

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

Happy Holidays! Didn't think I'd be saying that already! The cooler weather is here in earnest and I've chosen a hearty white and heavier reds that will pair nicely with said weather. Enjoy!

Cheers, Herb

A few public service announcements:

- Tickets are still available for the 2013 Decatur Wine Festival on Sat. Nov 9th from 1-4pm. Tickets available at www.decaturlwinefestival.org.
- My barrel of 13th Colony Southern Rye Whiskey is here! The only single barrel of 100% Georgia made Rye whiskey in the state. This is a one of a kind bottle for the whiskey aficionado.
- Another unique Bourbon arriving this week is **MY** barrel of Four Roses Barrel Proof 12 year old, OESV recipe. If you love the 2013 Four Roses Single Barrel Limited Edition, which is VERY limited, then this is your Bourbon. This is another must-have for the whiskey aficionado.

My non-Wine Club selection for the month is one of the many **Red Bordeaux wines** I recently added. Bordeaux is a great choice for cooler weather and heartier foods and it's a great alternative to Calif. Cabernet. They're structured, full-bodied wines and, thanks to warmer weather, riper than past vintages.

2012 Zolo Torrontes (Mendoza, Argentina)

Tasting Notes: In Argentina, Torrontes is to white wine what Malbec is to red wine. I really liked this example for its balance. Slightly perfumed aromas of crisp grapefruit are followed by bright and balanced flavors on the palate of ripe melon and honeysuckle. This white has a richer mouthfeel and body than most Torrontes and the acidity is perfectly balanced. It's present, but not too bright. The finish is intoxicating with sufficiently bright apricot and white flower flavors and nice length.

Food Pairing: Torrontes is a great cocktail wine. It's perfect by itself or as a starter wine for your next party.

2009 Valley of the Moon Chardonnay (Sonoma Coast)

Tasting Notes: My salesman brought this 2009 Sonoma Coast Chardonnay to taste. I was immediately reminded of the reality show "Storage Wars". It's an older vintage Chardonnay from a solid appellation. Is it a clunker or a hidden gem? No need to wait for the commercial break, it's a gem and the perfect Chardonnay as we head into cooler weather. Aromas of creamy pineapple and butterscotch lead to clean and rich flavors on the palate of ripe pears, honey, and baking spices. The acidity tames the fruit and the finish is dry with lengthy crisp apple flavors. **Great find!**

Food Pairing: As the weather changes, so change our food choices. I like to pair heavier Chardonnays with the heavier foods of Fall. This example has enough flavor and acidity to pair well with hearty soups and stews.

2010 Pueblo del Sol Tannat (Juanico Region, Uruguay)

Tasting Notes: Tannat is evolving from an obscure varietal grown in the Madiran region in southwest France to the national grape of Uruguay. And truth be told, I like the Uruguay version better. This example has an aroma of pleasant dark berry fruit with a hint of spice. Up-front, it's smooth on the palate with clean berry fruits, cherry and strawberry, then a bit drier on the mid-palate. The finish has dry tannins, good length, and bright black raspberry fruit. This is a nice, easy-drinking red with nice fruit and nice structure.

Food Pairing: This is a unique wine to pair with food because it has juicy fruit, but lots of dry tannins. You need a correspondingly juicy food, especially foods with a bit of marbling or fat on them. Beef or lamb stew or a bone in pork chop would be good choices.

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2011 Les Costes Cotes du Rhone Rouge (Chusclan, France)

Tasting Notes: This Grenache (50%), Carignan (35%), Cinsault (10%), Syrah (5%), and Mourvedre (5%) blend has great fruit, great acidity and a hint of *garrigue* making it my #1 choice for an everyday Cotes du Rhone. Aromas of dark red fruit and dried herbs fill the glass. These flavors continue on the palate with a mélange of berry fruit; cherry, berry, and raspberry, and a hint of white pepper. This is all tied together with perfect acidity. The finish is solid with more red fruits and good length.

Food Pairing: I find red Cotes du Rhones to be excellent food wines because they typically have lots of fruit, light to medium tannins, and good acidity. It's also a good red to pair with traditionally white wine foods like poultry. I would even say this could pair with the range of flavors of the Thanksgiving meal.

2009 Eugene Wine Cellars b2 Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley, Oregon)

Tasting Notes: I try to include a Pinot Noir every year for the November Wine Club. It's such a great fit with the multitude of flavors of the Thanksgiving meal. I was even more fortunate this year to find this beauty from Oregon (Go Ducks!). It's the perfect balance between France and California. It has the elegance of French Burgundy with a nod towards Californian fruit. It starts with aromas of dark cherry and raspberry with hints of mineral and earth. It's fairly elegant on the palate with soft, red berry fruits, humus notes, and great acidity. The finish is dry with medium tannins and cherry fruit. This Pinot Noir deftly straddles the line between lush and austere. A wonderful example of Pinot Noir from Oregon.

Food Pairing: I'm a big fan of pairing Pinot Noir with your Thanksgiving turkey. Pinot Noir has a lot of flavor, medium-body, and good acidity. It's the Goldilocks of the wine world - just right!

2008 Pharos Rioja Crianza (Spain)

Tasting Notes: I do love me some Rioja Crianza. To me, this is one of the most underrated wines in the world (and don't even get me started on Rioja Reserva and Gran Reserva). To be labeled Crianza, it must be aged at the winery for two years with a minimum of one year in oak barrels. The vast majority of Crianzas sell for less than \$15. What a bargain! This example exceeds that requirement and spends 18 months in oak and it shows. Rich aromas of black fruits and spices are followed by good intensity on the palate. I found concentrated, dark berry fruits on the palate with a hint of earth/humus and notes of vanilla. I love the complexity and layers of this Rioja. The finish is full-flavored with more black fruits, cedar, and big, but integrated tannins.

Food Pairing: This is the heaviest red this month and a perfect choice for beef or lamb.