



MAN AT HIS BEST

## Wine and a Movie

CHRISTOPHER SAWYER MAY VERY WELL BE the world's only film sommelier. At the annual Sonoma Valley Film Festival, it's his job to pick an appropriate wine for each movie at prescreening meals. But matching arty festival fare is one thing. What goes with something a bit more lowbrow, like, say, *The Break-Up*? We tested Sawyer with some upcoming DVD releases. —ALIX STRAUSS

Screen	Film	Pairing	Why It Works
	 <b>THE BREAK-UP</b>	Mia's Play- ground 2004 old-vine zinfandel, Russian River Valley, Cali- fornia (\$16) 	<b>ZINFANDEL IS DUBBED</b> the "sweetheart" grape, and Mia's Playground is as spirited, spicy, and sassy as the main characters (though perhaps better developed), with hints of black pepper and ripe blackberries—two very different tastes that, when mixed correctly, work extremely well together.
	 <b>THE OMEN</b>	St. Francis 2001 Behler Vineyard reserve mer- lot, Sonoma Valley (\$45) 	<b>MERLOT IS USUALLY</b> known as a smooth, easy red wine. So, like little Damien, this St. Francis seems harmless. But then when you get it in your mouth, you see how powerful it is, as the rich plum, cherry, and cocoa tannins explode.
	 <b>THANK YOU FOR SMOKING</b>	Ravenswood 2003 Icon syrah, Sonoma County (\$20) 	<b>A BOLD WINE WAS NEEDED</b> to match the bold statements of Aaron Eckhart's lobbyist character. The Ravenswood features an aroma of fresh leather, a mixture of meaty and wild fruit flavors, and, of course, a hint of smoke.
	 <b>NACHO LIBRE</b>	Gloria Ferrer 1997 Royal Cuvée, Carneros, California (\$28) 	<b>THE FILM IS FULL OF COLOR,</b> flavor, and fun, and so is this vintage sparkling wine, packed with tangy notes like tangerine, a hint of nuttiness from start to finish, and—much like Jack Black—a touch of creaminess at the core.
	 <b>AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH</b>	Gundlach Bundschu 2003 Rhinefarm Es- tate Vineyard cabernet sauvi- gnon, Sonoma Valley (\$32) 	<b>FOR THIS COMPLEX FILM,</b> I picked a complex wine featuring flavors of blackberry, cherry, and a hint of earth. The folks at Rhinefarm Estate Vineyard are true believers in organic and sustainable farming, making this a perfect fit for a documentary about the environment.