



Handy Hint: Cut out these notes and tape them to your bottle

Cellar Notes

March 2022

Prestige Red - Under \$50

RED - 2010 Sierra Cantabria Gran Reserva Rioja, Spain 49.00 - The Rioja district in northern Spain depends mostly on Tempranillo grapes, here blended with a 2% proportion of Graciano. This "Gran Reserva" spent 2 years in barrel plus 3 years in bottle before release. Our tasters noted red fruit suggestions, perfectly integrated with touches of balsamic, coffee, and oak. We suggest garlic and rosemary-infused rotisserie leg of lamb; our vegetarian friends may prefer a large platter of roasted winter vegetables. Enjoy 2022 - 2030. **93pts - Wine Spectator**, "An edge of tar and smoke lines the cherry, clove and herb flavors in this complex red, which is focused and balanced. Mineral elements and woody notes combine on the long finish. Drink now through 2032."

Collector Series - Under \$30

RED - 2013, Vignalta 'Marrano' Merlot-Cabernet Sauvignon, Colli Eugeni, Veneto, Italy - \$29.95 - Marrano, a 50/50 Cabernet Sauvignon / Merlot blend, comes from the winery's best barrels of Rosso Riserva, and the wine is left in barrel for 5 years prior to release. The hills north of Venice called Colli Eugeni contain the same soil composition and lie on the same latitude as Bordeaux, which encouraged winemaker Lucio Gomiero to craft his wines from those varieties. Dark cherry and blackberry fruit along with hints of vanilla and baking spices arrive with silky tannins on the finish. Simple seared lamb chop or steak would be a fine match. Enjoy 2022 - 2030.

WHITE - 2017 Ponzi Vineyards Chardonnay Reserve, Laurelwood District AVA, Willamette Valley, OR \$29.95 - This beautiful Chardonnay comes from the best lots of Ponzi's 2017 harvest, crafted in a somewhat lean style, avoiding the sweet vanilla overtones common to 'California-style' versions. The pure ripe fruit from Dijon clones here delivers crisp green apple, lemon, and beeswax notions. This will be a great match for that lemon-y Caesar salad, herb-crusted halibut, lightly grilled Salmon, and soft cow's milk cheeses such as Humboldt Fog. Enjoy today - 2024. **92pts & Editors' Choice - Wine Enthusiast**, "This late-breaking 2017 reserve is all-estate fruit and shows the same careful winemaking as all the earlier releases. Toasty flavors of nutmeg, Key lime, crisp pear and a lovely saline note combine gracefully, offering top-tier quality at a moderate cost."

Classic Series - Under \$20

RED - 2018 Creta, Ribera del Duero, Spain - \$19.95 - Creta is a special blend made from 30-50 year old Tempranillo vines. The clusters are harvested by hand, brought to the cellar where the grapes are destemmed and lightly crushed. We were impressed with this wine's unique nod to both old-world tobacco leaf and earthy aromas and new-world suggestions of mocha, vanilla, dark cherry, and cocoa. Yum!! It will match well with hard cheeses, grilled meats, and roasted vegetables. Enjoy today - 2024. **91pts - Vinous**, "Inky ruby. Smoke- and spice-accented dark fruits, pungent flowers and subtle oak spiciness on the perfumed nose. Smooth and fleshy on the palate, showing good heft as well as energy to the bitter cherry and blackberry flavors. Finishes long and spicy, with even tannins and bright closing lift."

WHITE - 2018 Vega Sindoa Chardonnay, Navarra, Spain \$19.95 - Ideal hillside vineyards of limestone, clay, and gravel in northern Spain give this fresh and lively white its particular finesse. Barrel fermentation and storage for three months in new French oak lends a touch of richness to the texture. Charming and bright, this wine is ready to drink with seared Sole or soft cheeses. Enjoy today - 2023. **90pts - Vinous**, "Vibrant and focused on the palate, offering Meyer lemon and white peach flavors that open up slowly with aeration. Shows bright, stony character on the incisive finish, which leaves behind citrus fruit and floral notes"

Award Series - Under \$15

RED - 2020 Tomero Cabernet Franc, Mendoza, Argentina 14.95 - This 100% Cabernet Franc comes from organic soils and was crafted using "wholly organic management." Three days of cold soaking prior to fermentation extracted oodles of characteristic blueberry and red fruit tones accompanied by hints of milk chocolate. Smooth on the palate, it will be perfect for casual drinking alongside a full combo pizza or with candlelight and fire-grilled beef. Enjoy today - 2026.

WHITE - 2016 E. Guigal Côtes-du-Rhône Blanc, Rhone, France - \$14.95 - A blend of 60% Viognier, 15% Roussanne and the rest Marsanne, Clairette, Bourboulenc and Grenache Blanc, we were floored by this wine's generous-yet-elegant expression of white peach, light lemon, and almond in a silky smooth package. Tom says, "Yes! Yes!" It will make an ideal match for a beurre blanc over Scallops and lightly roasted vegetables. Enjoy today - 2023. **91pts - Jeb Dunnuck** - "The 2016 Côtes du Rhône Blanc delivers the goods, and the quality of this cuvée has been incredible over the past few years... It gives up tons of Viognier character in its white flowers, peach, and pineapple aromas and flavors... It tastes like a Condrieu but costs about one-third the price."

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