



Handy Hint: Cut out these notes and tape them to your bottle(s)!

# Cellar Notes

January 2022

## Cellar Selection - Under \$100

**RED - 2017 Prats & Symington 'Chryseia' Red Blend, Portugal - \$99.00** - Our tasters were truly "Wow!"-ed by this 2017 Chryseia. Consisting of a 75/25 blend of Touriga Nacional and Touriga Franca, and receiving stellar accolades, it displays impressive concentration and outstanding age-ability. Touriga Nacional (*aka: Tempranillo*) has a similar fruit profile to the king of red wine: Cabernet Sauvignon, and is arguably the finest red grape variety of Portugal, used for blending in Port wines as one of the five preferred varieties. Try with steak au'poivre with a mushroom sauce. Best from 2022 through 2040. **96pts & "Cellar Selection" Wine Enthusiast** - "Produced for 20 years, this wine has become an iconic example of the power of great Douro red wines. The latest vintage is, as always, densely impressive, powered by dark tannins and black-plum fruits. Its dry core marks it out as a wine for long-term aging. Drink this impressive wine from 2023." + **95pts W. Advocate - 95pts W. Spectator - 95pts Decanter**

## Prestige Red - Under \$50

**RED - 2017 Prospice Cabernet Franc, Phinny Hill Vineyard, Horse Heaven Hills, WA - \$49.00** - The 'parent-grape' of Cabernet Sauvignon, here Cabernet Franc shows what it can do in Washington's finer vineyard sites. With aromas of dark minty chocolate and flavors showing black raspberry, clove, black currants, and suggestions of earl gray tea, it holds a persistent bold, firm, and broad finish. Our comments ranged from "Wow!" to "Bam!", to "Holy S\*\*t! Good!" Pair it with grilled or roasted meats, best after 2024. **93pts & "Cellar Selection" Wine Enthusiast** - "We know what a special vineyard this is for Cabernet Sauvignon, but this wine shows that the grape's progenitor can excel there, too. Its 100% varietal, alluring aromas of raspberry, earth, herbs and flowers focus the attention. The palate is dense and textured, full of dark-fruit flavors with a firm sense of tannic structure. The balance is impressive. Best after 2024."

## Collector Series - Under \$30

**RED - 2019 Lapostolle Cuvée Alexandre Carménère, Valle del Colchagua, Chile - \$27.95** - This medium-to-full-bodied red was originally cultivated in Bordeaux, France, but has found a more successful environment in Chile. Delivering distinctive mint and cherry aromas, the flavors arrive suggesting dark cocoa, espresso, mocha, tea, and a note of sarsaparilla. With medium acidity and round tannins it makes for an immensely enjoyable wine. Pair this with four-cheese pasta with truffles, or with roasted vegetables. Enjoy today - 2027. **94pts James Suckling** - "Intense Carménère aromas of crushed dark berries and cherries with dried flowers that follow through to a medium to full body with firm, silky tannins and a racy finish. Drink or hold." + **91pts W. Advocate - 90pts Vinous**

**WHITE - 2018 Grgich Hills Chardonnay, Napa Valley, CA**

**- \$29.95** - Miljenko Grgich first gained international recognition at the celebrated "Paris Tasting" of 1976, when judges chose the 1973 Ch. Montelena Chardonnay, crafted by Mike Grgich, as the finest white wine in the world. This 2018 exhibits an extraordinary balance on entry, with minerality and depth of flavors through the long and balanced finish, inviting crab in a decadent cream sauce. Simply delicious! Enjoy today - 2025. **92pts W. Advocate** - "The 2018 Chardonnay bursts from the glass with intense scents of white peaches, lemon curd, fresh grapefruit and lime blossoms with hints of sea spray and toasted almonds."

## Classic Series - Under \$20

**RED - 2017 Artisa Fetească Neagră, Romania - \$19.95** - This wine was a surprise and a delight to discover. Delivering both dark plum and bright cranberry-like flavors reminiscent of Sangiovese, the Fetească Neagră grape variety is native to Romania and is the leading grape variety for red wine in that country. You'll find aromas and flavors to include dark fruits such as blackberries and plums along with spicy and toasty nuances with mere suggestions of cola. Fetească is an excellent match to roasted, braised or grilled meat, especially lamb or beef, and it can also work well with spicy dishes, rich stews, and aged cheese. Try with cheesy polenta and short ribs. Best between now - 2025.

**WHITE - 2020 Sagemoor Estate White Blend, WA - \$19.95** - The Sagemoor Estate White Blend is a classic combination of 71% Sauvignon Blanc and 29% Semillon, hand-picked from the vines and fermented in concrete and French Oak. We enjoyed its lovely and somewhat tropical aromas of fresh peach, apricots, and nectarine, followed by lime-like citrus notes giving it a mild lift of fresh acidity. This dry white is perfect for any day of the week, the bright, mouth-watering acidity of Sauvignon Blanc is balanced with the creamy richness of Semillon. It will pair well with nearly any fish, shellfish or lighter chicken preparation. Enjoy today - 2024.

## Award Series - Under \$15

**RED - 2016 Lagar de Robla Premium Mencía, Spain - \$13.95** - An unusual find for us, the Mencía grape here delivers lush textures with a light tannic grip. A gulpable red, it sustains delicious dark fruits through a long and gently puckery finish. A favorite at our "Live at Five" Friday tasting, this supple red will sing with all things pasta, lighter meats and even salmon! Enjoy today - 2023. **92pts W. Enthusiast** - "Fully ripe blackberry aromas suggest raisin and prune without seeming overly heavy. A lively palate is full but not jammy, while this Mencía from a stellar vintage tastes of blackberry, black plum and cassis. Dark-fruit flavors persist on a rich finish alongside notes of prune and chocolate. Drink through 2022." + **90pts Decanter**

**WHITE - 2020 Palama Verdeca Salento Bianco, Puglia, Italy - \$14.95** - This fascinating Verdeca, an ancient white grape from vineyards in its native 'heel-of-Italy's-boot', displays aromas of lime, tangerine, and mint. Very much the same impressions come across tangy and bold with layers of warm citrus and racy acidity. Sustainably dry-farmed and from hand-picked grapes, this medium-bodied white is quite dry, yet expresses exuberant fruit with a very rich, clean finish. Ideal as an aperitif, it would also combine nicely with fish & chips, simple vegetables or salad dishes. Enjoy today - 2022.