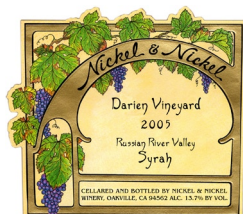


# WINE ENTHUSIAST

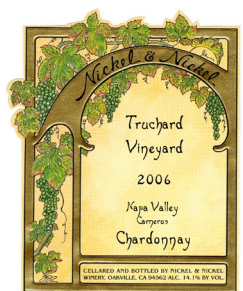
M A G A Z I N E

O C T O B E R 2 0 0 8



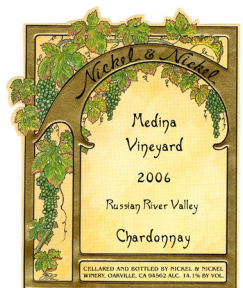
## 92 Nickel & Nickel 2005 Darien Vineyard Syrah (Russian River Valley)

This is an interesting and compelling young syrah that impresses not only for the depth of flavor, but for the superb structure, which suggests moderate aging. Firm, dusty tannins and fine acidity form the architecture. The furnishings are the intense black currant, crushed black cherry, licorice, cola, beef jerky, tabasco sauce and black pepper flavors that change endlessly as you sip and swallow. -S.H.



## 92 Nickel & Nickel 2006 Truchard Vineyard Chardonnay (Carneros)

Here's a powerful, exuberant Chardonnay that's perfectly comfortable with its enormous fruit and considerable oak. The flavors of pineapple jam, papayas, ripe nectarines, green apple-infused crème brûlée and peppery, cinnamon spice almost overwhelm, but are balanced with brisk Carneros acidity that gives a cleansing touch to the finish. -S.H.



## 91 Nickel & Nickel 2006 Medina Vineyard Chardonnay (Russian River Valley)

The vineyard is in the cool, southwesterly Green Valley, and the wine shows brilliant acidity and tangy green apple flavors, enriched with spicy, smoky new oak. It's a forward, rather pushy Chardonnay, insistent in its New World assertiveness, but an enormously attractive one that calls for equally big foods, like lobster, or scallops in a coconut-curry sauce. -S.H.



## 90 Nickel & Nickel 2005 Suscol Ranch Merlot (Napa Valley)

The vineyard is south of the city of Napa, in a cool area, and the Merlot is traditionally ripe, dry and hard in tannins. The 2005 follows that formula. The new oak has not yet been integrated, and the wine is fresh, and young and a little brash right now. But the tremendous heart of cherry, blackberry, chocolate and plum fruit suggests ageability. -S.H.