

Herb's Half Case Wine Club April 2017
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Welcome Spring! It's our last month of more reds than whites, so I included some slightly heavier offerings. Given our interstate issues, I encourage you to buy 2 Wine Clubs this month. It's the only known cure for commuting-itis. Enjoy!

Cheers, Herb

P.S. - My non-Wine Club selection for the month is **Bordeaux Rouge**. The heat and humidity will be here soon, so this is your last chance to enjoy a robust red with the appropriate weather. Secondly, and more importantly, it's a chance to taste the improved ripeness of Bordeaux and how it can favorably compare to west coast Cabernet and Merlot.

2014 R. Stuart Big Fire Pinot Gris (Oregon)

Tasting Notes: Score one for the Wine Club - the 2015 vintage of Big Fire is heading to Atlanta, so the 2014 suddenly becomes available (read: affordable) for the Wine Club! This is a superb Oregon Pinot Gris from a stellar winemaker, Rob Stuart. This beauty has an apple and almond aroma typical of Pinot Gris' from the Alsatian region. It has pleasantly ripe apple fruit on the palate with nice mineral notes and is round and juicy on the mid-palate. It has an excellent fruit profile and plenty of balancing acidity. The finish shows crisp fruit and nice length.

Food Pairing: This is a great white to serve by itself or with light appetizers. Good fruit and acidity equals great food friendliness. As an FYI – this white pairs well with ham or turkey

2015 Perimeter Chardonnay (California)

Tasting Notes: This is an **EXCELLENT** California-styled Chardonnay. Why? Because it has the richer flavors of oak-aged Chardonnay with **BALANCE** and **STRUCTURE!** It starts with aromas of ripe tropical fruits and spices. On the palate, I found soft tropical fruits, baking spices and a slightly creamy texture. The two main factors with this white are judicious use of oak and great acidity. These traits are lacking in most \$10 California Chardonnays. The finish has pear flavors, spice and decent length. This is a well-made Chardonnay.

Food Pairing: The Perimeter is fuller-bodied and has enough acidity to pair with chicken or lighter pork dishes. It has body and isn't flabby, so your food pairing options are greater. This would also be a good choice at any holiday meal where you need to serve a white, even though it's a red wine dish.

2014 Legado del Moncaya Garnacha (Campo de Borja)

Tasting Notes: I'm seeing a positive trend in Spanish Garnacha, or Grenache, balance. Ripe, but not overripe fruit is now the norm instead of the exception. This one from Moncayo is the perfect testimonial. It has an expressive aroma of dark fruits. This is made in a Rhone-style with dark berry fruit, especially raspberry, good acidity and a pleasant hint of dried herb. The finish shows more raspberry fruit, medium tannins and nice length. This Garnacha has it all - great fruit, great balance and a splash of complexity.

Food Pairing: I would almost say to serve this by itself. Since the fruit in this red is so enjoyable, I wouldn't want to share it with food. If you must, try to pair this with lighter-bodied everyday meals.

2014 Poggio Anima Montepulciano D'Abruzzo DOC (Italy)

Tasting Notes: The Montepulciano appellation in the Abruzzo region of east-central Italy produces great everyday reds, like this one from Poggio Anima. It starts with aromas of baked black fruits and continues on the palate with pleasantly bright blackberry and dark plum flavors, with notes of earth/cedar and vanilla .

This red has a dry backbone, which balances the fruit. The finish shows bright, dark plum fruit, dry-ish tannins and nice length.

Food Pairing: Given the acidity in this red, I'd pair it with richer foods. Try it with sausages off the grill or lighter meat dishes.

2014 Bisquertt La Joya Gran Reserva Syrah (Colchagua Valley, Chile)

Tasting Notes: This is a stellar Syrah, an underappreciated varietal in my humble opinion, from Chile. The Bisquertt La Joya has a beautiful aroma of dark raspberry fruit and a hint of cocoa. It has great ripeness on the palate with pretty red fruits, especially black raspberry, and hints of bell pepper and cocoa. The mid-palate has a silky, round texture and continues with gobs of ripe, red fruits. The finish has well-balanced tannins, ripe cherry/raspberry fruit and nice length. Great example of Syrah.

Food Pairing: This is a fuller-flavored Syrah, so pair with heavier foods. Beef or lamb dishes would work well with the La Joya.

2015 McManis Petite Verdot (California)

Tasting Notes: Petite Verdot, whaaat? Apparently, the Wine Illuminati decided, a few years back, that Petite Verdot would become a thing. Vintners responded, and today, we have single varietal Petite Verdot. It's no longer a mere blending grape and is gaining lead actor status! This one from McManis is a beaut. It has a nice aroma of pretty blue fruits with a hint of toast. There are floral notes (violets) on the palate with blue fruits - blueberry and black raspberry. It has good acidity and brightness and even has a hint of bacon, so often found in west coast Syrah. The finish is dense with dark blue fruits, mocha and nice length. This is a great single varietal Petite Verdot.

Food Pairing: This is a dense red, so you probably can't overwhelm this wine. Try it with any fuller-bodied food that you cook on the grill.