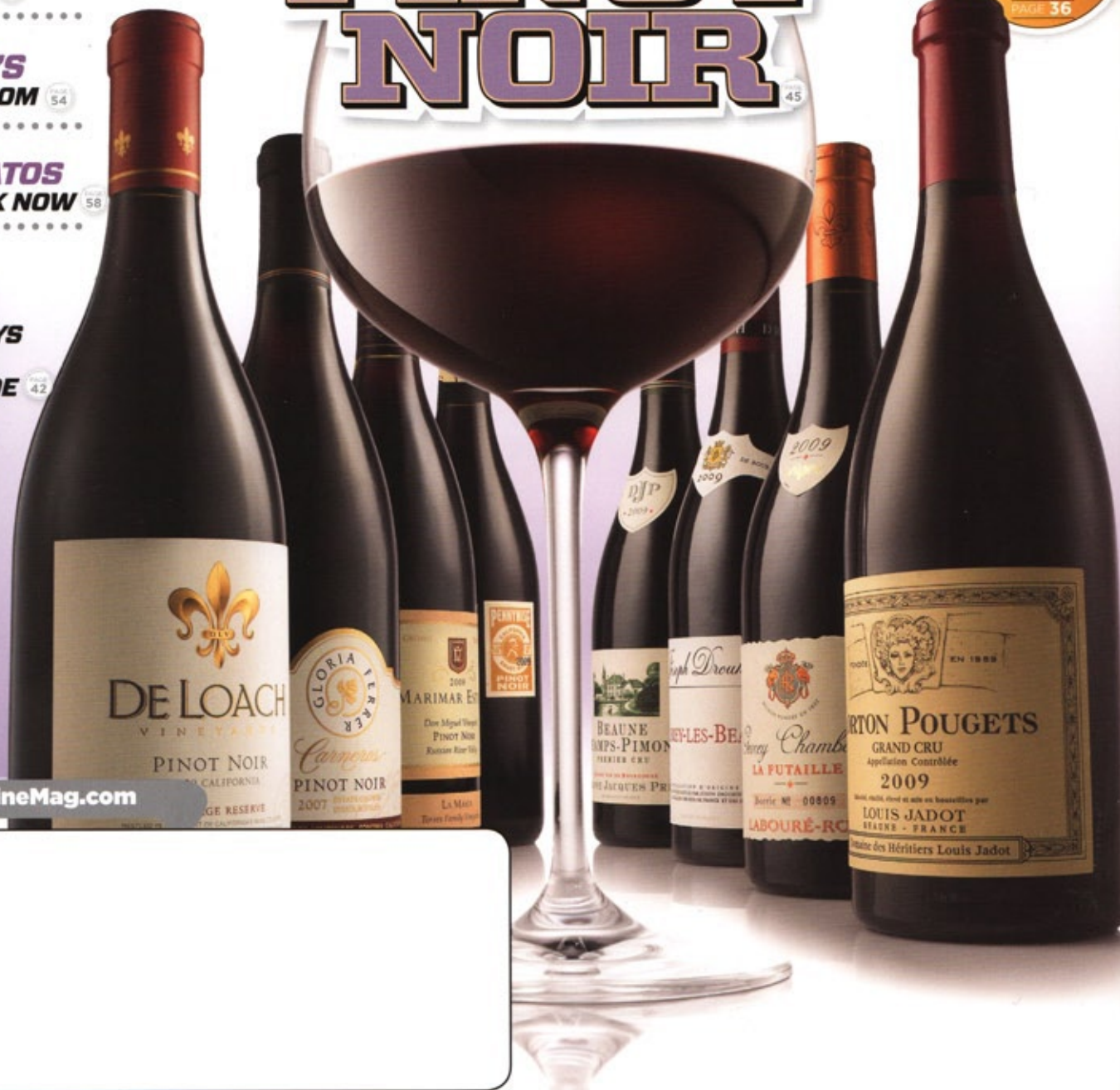
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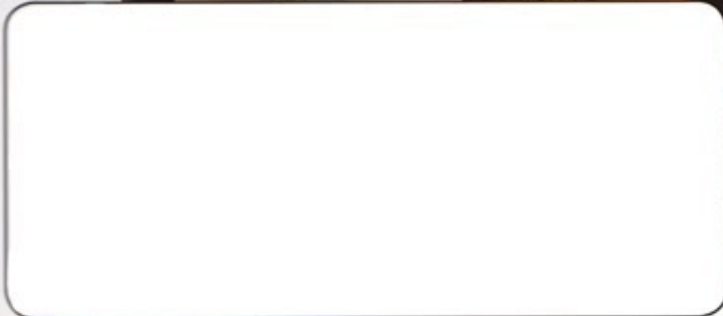
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Best Bets for Brunch

May is prime time for communions, wedding showers and of course, Mother's Day. It's also the perfect time of year for leisurely weekend brunches. We've all been to restaurants that serve mundane **mimosas** and **Bloody Marys**, but when you're entertaining at home this month, use these wine pairing tips to throw a party that will keep your family and friends talking for weeks.

If you're serving bagels with spreads including cured or smoked fish, nothing complements the seafood's briny flavors like fine **Champagne**. But if you're feeling a little less flush this year, a **Prosecco** or **Cava** can do the trick.

Quiche, frittatas and omelets can pair perfectly with **well-oaked white wines** like California Chardonnays or white Burgundies, or with **rosés from the Rhône Valley**. The wines' distinctive, well-rounded flavors harmonize with the richness of these egg- and cheese-based dishes.

Frizzante and sweet **Moscato** is the right choice for French toast, pancakes and crêpes topped with Vermont maple syrup or fruit jams. Sweet breakfast pastries, like a gooey cheese Danish or chocolate croissant, are an ideal match for an aromatic **ice wine**.

Full-bodied **Spanish rosados** made from Grenache and Tempranillo stand up to the smoky and salty nature of cured meats like chorizo or sopressata, while demi-sec **sparkling rosés** marry with fresh berries.

Leafy green salads with mustard vinaigrette dressing or a flavorful Caesar salad with sliced chicken breast call out for **crisp white wines**. Think about New Zealand Pinot Gris, Pinot Grigio from Alto Adige, or unoaked Chilean Chardonnay.

Fresh or cured hams go great with wines from Central Europe, such as **Austrian Riesling** or **Hungarian Furmint**. Brunch doesn't have to start at 11 am and end at 3 pm—with a little bit of planning and some imaginative wine pairings, you can entertain your guests in high style, and they just might not want to leave.

—MIKE DESIMONE AND JEFF JENSSEN

SNAPSHOT



SAG Awards, Los Angeles

Stars Viola Davis, Jessica Lange and Steve Buscemi shone brightly during the 18th-annual Screen Actors Guild Awards on January 29, but the preshow spotlight was stolen by Vitalie Taittinger, who made her debut as Champagne Taittinger's new global ambassador. Vitalie raised a flute of Taittinger's NV Brut La Française beside three-time SAG nominee Matt Czuchy of *The Good Wife* to open the red-carpet march of the Hollywood elite. It was the family-owned and -operated Champagne house's 12th time kicking off festivities at the Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium.

—BRANDON HERNÁNDEZ

LUXE life

BEDFORD POST

Country cottage stays get a wine-centric upgrade at the Bedford Post, co-owned by award-winning actor Richard Gere and located in Bedford Hills, New York, just an hour away from New York City. Wine dynamo Kevin Zraly consulted on the Relais & Châteaux property's new list, currently boasting 265 selections and 26 wines available by the half bottle. "[Half bottles] allow guests to go outside their comfort zone by experimenting with a new producer or grape variety," says Beverage Director Meng Chiang. That sense of adventure pervades the property's other offerings: The 14-acre retreat is home to two restaurants, a custom-designed limestone wine cellar (stocked with 2,200 bottles) available for private dinner parties, a yoga studio (with visiting yogis like Lama Lobsang Palden, who received the Dalai Lama's blessing to do healing work) and an eight-room, eco-friendly luxury inn utilizing geothermal energy. Suites feature upscale touches like hand-hewn reclaimed wood accents, working fireplaces and claw-foot tubs imported from Portugal. In spring months, guests enjoy a gratis wine and cheese hour, then unwind al fresco at The Farmhouse, the Inn's main restaurant, where seasonal dishes by Chef Jeremy McMillan are prepared on a wood-burning grill. bedfordpostinn.com —ALEXIS KORMAN

