

2012 Avennia Justine

A blend of 49% Mourvedre, 28% Grenache and 23% Syrah, the 2012 Justine has lots of minerality in its black fruits, smoked earth and meaty, peppery bouquet. Full-bodied, concentrated and with building tannin, this rocking GSM blend saw 15% stem inclusion, native yeast and 17 months in neutral oak before being bottled unfiltered and unfiltered. Drink it anytime over the coming decade.

Winemaker Chris Peterson calls 2012 an "Iconic vintage," adding that there were no heat spikes and that it's as good as, if not better than, 2007. I'm in complete agreement with him and loved these latest releases. Chris's wines always have firm, savory characters, yet back it up with serious mid-palate depth and concentration. These are all wines I can't wait to taste when they're at full maturity.

- Jeb Dunnuck (June, 2015)

2014 Avennia Sauvignon Blanc Boushey Vineyard Oliane

The 2014 Sauvignon Blanc Boushey Vineyard Oliane, which was brought up in 15% concrete tank and 10% new oak (I assume the rest was in stainless steel), offers exotic, fresh and lively notes of green citrus, lychee and crisp pineapple in a medium-bodied, racy and lively style. It spent some time on lees, and you see that in the texture, yet this is more racy and lively than rich and concentrated. I'd drink it over the coming couple of years, but I wouldn't be surprised to see it have an interesting evolution beyond that.

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2013 Avennia Valery

A blend of 86% Merlot and 14% Cabernet Franc, the 2013 Valery comes from 1986 plantings and sees moderate levels of new oak. Elegant, medium-bodied, supple and pretty, with perfumed notes of red plums, blackberry, spice-box and dried earth, it opens up nicely in the glass and has outstanding length. If it puts on weight in bottle, the score will be low.

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**2013 Avennia Sauvignon Blanc
Boushey Vineyard Oliane**

Chris's 2013 Sauvignon Blanc Boushey Vineyard Oliane is outstanding, with a crisp, fresh and lively style in its green citrus, crushed rock and green herb-laced bouquet. Made all from Sauvignon Blanc that saw 50% malolactic fermentation and 7 months, on lees, in 10% new oak, it's medium-bodied, with juicy, maybe even racy, acidity and a clean finish. It's beautifully done and should drink nicely for a year.

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**2013 Avennia Syrah Boushey
Vineyard Arnaut**

The 2013 Syrah Boushey Vineyard Arnaut is a rock star. Offering sensational purity in its meaty, dark fruits, olive brine, beef blood, currants and hints of violets, it hits the palate with full-bodied richness, impressive concentration and a great finish, where it shows additional minerality. Coming from the two oldest blocks at Boushey Vineyard, this is a serious, age-worthy Syrah that I suspect will have a Northern Rhone-like evolution. Give it 2-3 years once released and drink it over the following decade or more.

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2012 Avennia Gravura

The 2012 Gravura sports classic Bordeaux-like notes of tobacco leaf, underbrush, blackcurrants and licorice. Checking in as a blend of 48% Cabernet Sauvignon, 41% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc, it has medium to full-bodied richness, a rounded, supple texture and enough mid-palate depth and tannic grip to evolve nicely for another decade.

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Incorporating more Grenache in 2013 (47%), the 2013 Justine comes all from the Upland Vineyard and offers lots of Provencal herbs, peppery spice and dried earth to go with a core of black raspberry and blackberry fruit. Medium to full-bodied, textured, savory and balanced, it will drink nicely for 7-8 years.

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2012 Avennia Syrah Boushey Vineyard Arnaut

The best wine from Chris to date is the 2012 Syrah Boushey Vineyard Arnaut, and this smoking Syrah comes all from vines planted in 1994 and 1996, saw 15% stem inclusion during fermentation, and 16 months in only 15% new French oak. Showing the firm, focused, yet pure and concentrated style of the estate, it offers awesome notes of black fruits, bacon fat, black olive and smoked meats. Full-bodied, with a stacked mid-palate, ample texture and a big finish, give bottles 2-3 years in the cellar, and enjoy through 2027.

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2012 Avennia Sestina

The top Bordeaux blend of the estate, the 2012 Sestina (72% Cabernet Sauvignon, 19% Merlot and 9% Cabernet Franc, aged 20 months in 70% new French oak) is a serious, age-worthy effort that will need a decade to hit full maturity. Exhibiting notes of black fruits, smoke tobacco, scorched earth and graphite, it's full-bodied, structured and concentrated, with a great finish. It opens up nicely in the glass, and will still be kicking on its 20th birthday.

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2012 Avennia Valery

There's a scant 125 cases of the 2012 Valery, and this blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc comes most from Dick Boushey's 1986 planting of Merlot (the Cab Franc comes all from Champoux). Aged 20 months in 60% new French oak, it has beautiful density, medium to full-bodied richness and ripe tannin, as well as perfumed aromas and flavors of black raspberry, chocolate-covered cherries, wild herbs and toasted spice. I like it today, but have no doubts about its ability to evolve nicely for 15 years or more.

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The most structured and backward of Chris's 2013s, the Cabernet Sauvignon dominated 2013 Sestina offers lots of minerality and crushed rock nuances to go with notes of wood smoke, lead pencil shavings, spice and crisp black fruits. It has a great mid-palate and good texture, but patience will be required. Give it 5-6 years and it should impress over the following decade or more.

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2013 Avennia Gravura

A Bordeaux-style blend, the entry-level 2013 Gravura will be a blend of 47% Cabernet Sauvignon, 44% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc that see's roughly 50% new oak. A classic Bordeaux blend from Washington, it offers lots of lead pencil shavings, leafy herbs, red plum and black cherry-like aromas and flavors. Elegant, fresh and with a firm edge, it shows Chris's more pure, savory, firm style to a T and is a great introduction to the style here.

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