

### **Flinders Bay Margaret River Shiraz**

This lovely Shiraz from Western Australia is Dave's favorite Shiraz IN THE ENTIRE WORLD! Deep fruity flavors and a nice touch of spice.

Dave would drink it alone, but you'd probably enjoy it better with big, rich foods like beef, or maybe even croc on the barbie.

### **Crocodile Rock Murray Valley Shiraz**

A classic example of Australia's greatest contribution to the wine cellars of the world. The Murray Valley, in addition to being a premier viticultural area, is also home to many of Australia's crocodiles.

For a good time, serve it with pork or beef.

### **Chateau Lafite Rothschild Bordeaux**

This Premier Cru Bordeaux from Pauillac is arguably the most famous wine in the world, and justifiably so. This is the wine that was served to French kings dating to Louis XV.

Primarily Cabernet Sauvignon, with enhancements from Merlot, Petite Verdot, and Cabernet Franc, it is a wine to brag about.

### **Romeo Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Riserva dei Mandorli**

Emidio Bucci is one of our favorite wine merchants, and this is his favorite wine.

Massimo Romeo thins the Sangiovese grapes until just four bunches are left on each vine. The lonely grapes deliver a dense, powerful wine with great structure and charm.

### **Le Strette Barolo**

It's big. It's bold. It's one of Italy's Three Big B wines. The Nebbiolo grape is fairly pedestrian, except when planted on the banks of the Tanaro River in Italy's Piemonte region, near the towns of Barolo and Barbaresco. Of the two towns, Barolo produces the bigger, richer wine.

We served this wine at a tasting, and it blew the room away.

### **Elyse Cabernet Sauvignon**

Dave's favorite Cabernet in the store, this wine comes from a small family winery in the Napa Valley that produces consistently excellent wines.

Drink your Elyse over the next 7 to 15 years. Serve with beef, game, and ripe cheeses.

## **2 Brothers Big Tattoo Red**

This charmer was recommended to us by Top Dog Christopher Norton. He was right. This blend of Cab Sav, Syrah and Merlot is very big for a bottle in this price range.

This wine was created to honor the memory of the 2 brothers' mom, who died of cancer.

The Brothers donate 50 cents for each bottle sold to hospice and cancer charities.

## **Los Monteros Blanco**

Want a break from Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio? From Spain's eastern Valencia region on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, this medium-bodied white is very drinkable.

Fruity but dry, the aromas remind the taster of the oranges for which this region is famous. And you can't beat the cool bottle !

## **Gavala Vineyards Santorini**

This dry white comes from the oldest vineyard in Greece, on the island of Santorini. Given the island's strong winds, the vines are pruned into a circular shape. The grapes are placed in the middle of the circle so as to be protected from the winds.

The wine has a vivid golden color, and is notable for flavors of pear, lemon and pineapple. Seafood, cheese & white meats.

## **Doudet Naudin Tradition Blended Red**

Shazz and Dave had this before dinner recently, and they really liked how easy it was to enjoy. The Doudet is a light blended red that would be overwhelmed by big food, but is great alone or with light fare.

A nice crossover wine for folks who dig white wines.

## **Los Monteros Crianza**

Crianza is made from the Monastrell grape, and is aged in the bottle for a minimum of one year prior to release.

This fine example is from the eastern Spanish province of Valencia, which overlooks the Balearic Islands of Mallorca, Minorca, and Ibiza, playgrounds of really wealthy European types.

## **Carpene Malvolti Prosecco di Conegliano**

Italy's answer to Champagne, this wine made from the Prosecco grape is fresher and boasts more fruit – apple and tropicals mostly – than Champagne, but it remains a dry wine.

Good Proseccos remain a great bargain relative to Champagne.

### **August Briggs Zinfandel**

Zinfandel is Dave's favorite wine, and this is Dave's favorite Zinfandel. When you pay \$40 for a bottle of wine, you should get something that is notably better than a \$10 or \$20 bottle. This Zinfandel delivers. Big fruit flavors. Depth.

For most of us, it's not an everyday wine at this price, but any Zinfandel lover should try it at least once.

### **Perlat Unio**

The French have a great light red wine called Cotes du Rhone. Its primary grape is a grape they call Grenache. That grape originally was called Garnacha, and it comes from south of the border in Spain.

Since the French stole their grape in the first place, we figure that the Spaniards have balanced the account with this excellent version of Cotes du Rhone.

### **Little Ashby Spring Red**

Little Ashby is Talbot County's hometown wine, and this is Little Ashby's most popular offering. A smooth blend of red grapes, this wine is nicely paired with many foods, from grilled poultry to braised pork to tomato-based pasta dishes.

### **Edmeades Mendocino Ridge Zinfandel**

Dave & Shazz spent the night at Dave's father's house one night not too long ago when Pappy was out of town. Dave went spelunking in Dad's wine cellar, and pulled out a bottle of this wine to have with dinner.

Wow! This is the best Zinfandel we've had for under \$30.

### **Domaine de Pignan Chateauneuf du Pape**

"The sweet 2001 Pignan Chateauneuf du Pape (100% Grenache) exhibits generous amounts of framboise and cherry fruit, medium to full body, and excellent purity."

- Robert Parker

### **Little Ashby Maryland Merlot**

Wine doesn't get any more local than this! Little Ashby winery is located right here in Talbot County. Winemaker Warren Rich says that this Merlot is his best wine ever.

Try it with simple grilled beef or sauced pork.

## **Legaris Crianza**

We had this fine Spanish bottle while watching a game recently. The game was disappointing, but the wine was great!

This Crianza is a big, assertive version of this typically medium-bodied wine. Daredevils might venture to drink it alone, but mere mortals will want to match it with food such as well-seasoned chicken, pork or even beef.

## **Catamayor Cabernet Franc**

Okay, so if you're a big fan of aromatic wines, just keep moving along down the aisle. Cabernet Franc is the rare wine that has a subtle aroma, but a big taste. And don't even get us started on its smoothness.

This wine is smoother than Lou Rawls, and it's from Uruguay for dogsakes! Serve it with pork or beef.

## **Francis Coppola Diamond Series Black Label Claret**

This representative of Coppola's upscale Diamond Series is a heralded Cabernet Sauvignon. Aromas of chocolate and spices with flavors of blackberry, currant and strawberries, with smooth tannins.

Ideal with well-seasoned pork and beef dishes. Glass....corkscrew....ACTION !!!

## **Fuentespina Tempranillo**

"Simple at first, with clean black cherry fruit, this grows more complex with air, gaining aromas of dried flowers and sparks of black pepper; never flamboyant, it's balancing act, modest and sustained. 87 Points."

- Wine & Spirits

## **Bonterra Vineyards Organic Chardonnay**

Joe got unusually excited when we told him this wine had arrived, but then he said "Ohhhh. OrGANic."

He was right to be excited, even if it was for the wrong reasons. This wine from grapes organically grown in Mendocino County has nice apple and citrus flavor notes and moderate oak.

## **Red Diamond Chardonnay**

From Vicki's home state of Washington, this Chardonnay isn't as sweet as Vicki, but it isn't as expensive, either.

This crisp and refreshing Columbia Valley Chardonnay fills your mouth with juicy, ripe tropical fruit like pineapple, as well as pear and apple. Creamy oak subtly creeps in, adding complexity to the mouthfeel.

### **Oxford Landing Merlot**

This value-priced Australian Merlot lends ripe fruits and a hit of oak to its medium-bodied goodness.

Excellent with poultry, and bold enough to stand up to a steak.

### **Oxford Landing Cabernet / Shiraz**

This blend of 65% Cabernet and 35% Shiraz is 100% delicious. The Cabernet lends structure and deep fruits while the Shiraz adds a fruity spice kick.

We tasted this one morning recently (yes, morning !) and we were blown away by the value represented by this wine.

### **Little Boomey Shiraz**

Little Boomey is yet another great Australian wine value. Fruity and spicy, just like a Shiraz ought to be, and at a great price. Light enough to enjoy with chicken or a salad.

### **Thomas Fogarty Monterey Gewurztraminer**

“Intense, with juicy tangerine, pineapple, green apple, floral, herbal and spicy overtones that continue unveiling themselves on the long finish. 2,199 cases made. 87 points.”  
– Wine Spectator

### **Dry Creek Vineyards Somers Ranch Zinfandel**

This Zinfandel grows on Dry Creek’s east-facing slopes, and is consequently bursting with flavors of cherries, blackberries and plums.

“90 points” – Wine Enthusiast  
“89 Points” – Robert Parker

**Ferrari-Carano  
Alexander Valley Chardonnay**

This classic California Chardonnay achieves its style in a blend of fruit from sixty different lots of grapes. It has intense tropical flavors, complemented with notes of honeysuckle, peach and melon.

**West Cape Howe  
Unwooded Chardonnay**

This crisp unoaked Chardonnay is one of our favorites.

“Aromatic and lively, with cool-grown grapefruit and stone fruit aromas and flavors finishing with cleansing acidity. Fully deserves its GOLD MEDAL at the Quantas Wine Show of Western Australia. 92 Points” - [James Halliday](#)

**Paul Pernot et Fils ~ Puligny-Montrachet  
White Burgundy**

“This is the third vintage in a row that a Paul Pernot white Burgundy has made a huge hit at a tasting....The wines currently being made at Pernot's domain are among the best in Burgundy -- at sane prices, too!”  
- [Robert Parker](#)

**Landmark Overlook Chardonnay**

Looking for a dependably great upscale Chardonnay? For five out of the last six years, Overlook Chardonnay has been on the Wine Spectators Top 100 Wines List

“A rich, complex style, with layers of fig, apricot, smoky oak and spice. Well-balanced, smooth-textured and offering a cedary, herbal scent on the finish. 88 points.” – [Wine Spectator](#)

**Solitude Chardonnay**

From the Russian River Valley, this premium wine is Solitude's flagship product. This elegant wine wafts aromas of ripe pear, spice and creme brulee.

Layers of rich oak are evident, but not overwhelming, and add a toasted almond and vanilla component to the wine. Only 4,811 cases were produced.

**West Cape Howe  
Wooded Chardonnay**

The West Cape Howe winery is located on the Margaret River in far western Australia, out past all of the cattle stations a thousand miles from most of Australia's wine industry.

This version is bigger and oakier than the winery's Unwooded Chardonnay, which we also stock.

### **Wild Horse Merlot**

Suggested to us by an anonymous Top Dog, this Paso Robles merlot is fruitier than Carmen Miranda's headwear, while still maintaining a certain dry sensibility. In short, it's just what a merlot should be.

California

### **Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin 1996 Vintage Reserve Champagne**

Looking to make a big splash? Veuve Clicquot is one of the most prestigious Champagne houses in the world, and this vintage Champagne is a great one.

We found this bottle available at [FinestWine.com](http://FinestWine.com) for \$121 plus shipping.

France

### **McGuigan Bin 2000 Shiraz**

The syrah grape produces its best wines in Australia, where they call it Shiraz. And there aren't many in Australia who produce a better Shiraz than McGuigan, especially at this price. Serve Shiraz with hearty foods like steak or well-seasoned pork or chicken.

Australia

### **Chateau Sahuc Les Tour Sauternes**

An entry level foray into one of the great dessert wines of the world. Sauternes is made by allowing ripened grapes to become infected with a Botrytis fungus, which causes the flavors to concentrate into blissful yumminess. Worried about the fungus? You eat mushrooms, right?

France

### **Cakebread Chardonnay**

Our friends at Mason's serve this fine Chardonnay from the fabulous Cakebread Winery, and why wouldn't they? Awesome aromas of apple, pear and melon and a toasty oak background.

[92 points – Wine & Spirits](#)  
California

### **Santa Alicia Reserve Malbec**

Haven't tried Malbec? Here's a good starting point. Malbec is spicy like Shiraz, but lighter. It's a good choice for the Merlot drinker who is looking for something different. Malbec is quickly becoming the new "it" wine.

Chile

**Hans Lang Johann Maximilian  
Riesling Sekt**

Germany's answer to Champagne, this sparkler is a mélange of Riesling, Pinot Noir, and Pinot Blanc made in the methode traditionnelle, the classic means of making Champagne. It's a dry wine. We wonder what Dr. Freud would think about the bottle.

Germany

**Spy Valley  
Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc**

"...the real key to this wine is its absolute balance. Exquisite empathy of fruit, acidity, texture and palate delivery. Stunning example. Will age beautifully for a long time."

[London International Wine Competition](#)

New Zealand

**Cantarutti Pinot Grigio**

Lovers of austere, low-flavor Pinot Grigio should just keep moving. Wines from Friuli are known for their unabashed fruitiness, and this one is no exception. If you want your Grigio to taste like something, you can't go wrong with this one.

Italy

**Hangtown Gold - Lot 12**

Okay, so what is it? Hangtown Gold is a blend of Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Semillon, and Flora (a hybrid of Gewurztraminer and Semillon).

More importantly, it sports sweet melon, honeysuckle, pear, peach and floral aromas with citrus and stonefruit flavors.

California

**Mar de Frades Albarino**

Albarino is another of those hot new wine types, though the Spanish have been producing it for years. Light & refreshing, it's terrific with shellfish or as an aperitif.

Check out the thermo-sensitive label. A small sailing ship appears next to the seagull when the wine is properly chilled.

Spain

**Big Fire Pinot Gris**

Pinot Gris from Oregon is recognized as being a bigger, badder version of Pinot Grigio. The Italian version is typically lean, often to the point of flavorlessness (is that a word?).

Explodes with fruit aromas and flavors of orange, honeydew, tangerine, and peach.

Oregon

### **A to Z Pinot Gris**

We'd love to visit the A to Z winery, but there isn't one. The folks at A to Z are negociants, meaning that they buy grapes from others, then expertly blend them to create their wines.

It must be working. Wine & Spirits just named their Pinot Noir the best one under \$20 in the U.S.

Oregon

### **Domaine Borgeot Chassagne-Montrachet**

This old vine white Burgundy from the prestigious Chassagne-Montrachet appellation is a perfect example of all that a fine white Burgundy should be. Lighter and crisper than California Chardonnay, this wine is perfect to those who like their oak in the fireplace and not in their wine.

France

### **Rustenberg Stellenbosch Chardonnay**

From South Africa's best wine district, this Chardonnay is the wine you would be served if you flew First Class on South African Airlines to Cape Town.

South African wines offer some of the best values on the world wine market today. This one is no exception.

South Africa

### **Geographico Vernaccia di San Gimignano**

This is Italy's most renowned white wine, a refreshing alternative to The Usual Pinot Grigios and Sauvignon Blancs. Floral aromas are followed by soft fruits. Truly a pleasure to drink with seafood, light pasta, and white meats.

Italy

### **Pikes Clare Valley Riesling**

The Pike family has been producing wine since 1886, and boy, are they tired! [rimshot]. The 2002 vintage of this wine was featured on the cover of *Wine Spectator*, and was named a Best Buy.

Serve it well chilled with seafood or light fare, or just sit there and drink it alone.

Australia

### **Villa Puccini Pinot Grigio**

Our best-selling Pinot Grigio, Villa Puccini is organically grown and bottled in the hills of Friuli in the northeastern Italy.

Enjoy it with frutti di mare (seafood) of any sort, or with light chicken dishes.

Italy

### **Cakebread Chardonnay**

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[92 points – Wine & Spirits](#)

### **Pra Soave Classico Superiore**

This lovely wine from Veneto is 90% Garganega and 10% Trebbiano. Soft bodied, dry, lemony and mineral-scented, and from a consistent Gambero Rosso producer. This is a dazzling example of what a Soave should be with its depth, purity and texture with plenty of character and personality. (Italy)

### **Altavilla Della Corte Grillo**

The Gambero Rosso, Italy's wine bible, calls this wine "an especially good value" Made from Grillo grapes, it has a light yellow color with delicate aromas of Golden Delicious apples. (Sicily)

### **Scaliere Negroamaro**

From Puglia in the heel of the Italian boot, this light red is fruit-driven and fresh but with attractive notes of game and leather. You can impress your friends by dropping the word "Negroamaro" a few times, such as "this is one of the better Negroamaros I've had." (Italy)

### **Rosa del Golfo Primitivo**

" The 2001 Primitivo sees some wood and has some ruby in its color along with a spicy, weighty, and penetrating nose. The fruit is sweet, and the alcohol warming and flavors substantial and concentrated. 88 Points." [The Wine Advocate](#) (Italy)

### **Fattoria Montellori Vin Santo**

Vin Santo is Tuscany's great dessert wine. Trebbiano grapes are dried on mats before pressing to concentrate the sugar. The wine is aged in small barrels for 3 years before release. This is the best Vin Santo we've tasted. (Italy)

### **Trapiche Oak Cask Malbec**

The Trapiche Winery was founded in 1883 in the Mendoza Valley, and today produces some of the best values coming out of Argentina. Aromas of blackberry and plum with a touch of black pepper, smoke and vanilla. Velvety texture with soft tannins. ["86 points" Wine Enthusiast & International Wine Cellar](#)

### **Domaine Grossot - Les Fourneaux Chablis Premier Cru**

The Chablis district is just two hours' drive north of Paris, and is unique in that its wines are made almost entirely without oak casks, making a crisper, fresher wine that is exceptional with seafood. (France)

### **Periquita**

This lovely wine comes from 150-year-old vineyards just south of Lisbon. Periquita is made from the Castelao grape, which you probably haven't tried recently.

"Medium bodied, refreshing, and easy-drinking with cranberry, tart cherry, strawberry, and green vegetable notes. 85 points." [Wine Enthusiast](#) (Portugal)

### **Domaine Jean Touzot - Macon Villages**

The old vine Chardonnay grapes for this estate-bottled wine never see oak, resulting in a wine that is lighter than most Chardonnays - some would say possessing of greater finesse. Hey, we like both types, but we're just a couple of schmoes! (France)

### **Trapiche Oak Cask Cabernet Sauvignon**

[Wine & Spirits](#) calls Trapiche "one of the Value Brands of the Year."

"Dark red. Aromas of currant, smoke, game and tobacco leaf. Juicy, firm-edged flavors of redcurrant and fresh herbs. Offers an attractive restrained sweetness and good intensity. Finishes with slightly edgy tannins and lingering flavors of sweet red berries and fresh herbs. 86 points." – [International Wine Cellar](#) (Argentina)

### **Karyda Naoussa**

From Macedonia, this medium-bodied red is made from the Xynomavro grape. Yeah, that would be a great Scrabble word.

"Tough, leathery fruit backs sturdy, roasted plum flavors. Finishes with hints of tea and coffee. Decant in advance, or age 3–5 years. 88 points." – [Wine Enthusiast](#)

### **Scaletta Dolcetto d'Alba**

Dolcetto is the red wine that Italians from Piemonte, who drink Barolos and Barbarescos on Sundays, drink the other six days of the week. This version is produced only in excellent vintages, and is ideally served with lamb, pork or hearty pasta dishes. (Italy)

### **Lelia Garnacha**

A new friend of ours came in one day and said "Hey, where's the Garnacha?" Now we can say "We got yer' Garnacha!"

Garnacha is the primary grape used in Cotes du Rhone and Chateauneuf du Pape. This version is from the grape's native Cariñena region in northwestern Spain.

### **Chateau d'Yquem Sauternes**

You may not be able to afford the finest home or yacht in the world, but you can probably afford the world's finest dessert wine.

*Easy Credit Financing Plans Available.*

### **Masi Costasera Amarone**

A team of elite thieves recently stole 12,000 bottles of Masi Amarone from a choice of over 2.5 million bottles in a highly-secure storage facility in Italy. At least they had good taste.

Amarone is made from grapes that are dried on mats, producing a hugely flavorful wine with a major alcohol kick. This version kicks azz.

By the way, we're pretty sure this bottle isn't hot.

### **Masi Valpolicella**

Valpolicella is a medium-bodied red made from the same grapes as Amarone. It comes from Veneto, in the area surrounding the town of Verona, home of Romeo and Juliet.

We're pretty sure that your experience with this fine wine will end less tragically than that of the Montagues and Capulets.

### **Viña Antigua Sangiovese Bonardo**

Francis Ford Coppola first found fame as a film director (Holy alliteration, Batman!) His latest career has been as a winemaker. After launching a successful winery, he opened the Coppola Café, which serves this wine as a one of its “quality wines at low prices from around the globe.” Serve it with pasta, fowl,  
(Argentina)

### **Mazzocco Dry Creek Valley Merlot**

This Merlot is a rare example of the outstanding 1999 vintage that is still available. We've never had a California red from 1999 that was anything less than exceptional.

### **La Doucette Pouilly-Fumé**

The tiny hamlet of Pouilly-sur-Loire has only 1,770 residents, including the folks at Ladoucette, who have been growing Sauvignon Blanc to make top quality estate-bottled Pouilly-Fumé for nearly two centuries.

Drink with light dishes of pasta, fowl, or salads.  
(France)

### **Labouré-Roi Vallon d'Or Pouilly-Fuissé**

At harvest time, the valley which holds the town of Pouilly-Fuissé turns bright gold as the autumn leaves change colors, creating a Valley of Gold (Vallon d'Or). This wine, a crisp and pure interpretation of the Chardonnay grape, shares in the gold analogy.

### **Rustico Nino Franco**

“Gorgeously elegant, fresh, lively fruit, notes of bread dough and citrus, and persistent effervescence. It is almost impossible to believe this low-priced wine is so good ! 90 points” [Robert Parker](#) (Italy)

### **Champagne Boizel Brut Rosé**

Maison Boizel has been making Champagne in Epernay for over a century. This rosé is their latest effort. Thomas Stephenson, the leading Champagne critic in the world, rates this wine among the greatest in the world, awarding it 90 points. (France).

### **Carmel Road Monterey Chardonnay**

A winning combination of pear, apple, ripe melon and butterscotch flavors, spiked with spicy clove and tart citrus accents. Lavishly oaked for a mid-weight wine, there's sufficient depth of fruit here to support the wood. California  
"91 Points" – [The Wine Advocate](#)

### **Evans & Tate Margaret River Shiraz**

"Strong colour; spice, black cherry and licorice aromas lead into a spicy, cedary medium-bodied palate, with considerable elegance."  
94 out of 100." [James Halliday 2004 Wine Companion](#) (Australia)

### **Mocali Brunello di Montalcino**

Brunello di Montalcino is one of the world's great wines, and Mocali is one of the preeminent producers. "Full-bodied, with chewy tannins and a long finish. Loads of cherry character. Best wine ever from here. 92 points" – [Wine Spectator](#) (Italy)

### **Veraldo Barbaresco**

Barbaresco and Barolo are two of Italy's three "Big B" wines, and both are made from Nebbiolo grapes grown in Piemonte. The hamlet of Barbaresco is situated at slightly higher elevation than its neighbor Barolo, resulting in a slightly more restrained version of this local nectar.

### **Traversa Barbaresco**

DOGC (Denominazione di Origine Controllata e Garantita) wines such as this one belong to Italy's highest classification of wine quality.

This wine from Giuseppe Traversa is big enough to put some meat on your bones. Serve it with equally big food.

### **Mondoro Asti Spumante**

Some wine experts (who know such things) say that Mondoro is the Asti's finest sparkling wine. Made entirely from Moscato grapes, this wine contains a moderate amount of alcohol and exhibits a touch of sweetness, like Dave's dog, Mose.

### **Taylor Fladgate 10 Year Tawny Porto**

One of the few things that's better than a small glass of this port on a chilly night is the picture we found of its vineyard. Wow.

Excellent with soft cheeses such as brie; and desserts those made with coffee or almonds.

### **Ferreira Tawny Porto**

George Washington was a lad of 19 when José Ferreira cleared roads into the least accessible (and most fertile) parts of the Douro to plant his vineyards on the steep, dry slopes.

This fine tawny has been aged in oak casks, and is ideally served with desserts, salty nuts, blue cheese or chocolate. We like ours served with a crackling fire on a cold night.

### **Sandeman Late Bottle Vintage Porto**

Sandeman has only been making fine Ports for about 215 years, so we're starting to get convinced that they know what they're doing.

Late Bottled Vintage ports are made entirely from grapes grown in a single year, and are aged for several years before being bottled.

### **Schramsberg Blanc de Blancs**

Schramsberg produced America's first sparkling Chardonnay – one can't call it Champagne unless it's from that district in France - in 1965. Their wines consistently score 88-91 points from leading reviewers, and this small bottle is the perfect size for a pair of lovers.

### **Far Niente Cabernet Sauvignon**

One of the true prestige brands in Cabernet Sauvignon, Far Niente has succeeded yet again with a beautiful wine that is aged in French oak barrels to restrain the tannins typically present in huge Cabernets.

93 points – [Wine Spectator](#)

### **Primavera Dão Reserva**

Dão is one of Portugal's most famous reds, rare here since 80% of it is sold in Europe.

Dao is light-bodied red wine with cedar and pepper notes. The Portuguese like it with suckling pig, but you might want to serve it with strong fish such as tuna, with pork or lighter beef dishes.

### **Primavera Bairrada Reserva**

Looking to escape that Cabernet rut?

Bairrada is Portugal's robust red. It's big enough to handle spicy foods, beef dishes, and even game. The only question is: Are you game?

### **Domaine de Moulines Merlot**

It's unusual to find a good French merlot at this price, *mais Voila*!. This unfiltered merlot has great depth of color, but soft, gentle tannins. This wine has a most appealing bouquet of ripe blackberry fruit. Soft yet full on the palate but with good length.

### **Kouros Nemea**

This warm, meaty red made from the Agiorgitikos grape adds an exotic dark licorice dimension to Americans' taste experience. – [New York Times](#)

Nemea is ideal with lamb, but can be served as an exotic substitute to Cabernet or Shiraz.

### **Kouros Patras**

A light, fresh white made with the Rhoditis grape in southern Greece, this wine is like Athenian sunshine in a bottle.

Note the groovy lemony accents. This wine is a lovely alternative to Sauvignon Blanc. Serve it with seafood or white meats, or sip it while staring across your own version of the Aegean.

### **Villa Gaspararini Loredan Cabernet Sauvignon**

Here is an Italian Cabernet Sauvignon that is lighter in style than the typical California Cabernet. Drink it with Pasta Bolognese, or with roasted pork.

### **Monte Velho ~ Vinho Tinto**

This is the good red wine that the Portuguese drink every day. This version, from the Alentejo grape, boasts deep fruit flavors of cherry.

This wine is ideal with pork, and also nice with well-seasoned poultry or light beef dishes.

### **Regio Tatturo Montepulciano d'Abruzzo**

Remember that great wine you had in that fabulous trattoria in Italy overlooking the square with the pigeons and the playing children and the nuns? This could be it.

90% of Montepulciano d'Abruzzo is consumed in Italy, making it hard to find in the U.S. This is a light, easy-drinking red for everyday food.

### **Zonchera Barolo**

Big Dogs take note: Barolo is the biggest of the Italian wines. It's got big body, big taste, and a big price tag. Please only drink this wine with game or red meat. It will utterly overwhelm that wimpy chicken breast or piece of fish you were thinking about having, so forget about it!

[91 Points – Robert Parker](#)

### **Argiano Rosso di Montalcino**

The Argiano estate has been owned by Italian aristocrats since 1570, and is currently the estate of Countess Noemi Marone Cinzano.

Rosso di Montalcino the little sister of Brunello di Montalcino, is made from the same Sangiovese grapes aged in French oak.

### **Flinders Bay Margaret River Shiraz**

This lovely Shiraz from Western Australia is Dave's favorite Shiraz IN THE ENTIRE WORLD ! Deep fruity flavors and a nice touch of spice.

Dave would drink it alone, but you'd probably enjoy it better with big, rich foods like beef, or maybe even croc on the barbie.

### **Excelsior Chardonnay**

Money Magazine recently listed this wine as one of only three Round & Luscious wines that any self-respecting host should keep on the shelf. We agree. Good chardonnay doesn't come cheap, but neither does it require a refinance of your castle.

### **Avinyo Brut Cava**

A little earthier than Champagne and other Chardonnay-based sparkling wines, Cava is made the same way, but with Spanish grapes.

The result is a light sparkler with notes of bread dough, grapefruit, and other citrus as well as tiny pinpoint bubbles are offered in a refreshing, vigorous style. (Spain)

**89 points – Robert Parker**

### **Sandeman Ruby Porto**

What happens when a Scot moves to Portugal in 1790? He starts one of the world's oldest port houses !

Ruby Porto is the least expensive and best-selling port wine. It's a great introduction to this great dessert wine. (Portugal)

### **Langhe Nebbiolo**

This wine is the talented little brother of those big Italian kids Barolo and Barbaresco. All three are made with the Nebbiolo grape along the banks of the Tanaro River in Piemonte.

The good part is that while the big brothers are expensive, the kid brother comes cheap.

Ssshhhhh, don't tell anyone !

### **Varaldo Barolo**

Wine gets no bigger than this. Barolo is Italy's biggest wine, and Varaldo has crafted a great one and put some of it into this bottle.

It's so big, you may need a fork.

**92 points – Robert Parker**

## **A to Z Pinot Noir**

A Pinot we know: A to Z,  
fills those who drink it with glee.  
Perfect with grilled fish or romance,  
Just like fine Burgundy from France.  
And for great Pinot, at quite a small fee.

(Hey, we couldn't think of anything that rhymes  
with "Oregon")

90 Points ~ [Wine Spectator](#)

## **Tin House Edna Valley Syrah**

Ah, why do we love Syrah? Permit us to  
count the ways....the remarkable scent of  
mingled fruits...the richness and depth of the  
wine...the spiciness that warms a cool  
evening... (California)

## **2 Brothers Big Tattoo Red**

This charmer was recommended to us by  
Top Dog Christopher Norton. He was right.  
This blend of Cab Sav, Syrah and Merlot is  
very big for a bottle in this price range.

This wine was created to honor the memory of  
the 2 brothers' mom, who died of cancer. The  
Brothers donate 50 cents for each bottle sold  
to hospice and cancer charities.

## **Domaine Diochon Moulin-a-Vent Beaujolais**

We read a great article in Slate magazine  
extolling the beauty of real Beaujolais wines  
versus that Beaujolais Nouveau crap. In the  
article, author Mike Steinberger notes that  
Moulin-a-Vent is the best appellation in  
Beaujolais, and that Domaine Diochon is one  
of the best producers of this great wine.

## **Matzin Old Vine Zinfandel**

We can't understand why more people don't  
drink Zinfandel. Maybe it's the White Zinfandel  
stigma, but "real" Zinfandel (the red kind) is  
about big fruit flavors in a dry, smooth,  
medium-bodied wine.

This is a very big Zinfandel, replete with very  
ripe and dark fruit flavors. (California)

## **Schug Carneros Pinot Noir**

Schug is a great winery from California, and  
their Pinots are among their best wines.

Don't confuse this wine with Schug's  
Sonoma vintage, which while very good, was  
not called "a very good wine" and awarded  
87 points by [Wine Spectator](#).

### **Excelsior Chardonnay**

Another great South African bargain, made in the “tropical” New World style. Aromas of apricot, apple and melon. Follows through onto the palate, combining a creamy, supple mouthfeel with some lemony freshness.

**Michelangelo International Wine Award  
2003 - Silver**

### **Leaping Lizard Napa Valley Merlot**

Leaping Lizard is a crowd pleaser, and is an excellent choice for entertaining. It’s medium-bodied, fruit-forward, and still expresses enough backbone to be served with a wide variety of foods. (California)

### **Francis Coppola Diamond Collection Pinot Noir**

“This medium-density, clean and mild wine focuses on cherry-like character in its firm, pert flavors and finish. Very drinkable and downright likeable at its price. Good Value.”  
[Connoisseur's Guide](#) (California)

### **Ch. Michel de Montaigne Bergerac**

This wine is 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, making it a very versatile and drinkable French wine. For a good time, call .....no, just match it with poultry, pork, or beef. (France)

### **McManis Petite Sirah**

“Another big-bodied charmer is the 2003 McManis Family Vineyards California Petite Sirah, which has an expansive aroma of cherry and blackberry with lots of oak and strong vanilla. The oak taste is powerful, but there’s a solid base of blackberry and enough acidity for balance, with some pepper on the medium-long finish.” [SF Chronicle](#)

### **Villa Gasparini Cabernet Sauvignon**

An unusual find indeed. This Cabernet from Italy is made in the classical European style with firm structure and restrained fruit influences. If you like your wine big and not too fruity (like John Wayne), this just might be the ticket.

**Chateau du Haut Carmail  
Haut Médoc Bordeaux**

If you're looking to try an entry level Bordeaux, check out this one. A blend of Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon, it goes well with red meats and strong cheeses. Open and decant this wine one hour before drinking.

Check out the individually numbered bottles!

**Grof Degenfeld  
Tokaji Furmint**

Go ahead, try something different for a change. This Hungarian white is dry and crisp but still retains some fruit on the palate. You'll also pick up notes of grass and mineral. Nice acidity for a pleasant finish. Excellent with fish and chicken. What are you scared?  
(Hungary)

**Kiddush Hashem Cellars Syrah**

"A well-made wine that serves up bright-edged cherry, raspberry, blackberry, sage, thyme and pepper notes. Tannins are a bit powdery. With moderate body, the wine finishes with good length and just a touch of dryness."

[Wine Enthusiast](#) (California)

**Hahn Estates Monterey Chardonnay**

Whilst on a foray to Monterey, we came across this great Chardonnay. Don't be fooled by the chicken, It's totally azz-kickin' !  
Butt, you should drink it anyway.  
(California)

**Stonestreet Alexander Valley  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

"Quiet yet substantial, this is full of dark cassis flavor, clean and fresh. It's plush in the mouth and ends softly padded, with a pleasing perfume of blue and purple fruit, ready for prime rib. 88 points." (California)  
[Wine & Spirits](#)

**Counterpoint Sonoma Mountain  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

"This vintage brings a richly textured, deeply flavored Cab as good as many costing far more. Ripe flavors of currants are wrapped in toasty oak, with firm but plush tannins. Will age through the decade and improve. A good value. Editor's Choice. 91 points."

[Wine Enthusiast](#)

### **L'Ecole No. 41 Pepper Bridge Vineyard**

From Walla Walla, this acclaimed wine is a blend of 49% Cabernet Sauvignon, 48% Merlot and 3% Cabernet Franc.

[Wine & Spirits](#) magazine calls this “one of the 15 best Cabernets in America”, and awards it 94 points. [Wine Spectator](#) only gives it 93 points, though,

### **San Polo Mezzopane**

“Refined and rich aromas of blackberries and cherries. Full-bodied, with fine tannins and a medium finish. Well-crafted red. 90 Points.”  
(Toscana, Italy) [Wine Spectator](#)

### **Bonterra Vineyards Organic Cabernet Sauvignon**

This Cabernet, made from organically grown grapes, is best served with roasted chicken, pork, or beef dishes. (California)

### **JanKris Estate Heaven's Vineyard Viognier**

We are big fans of this family winery in Paso Robles, where second-generation daughters January and Kristin turn out this lovely Viognier, which share Chardonnay's viscosity but is more floral in aroma.

### **Melini Chianti**

Our best-selling Chianti, Melini comes from one of Tuscany's most respected producers and carries Italy's highest classification for quality. Drink it with almost anything, from pasta to grilled meats. (Toscana, Italy)

### **JanKris Estate Crossfire**

We really like this up-and-coming Paso Robles winery, and so will you if you like fruit-forward wines that are incredibly drinkable due to relatively low tannins.

This great blend of Cabernet (50%), Merlot (25%) and Syrah (25%) is more than worth the price. (California)

**Gouguenheim Flores del Valle  
Silvestre**

Yes, it's THAT Guggenheim family behind this wine. Ultra-respected winemaker Susana Balbo blends 5 parts Cabernet Sauvignon with 3 parts Merlot and 2 parts Malbec to produce this unique twist on Bordeaux. Great with grilled red meats. (Argentina)

**Gouguenheim Flores del Valle  
Melosa**

Argentine winemaking goddess Susana Balbo blends this magical combination of Malbec, Bonarda, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Merlot.

We love blends, which we liken to a painting with more than one color.

**JanKris Cabernet Sauvignon**

We really dig the JanKris wines. Their motto is "It's the fruit", a testament to the unapologetic fruitiness of their wines. Europeans might scoff, but Americans like their wines fruity.

So be a patriot and drink some JanKris today!  
JanKris....love it or leave it !!

**Monmousseau Vouvray**

Want a little sweetness in your life? In the French village of Vouvray, they grow Chenin Blanc grapes and make them into a slightly sweet, medium-bodied wine that is lovely as an aperitif, or with light foods.

**Hugel Pinot Blanc**

Alsace, now in northeastern France, has alternated between French and German control a number of times through history. The area, just west of the Rhine, still retains many vestiges of German culture. It is the only part of France that names its wines after the grape rather than the place. This Pinot Blanc is a soft and dry white that is a nice companion to fish, salads, or other light foods.

**Yamhill Valley Pinot Noir**

We think that this Pinot represents a great value for this difficult to grow grape. Relatively inexpensive Pinot Noirs tend toward being sharp or even harsh. This one is nicely smooth, just like Joe's jump shot.

### **Sandeman Founders Reserve Porto**

One of Sandeman's greatest ports, Founders Reserve is made by selecting the best "lots" of aging port from various vintages, then combining these and aging them for five additional years before release. (Portugal)

### **J. Steele's Shooting Star Lake County Cabernet Sauvignon**

Jed Steele's winery was recently named "one of the 50 great producers every wine lover should know" (only 8 are in California) by [Wine Spectator](#). This Cabernet exhibits nice fruit and low tannins, making it an eminently drinkable choice with grilled steaks.

### **Powers Cabernet Sauvignon**

There are at least three good reasons to buy this wine. First, [Wine Spectator](#) has called Powers a "rising star". Second, [Wine Enthusiast](#) named Powers Winery as one of the "50 Great U.S. Cabernet Producers." Third, our own [Vicki](#) will proudly explain to you (at length) the wonders of its Washington State origins.

### **Sutter Home White Merlot**

What is white Merlot, anyway? Using red Merlot grapes, the winemaker presses the grape juice and removes the grape skins, resulting in a wine that is lighter in color and low in tannins. Then the fermentation process is stopped early, leaving a wine that is sweet and low in alcohol. Cool, eh?

### **Chateau Lamothe-Cissac Bordeaux**

Don't be fooled by the low price. This is a big, traditional Haut-Médoc Bordeaux made with 73% Cabernet Sauvignon (with Merlot, Cabernet France, & Petit Verdot). Drink it with big, flavorful foods like roasted beef or pork. (France)

### **Monsieur Touton Grande Reserve Bordeaux Merlot**

Good French Merlot from Bordeaux for under \$10? Sacrebleu !!!

For under \$100, Top Dogs can order 12 bottles of this wine packed in a classic (and increasingly rare) wood case. (France)

### **Woodhall Angler Red**

Recommended to us by Top Dog Steve Copp, this is the red “white zinfandel” of Maryland.

Woodhall Angler Red is a slightly sweet table wine that is a good choice for those who find most wines too dry. (Maryland)

### **Woodhall Party Garnet**

Do you blush? This sweet dessert wine from right here in Maryland does. Try it as a hip local alternative to White Zinfandel or White Merlot. (Maryland)

### **Great With Steak Syrah**

Hey, matching wine with food doesn't get any easier than this, and we love the vintage photos. This very nice French Syrah is good not only with steak, but also with pork or any grilled foods. (France)

### **Great With Chicken Chardonnay**

Hmm, what wine goes well with that chicken we're having tonight?

Chardonnay is also stupendous with pork and meaty fish, or by itself while watching Jeopardy for that matter. (France)

### **Red Diamond Merlot**

Top Dog Jeff Moran recommended this very nicely drinkable Merlot at a great price. It comes from Washington State, which produces lots of great things, like apples and rain and banana slugs and ....umm, no, we can't think of anything else. (Washington)

**Tohu  
Marlborough Pinot Noir**

This is one of the first of the great New Zealand Pinot Noirs that we've carried. We love the wine. We love the bottle. We love New Zealand. So does [Wine Enthusiast](#), which gave this wine 90 points. (New Zealand)

**Foris  
Pinot Gris**

Women are a very small minority in the winemaking trade. Sarah Powell, Foris' winemaker: "I vastly prefer wines with a silky, supple texture, rich aromatics, long flavor, and intrinsic balance. I do not care for a lot of new oak, but look for wines that express the grape."  
(Oregon)

**Val Viadero Toro  
Vino Tinto**

You are holding in your hand yet another one of those great everyday red wines from Spain. Unless of course you have something else in your hand, such as a pencil or a cellphone.

The wine is from the Toro region in the northwest, is smooth and medium-bodied. Serve it with pork chops, pizza, or pumpkin pie. (Spain)

**Lions Gate  
Old Vines Cuvée**

"Cuvée" wines are blends of various grapes, a process that we liken to painting a picture with more than one color. We think that blended wines are often more harmonious than single variety bottlings. Try this one with any red meats. (California)

**Cline Cellars  
Ancient Vines Zinfandel**

This wine is from Cline Cellars, the highly-respected winery that produces Red Truck and many other great wines at value prices. This big, deep, fruity Zinfandel is produced from fruit from 80-100 year old vines.  
(California)

**Lotengo  
Torrontes**

Sure, it's the cool label that caught your eye, but don't lose sight of the fact that Torrontes is perhaps the best white wine you've never tried. Grown only in South America, it makes a crisp, dry wine with plenty of tropically-flavored oomph. (Argentina)

**Lotengo  
Malbec**

If you're looking for Malbec, you may as well buy one that has a cool label. Don't get us wrong, the wine is an excellent example of this increasingly popular varietal.

It's medium-bodied like Merlot, but has the peppery spiciness of Shiraz. (Argentina)

**Oxford Landing  
Shiraz**

The Oxford Landing wines are so typical of Australian wine production ~ very nice wines at a great price. We love this inexpensive Shiraz.

It's perfect for an informal dinner of burgers, steaks, or barbecue. (Australia)

**Solitude  
Carneros Sangiocomo Vineyard  
Pinot Noir**

Solitude produced only 861 cases of this fine California Pinot Noir in this vintage, strictly in accordance with Burgundian standards. The wine is grown in the cool Carneros region, which perfectly suits Pinot Noir. (California)

**Ancien Domaine des Pontifes  
Chateauneuf-du-Pape**

The name is an allusion to the fact that the Pope once hung his very large hat in the nearby town of Avignon rather than Rome. The wine, one of the greatest from France, is an incredible blend of up to 15 grapes, ideal with lamb, veal or poultry. (France)

**Wente  
Reliz Creek Reserve Pinot Noir**

Wente Vineyards has been growing Pinot Noir in the Arroyo Seco region of Monterey since the 1960s. It is the ideal region to grow this Burgundian varietal because of the long, cool growing season. (California)

**Lotengo  
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**Tortoise Creek  
Unoaked Chardonnay ~ Viognier**

A fresh, crisp blend of two Round & Luscious grapes. The wine is packed with fruit and boasts aromas of apricots and honeysuckle.

This wine is perfect along or with pork, chicken, or spicy foods. "An Exceptional Value." [Wine & Spirits](#) (France)

**Graham Beck Chardonnay**

We can't get enough of these Graham Beck wines. This Chardonnay is aged in French oak, rendering it a moderately oaky wine. It has a powerful vanilla and citrus bouquet.

Crisp and full-flavored, it's a great Chardonnay at this price. (South Africa)

**Altosur Chardonnay**

Altosur is our highest altitude wine, grown under the supervision of world-renowned winemaker Michel Rolland at 4,000 feet of elevation, and irrigated with thawed snow from the Andes. Only 2,000 cases were made. (Argentina)

**Clossman Bordeaux**

Just under the surface of the world famous Bordeaux wine trade are the wineries that have turned out exceptional Bordeaux wines year after year without the fame, or the high prices. The Bordeaux blend of Cabernets and Merlot is best enjoyed with hearty foods like beef or pork roast. (France)

**Wildhurst Vineyards  
Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon**

We love finding a great wine at a bargain price. Our friend (Wine and Beer guru) Matt DeFelice left us a bottle of this one night, and we loved it. This wine is bittersweet for Dave, as the first bottle of wine that he dropped and broke was one of these. Yes, he wept like a little girl.  
(California)

**MacRostie Merlot**

We know that California wines aren't subject to big quality swings from vintage year to year like those of France, but we REALLY loved the 1999 California wines. So did everyone else, which is why there are so few of them still around. (California)

**Chameleon  
Merlot**

Chameleon produces fine wines in the Old School Napa Valley. This Merlot offering wafts aromas of violets and currants. Flavors of black cherry follow in a beautifully balanced Smooth & Velvety wine that perfectly complements foods ranging from poultry through pork, beef and game.

**Kimball  
California Zinfandel**

We're amazed at how many people haven't tried Zinfandel. Zinfandel is fruity, dry, deep, and is the quintessential American grape. Good Zinfandel usually costs \$20 or more, but this one is a good introduction to this great grape. (California)

**Chateau Saint-Paul  
Haut-Médoc Bordeaux**

You could sit at the Old Ebbitt Grill next door to the White House, a haunt of Presidents and Diplomats since 1856, and order a bottle of this wine for \$36, or you could be fiscally prudent and buy it here, investing the savings to further the interests of the constituency of your choice. (France)

**Avignonesi  
Rosso di Toscana**

You're languishing over dinner at a café in Florence. The sun is dipping into the River Arno and the city glows like a jewel. You order another bottle of that incredible local red wine. You remind yourself to remember the name so that you can get more once you're home.....Avignonesi.....(Italy)

**Chiaramonte  
Nero d'Avola**

[Wine & Spirits](#) recently called Nero d'Avola “a hot new wine”. Made from 100% Nero d'Avola, this Sicilian red tastes of lush dark fruits and spices, and it's wonderfully smooth. “An especially good value.” [Gambero Rosso](#) (Sicily)

**Icardi  
Bricco del Sole**

This intoxicatingly good blend of Nebbiolo, Barbera, and Cabernet Sauvignon is simply one of the best wines we've tasted. The Gambero Rosso calls it “a masterful blend”. (Italy)

**Hair O' The Dog  
Incredibly Cool Blended White**

If you think we made this in our bathtub, you're right! Not really. Our best-selling wine (really) is made for us by the Guglielmo family, vintners of fine wines since 1925. A blend of French Colombard and Chenin Blanc, this soft & Mellow white has inviting aromas of melons, pears and citrus fruit. (California)

**Hair O' The Dog  
Amazingly Cool Blended Red**

The sister wine to our best-selling White, our red is made from Zinfandel, Ruby Cabernet, Petite Sirah, Barbera, and Carignane, producing a light, zesty table wine with aromas of cherries and berries within a framework of oak. It rocks with everything from hamburgers to pizza! (California)

**Elyse  
A.K.A. Napa Valley Zinfandel**

Hide the children! This huge Zinfandel is for grown-ups only. Boasting a 15.7% alcohol volume and gigantic fruit flavors to match, this enormo Zinfandel can be cellared for 10-12 years, or you could unleash it now. This wine has not been rated, but Elyse Zins typically score 88-91 points. (California)

**Banrock Station  
Sparkling Chardonnay**

If you'd like the taste of Champagne without the pricetag, check out Banrock Station. This sparkling Chardonnay is great for celebrations, and also with light foods and spicy foods. As a bonus, Banrock Station actively works to restore wetland habitat in nine countries.  
(Australia)

**Cypres de Climens  
Barsac**

Cypres de Climens is a Premier Cru estate in the commune of Barsac, neighboring the more famous commune of Sauternes. The Semillon grapes are botrytised to produce a dessert wine that has deep aromas and flavors of apricot, vanilla and pineapple. (France)

**Bridges  
Sara's Little Taxi**

Cutely named after its combination of Syrah, Petit Sirah and Cabernet (get it?), this is a seriously good blended wine. Enjoy it with everything from hamburgers to barbecue to steaks. (California)

**Monti Verdi  
Chianti Classico Riserva**

Chianti Classico is from the heart of the Chianti region of Tuscany, where the best Chiantis are produced. Riservas benefit from extra aging, making this one very fine Chianti. (Italy)

**Hiedler  
Gruner Veltliner**

Gruner Veltliner is the new darling of sommeliers everywhere. A bracing alternative to "the usual" whites, Austria's native grape produces wines that are pale green in colour and display fruit notes of grapefruits, limes, pears, and sometimes hints of white pepper. (Austria)

**Brotherhood  
New York Riesling**

From America's oldest winery (est. 1839), this Riesling from the Finger Lakes region is semi-sweet, and provides a fortuitous complement to Asian foods or to spicy stuff. It's also a masterful choice to sip at home. (New York)

**Linganore Winecellars  
Skipjack**

Maryland's answer to Riesling, this semi-sweet blend from Mount Airy is best served with desserts, fruit, or as an apertif. (Maryland)

**Chateau St. Nicholas  
Chardonnay**

Let's face it. Santa's a beer man. Our sources say that the Elfin One does kick back with this Chardonnay to keep things copacetic with Mrs. C, who gets a little bloaty from beer. (California)

**Domaine Rosier  
Blanquette de Limoux**

Joe Gardner, one of our favorite Wine Dudes, brought this sparkler by for a taste recently. Wow! Great yeasty-bready aromas. A full, creamy taste with a finish of pears. Incroyable!! (France)

**Hugel Gentil**

"Gentil" is the traditional name that Alsatian winemakers gave to their best blends of noble grapes. This blend of native Alsatian varieties is just wonderful as a Soft & Mellow wine. Try it alone, or with light fare or poultry. (France)

**Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin  
Yellow Label Champagne**

From one of the most venerated Champagne houses in the world, this fine example is primarily Pinot Noir, with Chardonnay and a bit of Pinot Meunier. Beautifully creamy with aromas of fresh bread and pears. You won't be sorry you bought it. (France)

**Kim Crawford  
Marlborough Unoaked Chardonnay**

This New Zealand Chardonnay is for those who don't like the oak in most California versions of the wine. "Substantial and vividly fruity but perfectly balanced with crisp acidity, this is -- as usual -- an exemplary wine. 87 points. A Smart Buy." [Wine Spectator](#)

**Abundance  
Abundantly Rich Red**

A rich blend of Syrah and Merlot with just a snippet of Sangiovese. Fresh berry flavor and a jammy richness. From burgers on the grill to pizza to bbq this wine will compliment a range of dishes. (California)

**Fuentespina  
Tempranillo**

From Spain's most famous wine region of Ribera del Duero, Fuentespina turns out Reserva Tempranillo that earns 93 points from Wine Spectator. This is a just a slightly more modest version at a far more modest price. (Spain)

**Tenuta Zicari  
Pezzapetrosa**

[cue Bobby McFerrin] Don't worry, be happy. The wine is as beautiful as the bottle, presuming you like huge reds. A blend of 85% Primitivo and 15% Cabernet from Puglia in the heel of the boot, serve this with hearty meals of beef, game or aged cheeses. (Italy)

**Tenuta Zicari  
Solicato**

The lighter of the Zicari wines that we carry, the Solicato is half Primitivo, half Merlot. Our Latin isn't good enough to figure out what the guy on the label is doing to that poor woman, but maybe that will be a nice topic of conversation over a meal or chicken, pork, or pasta with this very nice wine. (Italy)

**Ravenswood  
Zinfandel**

Our friends and Top Dogs Mike & Linda Wilt own the Quiznos restaurant next to us. They love this rare inexpensive Zinfandel, and say that it goes very well with almost every delicious sub at Quiznos, especially the extra large ones. (California)

**Icardi  
Barbera d'Asti**

A rustic wine with all the structure of a Barbera from Piedmont. There is a savory saddle leather flavor that peaks through a canvas of wild cherries and white pepper. (Italy)  
88 points. [Wine Enthusiast](#)

**Anapamu  
Chardonnay**

A persistent Top Dog has requested this wine on multiple occasions. We could resist no longer. "Soft, yet persistent...offers ripe, tropical fruit flavors; the wine's soft entry make it a very user-friendly wine; great out of the fridge. 86 Points. [Wilfred Wong](#)

**Domaine Chandon  
Brut Sparkling**

The same Chandons who produce Dom Perignon and Moet-Chandon purchased California vineyards to produce great sparkling wines using classic Champagne methods. This one is redolent of yeasty bread and stonefruits. (California)

**Domaine Carneros Taittinger  
Brut Sparkling**

Taittinger is one of Champagne's leading houses. This wine is from their Carneros property. "Complex elegant aromas of citrus, green apples and bread yeast; creamy texture; long vibrant finish."  
[San Francisco Chronicle's Top 100 Wines](#)

**Fonseca Bin No. 27  
Porto**

In 1822, Manoel Pedro Guimaraens, founder of the Fonseca family winery, created a special port which was reserved for his family only. He stored that port in Bin No. 27 of his wine cellar. Five generations of the family have maintained the recipe. (Portugal)

**Berrywine Plantations  
Medieval Mead**

Mead is a semi-sweet honey wine. It was the beverage of nobles in Medieval times (not the cheesy restaurant but the actual epoch). Please refrain from pillaging until after you leave the store. (Maryland)

## J

### **Nicole's Vineyard Pinot Noir**

Lively aromas of berries and violets integrated with vanilla, cola and slightly earthy undertones. The palate is intense with dark fruit - blueberry, cherry and plum - balanced by cracked-pepper spice, fennel and light rosemary. "90 Points" [Wine & Spirits](#)

### **Kangarilla Road Shiraz**

## **93 Points - Robert Parker**

Enough Said?

### **Cantarutti Pinot Grigio**

Our favorite Pinot Grigio in the shop, Cantarutti bursts with fruit flavors. This isn't too unusual for wines like this from Friuli, but it isn't said too often about Pinot Grigio. (Italy)

## Cline

### **Ancient Vines Mourvedre**

Trivia time: What grape is a major component of both Spanish Crianza and French Chateaufeuf du Pape? As you might have guessed, it's Mourvedre (a.k.a. Monastrell). This one, grown from old vines, is beautifully dark with fruits and chocolate flavors. A great change of pace. (California)

### **Chateau Ste. Michelle Columbia Valley Merlot**

From the 2004 American Winery of the Year, this Merlot exhibits "smooth, generous style emphasizes distinctly minty, herbal overtones to the cherry and spice flavors. It all lingers nicely. 89 Points." [Wine Spectator](#) (Washington)

### **La Spinetta Bricco Quaglia Moscati d'Asti**

The perfect summer backyard and patio wine, Moscato d'Asti is 'frizzante', redolent with the heady perfume of Muscat grapes. Its delicate sweetness and low alcohol makes this refreshing to sip on its own or together with various fruits. (Italy)

### **Tiziano Chianti**

In Tuscany, Chianti is a wine of the people (vin populi?), so we feel like you should be able to get a tasty Chianti for not too many lire. Tiziano agrees, and this offering which carries Italy's highest official assurance of quality is *bellissimo*. (Italy)

### **Robert Pecota L'Artiste Sauvignon Blanc**

It's no big secret that Mr. Pecota is a part-time Talbot Countian, and from what we can tell, he seems like a swell guy, even if he isn't yet a Top Dog. His Sauvignon Blanc would be very nice with a light salad, a little seafood, or poultry. (California)

### **Toasted Head Cabernet Sauvignon**

Some wise guy ordered a case of this, then never picked it up. His loss is your gain. In addition to having a way-cool label, there is a bouquet of cherry and blackberry fruit, with notes of chocolate, leather, roasted coffee, and sweet oak. (California)

### **Dry Creek Vineyards Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon**

"I have seldom tasted a Dry Creek Valley Cabernet (the appellation, not the winery) that didn't have a woolly edge to it. This wine is an excellent example. It's briary, with pushy tannins and the succulent flavor of wild blackberries. Oak adds a sheen of vanilla and smoke. 90 points." [Wine Enthusiast](#)

### **Easton Amador County Zinfandel**

"Hey, it's that wine they make in Easton!" Umm, no. This lovely inexpensive Zinfandel is made in California by Bill Easton, for whom our town is named (not really). Joking aside, this is excellent zinfandel. Don't believe us? "87 points" – [Wine Spectator](#)

### **Red Truck California Red Table Wine**

Top Dog #007 Smith, Jeff Smith recommended this very nice California blend to us. It's made of Mourvedre, Syrah, Petit Sirah and Merlot. Now you know why they just called it Red Truck. A wise choice with everything from pizza to filet mignon.

### **Warre's 1980 Vintage Porto**

Dave was a BMOC starting his senior year at St. Michaels High School when these grapes were picked. "A solid vintage Port from an unsung vintage. Medium ruby, with clean perfume and black cherry aromas, full-bodied, with silky, sweet concentrated berry flavors and a medium finish. 88 Points."

[Wine Spectator](#)

### **Graham Beck Brut Rosé**

Sparkling rosé is the new darling of the wine world, and why not? It's rich, bubbly, and as yeasty as a fresh from the oven loaf of bread. You can try a French version for 50 clams, or you can have this excellent South African version for a lot less. It is 70% Pinot Noir and 30% Chardonnay (South Africa)

### **Spy Valley Marlborough Gewurztraminer**

"Remarkable; intensely aromatic and floral, full bodied, nearly dry, richly flavored, and very long on the palate, with very long persistence. It tastes of litchi nut, rose petal, jasmine and radish. 5 Stars!" [Restaurant Wine](#)

### **Calera Central Coast Pinot Noir**

Mr. Clarke Reed tells a wonderful tale about his impromptu visit to the Calera Vineyard many years ago, but we'll leave that tale to him to tell. Food & Wine called this its "Best Pinot Noir Under \$20", which immediately caused the price to increase. (California)

**L'Ecole No. 41  
Columbia Valley Cabernet**

With a classic Cabernet nose, this highly integrated wine shows dark blackberry and herbal notes of mint and sage, with flavors of ripe plum, black cherry, and currants on an earthy toasty finish. "91 Points" [Wine Spectator](#) (Washington)

**Clos du Val  
Merlot**

Recommended to us by Top Dog Tracie Lahman. "...The well charred, vanilla scented barrels dominate the aroma, while blackberry fruit and tannins rule in the mouth. 90 points." (California)  
[Wine Enthusiast](#)

**Inglenook St. Regis Reserve  
Non-Alcohol Sparkling**

It's all the fun of Champagne without the hangover ! For those who wish to celebrate without indulging. (California)

**Boordy Vineyard  
Mallard Grenache Syrah**

It's Maryland Cotes du Rhone, Hon ! Boordy makes some of Maryland's best wines, and we just love the light fruitiness of this Garnacha-based blend. You could even drink it with crabs ! (Maryland)

**Gruet Demi-Sec  
Méthode Champenoise Sparkling**

If you like the idea of Champagne, but you find the actual drink drier than lying in a tub of salt in the Sahara at noon on the summer solstice, this is your answer. Gruet turns out a quality sparkling wine with a nice touch of sweetness.  
(New Mexico)

**Francis Coppola  
Bianco**

Here's a blend that you don't see everyday: Pinot Grigio, Chardonnay, and Sauvignon Blanc. The result is a wine that bursts with layers of fruit flavors: pear, apple, honeydew, citrus. This wine has it all.  
(California)

**Cielo  
Pinot Grigio**

Cielo makes a clean, crisp, classic version of Pinot Grigio with excellent freshness and balance. It's a wonderful pairing with steamed seafood or a light salad, and it's great for sipping by the warmth of the sun, or the fireplace. (Italy)

**Mark West  
Pinot Noir**

This is our favorite Pinot Noir under \$15. Actually, this wine is as good as many \$20+ efforts. Try it with anything from salmon (the classic Pinot pairing) to poultry to pork.  
(California)

**Schmitt-Sohne  
Piesporter Michelsberg Kabinett**

A very crisp moderately light bodied wine reminiscent of granny smith apples. Lively acidity results in a juicy, clean palate feel that is ideal for a wide range of foods from cheeses and appetizers to shellfish and meats. Made with Riesling and Muller Thurgau. (Germany)

**Boordy Vineyards  
Rockfish**

Maryland wines aren't quite world-class yet, but Boordy keeps getting closer and closer. This blend of Seyval, Vidal and Chardonnay is a delightfully light, refreshing wine with just a bit of sweetness. Trust us, you'll like.  
(Maryland)

**Nichelini  
Napa Valley Merlot**

Nichelini is one of those terrific small vineyards that you'll never hear about. But don't be suckered by this vineyard's lack of national press. Nichelini, one of the oldest vineyards in Napa (c.1890) turns out fantastically flavorful wines. (California)

**Larkmead Vineyards  
Napa Valley Merlot**

Only 758 cases of this exceptional wine were made. "Big, fleshy, dense, deep ruby/purple-colored effort displaying aromas of cocoa, smoke, dried herbs, and black as well as red fruits. 90 points." [Robert Parker](#) (California)

**Twin Beaks  
Shiraz**

Shazz loves Shiraz, and not just because it rhymes with her name. And she's always loved this one. We thought it was because of the ostriches on the label, but we've got to admit that this is very good wine. (Australia)

**Dow's  
10 Year Tawny Porto**

Bright and beautiful honey, toffee, caramel and (like the owners of this shop) a touch of nuts. A vibrant, sweet port of lovely, delicate structure. "89 points." [Wine Spectator](#) (Portugal)

**Viña Antigua**

Francis Ford Coppola, who apparently directed some films before becoming a Wine Dude, has a café in Napa Valley where they serve Viña Antigua to all of the poseurs and wannabes who hang out there. Maybe you're a Poseur Wannabe, but you can drink the same thing. (Argentina)

**Cantarutti  
Grave Pinot Grigio**

We love these wines made by Antonella Cantarutti on just 65 acres left to her by her father in Friuli. The secret to these big-flavored wines lies in the fact that the Cantaruttis trim their vines to yield less than half the maximum allowable fruit yield. (Italy)

**Siema  
Pinot Grigio**

The Lison Pramaggiore wine district encompasses the area surrounding Venice, including Romeo and Juliet's hometown of Verona. This fine Pinot Grigio is an excellent example of the local style of boldly flavored Pinots. (Italy)

**Hans Lang  
Riesling Trocken**

Fear not this Riesling, avowed haters of sweet wines. "Trocken" mean "dry". This beautiful Rheingau wine starts very dry, opening to an explosion of fruit flavors and ending on a slightly sweet, creamy note. You also get 33% more for free ! (Germany)

**Dr. Loosen  
Riesling**

This is classic German Riesling. "An off-dry white, bursting with peach and citrus notes on a plump, accessible frame. 87 Points."

[Wine Spectator](#)  
(Germany)

**La Rocca  
Pinot Grigio**

The grapes for this full-flavored wine are grown in far-eastern Friuli along the Slovakian border. Italians consider this area to be the best expression of the grape in the world, and justifiably so. Check out the aromas of hay and almonds. (Italy)

**Cornaro  
Veneto Pinot Grigio**

If you're looking for a simple crisp, refreshing Pinot Grigio, you've just found it. Cornaro produces an easy-drinking version of Pinot Grigio that would be perfect alone or with salads or light seafood. (Italy)

**NME Sudtirol – Alto Adige  
Pinot Grigio**

South Tyrol along the Italy's Austrian border is most famous for Otzi the Iceman, whose frozen remains were discovered on a glacier not far from the winery. Otzi, had he lived for another 5,300 years, would have loved this flavorful wine. (Italy)

**Tohu  
Pinot Noir**

Our exhaustive wine tasting regimen (yeah, we know) leads us to some very nice wines, and this one is among our favorite Pinot Noirs.

New Zealand fruit married to traditional Burgundian methods equals a truly excellent wine. (New Zealand)

**Bunratty Mead**

Mead is the honey wine favored by big hairy medieval types like that Hagrid guy from Harry Potter. But smaller, better-groomed, more-modern people like it, too. Please refrain from pillaging while in the store. (Ireland)

**Royal Tokaji  
Tokaji Aszu**

Tokaji from Hungary was the world's first noble dessert wine. The wines are classified from 1-6 "puttonyos" (literally "baskets"), with 6 being the highest quality wines. This 5 puttonyo selection is superb. (Hungary)

**L'Ecole No. 41  
Apogee**

"Apogee" means the highest point of an arc, an apt metaphor for this celebrated Bordeaux-blend from Washington State.. Wine Spectator called it "boldly aromatic" (among other things) and gave it 91 points. (Washington)

**Duckhorn Vineyards  
Merlot**

The folks at Duckhorn Vineyards committed themselves to producing great Merlot back when everyone else in Napa was using the grape as a blending agent. Their work has paid off with Merlots routinely getting 90+ points from reviewers. "90 points" Wine Spectator. (California)

**Vega Sindoa  
Cabernet ~ Tempranillo**

This wine from Navarro in the north of Spain combines the Spanish Tempranillo grape, a low-tannin finesse player, with Cabernet Sauvignon, which adds depth and complexity. This great combination leads to a great food wine that will pair with anything from chicken to pork to beef. (Spain)

**Piper-Heidsieck  
Brut Champagne**

Piper-Heidsieck is universally acknowledged as one of the world's great Champagne houses. This is their signature Brut, a tremendous sparkler that offers hazelnut, citrus and honey flavors. "91 Points". Wine Spectator. (France)

**Boordy Vineyards  
Maryland Sparkling Cuvée**

When you're looking to celebrate on a more local scale, why not go with Maryland's own sparkling wine? Boordy, Maryland's oldest winery, makes this wine with the traditional blend of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, using the traditional Champagne method.

**Taittinger  
La Francaise Brut Champagne**

Another of the great Champagne houses, Taittinger uses a higher percentage of Chardonnay in their La Francaise Brut than most houses do. The result is a highly-refined Champagne with great yeast and honey flavors. Exceptional. (France)

**Pol Roger  
Champagne**

Dave loves this Champagne, as does Wine Enthusiast: "Pol Roger has hit the bull's eye with this year's release...92 points!" (France)

**Panarroz**

An exciting blend of Syrah, Mourvedre and Garnacha from Jumilla in eastern Spain. Deep ruby color, rich perfumes, and juicy. "A gorgeous aged Spanish red. 90 points!"

[Robert Parker](#)

**Araucano  
Carmenere**

The Carmenere grape was long thought to be Merlot in Chile. In fact, the grape is an ancient relative of Merlot, and was in fact grown in Bordeaux prior to Merlot. Here it produces a wonderful medium bodied wine that excels when slightly chilled. (Chile)

### **Abeja Cabernet Sauvignon**

“Abeja” (a-**bay**-ha) is Spanish for “bee”, a tribute both to the Latino workers who harvest these grapes and to the environmentally sensitive growing practices of the vineyard.

This wine is a big Cabernet whose prior vintage received 92 points from the Spectator. This vintage had not been rated at press time.  
(Washington)

### **Oracle Cabernet Sauvignon**

You may have had this wine at Out of the Fire recently. It is yet another great wine value from South Africa. Like Othello, it is dark, supple and superb. Drink it with pork, beef or game. (South Africa)

### **Oracle Shiraz**

We get this Shiraz from the other Down Under.

This is perhaps the perfect wine for roasted pork. The peppery spice notes of the Shiraz grapes sublimely compliment the savory taste of the pork. (South Africa)

### **Tamas Estates Barbera**

Barbera is an excellent choice for folks who want an Italian wine, but who find Chianti and other Sangiovese wines too astringent.

Smooth, dark, and fruity, this California version is wonderful with hearty pasta and grilled meats. (California)

### **Pascual Toso Cabernet Sauvignon**

Pascual Toso left his native Italy for Argentina in 1880. He used his wine-making knowledge to craft the bounteous supply of local grapes into some of that country’s first quality wines.

Today the winery that he founded is among Argentina’s finest. “88 Points” Wine Spectator

### **Excelsior Estate Cabernet Sauvignon**

Ahhh, you’ve made an excellent choice by choosing this wine. Robert Parker called this wine “an excellent value” and Wine Spectator gave it 91 points. More

importantly, Dave says “This rocks !”  
(South Africa)

**Mirone  
Blended Red**

“Mirone” was the signature of Mir Geribert, the 11<sup>th</sup> century Prince of Olerdola. This Aragon wine is a lovely light everyday blend that is primarily Garnacha, one of our favorite grapes. An excellent sipping wine, it will also pair up with fish, poultry and pork. (Spain)

**Linganore  
Steeple Chase Red**

Linganore’s Mount Airy winery produces a number of good Maryland wines, including this semi-sweet, chillable red blend that is a nice choice for those who find most red wines too dry. (Maryland)

**Nichelini  
Napa Valley Zinfandel**

Face it, you’ve never heard of Nichelini. It is one of those small wineries with virtually no advertising budget. Even their website is lame. But their wine is divine – especially their Zinfandel. We love this wine. (California)

**Cetamura  
Chianti**

How can you tell whether an inexpensive Chianti is any good? Well, one thing you could do is to look for the DOCG label, which is Italy’s highest classification of wine quality. It’s that pink one at the top of the bottle. Drink it with pasta, chicken cacciatore, or veal. (Italy)

**Oracle  
Pinotage**

Pinotage is South Africa’s signature grape. It produces a dark, complex wine with a lot of flavor and low tannins. Pinotage is an excellent substitute for Cabernet Sauvignon for those who find Cab a bit chalky. (South Africa)

**Robert Pecota  
Syrah**

Mr. Pecota, who lives here in the county sometimes, hasn’t stopped in yet. We were a little miffed, but then we realized that we haven’t stopped by his winery out in Monterey County yet, either. So all is forgiven, Mr. P. Enjoy his Syrah with steak, game or barbecue. (California)

### **Goats do Roam**

The original idea here was to make fun of the French wine Côtes du Rhône, which is a light Garnacha, Syrah, Mourvedre blend. But along the way to a clever joke, a really good wine emerged. If you like light reds, you'll love this wine made from the same grapes as the butt of the joke. (South Africa)

### **Madrileño de Ricardo Benito Tempranillo**

“Madrileño” is a Spanish term meaning essentially “authentically Spanish”. Tempranillo is Spain’s noble grape, equating in style to Cabernet Sauvignon. Tempranillo is the grape from which Rioja is principally made. Enjoy it with big food. (Spain)

### **Posada El Virrey Tannat**

Looking for something different? The Tannat grape originated in the Basque country along the French/Spanish border. The vines were brought to Uruguay in the late 1800’s where Tannat has flourished to the point that it is now Uruguay’s signature grape. This is a big wine that should be consumed with rich food. (Uruguay)

### **Le Bine Valpolicella**

Valpolicella is made from the Corvina and Rondinella grapes, the same grapes used for its more famous sister wine – Amarone. This Valpolicella is filtered through the drying mats used for Amarone in order to concentrate the flavors. (Italy)

### **Peace Family Vineyard Blended Red**

All we are saying...is give Peace a chance. (Sorry, couldn't resist that one.) A backwards Côtes du Rhône with the same grapes, but in opposite proportion and a bit of Cabernet thrown into the mix. The result is a smooth medium red that everyone seems to love. Who knew Peace was so popular? (Australia)

### **Castroviejo Rioja Reserva**

Rioja doesn't get better than this. A well-aged bottle of Reserva made from 80% gutsy Tempranillo and 20% mellow Garnacha. This is about as great as Spanish wine gets. (Spain)

**Vincent  
Macon-Villages**

The French make superb wines that showcase the beauty of the Chardonnay grape without the heavy oak influence that is typically used in New World wines. Lighter and redolent of pear and apple, these wines are sublime. Macon-Villages wines represent the best values of the French Chardonnays. (France)

**Indaba  
Chardonnay**

Indaba makes a classic New World Chardonnay that marries pear, apple and citrus flavors of the fruit with the butter and vanilla notes of oak barrels. (South Africa)

**Rimat  
Chardonnay**

This is classic Old World Chardonnay, meaning that the winemakers have emphasized freshness and pure fruit essence by avoiding the use of oak barrels. One typically pays a premium for Old World-style French Chardonnay, but this wine is an excellent bargain. (Spain)

**Oracle  
Chardonnay**

A lightly-oaked Chardonnay that boasts a cool, slightly green color and flavors and aromas of tropical fruits. Oracle excels with poultry, fish, pasta and even pork. (South Africa)

**Oxford Landing  
Chardonnay**

Oxford Landing turns out very respectable high quality wines at very reasonable prices, a skill that the Australians have truly mastered. This Chardonnay is typical of the better Australian efforts. (Australia)

**Little Ashby Vineyards  
American Chardonnay**

Talbot County's own winery scores with this local offering of the most classic of all wine grapes. Serve it with soft crabs, Perdue chicken, or beaten biscuits. (Maryland)

**Domaine Du Vissoux  
Old Vines Beaujolais**

Old vines generate wines with more flavor than younger vines. The Gamay vines at Domaine du Vissoux in Beaujolais produce a lively light red that bursts with fresh fruit flavors, exactly as a Beaujolais should. Excellent for sipping and with light fare. (France)

**Santa Barbara Winery  
Chardonnay**

We love Santa Barbara wines. This Chardonnay is a great example of why. It's one of the smoothest and most-balanced Chardonnays we've tried. It manages to be both crisp and supple, a difficult feat that we rarely see. (California)

**McGuigan  
Bin 7000 Chardonnay**

The mates at McGuigan consistently produce high quality wines at reasonable prices. Their Chardonnay is typical of the Australian style, bursting with tropical fruits. (Australia)

**Elk Cove Vineyards  
Windhill Pinot Noir**

Simply one of our very favorite Pinot Noirs. The Windhill vineyard that produces the grapes boasts a combination of old vines and low fruit yields that produces an intensely flavored wine that avoids both the sharpness or the lean nature of lesser Pinots. (Oregon)

**Bouchard  
Puligny-Montrachet**

We had this wine on New Year's Eve. It is unquestionably our favorite Chardonnay in the shop. Tremendous fruit flavor and a level of balance and smoothness unmatched by any Chardonnay we've tasted. (France)

**Kimball  
Pinot Noir**

Pinot Noir is such a difficult grape for winemakers that many wineries don't even try to grow it. This is why good Pinot Noir tends to be expensive. When we find a good one that is reasonably priced, like this one, we jump on it. You may want to do so, too. (California)

**Grand Cuvée Fournier  
Sancerre**

Sancerre, from the Loire Valley, is the classic French Sauvignon Blanc wine. Lighter, earthier and less overwhelmingly fruity than efforts from New Zealand and California, many find Sancerre significantly more elegant.  
(France)

**Sacred Hill  
Whitecliff Estate Sauvignon Blanc**

Sacred Hill makes a classic New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc that blasts the drinker with a motherlode of tropical fruit flavors ~ lemon, lime, grapefruit, oranges, kiwi, maybe even a little rambutan. It's like Skittles in a bottle!  
(New Zealand)

**Hugel  
Gewurztraminer**

The Hugel family has been making wine in Alsace for over 350 years. Their classic Gewurztraminer (guh VERTZ truh MEEN er) is perhaps the perfect wine for light fare, especially seafood and Asian cuisine.  
(France)

**Chateau Ste. Michelle  
Semillon**

"A fine value...offers apple, honeyed mineral, almond, excellent intensity on the attack, revealing loads of honeyed minerals, and then compresses to display a tannic finish."  
[Wine Advocate](#) (Washington)

**Hermanos Lurton  
Rueda**

The Lurton brothers are famous for producing great wines on three continents. This terrific white from Rueda is crisp, flavorful, and smooth. Serve this great wine with seafood, poultry, or any light fare. "90 points." [Wine Spectator](#) (Spain)

**Le Vieux Moulin  
Bordeaux Blanc**

The "other" Bordeaux is a blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon that produces a wonderfully light, crisp and fresh wine that is perfect for sipping and with any light foods.  
(France)

**Nobul  
Tempranillo**

Nobul is a very deep, flavorful version of Spain's noble Tempranillo grape. This is the grape used in Rioja. Tempranillo is medium-bodied, rich and packs dark berry flavors. It rocks with pork, beef, hamburgers or even chicken. (Spain)

**Payva  
Tempranillo**

Payva is produced by six Spanish brothers from grapes grown on the family estate on the Guadiana River. Dark, intense, spicy and flavorful, it is a wine that works with almost any food except white fish. (Spain)

**Ironberry  
Cabernet Shiraz**

This wine is a total Fruit Bomb. Big, big flavors of berries and plums dominate this very good wine. If you like your wine to have some flavor, do yourself a favor and buy this one. (Australia)

**Silverwing  
Adelaide Hills Riesling**

Australian wines aren't usually thought of as subtle, but this fine dry Riesling is beautifully light, crisp and restrained. It will surprise a lot of people who think that they don't like Riesling. (Australia)

**Morandé  
Sauvignon Blanc**

So by now maybe you've had enough of those exploding grapefruit Sauvignon Blancs from New Zealand, see? Maybe you'd do yourself a favor by trying out this restrained, classic wine that is ideal with delicate fish, salads, and Asian cuisine. (Chile)

**Aresti  
Merlot**

You could drink this wine from Chile with some chili when it's chilly. But we're being silly. Aresti stopped us cold with its deep ruby color, big fruit aroma and silky smoothness. A truly great Merlot. (Chile)

**Masterpeace  
Cabernet ~ Merlot**

Andrew Peace masterfully blends these two big red grapes to create a uniquely fruity Bordeaux-blend from Down Under. Serve this wine with any savory pork or beef dish.

**Castroviejo  
Crianza Rioja**

Spain's most famous wine is Rioja, a flavoful red based on the Tempranillo grape. This version adds 20% Garnacha, which mellows the Tempranillo Beast. Oak aging smooths this wine even more. A nice quaff. (Spain)

**Museum  
Sangiovese ~ Cabernet**

Don't let the feminine label fool you. This wine is big and bold. It's like a lace glove over an iron fist. A blend of Sangiovese (the Chianti grape) and Cabernet Sauvignon, it's a big wine for big food, like He-Man steaks or a Manly Meaty Roast. (Italy)

**Epiphany  
Revelation**

"full-throttle, seamless... gorgeously exotic, expressive perfume...an opulent texture... tremendous reserves of fruit...beautiful balance, and a long, heady finish. A hedonistic as well as intellectual success...Bravo! 93 Points" – [Robert Parker](#) (California)

**La Macolina  
Albana di Romana**

This is the white wine you would drink at a sidewalk café in Rome, as you weakly attempt to look like you're not a tourist. Keep the wine label facing the crowd, and maybe you've got a chance. (Italy)

**Paraduxx  
Zinfandel ~ Cabernet**

A rare blend that evokes common praise...  
"92 Points" ~ Wine & Spirits  
"92 Points" ~ Connoisseur's Guide  
"90 Points" ~ Wine Spectator  
"4 Stars!" ~ Decanter  
(California)

**Bridlewood  
Central Coast Syrah**

Our man Joe Gardner, who sells us this wine, was flabbergasted when we decided to discontinue it because it was selling slowly. He made us buy it again. We put it on the tasting bar, and it sold out immediately. We admit it. Joe was right and we were idiots.  
(California)

**Chimney Creek  
South Island Pinot Noir**

Yeah, you've had the New Zealand Sauvignon Blancs. Big flippin' deal. If you seek *savoir faire* regarding the South Island, check out this Pinot Noir. It's quite a noble effort to pit a determined Kiwi against this notoriously finicky grape. (New Zealand)

**Stephen Vincent  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

Okay, so this is probably the ugliest wine label in the shop. Let's face it ~ it's lame. But just like in the tale of the Ugly Duckling, there is a beautiful swan of a wine that wants to get out. Now if you could only find a corkscrew.  
(California)

**Menage a Trois  
Blended White**

So many people were enjoying the Menage a Trois that we were having over in the red wine section that we decided to start having one here in the whites, too. Okay, it's a blend of three grapes. Get it? Slightly sweet and nicely smooth.  
(California)

**M ~ de la Fruitiere  
Muscadet**

Noted local Marine Biologist Dr. Bob Lippson recommended that we get a Muscadet. The man knows the sea, so it seems he probably knows a thing or two about wines that go with seafood. From vineyards near the mouth of the Loire River, this lovely light fresh white is the perfect seafood wine. (France)

**Mirone  
Blended White**

A classic Soft and Mellow blend of native Spanish grapes, this wine is truly world-class. The label was designed by the winemaker's Japanese wife. Serve this wine chilled with any lighter fare. (Spain)

**Santa Chiara  
Vernaccia di San Gimignano**

Who knew that in addition to its great reds, Italy also produces this terrific white? Folks are always surprised at how much they like the intense aromas and lively mouthfeel of Italy's greatest white wine. Serve it as an aperitif or with light fare. (Italy)

**Mark West  
Chardonnay**

We love Chardonnays from Santa Barbara County, which despite the more southerly location, always seem to be a little lighter than the Chard Bombs of Napa. Maybe it's the proximity to the cool Pacific. Whatever it is, we say "Hit me again, bartender!" (California)

**The Bishop  
Riesling**

Our best-selling sweet Riesling, The Bishop is from the classic Mosel-Saar-Ruwer region in western Germany. This is a very nice sipping wine that also works with light fare. And you can't beat the price for a German Riesling!

**La Rocca  
Pinot Grigio**

La Rocca is a product of the Collio Denominazione, a hilly region along Italy's northeast border with Slovenia outside of Venice. The wine is beautifully fragrant, then crisp and intensely fruity on the palate. (Italy)

**Allan Scott  
Sauvignon Blanc**

We read somewhere that this wine has a "spanking acidity". Yikes! All we know is that it's a gigantic tropical fruit motherlode, as any good New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc should be. (Pittsburgh....not really) (New Zealand)

**Chateau Morrisette  
My Dog Blue**

A semi-sweet blend of Riesling with a small amount of Vidal. Aromas of mint, honeydew and apricot highlight the soft finish of this soothing wine. Serve chilled with fruits and cheeses or with spicy Chinese food. (Virginia)

**Waipara Hills  
Dry Riesling**

Waipara Hills has been a popular choice here at The Dog with folks who want a wine that's sweet, but not "icky-sweet". Dry Rieslings will surprise people who swear that they don't like sweet wines. (New Zealand)

**Sula  
Chenin Blanc**

Our friend Mr. Guy Lovelace was looking for a wine for an India-themed party, and we came up with this one. He loved it. We love it. This soft, sweet white is the only Indian label available in Maryland. Great with Asian foods or any light fare. (India)

**Oracle  
Sauvignon Blanc**

We're not positive, but we're pretty sure that maybe this wine is perhaps one of the house wines at Out of the Fire these days, but don't hold us to that. Lovely with seafood, salads, or gently-prepared poultry. (South Africa)

**Boordy Vineyards  
Viva Sangria**

Sangria is a lightly spiced sweet red wine that is traditionally mixed with fruit and served as a party punch. It originated in Spain and became popular in the U.S. after the 1964 World's Fair. Olé !! (Maryland)

**Pikes  
Sauvignon Blanc ~ Semillon**

It's Aussie White Bordeaux, by cracky ! This blend is fruitier than the French version, and is superior for sipping alone or with seafood, lunch, or a salad. (Australia)

**Chateau d'Agassac  
Haut-Médoc Bordeaux**

Bordeaux from Haut-Médoc accentuate Cabernet Sauvignon over Merlot, producing a big, tight wine that ages remarkably well. This bottle from the 2000 vintage hasn't peaked yet, and will only get better for the next few years. (France)

**Verdicchio  
Dei Castelli di Jesi**

Owing to its good structure for an Italian white, Verdicchio is generally considered to be the most versatile Italian white wine with food. It will stand up to anything from fish to poultry to hearty pasta. (Italy)

**Kanu  
Chenin Blanc**

Can you Kanu? Chenin Blanc grapes produce a soft, medium-bodied white that is usually on the sweet side. Kanu, named for a mythical good harvest bird, delivers a nice version of this wine. (South Africa)

**P.J. Valckenberg  
Liebfraumilch**

“Liebfraumilch” means “mother’s milk”, a statement on how much the Germans revere this wine. It’s sweet and soft, just like Dave’s dog Sadie when she was a puppy, and before she grew up into a big stupid drooling dog who eats shoes. But we digress...(Germany)

**Santa Julia  
Reserva Chardonnay**

All of you foodies out there will appreciate that this wine was recently featured at a dinner for the James Beard Foundation. Aged in French rather than American oak, it is a moderately oaky Chardonnay (Argentina)

**Tohu  
Unoaked Chardonnay**

We love Tohu’s wines. This unoaked Chardonnay blasts flavors of peaches without smothering them with oak-induced butter and vanilla flavors. Malolactic fermentation makes this wine smooth and creamy. (New Zealand)

**Allan Scott  
Chardonnay**

“Polished in texture, striking a wonderful balance between ripe, spicy pear and caramel against a lovely zing of acidity, letting the flavors linger persistently. 90 Points” – [Wine Spectator](#)

**Mer Soleil  
Chardonnay**

Sometimes others say it better than we do...

**“Fabulous!”**

- Sandi Whitehurst  
Top Dog # 227  
(California)

**Lawson’s Dry Hills  
Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc**

Tropical and passionfruit aromas. Crisp citrus and gooseberry flavors are balanced with good palate weight and a clean fresh finish.  
(New Zealand)

**Fonseca  
Ruby Port**

If you’re new to port, the odds are that you’ll like this nice ruby from Fonseca. Fruity, sharp and sweet, it’s kinda like that nerdy kid in high school who ended up going to Princeton and made millions in the tech bubble in the 90s. Not that we’re bitter. (Portugal)

**Churchill’s  
20 Year Tawny Porto**

All red wines lose color as they mellow with age. Hold this bottle up to the light and you’ll notice the beautiful amber color of the wine. This is old tawny port intended for sophisticates, the wine cognoscenti, and brunophiles (people who like brown stuff).  
(Portugal)

**Inglenook  
Alcohol-Removed Champagne**

Dom Perignon is spinning in his grave, but hey, sometimes you need to go No Alcohol. Here’s a fun fact: You would need to drink four bottles of this stuff to get the same alcohol as you’d get in one can of beer. (Who Cares?)

### **Opus One**

Opus One is flashier than the lime-green tuxedo with ruffled shirt that Joe wore to the Junior Prom. This exalted Napa Cabernet is the brainchild of Robert Mondavi and Baron Phillippe de Rothschild. (California)

### **Nugan Estate Shiraz**

Nugan trims its vines so that they yield half the fruit of neighboring vineyards. This yields less wine, but better wine. This practice is the primary difference between crappy, weak wines and better wines. (Australia)

### **Nugan Estate Chardonnay**

An excellent Old World-style Chardonnay from a New World winery ! "Readers will enjoy [this] Macon-Villages-styled white exhibiting notes of lemon meringue, orange, and citrus. While it sees a bit of oak, that component is not apparent in its elegant, fruit-driven, medium-bodied personality." – [Robert Parker](#)

### **Firestone Vineyard Riesling**

We never tire of this wine [rimshot]. This off-dry Riesling is a little sweeter than than a Dry Riesling and less sweet than a typical German-style Riesling. Pair it with anything light, from seafood to simple pork. (California)

### **Nobilo Icon Pinot Gris**

We had this one with a plate of Dave's Not So Famous Thai Green Curry the other night. Incredibly flavorful with tropical fruits and the oily texture typical of Alsace-style Pinot Gris, this is an exemplary wine. (New Zealand)

**Hogue  
Johannisberg Riesling**

“An Excellent Value. Medium-bodied and satin-textured, it delivers loads of tangerine-laced white fruit flavors in its appealingly forward character. 87 Points” [Robert Parker](#)

**Tamas Estates  
Pinot Grigio – Monterey**

This is classic Pinot Grigio that is perfect for sipping alone. Or with friends, for that matter. Light and pretty; delicate nose of honeysuckle, apricot, peach; nectarine, lime, some mango and kiwi fruit; intensely tart with high acidity. (California)

**Leasingham  
Magnus Riesling**

Named for Leasingham Vineyard founder Magnus Badger, this Riesling was the highest scoring wine in recent a Clare Valley Riesling competition. Try it with any seafood, or with salads, appetizers, or Asian foods. (Australia)

**Luna  
Napa Pinot Grigio**

Please don't confuse this wine with that Luna di Luna stuff in the neon bottles that you can buy at the gas station. This is the real Napa deal, its prior vintages having attained 90+ points from major reviewers. (California)

**Bruno  
Barbera D'Alba**

The classic EYEtalian red. This Barbera has a beautiful ruby red color. Dry and well-balanced with some spicy notes. Excellent with red meat pasta sauces. In the Piedmont area this wine is also used in the making of the pasta sauce to add a deep and rich taste. Mmmm...Squisito! (Italy)

**Columbia Winery  
Cellarmaster's Riesling**

This wine was created by accident when a fermenter stopped working, resulting in a wine that was sweeter and lower in alcohol than the winemaker intended. He tried it anyway, and now he makes it that way on purpose. (Washington)

**Domaine Santa Duc  
Côtes du Rhône**

A masterful blend of Grenache, Syrah, and Cinsault from the master of Gigondas, Yves Gras. "There are some other brilliant wines made in Gigondas, but readers will not find anything better than Santa Duc's two cuvees."

- Robert Parker (France)

**Chateau Calabre  
Bergerac Rosé**

In the mood for something different? This excellent rosé is made entirely from Merlot grapes. The lighter color and flavor are the result of less contact between the grapeskins and the juices during fermentation. (France)

**La Colline  
Syrah**

The classic style of French Syrah has nearly been lost as New World winemakers produce huge amounts of aggressively-fruity Shiraz-styled wines with the grape. This Syrah is more subtle, nobly pleasant, and a better companion to hearty foods. (France)

**Basignani  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

Local winemaker Warren Rich says that the Basignanians make the best wine in Maryland, though he expects to eclipse them someday soon. Their Cabernet is richer than any local wine that we've tasted. (Maryland)

**Bourgogne Ambroise  
Red Burgundy**

There is a great deal of mystique about Burgundy - but let's face it - it's just Pinot Noir. Good ones like this display amazing complexity. Euro-inflation has priced many good Burgundies into the stratosphere, but this one remains a great bargain. (France)

**Domaine de Pouy  
Côtes de Gascogne**

Quiz: Which white grape is the most widely grown in France? Ehhhh. Wrong answer! It's the humble Ugni Blanc, which is used for Cognac and blended into beautifully simple white wines that are great for sipping or with seafood or a light salad. (France)

**McManis  
Chardonnay**

This is one of those big California Chardonnays that will impress your friends without emptying your wallet. [Food & Wine](#) recently named McManis Family Vineyards Chardonnay as one of its 10 Top Bottles of Chardonnay. (California)

**Viu Manent  
Reserve Chardonnay**

We really weren't looking to buy another Chardonnay when we tasted this Chilean charmer from the Colchagua Valley. It was just too good to pass up. Great fruit flavor with nicely-moderate French oak . (Chile)

**Bridlewood  
Viognier**

*An Ode to Viognier*

Whilst quaffing in a pose supine  
one might partake of Viognier.  
'Tis a lovely, full-bodied floral wine ~  
A more aromatic Chardonnay.

**Borsao  
Garnacha ~ Tempranillo**

From what Robert Parker calls "one of the world's greatest priced-wineries", this wine is an impossibly good value. The wondrous light Garnacha that we love so much is blended with Spain's noble grape for some additional oomph. (Spain)

**Gavi del Comune di Gavi  
Cortese**

Does everyone you think that the Italians drink Barolo with seafood? Egads ! No, they've got great white wines, including Gavi, made from the Cortese grape. It's light. It's fresh. It's fragrant. It's Springtime in a bottle ! (Italy)

**Domaine de Joy  
Colombard ~ Ugni Blanc**

We would have probably bought this wine for the name alone. How very celebratory ! But the fact is that we're sticklers for good taste, and this Gascogne blend is just too flipping good with fish or poultry to pass up. (France)

**Hair O' The Dog  
Merlot Magic**

Ahh, we note your skepticism. The house wine can't be good, can it? Wrong, Batman! Beautifully fruity and smooth, it sports a label designed by Nancy Spicer of Easton. The Dog donates \$1 to local charities for every bottle of this wine that we sell. (California)

**Segura Vidas Aria  
Brut Cava**

Cava is Spain's version of Champagne. It boasts similar great fruit and yeast flavors at a much lower price. We had so many customers placing orders for this wine that we decided it would be easier on everyone if we stocked it. (Spain)

**Beccaris  
Moscato d'Asti**

Yeah, we've heard that you don't like sweet wines. But this one is going to turn you into a big liar. It's a slightly bubbly *frizzante*, and the bubbles cut the sweetness. It's light. It's really fun. It's fabulous! (Italy)

**Rosenblum Cellars  
Cuvee 27 Zinfandel**

This is real Zinfandel, not the sweet pink stuff. It's boldly fruity and spicy. Rosenblum is one of the great producers of this quintessentially American wine grape, and we're pretty sure that the winemaker's aunt lives around here. (California)

**Leaping Lizard  
Los Carneros Pinot Noir**

We knew these guys had great Merlot, but excellent Pinot Noir at a bargain price? Who knew? Not us! But now we do, and so do you. (California)

**Domaine La Rosiere  
Beaujolais Rosé**

This ain't your Mama's pink wine! French rosé is light and dry. It's the perfect warm-weather sipper, and works with salads, seafood and light fare of any kind. This bottle is made from the same Gamay grapes used in Beaujolais. How do they make it pink? Magic! (France)

**Chateau Belvue  
White Bordeaux**

White Bordeaux is a blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon, and it's *magnifique* alone or with light foods. This is what you would be sipping on a warm day at that beautiful little park in downtown Bordeaux whose name we can't remember. (France)

**Jaillance  
Clairette de Die**

You are clearly going to die when you find out how good this wine is. From the Loire Valley, it will have a hint of sweetness on first taste, then finish completely dry. Our customers love this wine. (France)

**Castillo del Baron  
Monastrell**

Relax. Monastrell is the same grape as Mourvedre. Wait, that doesn't help. Okay, it's a grape that is blended into Bordeaux to add smoothness. One doesn't often find it in a starring role, but in this bottle it's dark, fruity and just danged good. (Spain)

**St. Urbans-Hof  
Piesporter Goldtropfchen**

This is the easiest wine review to write in the whole store: This wine is a perfect example of how great German wines can be. (Germany)

**Monte Schiavo  
Adeodato Rosso Conero**

What right do we have to ask you to pay over 40 clams for a wine that you've never heard of? None at all. So just ignore one of the best big red wines that we've ever had, and we'll drink it ourselves. By the way, the grape is Montepulciano. (Italy)

**Le Giuncare  
Verdicchio Classico Riserva**

We've always liked Verdicchio, which is Italy's greatest white wine. This one blew us away. "Classico" means that it's from the best part of the growing region, and "Riserva" means that this wine is the best produced by the vineyard." In short, it rocks. (Italy)

**Hair O' The Dog  
Chillin' Chardonnay**

You have stumbled upon the choice of true Chardonnay sophisticates. Our House Chardonnay is vinted by Foppiano Vineyards and sports a label designed by Polish design queen Ala Czarniecka. We donate \$1 to local charities for every bottle sold. (California)

**Caymus  
Conundrum**

A truly magnificent blend of white wine varieties yields a sum that is greater than its parts. Our very cool friends at General Tanuki's serve it with their Asian-inspired fare, but it will stand up to just about anything. (California)

**R. Dubois  
Pouilly-Fuisée**

Pouilly-Fuissée is a Chardonnay-based French wine that is lightly oaked. It is lighter than typical California Chardonnay, but more substantial than Chablis. This one gets 91 Points from Wine Spectator. (France)

**Domaine Houchart  
Côtes de Provence Rosé**

Maybe you can't make it to the beach at St. Tropez for this year's festival, but you can drink the same deliciously light local rosé as the swells in tuxedos. Hey, isn't that Kevin Bacon ? (Provence, France)

**Foley  
Santa Rita Hills**

Alicia Benhardt-Potter, the only wine sales rep that we're afraid of, loves this wine from the new Santa Rita Hills appellation. We do, too. What's shocking is that she doesn't sell it, and we buy it from one of her competitors. (California)

**Christian Moreau Pere et Fils  
Chablis**

If you prefer your oak in the backyard rather than in your wine, this Chablis is for you. Chardonnay juice is aged in stainless steel vats, imparting a much lighter, crisper apple taste than you get with California oak bomb Chardonnay. (France)

**Lafond  
Santa Rita Hills Pinot Noir**

The new Santa Rita Hills appellation is the hottest area for Pinot Noir production in California. We love this excellent affordable (for Pinot Noir) effort from Lafond. Great balance and smoothness. (California)

**Monte Schiavo  
Lacrima di Morro d'Alba**

Feeling adventurous? Lacrima di Morro d'Alba is one of those local Italian wines that is almost never exported. Named for the tear-shaped clusters produced on the vine, the wine is a very nice, slightly raisin-tasting light red. Be the first on your block to try it! (Italy)

**Robert Kacher  
Tocques et Clochers Chardonnay**

This is fine French Chardonnay just as many believe it should taste, emphasizing the natural apple and pear flavors of the grape over the butter and vanilla flavors of the oak barrels in which many Chardonnays are aged. (France)

**Stuhlmuller Vineyards  
Alexander Valley Cabernet**

Fritz Stuhlmuller made just 2,100 cases of this Cabernet, which is among the best we've tasted at this price. The vineyard is located at the convergence of the Alexander Valley, Dry Creek, and Russian River appellations. Location, location, location. (California)

**Solo Rosa  
California Rosé**

Gourmet magazine recently blind-tasted fifty rosés from around the world, and rated this wine #1. From Sangiovese and Merlot grapes, this is one flavorful dry rosé. (California)

**Londer Vineyards  
Paraboll Pinot Noir**

The Londer family bottled only 496 cases of their premium Anderson Valley Pinot Noir, which scored 93 points in a recent edition of *The Wine News*. (California)

**J Wines**  
**Russian River Valley Pinot Noir**

One of our favorite Pinot Noirs, this Russian River beauty is light and smooth. It's almost a shame to have to share a really nice light red with food, but if you must, go with Pacific salmon, tuna, poultry or ightly-handled pork. (California)

**Nobilo**  
**Icon Sauvignon Blanc**

This Marlborough entry is an unabashed motherlode of grassy grapefruityness. Yeah, that probably doesn't sound like it's good. And it isn't. If you're a fan of New Zealand wines, this wine is great ! (New Zealand)

**Louis Bernard**  
**Côtes du Rhône Blanc**

Who knew that the folks in Côtes du Rhône made white wine? This light blend of five local grapes including Grenache is guaranteed to soften the edges of a hard day. It's great alone or with salad or seafood. (France)

**Toso**  
**Brut Sparkling**

Our customers were looking for an inexpensive Champagne substitute, and we went all the way to Argentina for this excellent sparkler made from Chardonnay and Chenin Blanc. (Argentina)

**Nobul Red**  
**Tempranillo**

We recently held a Wine 101 class. Over the three class sessions, the attendees tasted at least 15 great wines. Many of them said that this was the best wine we served. (Spain)

**Anapamu Cellars**  
**Pinot Noir**

Anapamu makes one of those rare wines – a solid Pinot Noir priced under \$15. A great Pinot Noir for the uninitiated, serve it with seafood, poultry or pork. (California)

**Affreschi  
Nero d'Avola**

Nero d'Avola is a black Sicilian grape that renders a rich red wine that is very versatile with foods from pasta through poultry, pork and beef. We keep reading in the trade press that Nero d'Avola is going to be a big deal soon. Be the first on your block ! (Sicily)

**Roggiano  
Morellino di Scansano**

We know what you're thinking... Oh no, not Morellino di Scansano AGAIN ! Heh, heh. This is one of those wines that we bought simply because we really liked it. A dark red (Italy)

**Chateau Fortia  
Chateauneuf du Pape**

"94 Points" – Robert Parker

(We like to write our own wine cards, but if the most acclaimed wine critic in the world can't convince you to drink it, then we can't either)  
(France)

**Delas  
Côtes du Ventoux**

Any wine schmoe can delight friends with Côtes du Rhône, a lovely light Rhone blend of Grenache, Syrah, etc., but just think how much cooler and sophisticated you'll be for drinking lesser-known Côtes du Ventoux, which is essentially the same wine. (France)

**Domaine du Vieux Lazaret  
Chateauneuf du Pape**

"Vieux Lazaret" refers to an 18th century hospice run by the Lazarists, a silent order of monks. This hospice is now part of the estate that produced this bottle of the most noble of the Rhone Valley wines. It is ideal with lamb, pork, or game. (France)

**Los Monteros  
Blanco Valencia**

Valencia, on Spain's Mediterranean coast, is famous for oranges. And we swear that you can taste those oranges in this lively light white wine. It's a gorgeous wine on a beautiful day, and might even make you feel better on an ugly day. (Spain)

**Ducceto  
Chianti**

Those zany Italians classify their wines by appellation (where it's from) just like everyone else does, but they also confer the higher status of DOCG ratings on their best wines, such as this nice Chianti that is incredibly righteous with pasta, pork, or poultry. (Italy)

**Domaine des 2 Collines  
Beaujolais~Villages**

Beaujolais-Villages wines come from specific villages that produce higher quality wines than run-of-the-mill Beaujolais. This one is light, fruity and great for folks who usually groove to white wines. (France)

**Posada del Virrey  
Tannat**

Tired of fruity wines? Tannat grapes reputedly yield the most tannic wine on Earth. That being said, it's actually quite nice. Also, who in the Hell drinks wine from Uruguay? We recommend that you drink this stuff with a big steak, which tames its beastliness. (Uruguay)

**Querceto  
Chianti**

If you're looking for the best Chianti wines, this is one of them. Chianti Classico Riservas are the best wines from the best part of the Chianti region in Tuscany. (Italy)

**Arbanta  
Rioja**

We think that Rioja rocks. Made from Tempranillo grapes, it grooves with the perfect balance of fruit and structure. One can imagine a nice glass of this wine while the sun paints ochre the ramparts of an ancient Moorish fortress. (Spain)

**Monkey Business  
Merlot**

This wine seemed like a natural for a couple of knuckleheads like the dudes who run this shop. It doesn't hurt that it's full of great Sonoma Valley juice. Nothing could be better with summer barbecue, or is that barbeque? BBQ? (California)

**La Rocca  
Merlot**

Most Merlot wines are fruitier than Liberate's orchard. Not this one. European Merlot is far more restrained than its American cousin, with aromas of earth and hay. It's really a very fun change from the everyday. Go for it ! (Italy)

**Bogle  
Merlot**

We must admit that we're somewhat boggled by Bogle and the fanatical appeal that it seems to generate with people. Don't get us wrong, it's great wine. But man, it's almost like there's a cult. Weird. (California)

**Viu Manent  
Carmenere**

We love recounting the tale of how so-called wine experts proclaimed that this grape was Merlot for over 400 years until DNA testing proved that they were big stupidheads. It tastes just like Merlot, but better. (Chile)

**Arancio  
Grillo**

Wasn't it Robert Frost who talked about how taking the road less traveled had made all the difference? Grillo is a Sicilian grape with masterly citrus flavors and a crisp punch. Try it in place of [yawn] Sauvignon Blanc. (Sicily)

**Fuedo Monaci  
Primitivo**

Here's an opportunity to look like you're being sophisticated without really venturing much. Primitivo is Zinfandel, as these grapes are twin babies of the Croatian *Crljenak*, a word that we could not possibly pronounce. (Italy)

**Il Bastardo  
Sangiovese**

Okay, so we're kind of annoyed by those Fat Bastard wines. On the other hand, this Bastard is a very good version of the wine made with the Chianti grape. Great with everything from pizza to pasta to lunch with Bob Costa. (Italy)

**Broquel  
Chardonnay**

Broquel is the upscale label for Trapiche, Argentina's largest wine producer. This wine is a terrific example of how much quality can be found in Argentina now. Beautifully buttery with tropical fruit notes. You can get a wood case of six bottles of this wine for under \$90.

**Michel Torino  
Chardonnay**

Here's a cool wine fact: Vines grown at high altitude produce great juice because the vines are stressed by bright sunlight and thin soils. Check it out with this sumptuous wine from grapes grown at 5,500 feet. That's higher than Denver ! (Argentina)

**Broquel  
Malbec**

Malbec is Argentina's signature grape, tasting to us like a peppery cross of Pinot Noir and Syrah. This example is one of the best we've tasted, and is available in a wood case of six bottles for under \$90. (Argentina)

**Broquel  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

Argentina is beginning to turn out some excellent Cabernets at about half the cost of California Cabs. Broquel, the premium line from Trapiche, produces this dark, smooth wine that tastes like it costs \$30. You can get six in a wood case for under \$90.

**Laurent-Perrier  
Champagne**

"Lovely. Candied citrus, ginger and mineral aromas and flavors integrate well with the lightweight, elegant frame. Beautifully displayed, from start to the long finish. 90 points." Wine Spectator  
"90 points" - Robert Parker

**La Tour Narbonnaise  
Cuvée de Cabardes**

We really liked this wine at a tasting, but we didn't know what it was. After some research, we found it on the wine list of a Baltic Sea ferry. It's a full-bodied blend of Cabernet, Merlot, Syrah and Grenache from Languedoc that costs 208 Swedish Kronors on board, but far less here at The Dog. (France)

**Di Gino  
Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi**

We really love Verdicchio, Italy's greatest white wine. We can't think of anything more pleasant on a warm day than a glass of Verdicchio and an inheritance. Beautiful alone or with light fare. (Italy)

**Chateau Le Sartre  
White Bordeaux – Pessac-Léognan**

This is classic white Bordeaux from one of the best districts in France. 70% Sauvignon Blanc with Semillon. In our opinion, no wine is better on a warm day than a great white Bordeaux such as this one. (France)

**Chateau Hautmont  
White Bordeaux – Graves**

Graves ("GRAHVS") produces great red Bordeaux wines. But do you think those folks drink that in the summer? Egads! The lighter choice is this blend of Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon. It's the refreshingest! (France)

**La Porte de L'Abbaye  
Pouilly Fumé**

Wine Spectator listed the 2002 vintage of La Porte de L'Abbaye as # 35 on its list of the Top 100 Wines in the world. That vintage of this Sauvignon Blanc wine has been snapped up by collectors, but you can try the encore for less. (France)

**Paul Hobbs  
Russian River Chardonnay**

Paul Hobbs Chardonnays are regular members of Wine Spectator's Top 100 list, with the 2001 vintage earning 95 points from Wine Spectator. Aged exclusively in French oak, this wine emphasizes the natural fruit flavors of honey and white fruits over the vanilla flavors of the oak.  
"90 points" ~ Robert Parker

**Tohu  
Sauvignon Blanc**

One of our favorite brands in the shop, Tohu produces great New Zealand wine. Their Sauvignon Blanc is unabashedly grapefruity and totally over the top. If you want a white wine that TASTES LIKE SOMETHING, this would be the one. (New Zealand)

**Le Petit Caboche  
Rosé de Vaucluse**

**Attention White Wine Drinkers:** If you're ever going to venture into reds, here is your entry point. This rosé wine is so light that it's lighter than many whites. The subtle flavoring and lack of the tannin "YUCK" factor adds up to the perfect red for you. (France)

**Lucas & Lewellen  
Pinot Noir**

Hey, it's that wine from "Sideways"! Indeed, this wine was featured in the film while Paul Giamatti's character spoke rhapsodically about the virtues of Pinot Noir. We found his slam of Merlot unwarranted, but hey, our philosophy is "drink and let drink". (California)

**San Pietro  
Pinot Grigio**

Okay, so Joe bought this one because it comes from his family's ancestral village in Italy. It's crisp, clean and light. Buy it and check out the small tear of pride the glistens in Joe's eye. Or maybe he's just thinking about Ol' Yeller again. (Italy)

**Dom Perignon  
Champagne**

The most famous Champagne in the world is also one of the best. Dom Perignon was the monk who invented *methode Champenoise*, and famously exclaimed upon his first taste "I am drinking the stars". This wine was rated at 98 points by Robert Parker.

**Archipel  
California Cuvée**

"A serious blend of 62% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, and 8% Cabernet... Big, blackberry and cassis flavors are interwoven with cedar, toasty oak, and spice box. Supple tannin as well as full-bodied flavors suggest it will drink well young, yet age nicely. 91 Points" ~ Robert Parker

**Powers  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

Wine Spectator called Powers a "rising star". Wine Enthusiast named Powers Winery as one of the "50 Great U.S. Cabernet Producers." Our own Vicki just likes that it's from her semi-native state of Washinton.

**Tamar Ridge  
Chardonnay**

How could we resist? It's from Tasmania, by gum ! Tamar Ridge is made in typical Australian style, big on tropical fruit flavors with a healthy oak backing. Drink it for a devil of a good time. (Tasmania)

**Plantagenet  
Riesling**

This dry-style Riesling has awesome lime flavor and a crispness that feels like biting into an apple. If you were planning on yet another Pinot Grigio (yawn), try this instead. You won't be sorry. It's an apertif wine, but we can't think of a better wine with fresh oysters. Dang, that's good ! (Australia)

**Barossa Valley Estate  
Spires Chardonnay**

"Soft and plump, a generous mouthful of pear, peach, almond and spice flavours that linger nicely on the round finish. Best Value! 88 Points!" - Wine Spectator (Australia)

**Eola Hills  
Oregon Pinot Noir**

Oregon is Pinot Noir country. So when we found out that Eola Hills made the top-selling Pinot Noir in Oregon, we had to check it out. We loved it. This is a very nice Pinot Noir at a great price. Dave's review: "It's groovy, baby."  
(Oregon)

**Barossa Valley Estate  
Spires Shiraz**

Great Australian Shiraz isn't subtle. It should grab you by the throat and kick your butt ! This one's got the big fruit flavors and spicy pepper kick to leave you bruised for weeks.  
89 points – Wine Spectator (Australia)

**Seifried  
Nelson Sauvignon Blanc**

There's no shrinking violet in this bottle, baby !  
This wine almost jumps out of the bottle. Giant  
grapefruit aromas and big tropical flavors. It's  
like having a herb-infused fruit-salad in a glass.

Just drink it. Now.

89 Points – Wine Enthusiast. (New Zealand)

**American Winetasters Society  
Los Carneros Pinot Noir**

AWS is a group of wine pros who buy surplus  
grapes from the finest vineyards and produce  
great wines at half the cost of the big label  
wines that use the same grapes. This  
excellent Pinot Noir is evidence of how great  
that idea is. This is one of only 504 cases  
produced for the whole country ! (California)

**Rex Goliath  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

The folks at Rex Goliath can do no wrong.  
They consistently turn out highly-drinkable  
wines at ridiculously low prices, even with  
expensive wines like Cabernet and Pinot Noir.

Maybe they use voodoo or something.

(California)

**Albert Mann  
Pinot Blanc**

A riddle: What wine is great alone, with  
seafood and Chinese take-out, and also  
nearly rhymes with "Keno Funk"? It's Pinot  
Blanc ! Albert Mann's version of the Alsace  
classic is sublime. (France)

**Bogle  
Chardonnay**

We admit it. We thought that the legions of  
customers walking through the doors saying  
"Bogle.....Bogle....." were cult members.  
Then we found out that the Wall Street Journal  
has listed this wine as a Top Value for five  
years in a row. Now we get it. (California)

**Mapreco  
Vinho Verde**

We dig the lightness of Vinho Verde,  
Portugal's "other" wine. Effervescent and  
citrusy, it's a perfect antidote to the treachery  
of daily life. Mapreco's version is semi-sweet  
and has probably the cutest label of any wine  
we've seen. Awww, a wittle owl ! (Portugal)

**Seaview  
Brut Sparkling**

One of our customers had this wine at the Inn at Easton, and loved it though she normally doesn't like Champagne. If that sounds like you, this could be your ticket to a bubbly Nirvana. (Australia)

**Jean Touzot  
Macon-Villages**

To answer your first question, it's unoaked French Chardonnay. Much lighter and fruitier than California oak-bombs, Macon-Villages wines are some of the best wine values in the world. (France)

**Carina Cellars  
Viognier**

We don't think that our wine rep Kayzie would lie to us, but she says that the owner of this winery lived in Oxford and had a boat named Carina. Anyway – Carina Cellars produced only 650 cases of this excellent Viognier. (California)

**Cantarutti  
Collio Pinot Grigio**

This has always been one of our favorites in the shop. The wine is produced from a 65 acre hillside vineyard that has been in the same family for hundreds of years. This is about as good as Pinot Grigio gets. (Italy)

**Bogle  
Pinot Noir**

*Wine & Spirits* recently named Bogle one of its Best Value Brands of 2005. The Russian River, where this Pinot is grown, is California's top appellation for Pinot Noir. Put those two together at this price, and then you've got something. (California)

**Dog House  
Charlie's Chardonnay**

Perhaps you are in the dog house for crimes against the one you love. In the event that you have trouble saying you're sorry, the submissive dog on this label might just transmit your apology subliminally. Hey, it's worth a shot. (California)

### **Villa Puccini Pinot Grigio**

Our best-selling Pinot Grigio, Villa Puccini is organically grown and bottled in the hills of Friuli in the northeastern Italy.

Enjoy it with Frutti di Mare of any sort, or with light chicken dishes. (Italy)

### **Grand Cuvée Fournier Sancerre**

Sancerre, from the Loire Valley, is the classic French Sauvignon Blanc wine. Lighter, earthier and less overwhelmingly fruity than efforts from New Zealand and California, many find Sancerre significantly more elegant. (France)

### **McManis Petit Sirah**

We think that Petit Sirah is one of the best full-bodied reds that no one has tried. But the trick is that they usually cost a lotta jack. Not this one. Check it out with a big steak or man-food of any type. (California)

### **Hair O' The Dog Incredibly Cool Blended White**

If you think we made this in our bathtub, you're right ! Not really. Our best-selling wine (really) is made for us by the Guglielmo family, vintners of fine wines since 1925. A blend of French Colombard and Chenin Blanc, this soft & Mellow white has inviting aromas of melons, pears and citrus fruit. (California)

### **Dr. Konstantin Frank Dry Riesling**

Dr. Konstantin Frank is the the undisputed king of Finger Lakes wine industry. This dry Riesling is his signature wine.

*Wine Spectator* agrees, awarding this wine 90 points. (New York)

### **Rijk's Private Cellar Chardonnay**

If you like to be ahead of the curve, this might be your Chardonnay. Rijk's first vintage was in 2000, and this young winery has been racking up awards ever since. Aged in French wood to a moderately oaky finish. (South Africa)

**Seven Deadly Zins  
Zinfandel**

An evil blend of zinfandel grapes produced by seven of the greatest zin producers in Lodi, this wine is so huge that we would not recommend drinking it near an open flame. We recommend putting a slight chill on it to tame its beastliness. (California)

**Altum  
Shiraz Reserve**

Chilean Shiraz? Sure, why the heck not ? They do pretty well with the Sea Bass. The proof is in the pudding with this deep, fruity wine that Wine & Spirits awarded 90 points. Take that, Australia ! (Chile)

**J. Bookwalter  
Gewurztraminer**

Gewurztraminer, in addition to being really hard to pronounce, is an Alsatian grape that produces aromatic, spicy wines with a touch of sweetness offset by bracing acidity. It's cool with Asian fare and groovy with anything light. (Washington)

**Matanzas Creek Winery  
Sauvignon Blanc**

"Intriguing nose melds grapefruit, lemon drop, fresh herbs and minerals, plus hints of smoke and fig. Light and tangy; bone-dry but supple, with the lemony quality dominating. Finishes with very good persistence... 89 points."  
Stephen Tanzer, *International Wine Cellar*

**Peace Family Vineyard  
Chardonnay**

Andrew Peace turns out truly lovable Australian wines. Always smooth and fruity, they are quintessential Qantas quaffs. Did we just say that? (Australia)

**Carmel Road  
Pinot Noir**

We couldn't get enough of Carmel Road's big oaky Chardonnay, which nailed a 90 point rating from the Spectator. Then Matt General reviewed the Pinot thusly: "MAN, IT'S KILLER, DUDE!". We think that's a good thing.  
(California)

**Roque Martin  
Rosé de Provence**

What's not to love? We love the ladylike curves of the bottle, the bas-relief palm tree, and the terrific dry light rosé wine. Serve it chilled just like a white. There is no better tonic for a warm afternoon. (France)

**Zonchera Barolo**

Big Dogs take note: Barolo is the biggest of the Italian wines. It's got big body, big taste, and a big price tag. Please only drink this wine with game or red meat. It will utterly overwhelm that wimpy chicken breast or piece of fish you were thinking about having, so forget about it! [91 Points – Robert Parker](#)

**Zenith Vineyards  
Pinot Noir**

So first of all, those crazy Kiwis took over the Sauvignon Blanc market with their righteously explosive grapefruit bombs. Now they're turning that terrific cool climate loose on Pinot Noir. This is good stuff. (New Zealand)

**Fox Creek Vixen  
Sparkling Shiraz**

You've probably seen the articles in the food press anointing Sparkling Shiraz as THE ULTIMATE BARBECUE WINE! We happen to like all kinds of wine at barbecue, but who are we to question the foodies? (Australia)

**Charles de Fere  
Blanc de Blancs**

Yes, we see the worry on your face. Sure, it's just like Champagne. It's even French. But that price. How can it be so cheap? What's the catch? Does it suck?

The answer: "Best Buy" – Wine Spectator

**Carpene Malvolti  
Prosecco di Conegliano**

Italy's answer to Champagne, this wine made from the Prosecco grape is fresher and boasts more fruit – apple and tropicals mostly – than Champagne, but it remains a dry wine. Good Proseccos remain a great bargain relative to Champagne. (Italy)

**Aveleda  
Vinho Verde**

Venting Time: Vinho Verde is one of our favorite wines! Why aren't you people drinking more of it? Why? Why? WHHHYYYY??? Okay, we're better now. This is the best light white you've never had. We'll leave it at that. (Portugal)

**Domaine Fleurot-Larose  
Premier Cru Chassagne-Montrachet**

Don't ask us how in the name of Sam Hill we found Premier Cru French Burgundy at this price. It's probably better that you don't know. We wouldn't want to make you an accessory. (France)

**Coup de Charme  
Viognier**

Even if we didn't love the wine, we'd have been tempted to buy it. Coup de Charme is a great name. Just try a French accent and say "Monsieur, eet appears zat I vill need to admeenister ze Coup de Charme." (France)

**Norman Vineyards  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

So, you say that you want a big wine, eh?

"This Cabernet Sauvignon is so big you have to chew it before you swallow, but avoids being tannic or rough." -*Jerry Mead* (California)

**Cinnabar  
Chardonnay**

Top Dog John Yorkilous suggested this oakiest of Chardonnays. If you like 'em really big and really smoky, Mr. Y says that this is your wine. (California)

**X Winery  
Napa Valley Pinot Noir**

X was established as a result of an MBA business plan at Cal Poly. The plan focused on a winery that would utilize new technologies to lower production costs while creating fine wines at lower prices. Did the plan work? We give it an "A". (California)

**Martin Weyrich  
Moscato Allegro**

Maybe the perfect impressive gift bottle, this Moscato is typically a dessert wine, but can also be had as an aperitif. The label is just soooo Italian that it is a surprise that the wine comes from ... (California)

**Domaine Loyer Bastie  
Sauvignon Blanc**

Traditional French Sauvignon Blanc smells and tastes more like herbs and grass than it does like a grapefruit. Think of it as a new-mown lawn on one of the first warm days of Spring. (France)

**Domaine Loyer Bastie  
Merlot**

Many would call them "earthy", but we think that French Merlot smells like hay. This Merlot is far more subtle, and is a better food wine than the fruit bomb Merlots that have flooded the market. (France)

**Helyos  
Banyuls**

The ultimate accompaniment to chocolate, Banyuls is a Grenache-based dessert wine from the south of France. **"Extremely full-bodied...and a finish that lasts more than 60 seconds. 95 points."** Robert Parker

**Chateau Vernous  
Médoc Bordeaux**

This blend of Cabernet and Merlot from the famous Médoc district of Bordeaux was a **Gold Medal winner at the Selection Mondiale in Belgium**. You will love it with a hearty meal.  
(France)

**Seifried  
Nelson Riesling**

Okay, so the Kiwis have pretty much taken over Sauvignon Blanc. Then they started making inroads in Pinot Noir. And now this very nice fruity, not-to-sweet Riesling.  
**Double Gold Medal Winner  
San Francisco Intl. Wine Competition**

**Protocolo  
Garnacha Rosé**

Dry? Check!  
Light? Check!  
Great with food? Check!  
Great price? Check!  
(Spain)

**Rex Goliath  
Central Coast Chardonnay**

Rex Goliath is named after a 47-lb rooster, and the wine is an equally huge California Chardonnay. Big fruit flavors. Big oak

**Olivier Leflaive  
Les Setilles Bourgogne Blanc**

Psst. Keep this under your hat, but this wine is made from declassified Meursault vines.  
What's it to you? Well, this fabulous Chardonnay would have cost 3 times this much a couple of years ago. (France)

**Seifried  
Unoaked Nelson Chardonnay**

This is nothing like any Chardonnay you've had. The fruit smells and tastes tropical, like lychee, pineapple and mango, and the stainless steel aging leaves no taste of vanilla, wood, or butter. Delish! (New Zealand)

**Four Emus  
Shiraz**

Besides having one of the cutest labels in the shop (AWWW, EMUS !!), this is a highly drinkable, fruity wine that will satisfy all lovers of Australian Shiraz. Unlike Joe, it is both deep and rich. (The Land Down Under)

**Nine Stones  
McLaren Vale Shiraz**

As Australia's wine industry matures beyond The Yellowtail Epoch, several wine districts are emerging as world-class. One of them is McLaren Vale for its Shiraz. A truly sumptuous wine. (Australia, mate)

**Frederic Esmonin  
Gevrey-Chambertin  
*Clos de Prieur***

Gevrey-Chambertin in Burgundy produces some of the finest Pinot Noir wines in the world. This bottle from the recommended 2002 vintage is a special wine for a special occasion. Only 150 cases were imported.  
**91 points – Wine Spectator** (France)

**X Winery  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

We love the X wines, which are made with technologically-advanced methods in order to produce the highest quality wines at the lowest possible cost. Try this one with a big, juicy steak, and don't forget to give the bone to your dog. (California)

**La Porte de Caillou  
Sancerre Rouge**

So this charming French couple walks into the shop one day. They see our white Sancerre and tell us that they used to live near the vineyard that produces this wine, and that while the white is good, they REALLY love the red. It's Pinot Noir. Who knew? (France)

**David Bruce  
Central Coast Pinot Noir**

David Bruce is a small, highly respected Pinot Noir specialist whose wines consistently earn 90+ points. Try this great wine with finely-prepared salmon, poultry, or even a nice pork roast. (California)

**X Winery  
Red X**

X Winery uses advanced technology to lower production costs, allowing the winery to spend its money on better grapes. Sounds like a great idea to us! A blend of Syrah, Merlot, Cabernet Franc. (California)

**Calina  
Reserva Chardonnay**

Calina is Kendall-Jackson's Chilean venture. We really liked this nice little Chardonnay grown in Chile's coastal region. Lightly oaked and nicely fruited. The label says to serve it with ceviche or seafood paella, but it's great with almost anything. (Chile)

**Villa Trasqua  
Chianti Classico**

"Classico" means that this wine is from the heart of the Chianti district, where the best Chiantis are made. This wine is over five years old, enough time to tame its beastly tannins. (Italy)

**Aresti  
Merlot**

Merlot drinkers are usually looking for a fruity wine. This is the fruitiest Merlot we've ever tasted. We have several customers who totally freak out if we go out of stock on it, so please leave one for them. (Chile)

**Domaine de Bois D'Yver  
Chablis**

The makers of real Chablis – a beautiful unoaked Chardonnay – have been fighting for years against unscrupulous winemakers who market cheap white jug wines as Chablis. Try the real deal to see why the real guys think the fight is worth it. (France)

**Ardales  
Organic Tempranillo**

This organically-produced wine made from the Rioja grape has no added sulfites, so you'll stop getting those gnarly headaches, though we can't guarantee you won't get one if you drink the whole bottle. (Spain)

**Frederic Esmonin  
Gevrey-Chambertin  
*La Petite Chapelle***

Robert Parker calls Esmonin “one of the greatest winemakers” in Gevrey-Chambertin, the French Village that is to Pinot Noir what Punxsutawney is to Groundhog Day. A truly exceptional wine. (France)

**Trinitas  
Old Vines Zinfandel**

This big Zinfandel comes from 90 year old vines in Contra Costa County. The wine contains 12% Petit Sirah for balance and explodes with flavors of black fruit, white pepper and chocolate. (California)

**Graham Beck Gamekeeper’s Reserve  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

Okay, if you’ve been reading these cards for awhile, you know that we’re crazy about Graham Beck wines. This Cabernet is an excellent example of why that is so. Great fruit. Great structure. Small price (for Cabernet, anyway.) (South Africa)

**2 Brothers  
Big Tattoo Red**

This blend of Cab Sav, Syrah and Merlot is very big for a bottle in this price range. The wine was created to honor the memory of the 2 brothers’ mom. The Brothers donate 50 cents for each bottle sold to hospice and cancer charities. (Chile)

**James Estate  
Chardonnay**

Looking for that wine with the yellow kangaroo on the label? We don’t have it! But what we do have is this is big, fruity Australian Chardonnay at a skinny price. We’re betting you won’t go back to the kangaroo.

**James Estate  
Shiraz**

A lighter-bodied Shiraz that is perfectly suited to sipping on a cool evening. Or afternoon for that matter. Compares well to Yellowtail. (Australia)

**Cossart-Gordon  
Madeira**

When you're feeling like getting in touch with your inner 18<sup>th</sup> century, have a glass of George Washington's favorite tippie. Madiera is for all intents and purposes a Port wine, made off the coast of Africa. (Madeira)

**Memo  
Montepulciano d'Abruzzo**

We honestly did not expect this reasonably priced Italian entry to be particularly good, but we were morons. It rules! Dark and very smooth, like Sidney Poitier. They call me Mister Memo! (Italy)

**Worthy  
Sophia's Cuvee – Napa**

94 points from Robert Parker. We could blather on about dark fruits, the mystique of Napa Valley, microclimates and whatnot, but why? Why, why, why? (California)

**Cinnabar  
Mercury Rising**

Cinnabar's classic Bordeaux blend of primarily Cabernet and Merlot is big and rich with deep flavors of blackberry. It's the perfect accompaniment for rich beef roasts or hearty steaks. (California)  
**90 points ~ Wine Enthusiast.**

**Jim Jim  
Shiraz**

This wine is named after a dog at the winery who eats the Shiraz grapes right off the vine as they start to ripen. How could we not buy it? Then again, one really can't go wrong with McLaren Vale Shiraz. (Australia)

**Murphy-Goode  
Petit Verdot**

Who cares if no one has ever heard of the noble Petit Verdot grape? We LOVE it. This deep, rich, very smooth wine is made entirely from the grape that is typically blended into Bordeaux wines. It's Yum City. (California)

**Graham Beck  
South Africa Brut**

Australia as a hot new wine region is so 2002. These days, hipsters like us look to South Africa, the other Down Under, for great values in vino. This dry sparkler is 58% Chardonnay and 42% Pinot Noir, for those keeping score. (South Africa)

**Kendall-Jackson  
Grand Reserve Chardonnay**

A beautiful moderately-oaked wine that Robert Parker, who awarded 90 points, says is “gorgeous” and “a fine value”. We just say, “Dang, that stuff is yummy.” (California)

**Mahler-Besse  
Le Vieux Moulin Bordeaux**

Who says that good Bordeaux should to be expensive? We get this classic Cab/Merlot blend directly from the importer, eliminating the normal distributor middleman. You get the savings. (France)

**Moselland  
Auslese Riesling**

The funky German Pradikat system designates wines by the ripeness of the grapes at harvest. “Auslese” grapes are among the ripest, resulting in Rieslings that are very sweet indeed. (Germany)

**Little Ashby  
Super Talbot**

Warren & Lynn Rich tell us that this wine has won a major award ! Just like the Dad in A Christmas Story ! This blend of red grapes produces a luscious light red wine that is well-suited to poultry or hearty seafood. (Maryland)

**Two Brothers  
Big Tattoo White**

This is a semi-sweet wine that you can feel even sweeter about than usual. The two brothers – a wine importer and a tattoo artist - created it to honor their mother, who died of cancer. They donate 50 cents for each bottle sold to cancer & hospice causes. (Germany)

**Martin Cendoya  
Reserva Rioja**

“Old vine” wines are desirable because they contain juice that is more concentrated than that from newer vines, resulting in a far more flavorful wine. From vines planted before The Great War, this Tempranillo-based wine exhibits a richness indicative of its heritage.  
(Spain)

**Virgin  
California Shiraz**

Is there any business that Sir Richard is *not* involved in? This nice Shiraz in the beautiful painted bottle also sports the new generation screwcap that we’ll bet that you didn’t even notice. Cool, eh? (California)

**Earth, Zin & Fire  
Front Row Zinfandel**

You’ve got to get this wine into your life. Sorry, we couldn’t resist that any more than we could the great name of the winery. This ain’t no gimmick wine, brutha ! Excellent zinfandel fruit and spice make it extra nice. (California)

**Virgin  
California Chardonnay**

We would like to make it clear right up front that Virgin Chardonnay is not just for virgins, though drinking enough of it in the right setting might help one to shed that label.  
(California)

**Bonny Doon  
Ca’ del Solo Sangiovese**

We can always depend on Bonny Doon for seriously good wines with seriously funny labels. This Sangiovese (the Chianti grape) is much smoother than typical. This wine rocks with poultry, pork or beef. (California)

**Silver Oak  
Alexander Valley Cabernet**

Here’s a wine to impress the Boss – Spouse – Bribe Recipient. Robert Parker enjoyed the “lusty, sweet perfume of cassis, spice box, licorice, and lavender.” He then awarded it 90-92 points. (California)

**Les Maranches  
Mâcon-Uchizy**

Makin' You Cheesy? Relax, it's just a Chardonnay in the lighter French style. In the wacky French system, the more specific the location named, the better. Thus Macon-Uchizy is a notch better than Macon-Villages. (France)

**Hahn  
Grüner-Veltliner**

What the? It's Austria's national grape, which yields a crisp minerally wine that's great with food, especially poultry. This is the wine that we drink with Thanksgiving dinner. It's a liter bottle, so you're also getting another 1/3 free ! (Austria)

**Poet's Leap  
Riesling – Columbia Valley**

The label art depicts the Grand Jeté that we took when we tasted this wine. This is exactly what good Riesling should taste like: the stout acidity serving as a perfect foil for the touch of sweetness. (Washington)

**Horton  
Viognier**

Washington Post wine guru Michael Franz says that Viognier is the best white grape grown locally, and that Horton is the best Viognier producer in Virginia. A Round & Luscious white, serve it with hearty seafood, poultry or pork. (Virginia)

**Fattoria La Lecciaia  
Brunello di Montalcino**

Brunello is one of three Big B Italian wines, along with Barolo and Barbaresco. These wines have huge, deep flavors that are the envy of many winemakers. Not convinced?: 92 Points ~ Wine Spectator (Italy)

**Lolonis  
Zinfandel**

Organically-grown grapes with ladybugs as the pest-management program? It's Old School, or maybe it's New School. Either way, a very nice Zinfandel that garnered a score of 91 points from the Connoisseurs' Guide. (California)

**Lolonis  
Ladybug White**

We're baffled by folks who won't try blended wines. Blends of two or more grapes usually yield a beautifully balanced wine. As we say, blending is like painting with more than one color. Organically grown grapes. (California)

**Lolonis  
Fumé Blanc**

Made from 35-40 year-old organically-grown grapes, this Sauvignon Blanc has flavors of apple, lemon grass and lime. Only 4,000 cases made. (California)  
*Four Stars – Restaurant Wine*

**American Winetasters Society  
Alexander Valley Zinfandel**

Get it while it's hot ! The AWS is a group of winemakers who buy excess grapes from the best vineyards, then blend up a spectacular wine at a bargain price. AWS offerings sell out quickly, so don't diddle! (California)  
**Only 112 cases made !**

**Jaboulet Isnard  
Côtes du Ventoux**

This Grenache wine from the Rhone Valley is a close cousin to Côtes du Rhône. The Jaboulets have only been making wine here since 1834, so you can trust that they've figured it out by now. (France)

**Lolonis  
Redwood Valley Merlot**

The ladybug on the label is cute – that's for sure. But she's there to signify that ladybugs are the pest-management program at Lolonis, where the grapes are grown organically.  
(California)

**Wente  
Riva Ranch Reserve Chardonnay**

We're big enough to admit that this was one of the last of many wines we tasted one fine Tuesday. Our dim recollection is that it was superb. Diminished capacity or *in vino veritas*? You decide. (California)

**Wente  
Crane Ridge Reserve Merlot**

You can buy this wine from Singapore's "premier wine merchant" for \$43, or you can get it here for less than half that price. Either way, it's delicious. And if you buy it here, we guarantee no jet lag. (California)

**Trumpeter  
Tupungato Chardonnay**

Whenever we're in Tupungato, we always get this. "Possibly the best value in Chardonnay I've encountered this year...roars from the glass with floral aromas...a resounding success."  
89 Points. - Robert Parker (Argentina)

**Domaine Bachelet  
Puligny-Montrachet**

The teeny town of Puligny-Montrachet in the French province of Burgundy produces some of the most highly-regarded Chardonnay in the world. The wine beautifully expresses the natural apple and pear flavors of Chardonnay grapes. (France)

**Benton Lane  
Pinot Gris - Willamette**

Oregon is perfect terroir for Pinot Gris. The folks there make the wine in the intensely-flavorful French style. Before you commit a cardinal sin before Ms. Vicki, remember to pronounce it "will AM it", dammit! (Oregon)

**Santa Margherita  
Valdadige Pinot Grigio**

We don't normally carry wines that are advertised on TV. In this case, we caved because customer kept taunting us and beating us with sticks. The Valdadige is Santa Margherita's premium Pinot Grigio. (Italy)

**Domaine de la Presidente  
Chateauneuf du Pape**

Did you know that the Pope used to live in Avignon? This superior Rhone blend is a beautifully balanced, nuanced light red wine that is an excellent accompaniment to poultry, lamb, seafood and pork. (France)

### **Excelsior Estate Cabernet Sauvignon**

We could go on and on and on some more about the tremendous values in South African wines. But we can't, because this card is too small. So we'll leave it to Robert Parker, who called this wine "an excellent value."  
(South Africa)

### **Salmon Run Petit Noir**

Dr. Konstantin Frank is the Big Dog of New York's fine wine industry, and Salmon Run is Dr. Frank's second label. This Petit Noir is a light-bodied red that is suitable for sipping, poultry, salads or pork. (New York)

### **Bonny Doon Bouteille Call Framboised Syrah Port**

The folks at Bonny Doon have created a bad pun, a hilarious bottle, and a serious wine. This Port of syrah grapes infused with raspberries begs to be with our Belgian Cote d'Or chocolate. 18% alcohol content assures that this bottle will last for weeks after opening.  
(California)

### **Tomaiolo Chianti Classico Riserva**

This bottle from the best Chianti district is also from the terrific 1999 Tuscan vintage. Beautifully smooth Sangiovese perfectly complements a wide variety of foods, including pasta, chicken, pork and even beef.  
(Italy)

### **Batasiolo Moscato d'Asti**

It's Sweet! It's Sparkling! It's Moscato d'Asti !

For those who find Champagne too dry, this little Italian dessert wine is just the trick. Perfect with biscotti, fruit, and tarts. (Italy)

### **Grof Degenfeld Tokaji Muscat Lunel**

You're not in Kansas, anymore. Muscat Lunel is one of the oldest varieties of grapes in the world. This late harvest version yields one of the world's best semi-sweet dessert wines. The problem with this wine is that it will be better than your dessert. (Hungary)

**E. Guigal  
Condrieu**

One of the most difficult wines to find due to very limited production, Condrieu is a medium-bodied white made from Viognier. Intensely flowery and fruity, this wine earned 91 points from Robert Parker. (France)

**Le Mousseux  
Sparkling Cider**

There are times when alcohol just isn't cool. This secret cuvee, a blend of several apple varieties chosen for flavor, acidity and aroma, includes Macintosh, Jonathan, and Granny Smith. (Virginia)

**Warre's  
10-Year Tawny Porto**

They've only been at this for three centuries, so we think that the folks at Warre have figured out this Porto thing by now. A delicate, aged tawny that is a nice choice for everyone from the novice to the connoisseur. (Portugal)

**Sonoma-Cutrer  
Russian River Ranches Chardonnay**

Sonoma-Cutrer makes the most popular restaurant wine in America. It is a beautiful full-bodied Chardonnay redolent of melon and lemon. Unfortunately, this isn't it. Just kidding. Yes it is. (California)

**Stags' Leap  
Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon**

From the original 1893 winery that pioneered the revered Stags' Leap appellation, this Cabernet is huge, bold and dark. We can't think of anything better with a nice cut of beef. (California)

**Bogle  
Petit Sirah**

This was the wine that started the whole Bogle empire. Deep and rich, Petit Sirah is quite possibly the best wine that you've been too wimpy to try. At least you're in good company. (California)

**August Briggs  
Napa Valley “Dijon Clones” Pinot Noir**

August Briggs is one of Dave’s favorite wineries. They produce small quantities of beautiful wines, then package them in equally impressive bottles. Flavors of cherry and vanilla. Only 465 cases made ! (California)

**Taz  
Pinot Noir – Fiddlestix Vineyard**

“This rich, full-bodied Pinot is no simple fruit bomb, featuring complex aromas of smoke, mineral and rockdust that blend seamlessly into flavors of black cherries, anise and dried spices. 92 points” - Wine Enthusiast  
Uhhh, rockdust? (California)

**Rombauer  
Carneros Chardonnay**

A luscious Chardonnay from one of the best appellations in California. This wine was Best Chardonnay for the past four years at Winefest, and was Best in Show for three of those years. Dang ! (California)

**Willowglen  
Old Tawny Port**

Maybe the perfect Port for the uninitiated, Willowglen turns out a very respectable tawny at an excellent value. Tawnies are aged longer than Ruby Ports, making them smoother. (Australia)

**El Toqui  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

For decades, Chile has turned out wines ranging from poor to average. In recent years, Chilean winemakers have learned how to reduce crop yields in order to produce great wines. For a song, you can see how far they’ve come. (Chile)

**El Toqui  
Syrah**

You’ve had the Australian stuff. Maybe you’ve tried some from California, or perhaps even a French one. But Chilean Syrah? This one made a believer out of us. (Chile)

**El Toqui  
Chardonnay**

Some stores we know would say “We searched the entirety of the Cachapoal Valley to find this superior Chardonnay, then bought the entire year’s production.” We just say “Hey, this is really good.” (Chile)

**Clos de Menuts  
Saint-Emilion Grand Cru**

This wine is at Joël Robuchon at The Mansion in Las Vegas, operated by the eponymous 3-star Michelin chef . A mere half-bottle of this wine will set you back \$45 there. Our odds are a lot better. (France)

**Monkey Bay  
Sauvignon Blanc**

We like *Wine Enthusiast*, the only major wine reviewer that rates wines blindly. The Enthusiast called this wine “a real crowd pleaser and a Best Buy”, awarding it 87 points.  
(New Zealand)

**Zagalòn  
Chardonnay**

Psst. Don’t tell anyone, but this wine is only half Chardonnay. The other half is Muscat, a grape typically used in dessert wines. Don’t worry. It’s both dry and rich, just like King Fahd. Well, before he died. (Spain)

**Bonny Doon  
Pacific Rim Chenin Blanc**

This fully dry Chenin Blanc is even more pleasant than the mood of the woman on the label. Very soft ~ an ideal accompaniment to seafood of any stripe, or to a good cheese or salad. (California)

**X Winery  
Sauvignon Blanc**

We really love the X Winery, which is based upon the Papa Johns concept of Better Grapes, Better Pizza. Wait, no. That's Better Grapes, Better Wine. But this would be really good with a veggie pizza. Mmm...pizza.

**Aurora  
Gavi di Gavi**

Gavi is a town in Piemonte, the northwest Italian province best known for Barolo and Barbaresco. Do Gavites drink those big reds with lighter fare, such as pasta and fish? Hell no, Jethro ! They dig the Gavi, baby ! (Italy)

**Tiamo  
Pinot Grigio**

Tiamo has been on our shelf since we opened the store back in 1638. Not this particular bottle, mind you, but others like it. In any case, since we hadn't tasted it in almost 70 years, we had almost forgotten how very good it is.  
Great for sipping ! (Italy)

**Lurton  
Pinot Gris**

We think that this wine is one of the best wine values in the shop. Lushly fruited, just like a drag queen karaoke contest, it is an outstanding value that compares well to wines that cost twice as much. (Argentina)

**Rex Goliath  
Pinot Noir**

Can a Pinot Noir for under \$10 be any good?  
The answer is – obviously - No.  
Just kidding. The answer is YES. Rex Goliath wines are such good values that they are often overlooked. ! (California)

**Broquel  
Malbec**

Malbec is Argentina's signature grape, tasting to us like a peppery cross of Pinot Noir and Syrah. This example is one of the best we've tasted, and is available in a wood case of six bottles for under \$90. (Argentina)

**Broquel  
Cabernet Sauvignon**

Argentina is beginning to turn out some excellent Cabernets at about half the cost of California Cabs. Broquel, the premium line from Trapiche, produces this dark, smooth wine that tastes like it costs \$30. You can get six in a wood case for under \$90.

**McGuigan  
Bin 3000 Merlot**

McGuigan makes the fruity Australian Merlot that Merlot drinkers like to drink. Dark and bursting with red and black fruits, it's particularly nice as an aperitif. (Australia)

**Paul Hobbs  
Pinot Noir – Hyde Vineyard**

“...Jumps from the glass... a full, authoritative and powerful wine. There are 308 cases of this impressive Pinot Noir which should drink well for up to a decade.

**92 Points – Robert Parker  
(California)**

**R. Stuart  
Pinot Noir – Autograph**

How's this for audacity: R. Stuart refuses to submit their wines to critics for scores because they won't "play that game". Next, they call their signature Pinot "Autograph". This is, however, great Oregon Pinot Noir.

**Billecart-Salmon  
Brut Champagne**

Billecart-Salmon's affordable option is a beautiful Champagne renowned for its tiny bubbles that merits 91 points from *Wine Spectator* and 90 from *Robert Parker*. .  
(France)

**Billecart-Salmon  
Rosé Champagne**

A great Champagne for people who don't normally like Champagne. Pink, dry, and full of bubbles, you should read how people are raving about it on [wineaccess.com](http://wineaccess.com). (France)  
**93 Points - Robert Parker**

**Burgess  
Napa Valley Merlot**

This one is worth tasting just to see if you can discern the “pencil lead”. From *Wine Spectator*: “Firm and complex, with a tight band of currant, pencil lead, herb and cedary oak...” Cedary oak? (California)

**Chehalem  
Pinot Noir – Stoller Vineyard**

“Huge quantities of violets dominate the otherwise black cherry-scented nose... densely-packed, plump, and satin-textured, this is a broad, lush, decadent effort. 91 points.” - *Robert Parker* (Oregon)

**Nickel & Nickel  
Cabernet – Stelling Vineyard**

From the super-exclusive winery that produces exceptional single-varietal, single vineyard wines. Nickel & Nickel is the sister winery of Far Niente, focusing its efforts on Cabernet. Only 482 cases made. (California)

**Boordy Vineyards  
Sevyal-Vidal-Chardonnay**

Maryland’s oldest winery scores with this Soft & Mellow three-grape blend. A nice sipping wine, it is also a very good accompaniment to Rockfish, or poultry for that matter. (Maryland)

**Elk Run  
Sweet Katherine**

The most popular Maryland wine that we sell is this semi-sweet red dessert offering from Elk Run. It’s a nice choice for after dinner, or before dinner. Or for dinner, though the Surgeon General probably would not approve. (Maryland)

**Chateau des Erles  
Rosé**

We used an electron microscope to read the back label of this dry rosé of Syrah and Cinsault from Languedoc. It says that this wine is a perfect accompaniment to informal meals, tapas, or grilled foods. We agree. (France)

**Domaine Violon  
Côtes du Rhône**

This a wine that you would serve at a dinner for friends if you happened to live in the south of France. And if you happened to have friends. As with most blends, this cuvée of Grenache, Syrah and Mourvedre is boffo both by itself or with light meats. (France)

**Moët & Chandon  
White Star Champagne**

This venerable Champagne house from Epernay produces the exalted Dom Perignon. But for 100 clams less, you can drink the flagship of the line, the standard against which most Champagnes are measured (France).

**Krug  
Grand Cuvée Brut**

There are many who believe that this Champagne from Reims is the best in the world. You won't get an argument from us, nor from many wine critics. This wine is an "explosive mosaic of flavours". We plagiarized that last bit from a British web site. (France)

**Chanson Père & Fils  
1<sup>er</sup> Cru Beaune - Pinot Noir**

Burgundy doesn't get much better than this *Premier Cru* offering from a *domaine* owned by Bollinger. Pinot Noir connoisseurs find fine Burgundies to be far superior to the fruitier offerings of America, and they can rarely be had for a song. (France)

**Ruggeri  
Santo Stefano Prosecco**

Made from Prosecco grapes grown on the impossibly steep Valdobbiadene hills, this fine Italian sparkler is both lighter and fruitier than Champagne. You're going to love to toast with it, or even to eat toast with it. Or antipasti. Or a nice salad. Eat your vegetables ! (Italy)

**Chesapeake Wine Company  
Blue Crab Blanc**

Far kindlier than the ferocious beast depicted somewhat romantically on the label would be. Apple, lemon, and honey flavors. Soft and dry, the wine goes solo nicely and also pairs with seafood, salad, or grilled chicken. (Virginia)

**Torres  
Sangre de Toro**

One seldom get a chance to exercise one's Inner Matador. This is a delicious blend of Garnacha and Carinena. Dark with generous spice notes, this wine is perfection with tapas or *pollo y arroz*. Olé ! (Spain)

**Michael-Scott  
Cabernet – Del Biondo/Bella Oaks Vyd**

If you're looking for that elusive wine that embodies uncompromising quality, exclusivity, and a reasonable price, this is it. Unfiltered and organically-grown from select Napa microparcels, this wine rocks. Only 300 cases produced. (California)

**Torres  
Viña Esmeralda**

We see you standing there thinking "why would I buy this? 85% Moscatel and 15% Gewurztraminer? What IS it?" In this one case, we're just going to ask you to trust us. Go ahead, you scaredy cat ! Thank us later. (Spain)

**Hippolyte Reverdy  
Sancerre**

The village of Sancerre in the Loire Valley produces crisp Sauvignon Blanc wines that are esteemed for their delicacy. Reverdy is known as one of the best producers of the wine. (France)

**Matua  
Sauvignon Blanc**

So many customers kept placing Special Orders for this wine, we decided to cut out the middleman and stock it. Drinking it is like Carmen Miranda's headgear exploding while you're sniffing one of its grapefruits. (New Zealand)

**Cristalino  
Brut Cava**

Cava is Spain's version of Champagne. The grapes are Spanish, but the wine is made in the same manner, with a secondary bottle fermentation. A nice light, dry wine resplendent with toast and citrus. (Spain)

**Robert Pecota**  
**L'Artiste Sauvignon Blanc**

It's no big secret that Mr. Pecota is a part-time Talbot Countian. He stopped in one day, and he sure seems like a swell guy, even if he isn't yet a Top Dog. His Sauvignon Blanc would be very nice with a light salad, a little seafood, or poultry. (California)

**Casillero del Diablo**  
**Carmenere**

It may sound exotic, but Carmenere has been cultivated in Chile for 400 years. The grapes were thought to be Merlot until DNA testing proved them to be Carmenere. Please feel free to use this story at the cocktail party of your choice. (Chile)

**Trapiche Pinot Noir**

Pinot Noir is a difficult grape to grow, which accounts for the high price of its eponymous wine. We went looking for a well-priced Pinot Noir that would be good enough for our friends if we actually had any. (Argentina)

**Patz & Hall**  
**Pinot Noir – Hyde Vineyard**

"Generous plum, rose petal, wild berry and lavender aromas carry over to the palate in a rich, supple, elegant style. A nice touch of cedary vanilla oak adds a pleasant flavor dimension and the flavors linger on and on."

**93 Points ~ *Wine Spectator***

**Galante Vineyards**  
**Merlot ~ Carmel Valley**

You want Old School? The winemaker's great grandfather was the founder of Carmel, California. A truly special Merlot from a boutique winery that is poised to become The Next Big Thing. Only 200 cases produced. (California)

**Weingut Erich Bender**  
**Trockenbeerenauslese**

Just think of the Scrabble points if you pulled that one off! An incredible German dessert wine made from hand-picked late-harvest Riesling grapes. Sweet, but with enough acid for a harmonious and delicious balance. (Germany)

**Barboursville Vineyards  
Pinot Grigio**

This is the first East Coast Pinot Grigio that we've liked. The winemaker has managed to capture the cool, refreshing essence of Pinot Grigio while retaining a very pleasant fruit load.  
(Virginia)

**Weingut Johann Haart  
Riesling – Kabinett**

The Haart family started making wine in Piesport in 1337, which is ridiculous even by European standards. The driest of the German Rieslings, this wine sports whammo nectarine flavors with great acid for balance.  
**91 Points – Wine Spectator** (Germany)

**Allegrini  
Amarone**

Psst. Hey, keep this under your hat. Robert Parker awarded 95 points to the prior vintage of this wine. He hasn't rated this wine yet, but he did rate the 2000 vintage as "excellent". Put 2 and 2 together, and you've got one great wine. (Italy)

**Pine Ridge  
Cabernet – Stag's Leap**

"Gorgeous, dark ruby/purple-hued...offers scents of new oak, flowers, black and red fruits in a medium to full-bodied, concentrated, well-balanced style. (\$70)"  
**93 Points – Robert Parker** (California)

**Reinares  
Tempranillo**

Tempranillo is one of Spain's great contributions to wine. Used in Rioja, the grape is medium-bodied with both good fruit and a solid structure. It's a great food wine with poultry and pork. (Spain)

**Hahn  
Meritage**

Sure, we could really blow some smoke about the mystique of Meritage, what's important is (a) that it rhymes with "heritage", and (b) that it is a California blend of the Bordeaux grapes – Cabernet, Merlot, etc.  
(France)

**St. Urbans-Hof  
Riesling**

“Very seductive from the smoky, mineral-tinged aromas to the peach and lime flavors. It’s juicy and silky, with precision balance and a lingering finish.”

**91 Points – Wine Spectator** (Germany)

**Villa Jolanda  
Prosecco**

Lighter and less bubbly than Champagne, Prosecco charms everyone with its delicate fizz and nuances of white fruits. Drink it before dinner or mix with peach purée for a Bellini. (Italy)

**Albert Mann  
Pinot Gris ~ Cuvée Albert**

Albert Mann is **The Man** when it comes to wines from Alsace, the funky eastern part of France that is inhabited by Germans. This wine is a very smooth, very flavorful ride that will wow fans of Pinot Grigio. (Alsace)

**Chateau Le Sartre  
White Bordeaux – Pessac-Léognan**

This is classic white Bordeaux from one of the best districts in France. 70% Sauvignon Blanc with Semillon. In our opinion, no wine is better on a warm day than a great white Bordeaux such as this one. (France)

**Dr. Konstantin Frank  
Chardonnay**

Dr. Konstantin Frank was the father of East Coast winemaking, planting the first *Vinifera* vines in New York state in 1962. We really like the light, Burgundian treatment of the wine, and so do the folks at Mason’s, who feature this on their wine list. (New York)

**Rijk’s  
Semillon**

The best Semillon that we have tasted. Semillon is the grape that is blended with Sauvignon Blanc to create white Bordeaux wines. It is typically pleasant, if somewhat neutral in flavor. Not this one, which explodes with tropical fruits. (South Africa)

**Sebastiani Vineyards  
Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir**

“Plenty of vanilla and cedary oak to overcome, but the ripe plum and black cherry flavors are up to the task. A hint of lavender and nutmeg adds a tasty dimension, and it's hard to find a better value in Pinot Noir.”

**88 points. Wine Spectator (California)**

**Gypsy Dancer  
Emily's Reserve Pinot Noir**

Winemaker Gary Andrus produces the wine in three of the world's greatest Pinot Noir terroirs in Napa Valley, New Zealand and the North Willamette Valley in Oregon, where he makes only 1,250 cases of this beautiful Pinot Noir. (Oregon)

**Robert Talbott Vineyards  
Logan Pinot Noir**

Bruce Berrier turned us on to Talbott wines.

This Pinot Noir, from the highly-regarded Sleepy Hollow Vineyard, is named for their son

Robert Logan. The wine is full of cherry, blueberry and smoke aromas. (California)

**Lan  
Edicion Limitada Rioja**

“This rich red tastes like blackberry jam on toasted brioche. Thick on the palate, oozing with sweet fruit and oak, with muscular tannins that barely ripple the surface. Yet it remains fresh, with a clean, floral finish.”

**95 points. Wine Spectator (Spain)**

**Tomasello Winery  
Blackberry Wine**

This is 100% blackberry wine from New Jersey. Hey, it's the Garden State! Use this as a dessert wine, or as a base for a blackberry reduction, which would be awesome with roast pork. Mmmm. (Exit 4)

**Savannah-Chanelle  
Laetitia Vineyard Pinot Noir**

This family-owned vineyard specializes in Pinot Noir, producing a total of only 8,000 cases of wine annually. Classic California Pinot Noir cherry and tobacco flavors.

**2005 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition - Gold Medal**

**Chateau Le Sartre  
Pessac-Léognan Bordeaux**

A blend of Cabernet and Merlot from a fabulous producer that is a nice upgrade from everyday Bordeaux, but still more affordable than the Grand Cru and Premier Cru wines, which can cost hundreds. (France)

**Chateau Malmaison  
Bordeaux**

“This smells like Port. Superperfumed, with loads of plum character. Full-bodied, with loads of velvety tannins and a rich, thick finish. Fantastic. Amazing quality for this estate.”  
**92 Points ! ~ Wine Spectator** (France)

**Bridlewood  
Central Coast Syrah**

The best California Syrah that we’ve tasted. We used to sell this stuff like crazy at over \$20 per bottle, but the Wine Gods have smiled upon us by reducing the price for this excellent stuff. (California)

**Robert Kacher  
Tocques et Clochers Chardonnay**

This is fine French Chardonnay just as many believe it should taste, emphasizing the natural apple and pear flavors of the grape over the butter and vanilla flavors of the oak barrels in which many Chardonnays are aged. Check out the heavy bottle! (France)

**Epiphany  
Petit Sirah**

“Exhibits an opaque purple color along with terrific fruit density (blueberries and cassis with a hint of mocha), a deep, full-bodied palate, and elevated tannin in the finish. This is the most impressive lineup in Epiphany’s young history. “ **90 Points – Wine Advocate** (California)

**Jacquesson  
Cuvée No. 729 Champagne**

The leading wine magazine in France recently classified the major Champagne houses. Jacquesson, a small independent, shocked the industry when it was ranked #3, ahead of Billecart-Salmon (#5), Roederer (#6), Veuve (#7), Taittinger (#24), and Mumm (#27).

**Wishing Tree  
Shiraz**

Looking for a sure thing? Try this bottle that **Robert Parker** calls “an exceptional value” and **Wine Spectator** dubs “the #1 Best Value Red Wine from Australia.” Hey, why would they lie? (Australia)

**Penner-Ash  
Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

**Wine Spectator** listed this wine at #36 in its Top 100 Wines of the Year list. Only three Pinot Noir scored higher, and your chances of getting one of those reminds us of a snowball in Hades. These bottles are from the last two cases available in Maryland. (Oregon)

**Zind-Humbrecht  
Riesling**

This best Riesling producer in the world is not in Germany, but in Alsace. This winery has produced dozens of wines that have rated 98-100 points from Robert Parker. Alsatian Rieslings are dry, not sweet. (Alsace)

**Aquinas  
Napa Valley Chardonnay**

“Packs as much flavor as you can fit in a glass. Ultraripe pineapples and peaches, caramelized oak, toasty meringue, vanilla, the works. Plus, it’s creamy, smooth and crisp.” **90 Points & A Best Buy – Wine Enthusiast** (California)

**Sidewise  
Pinot Noir**

Sure, it’s a blatant rip-off of the film. But we’ve actually tasted this wine, and it is the real thing. It’s French, so the wine is restrained and is best enjoyed with a meal, but at this price, it’s a steal ! (France)

**Domaine Pere Caboché  
Côtes du Rhône**

Why haven't you tried Côtes du Rhône yet? Yeah, we're talkin' to you, Buster! Seriously, if you (like a lot of people) just automatically go to Pinot Noir when you're looking for a light red, check out this Grenache-based lovely from the Rhone Valley. Yum! (France)

**Mirone  
Old Vines Garnacha**

Named for some old Spanish dude whose "R" looks like "Y", this is very nice Garnacha, a refreshingly fruity, slightly tart, always fun wine that is rocks by itself, or with poultry, pork or meaty fishies. (Spain)

**Momessin  
Beaujolais Nouveau**

The cool thing about "Nouveau", as we hip winesters call it, is that it was grapes on the vine just a few weeks ago. This is wine as fresh as it gets. A lovely light tippie that is light years better than Ripple. (France)

**Greuze Noir  
Beaujolais Nouveau**

Far cooler than that "other" McNouveau, Greuze Noir is perhaps named after the artist Jean Baptiste Greuze. Or maybe not. Anyway, this lightest of red wines will paint a purty picture upon your palate. (France)

**Lost Canyon  
Trenton Station Vineyard Syrah**

Our friend Michael Pinsky brought us this gorgeous Syrah from a small producer of ultra-premium, vineyard-designated wines. A sublime wine with intense blackberry fruits and a miles-long finish. Less than 150 cases were made. (California)

**St. Michaels Winery  
Chardonnay**

The guys from The Town that Didn't Really Fool the British have a hit with this perfumy, fruity, and very flavorful wine. Of all the wines we've featured at wine tastings, this was the best seller. (Maryland)

**St. Michaels Winery**  
**St. Michaels White**

What else are you going to drink with crab cakes? This blend of luscious white grapes yields a tasty, medium-bodied, and nicely-balanced wine that nicely accompanies most lighter foods. (Maryland)

**Casal Garcia**  
**Vinho Verde**

It is well-known that we love the *vino* around here, but what we really love is the Vinho Verde. Very light, slightly effervescent, reminiscent of citrus, and always fantastic, it's the ultimate sipping wine. (Portugal)

**Fiore**  
**Chambourcin**

Chambourcin is the red grape variety that grows best in Maryland. Light in body and slightly spicy, it's a great cocktail wine. This wine won a Gold Medal in the Los Angeles County Fair, a huge achievement for a Maryland wine.

**Fiore**  
**Vidal Blanc**

Vidal Blanc, which along with Seyval are the best Maryland wine grapes, produces a light, slightly-sweet and fruity wine that is an excellent sipper, and accompanies light fare well. (Maryland)

**Bully Hill**  
**Love My Goat Red**

We had so many people asking for Bully Hill wines, we had to either buy them or go insane. We did both. Bully Hill's best-selling wine is a slightly spicy red rules with spicy pasta, pork or beef. (New Yawk)

**Chateau Fage**  
**Graves**

A customer who we're guessing would prefer to remain anonymous really swears by this bargain Bordeaux blend of Cabernet and Merlot. We love it with roast pork, rich poultry, or beef. (France)

**Torre del Bardo  
Toscana**

“Super Tuscan” wines are blends of classic Italian Sangiovese with French grapes, usually Cabernet Sauvignon and/or Merlot. The resulting wine is usually more than the sum of its parts. Super Tuscans are often expensive, but we’ve cut out the middleman. (Italy)

**Villa Chiopris  
Pinot Grigio**

Our friends at Scossa feature this beautifully made wine on their wine list. Packed with rich fresh fruit flavours such as honey and apple and an elegant dry finish. Very good structure and well balanced. (Italy)

**A. Charbaut  
Brut Champagne**

“A distinctive, traditional style of Champagne, with enticing accents of walnut and honey that add complexity to the vibrant fruit flavors and firm, elegant mousse.” (France)

**90 Points – Wine Spectator**

**A. Charbaut  
Rosé Champagne**

Rosé Champagnes typically contain a higher percentage of Pinot Noir than most Champagnes, and derive their lively pink coloration from the Pinot Noir grapeskins. Rosés are usually expensive, but this one is a tremendous bargain.

**90 Points – Wine Spectator**

**Wente  
Reliz Creek Pinot Noir**

You can tell when a winery is serious about its wines. Just check out the heft of the bottle. Wente goes to the trouble of using premium bottles because this wine deserves it. Very smooth, with nicely balanced cherry and tobacco. (California)

**Joseph Phelps  
Ovation Chardonnay**

**90 Points ~ Robert Parker.** “Abundant quantities of tropical fruit, a hint of orange marmalade, good density as well as excellent definition and purity...the finest Chardonnay offering Phelps produces. (California)

**Chateau Montelena  
Napa Chardonnay**

**Robert Parker awards 92 points** and says “boasts a rich lemon custard-like nose with hints of green apples, white currants, pears, and peaches.... vibrant, full-bodied, and surprisingly rich with a vivaciousness and zesty acidity that provide a laser-like precision and freshness.” The man was on a roll.

**Santa Julia  
Pinot Grigio**

Santa Julia produces very competent Argentine wines at affordable prices. As with most southern hemisphere producers, you’ll get tropical fruit notes in this entirely dry, light, aromatic wine. (Argentina)

**Dr. Pauly Bergweiler  
Spatlese Riesling**

According to our friends at Wine Spectator, this is “rich, round and concentrated, showing apricot, orange and passion fruit flavors on an open profile.” They also bestowed 88 points. (Germany)

**Pine Ridge  
Napa Merlot ~ Crimson Creek**

“Dark, rich and concentrated, with tiers of currant, anise, cedar and fresh earth. Holds a tight focus and finishes with a burst of fruit that’s wrapped around tight tannins.” ~ Wine Spectator (California)

**Graham’s  
Late Bottle Vintage Port**

Late-Bottled Vintage ports (LBVs to cool wine types like us) are bottled from a single year that is not a declared vintage year. They are barrel-aged rather than bottle-aged, so they mature more quickly. (Portugal)

**Graham’s  
Ruby Port**

Ruby Port is the youngest, freshest, least expensive, most accessible, least pretentious, most vibrant, and fruitiest of Ports. It is typically where the new drinker of the famous wine from Douro starts. (Portugal)

**Jim Barry  
Cover Drive Cabernet Sauvignon**

We've been saying it for months, but now we've got backup: "a knock-out value, one of the finest bargains in Cabernet Sauvignon in the marketplace."

**90 Points – Robert Parker** (Australia)

**Jim Barry  
Lodge Hill Shiraz**

"A terrific value, the dense ruby/purple-tinged Lodge Hill exhibits minty blackberry characteristics intermixed with a hint of pepper"

**90 Points – Robert Parker**  
(Australia)

**Corte Rugolin  
Valpolicella Classico**

Our friends at Scossa serve this fine Valpolicella with lighter pasta dishes, poultry and lighter fare. Being light and fresh, it is also an excellent sipping wine that can be enjoyed by those on hunger strikes. (Italy)

**Moet & Chandon  
White Star**

White Star is one of the world's most popular Champagnes. It is an Extra Dry Champagne, which is perversely slightly sweeter and softer than a Brut.

**Catena  
Alta Malbec**

"Deftly toasted, with vanilla and mocha suavely intertwined with lush plum, blackberry and boysenberry fruit. Long, plush and smoky through the finish, with the fruit taking an encore. A beauty." **93 Points !**

**Wine Spectator** (Argentina)

**Elk Cove  
Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**

“A bit firmer than most, but the cherry, currant and spice flavors keep pouring out as the finish lingers beautifully.” By the way, it’s pronounced “will AM it”, dammit! We love saying that. **89 Points ~ Wine Spectator**  
(Oregon)

**Evans & Tate  
Margaret River Chardonnay**

“Lithe, polished and immensely appealing for a cascade of spicy nectarine- and apricot-scented pear, vanilla and mineral aromas and flavors, lingering on the silky finish.”  
**90 Points ~ Wine Spectator** (Australia)  
**#79 in Wine Spectator’s Top 100**

**Babich  
Sauvignon Blanc**

“Distinctively citrusy and herbal, with lime, grapefruit and mineral character adding depth to the lively, focused flavors.”  
**90 Points ~ Wine Spectator**  
**#56 in Wine Spectator’s Top 100**

**Rex Goliath  
Pinot Grigio**

Rex Goliath consistently delivers great wines at value prices. The Pinot Grigio is very flavorful, even compared to \$12 wines. At this price, it’s a ridiculous bargain.  
(California)

**Rex Goliath  
Merlot**

Rex Goliath is the best quality value brand that we’ve tasted. We sell every wine they offer. The Rex Merlot is nicely smooth with tons of dark fruit ~ just what Merlot drinkers are looking for. (California)

**Pieropan  
Soave Classico**

Perhaps you had this wine at Scossa, where it is served with northern Italian fare. Soave wines are soft and often citrusy ~ very nice accompaniments for dishes ranging from light pasta through poultry. (Italy)

**Lulu B.  
Pinot Noir**

Good Pinot Noir typically starts around \$15. The grape is a real pain to grow, and it resists being made into good wine. We only occasionally find an inexpensive Pinot that we can sell and still be able to sleep at night. This is one of them. (France)

**Douglas Green  
Sauvignon Blanc**

This winery dual-harvests its vineyards. The first harvest captures the grapes at their herbaceous best, and the second harvest yields riper grapes that exhibit tropical flavors so critical to southern hemisphere Sauvignon Blancs. Cool idea, eh? (South Africa)

**Berrywine Plantations  
Raspberry Wine**

Being professional wine dudes, we were surprised at how much we liked this 100% raspberry wine. Just like us, it is slightly sweet and quite enjoyable at parties. (Maryland)

**Chateau de Sainte Gemme  
Haut-Médoc Bordeaux**

“Solid and racy. Vivid aromas of currant and berry follow through to a medium- to full-bodied palate, with well-integrated tannins and a long, refreshing finish.” **90 Points ! ~ Wine Spectator** (France)

**Berrywine Plantations  
Blackberry Wine**

Linganore’s sister winery makes 100% real fruit wines, unlike that funky carbonated stuff in the frosty bottles that’s made of wine and fruit juice. Only slightly sweet, and quite pleasant, we dig this stuff. (Maryland)

**Fontanafredda  
Barolo ~ Serralunga**

Barolo is Italy’s biggest red wine, and it never comes cheaply. Gigantic flavors that overwhelm all but the heartiest of foods. This is the best value in Barolo that we’ve seen. **92 Points ~ Robert Parker** (Italy)

**Kim Crawford  
Marlborough Unoaked Chardonnay**

Lighter than the California style, and full of tropical fruit flavor. A nice departure to the same old thang. "Lively, fruity style has pear and lime aromas and flavors, lingering well."  
87 Points ~ Wine Spectator

**2 Brothers  
Big Tattoo White**

A semi-sweet blend of Riesling and Pinot Blanc that you can feel extra-good about drinking. The 2 brothers created this wine to honor their mother. The sale of this wine has raised over \$300,000 for cancer and hospice charities. (Germany)

**Zolo  
Malbec**

A terrific introduction to Malbec, the Argentine national grape. We happen to think that Malbec is the perfect wine with pork, but it's also smashing with poultry and beef. Dig its peppery magic! (Argentina)

**Nickel & Nickel  
Chardonnay ~ Truchard Vineyard**

From the producers of Far Niente, Nickel & Nickel produces spectacular single-vineyard, single varietal wines. "Nickel & Nickel wines are all top quality...rich and intense..beautiful in structure...filled with dense, saturated color." **New York Times** (California)

**Teruzzi & Puthod  
Vernaccia di San Gimignano**

This organically-grown Italian white is made from an ancient variety of Tuscan grapes. It's nicely crisp, with honey and pear flavors. Nice with light fish or poultry. (Italy)