

Wine & Spirits by Richard Nalley

California State Of the Art

Can California's best wines
silence the doubters?

HAPPY ENDING

Dolce 2003, Napa Valley

The owners of Napa's Far Niente dedicate a vineyard, essentially a whole separate winemaking entity, to producing this flamboyant, resplendently layered sweet wine. The Semillion and Sauvignon Blanc grapes—as in France's Sauternes—are left to hang in a foggy vineyard where the mold *botrytis cinerea* takes hold, shriveling the grapes (each five tons shrinks to only one) and concentrating the sugars to create this blockbuster wine, which combines racy vibrancy with a shower of apricot, honey and spring flower flavors. It is dessert in itself.