

Herb's Half Case Wine Club August 2013
Decatur Package Store ~ 1220 Clairmont Rd ~ Decatur GA 30030 ~ 404-633-5250
decaturpackagestore.com

Good news, I've finished my Ark! Admission is based solely on cumulative store purchases. Seriously, it's a summer friendly mix of whites and reds (one red, which I recommend slightly chilling) that will help you survive the heat and the beginning of the new school year. Enjoy!

Cheers,
Herb

My non-Wine Club selections for the month are the slew of **White and Red Burgundies that I've just added to my French section**. Obviously, the unoaked whites are perfect for summer, but the Pinot Noirs are as well. Bright fruit, crisp acidity, and good food pairing make red Burgundies a viable choice as well.

2012 Bonterra Viognier (Mendocino/Lake Counties)

Tasting Notes: I haven't chosen a Viognier in the Wine Club in ages, and that's a shame, because it's such a great summertime white. Fortunately, Bonterra makes a great Viognier, and it's also made with organically grown grapes (Bonus!). This example has aromas of peaches and tropical fruits. I like its acidity, which tames the bountiful peach and stone fruit flavors on the palate. There's a hint of honeysuckle and fresh fruit cocktail on the mid-palate, and the finish is crisp, with fresh picked white peach flavors. Flavorful and refreshing – the perfect antidote to summer!

Food Pairing: Viognier has enough flavor to be a great choice by itself or as a starter wine. Because it's such a light bodied wine, I wouldn't overwhelm it with heavy foods. Try it with any flaky whitefish prepared with a tropical fruit salsa.

2012 Ballade Rosé (Gascogne, France)

Tasting Notes: I would describe this as the anti-Rosé or, more politically correct, the Rosé for red wine drinkers. I say this because it's 100% Cabernet Sauvignon, which is quite unusual for Rosé. This particular Rosé has a bigger body than most of its peers. It starts with aromas of spicy, dark red berry fruits, then leads to a pleasantly round mouthfeel with steely, berry fruit flavors on the palate. I even found a slight citrus note and lively acidity on the mid-palate. The finish shows an interesting mix of strawberry, cherry, and grapefruit with nice lengthy flavors. Fun Rosé.

Food Pairing: Everything! Just kidding, but Rosé is a very versatile food wine. Given its acidity, pair with fried foods (great with fried chicken) or typically red wine dishes, like burgers or pizza.

2011 Poggio Anima Gabriel Greco (Basilicata, Italy)

Tasting Notes: I had to complete the unique white triad, so I thought Greco would be the perfect choice. Greco is an ancient varietal brought over from Greece to Italy 2500 years ago. I like it because it's a great alternative to the sometimes uninspiring Pinot Grigio. This example has an expressive aroma of honeyed lemons. It has a heavier weight on the palate with a round texture and lemon curd flavors. The mid-palate trends toward ripe melon and honey notes. The finish has slightly bright peach flavors and good length.

Food Pairing: Since this white has a bit of weight, pair it with heavier foods, like pork or roast beef dishes. You might also try it with salmon off the grill.

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2010 Jacob's Creek Shiraz Cabernet (South Eastern Australia)

Tasting Notes: This was one of my more impressive Wine Club finds. It's easy to find expensive wines for the Club and much harder to find quality, offsetting, below-\$10 wines. This entry level red from Jacob's Creek meets the quality standard and then some. Bright black and red fruit aromas with a hint of underbrush rise from the glass. On the palate, you'll find a somewhat lush mouthfeel with a mélange of berry fruits – blackberry, raspberry, and black currant. It has a soft mid-palate, but increases in dryness as the wine opens. The finish has enough tannins and ripe, dark berry fruit that's quite lengthy. Great value.

Food Pairing: This a great everyday red for almost any everyday meal.

2009 Grandi & Gabana Theor Rosso (Venezia, Italy)

Tasting Notes: This is a great summertime red from the Venezia region in northeast Italy. It's a blend of 70% Refosco dal Peduncolo Rosso, a variety of Refosco indigenous to the Venezia region, and 30% Cabernet Franc. It has an alluring aroma of soft, fresh berry fruits. This Rosso is easy drinking with pleasant brightness and earthiness, coupled with cherry then berry fruit. It's an easy drinker, but with enough complexity to satisfy your taste buds. The finish has integrated tannins, bright red fruits, and medium length.

Food Pairing: This would be a red to serve with a chill – put it in the fridge for 20 minutes before serving. Given the acidity in the red, pair with juicier meats from the grill or oven.

2011 Edna Valley Cabernet Sauvignon (Central Coast, California)

Tasting Notes: This is my criteria for \$10-ish California Cabernets: good fruit coupled with good structure. The Edna Valley has both. It begins with an aroma of dried (not candied, which unfortunately I find much too often) cherries and leads to pleasantly bright berry/cherry fruit with a hint of cocoa on the palate. This Cabernet has great fruit, but also great structure with plenty of acidity and dryness throughout. The finish has concentrated, dried berry fruit and good length. This is a well made Cabernet!

Food Pairing: This Cabernet has enough body and acidity to pair with heavier meat dishes. It would also be a great choice for burgers.