

FOOD & WINE

APRIL 2006

best of california wine country

super-selective guide
to 75 top bottles

30 amazing recipes
for perfect pairings



napa valley confidential:
how to live the dream



10-cent tastings

Napa Valley has at least one bargain: the \$20 **Taste Napa Downtown card**, which allows wine tastings for a dime each at spots in the city of Napa. The Vintner's Collective room, for one, pours limited releases like the 2002 Showket Vineyards Sangiovese (napadowntown.com).

< CRUNCHY CANDY

Brother-sister duo Brent and Anette Madsen of **Anette's Chocolate Factory** uses buttery, vanilla-rich, barrel-aged California Chardonnay to bump up the flavor in the brittle they sell at their shop in the city of Napa (\$10; 1321 First St.; 707-252-4228).

TINY TURTLES >

Every time F&W editors return from a trip to Napa Valley, they bring back something from the **Woodhouse Chocolate** store in St. Helena—like these adorable caramel-and-nut-filled chocolate turtles (from \$6 for 6 pieces; 1367 Main St.; 800-966-3468).

CHAMPION CHEESE >

Santa Barbara's sole cheese shop, **C'est Cheese**, is also one of California's best, offering local favorites like Fiscalini Farmstead's San Joaquin Gold, a nutty cow's-milk cheese (\$17 per pound; 825 Santa Barbara St.; 805-965-0318).



Sonoma Style

Charlie and Lisa Palmer are Healdsburg's power couple. He's the chef at Dry Creek Kitchen; she picks the design items for their fantastic new shop, **Lime Stone**. One top seller: trays decouped with bottle labels from local wineries (\$96; 315 Healdsburg Ave.; 707-433-3080).