

Happy Holidays! It has sneaked up on us again. Never fear, though, with these six choices you can handle any situation from Thanksgiving dinner to surprise guests. Herb's Half Case Wine Club can conquer them all! Enjoy.

Cheers, Herb

**There're still a few tickets available for the 2017 Decatur Wine Festival on Sat. November 4, 12:30-4:30.**

**Tickets are available, click here...**

[www.freshtix.com/events/decatour-wine-festival-2017-08-23](http://www.freshtix.com/events/decatour-wine-festival-2017-08-23)

P.S. - My non-Wine Club selection for the month is the **2015 Adelsheim Willamette Valley Pinot Noir** or at a minimum **Any Willamette Valley Pinot Noir**. I had a glass of the Adelsheim at a restaurant recently and I was quite impressed. Smooth with rich dark red berry fruit and a touch of balancing acidity. It was the perfect combination of Burgundian structure and California fruit. That's why I'm also recommending Willamette Valley for Pinot Noir. I'm finding that they have great fruit, great acidity and great enjoyability!

### **2016 Gilia Garganega/Pinot Grigio (Italy)**

**Tasting Notes:** As much as I hate to admit it, Pinot Grigio is a great holiday wine. It pairs well with many foods because it has good fruit and acidity. I chose this example because it's PG with a twist. It's 50% Garganega, the main white varietal in Soave, and really adds flavor to the Gilia. This white has an apple and melon aroma. It's bright on the palate with ripe lemon, floral notes and good acidity. I like that it has a lot of flavor, something that your typical PG can lack. The finish is bright and juicy with lime, citrus and nice length.

**Food Pairing:** I like this white because it has enough flavor to serve by itself and enough structure to serve with food. Pair this white with a cocktail party where you serve light appetizers or with a sit down meal of poultry or light pork.

### **2016 Weingut Stadt Krems Gruner Veltliner (Kremstal, Austria)**

**Tasting Notes:** I specifically chose this Gruner Veltliner to highlight it as a tremendous food wine. It's a grape that has good fruit, acidity and decent body and is the perfect match with food. This example has a fresh melon aroma with a hint of almond. There's a slight spritz upfront, which will decrease with aeration, with pleasantly bright lemon/lime fruit. Let this warm up a bit and the acidity will diminish and the fruit will become rounder with more depth. The finish is clean with bright, fresh citrus fruit and nice length.

**Food Pairing:** This is a white that will become better as the meal progresses and the wine slowly raises temperature. As with the PG above, this white can be served by itself, with light apps or with the multitude of flavors in the holiday meal.

### **2014 Duorum Tons (Douro, Portugal)**

**Tasting Notes:** Portugal strikes again! I'm finding more superb everyday reds from this country than anywhere else. The Duorum, like most Portuguese reds, is a blend - Touriga Franca (50%), Touriga Nacional (30%) and Tinta Roriz (20%). It has a fresh raspberry aroma. On the palate, it's an explosion of fresh fruits - raspberry and strawberry - that are bright, yet balanced. These fruits turn darker on the mid-palate, where blue fruits emerge. The finish has bright red fruits with nice concentration and length.

**Food Pairing:** You've heard of cocktail white wines? Well, this is a cocktail red. It's great as a starter red for your next party. It's on the lighter side, but will pair nicely with most party appetizers.

### **2015 Piazza Barbera (Piedmont, Italy)**

**Tasting Notes:** I'm a big fan of Barbera, Piedmont's entry-level red variety. It has flavor and acidity (see the trend this month, fruit and acidity, which make food-centric wines) and can also be enjoyed by itself. The Piazza has a fresh cherry/berry aroma that leads to slightly bright, concentrated berry fruit on the palate. As this red opens, the acidity will lessen and the fruit will expand. The fruit component is quite good with this red. The finish is solid with medium-tannins, darker berry fruit and nice length.

**Food Pairing:** Barbera is a great everyday red that will pair nicely with burgers, pizza and the leftovers, which are an integral part of Thanksgiving.

### **2016 Fly By Pinot Noir (California)**

**Tasting Notes:** I like this Pinot Noir because it's a bit on the richer side, but still maintains good balance with a healthy dose of acidity. It starts with a nice aroma of dried red fruits. Yes, it's thick and dense on the palate with ripe red fruits, but there's just enough acidity to temper this rich fruit, so it doesn't seem cloying. The finish is solid with dark red fruits (raspberries and cherries), medium tannins and great length. The perfect accompaniment to your holiday meal!

**Food Pairing:** This red has enough flavor, body and structure to pair with the many flavors of the Thanksgiving meal.

### **2014 Barone Montalto Nero D'Avola/Cabernet (Sicily, Italy)**

**Tasting Notes:** This 51/49 blend features Sicily's native red grape, Nero D'Avola. This grape has transformed, due to better winemaking, from an over-ripe, baked red to a fuller-flavored, well-balanced red that everyone can enjoy. The Montalto has an aroma of dark berry fruit with a touch of oak. It shows nice freshness on the palate with bright, ripe dark berry fruit and great acidity. This is a fuller-flavored red with classical European structure. The mid-palate has a nice floral note with more blue fruit flavors. The finish has balanced tannins, solid berry fruit and decent length.

**Food Pairing:** This is a heartier red, so you won't overwhelm it with heavier meat dishes. It will even work with lamb or game dishes