

ForbesLife

Hot Out of Napa

Richard Nalley, 06.05.09



Napa is becoming ever more Cabernet Sauvignon-centric, probably with good reason, but two recently tasted wines made me re-think my general prejudice against the Valley's whites. In different ways they both show a sophisticated touch too often missing for me in the oaky, buttery, alcohol-heated, tutti-fruttied wilderness of Napa

Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc.

The beauties are out there, alright, but you've got to look.



Far Niente 2007 Chardonnay, Napa Valley

Only a handful of other California wineries can equal Far Niente's knack for turning out flamboyant, big-bodied Chardonnays that actually have style and structure. I don't always love them, but this is a jewel; maybe my all-time favorite from the winery. It is no shrinking violet--it rolls in rich, silky waves across your

tongue--but what is striking is the delicacy of the finish, the wine's liveliness and underlying minerality, and the classically pure quality of the peach/pear aromas wafting from the glass.