



Stephen Tanzer's

# International Wine Cellar

New Releases from Washington State

Nov/Dec '07

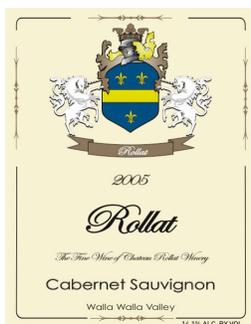
By Stephen Tanzer

"While Washington's 2007 crop of wines will be covered in depth over the next year or three, it's not too early to say that this vintage will be tricky in spots, due to rainy, cooler weather during the latter half of the harvest, which may have affected the later-ripening cabernet. Certainly, the state's growers had become spoiled by a trio of clement seasons that have offered favorable conditions and atypically long hang time for their grapes to develop even greater intensity of varietal character than usual-and it's clear from my tastings that every vintage since 2000 has yielded many fine bottles.....

**What I discovered.** Among the highlights of my recent tastings:...A growing number of suave and understated cabernets and Bordeaux blends that are closer in character to Bordeaux than to California in the way they combine ripe flavors, harmonious oak and good inner-mouth verve with moderate levels of alcohol...And of course, as always, several exciting emerging producers—or at least names new to this reviewer—and wineries on a steep upward curve: à Maurice, **Chateau Rollat**, Brian Carter Cellars, Gramercy Cellars, Mark Ryan Winery and Waters Winery, to name just a few."

## 90

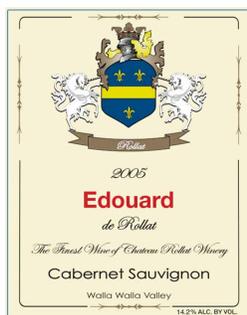
### 2005 Chateau Rollat Cabernet Sauvignon Rollat Walla Walla Valley



(\$38; includes 15% merlot and 5% cabernet franc) Bright ruby-red. Pure aromas of black cherry, licorice, pepper, minerals and earth. Suave and nicely delineated, with an enticing light touch to its flavors of bitter cherry, fresh herbs and cocoa powder. Finishes with fine-grained tannins. A juicy, lively cabernet with the polished texture of a Medoc wine-no surprise, as Christian LeSommer, ex-general manager of Chateau Latour, is the consulting winemaker for this exciting new venture.

## 92 (+?)

### 2005 Chateau Rollat Cabernet Sauvignon Edouard de Rollat Walla Walla Valley



(\$62; blended with 20% merlot and 5% cabernet franc) Bright ruby-red. Aromas of black cherry and herbs, with a brooding soil pungency and very suave use of oak. Richer, denser and more energetic than the regular bottling. This one boasts greater sweetness of fruit but it also has terrific acidity and comes across as tightly wound today. Finishes very long, with a succulence achieved by only a handful of Washington State cabernets. These two wines are made entirely from Walla Walla fruit, from the Pepper Bridge and Seven Hills vineyards.