

new reviews

COGNAC – FRANCE

Camus Borderies Single Estate Family Reserve XO Cognac
(France; CIL US Wines & Spirits, Ft. Lauderdale, FL)
40% abv, \$199.

Cherry/vermillion color; flawless clarity. The initial inhalations detect under-the-radar scents of baked cherry pie, black currant, toasted walnut, and soy sauce; more time in the glass unleashes more pronounced scents of pipe tobacco, lychee, sarsaparilla, and guignolet (the French cherry liqueur). Entry is densely textured, spiced with flavors reminiscent of black peppercorn, date bread, black raisins, prunes, and cherry turnover;



midpalate reinforces the entry findings, adding cassis, crème brûlée, and tart cherry tastes that multiply the complexity. Concludes long, satiny, meaty, and baked in the finish, as exotic and unexpected flavors of BBQ sauce, tomato paste, and Worcestershire sauce make cameo appearances. An extremely intricate and characterful XO Borderies of the highest grade.

Spirit Journal December 2018:
★★★★/Highest Recommendation

Distillerie Du Peyrat Certified USDA Organic Selection Fins Bois Cognac
(France; Heavenly Spirits LLC, Lakeville, MA)
40% abv, \$35.

Citron color; ideal clarity. Upfront, I pick up immediate aromas of brown butter, leather razor strap, black peppercorn,

and popcorn; further aeration stimulates traces of green tobacco, dried apricot and dried peach, and apple peel. The intense fruit notes, most prominently, white raisin and white peach, take command instantaneously as the flinty texture shines through the entry stage due to heightened acidity; midpalate features more of the oak impact as the flavor profile turns lean, crisp, and slightly resinous/nutty. Concludes medium long, vegetal, completely dry, woody, and vibrant.

Spirit Journal December 2018:
★★★/Recommended

Distillerie Du Peyrat XO Certified USDA Organic Cognac
(France; Heavenly Spirits LLC, Lakeville, MA)
40% abv, \$90.

Tawny/ochre color; impeccably clean. Initial whiffs detect dry but charred aromas of braised meat, brown sugar, honey glazed ham, and rum barrel; secondary inhalations following more aeration encounter equally deep fragrances of cherry wood, pipe tobacco, and meringue. Entry is supple in texture, more bittersweet than dry, and reminiscent of dried figs and/or dates; midpalate accentuates the acute bittersweet aspect via the flavors of nougat, candied walnut, dates, chamomile, and dark caramel candy. Finishes long, intensely bitter-sweet, peppery/spicy, and toasted.

Spirit Journal December 2018:
★★★★/Highly Recommended

Jean Fillioux Single Cask #96 XO Grande Champagne Cognac
(France; Heavenly Spirits LLC, Lakeville, MA)
45% abv, \$135.

Pretty copper color; flawless clarity. The aroma right from the very first sniff conveys gracefulness, integration, and power through expressive aromas of spiced pear, chocolate covered raisins, and cherry blossom; later whiffs pick up earthy, oak-impacted traces of hard cheese, sawdust, marzipan, and almond butter. Entry features the oak influence, in particular, in the sap-like, honeyed opening flavor that's succulent, acidic and therefore fresh, and peppery/piquant; midpalate

brings all the taste aspects together for an illustrative exhibition of Grande Champagne wallop and charm as the flavor profile goes orchard fruit-like, intensely oaky and resinous, honeyed, spicy, and espresso-like. Ends long, oily, toasted, toffee-like, and buttery in texture. Loved it.

Spirit Journal December 2018:
★★★★/Highest Recommendation

Jean Fillioux Cigar Club Grande Champagne Cognac
(France; Heavenly Spirits LLC, Lakeville, MA)
40% abv, \$170.

Beautiful mahogany/sinopia brown color; unblemished purity. This opening aroma is muted and reluctant so I back off for ten minutes; following more aeration, the aroma comes alive in the exotic forms of baked banana, roasted meat, BBQ sauce, fish oil, cocoa bean, and soy sauce. Entry bursts with soy sauce, Asian cooking spice-like flavors that are elemental, bitter, vegetal, and spicy; midpalate takes an unexpected left turn as it highlights desert dry flavors of black tea/orange pekoe, bean curd, and green vegetable that mingle with the dried apricot and raisiny fruits; there is a massive amount of taste explosion here. Finishes long, bittersweet, caramelized onion-like, toasted marshmallow-like, and utterly luscious. A wonderfully weird, deeply flavorful cognac that takes a couple of bizarre turns that produce delightful results.

Spirit Journal December 2018:
★★★★/Highly Recommended

Hennessy Master's Blend Selection No. 3 Cognac
(France; Moët Hennessy USA, New York, NY)
43% abv, \$110.

Auburn color; impeccable clarity. The first inhalations after the pour identify bright, vivid aromas of sultanas, red plum, hazelnut, melon, and baking spices, in particular, clove and allspice; secondary whiffs pick up added scents of winter holiday fruitcake, candied almond, peach cobbler, dried apricot, and dark caramel. Entry features raisiny, pruny, dried fruit tastes that are semi-