

The Black Door Wine Descriptions

JL—Jerry Lasco

CU—Cody Uzzel

**Cases are built by accumulative value, not by the cost of each bottle.

Bubbles

A Bichot Crémant de Bourgogne Rosé, Burgundy, FR-\$23.99—Such a tasty wine! We brought this wine on last year and it quickly became the #1 wine of the summer and in top 3-5 wines we sold all year! Crazy! Yet not so crazy once you taste it. Popping a bottle, it smells like great rosé Champagne, fresh sweet pastries topped with red fruit. (it's made with the same method as Champagne) The glass is full of raspberries and cherries. The bubbles are sharp yet pleasant and the wine has a great texture in the mouth. It is one of the great values of our bubbles selections, drinking like good Champagne without the price tag. -CU

Charles Ellner Carte Blanche Champagne, FR-\$31.99--Really a Champagne drinkers Champagne. Great citrus fruit energized with electric acidity and a crunchy mineral finish. Tons of tiny bubbles flow out of the glass and the toasty bread notes on the nose are fresh and aromatic. This wine is a great way to start a meal or pop for brunch. I personally drink this Champagne, regularly, maybe too regularly...HA cheers!-CU

Moët and Chandon 'Imperial Reserve', Champagne, FR-\$36.79—Named after the Imperial Emperor of France, Napoléon, this wine has a long heritage and is made by the most famous winery in Champagne, and possibly the world. You may have heard otherwise, but you do pronounce the T in Moët (MO-eT). Made to be food friendly and an easy drinking style of Champagne. This wine is always very fresh and mixed with citrus and red fruits and pretty floral tones. The bubbles are inviting and the mineral and yeast are present but not overwhelming. Consistency, which is an amazing feat on the large scale they produce, is key as this wine always delivers their signature style. One of the best traits of Champagne is that it pairs well with just about any food—simply pop the cork and enjoy! -CU.

Prodige Brut, Loire, FR-\$15.99--Sparkling wine from France! This is one of the best values that I've run across--great sparkling wine without the Champagne price tag. It's bone dry, crisp and refreshing with bright acidity and a nice mouth feel. A perfect wine to celebrate any occasion, or the end of the workday--cheers! -JL

Raventós i Blanc 'de Nit', Conca del Riu Anoia, SPN-\$\$\$—A legend in our company and one of my first loves in “pink fizz” (a term used by some of our long-time regulars). The Raventós family are the pioneers in bringing Champagne wine methods to Spain while maintaining their identity in using local vineyards and native varietals. This is a very elegant wine using 3 white grapes (Xarel-lo, Paralleda, Macabeo) and a dash of red juice from Monastrell grapes. Light red fruits are balanced with fresh acidity and a pretty mineral finish. Like Champagne this wine is all about the soil grapes were grown in and the masterfully implement it in the wine. Fun Fact-de Nit is the name of this cuvée highlighting the workers picking grapes at night to maintain the freshness of such delicate fruit. -CU

Stellina di Notte Prosecco, IT-\$14.39—I love this Prosecco. It has a bright, lively profile that excludes fresh citrus and green pear, graced with white floral notes. It is fresh, lively and approachable. Most of all, it is affordable, and the perfect choice for any occasion or pairing. -JL

Whites

A. Bichot Aligote, Burgundy, FR-\$15.19--Many know that Burgundy France produces arguably the best pinot noir and chardonnay in the world. What they don't know is that there is another grape grown here called aligote. Aligote has been grown in Burgundy for over 200 years and provides us a fantastic taste of the region without the high price of its more famous cousins. We love this wine for its peek inside Burgundy's famous terroir (the earth and environment the wine is grown in). Great minerality from the soil with medium body and tart apple fruit. Great with charcuterie and versatile with all food. JL

A. Bichot Long Depaquit, Burgundy FR-\$26.39--Chablis--Yum! This is a level above most village level Chablis in its boldness and power. While Chablis is known as a brighter, lighter, more acidic example of the chardonnay grape, the Long du Pacquit estate produces a bigger presence that's an incredible value for those who enjoy Chablis. Floral notes (white flowers), apple and lemon notes with chalky, flinty minerality. Power and finesse pairs well with fish or fowl. JL

A. Bichot Macon Village, Burgundy, FR-\$15.19--a simple and pure chardonnay comes from this southern village in the Cote de Beaune, known for its great value. This is my go-to chardonnay to enjoy with a nice meal on any day of the week. It's beautifully simple yet elegant with just enough power and boldness to pair well with food. No oak, not creamy or rich--for those who prefer old world, fruit and terroir driven chards. JL

Alexana 'Tete de Cuvee' Chardonnay, Willamette Valley, OR-\$38.39- This is an old school gem we have been sitting on for a bit. This is a private label made for us by Dr. Revana's

Oregon winery Alexana. The doctor is a Houston resident and cardiologist. He found a passion for wine as well as was an early regular of the original TTR location, and that's where our partnership started. He made this special Chard just for us. This wine shows the power of Willamette Chardonnay with ripe apples and pears stacked on a rich body. This is a great middle ground between our west coast Chards and the French styles in Burgundy. Not many of these beauties left. -CU

Alzinger Ried Mühlpoint Federspiel Grüner Veltliner Wachau, AUT-\$29.59 -That is one big mouthful right there(pun intended) Let's break it down- Alzinger is the producer, this is from a single vineyard, Ried (vineyard) Mühlpoint, Federspiel is it's classification as a lighter style, it is made from the famous heritage grape of Austria; Grüner Veltliner. It is grown up-river near the tiny picturesque and historic village of Wachau. (the W is pronounced with a V). Leo Alzinger is a very nice guy and makes lovely wines. This one is a great way to get to know their wines. Classic Wachau GV style, richer and rounder (for Grüner) but with bright and elegant acidity, a delicious minerality and a load of spiciness that this wine is known for. This wine is a versatile food partner, going great with cold appetizers and salads and even up to poultry and pork. When I visited him last fall, one of my most memorable pairings was this wine and grilled pork ribs from a neighboring farmer. Living in Texas I never expected the best ribs to be in Eastern Europe! -CU

Amici "WineMakers" Chardonnay, Napa CA-\$26.39--My good friend, John Harris, originally from Houston TX and graduate of Memorial High and UT, now makes delicious wine in Napa at his winery, Amici, which means "friends" in Italian. John has been making this wine (along with a pinot noir) specifically for us for many years now. It's ripe Cali chardonnay with a touch of oak without being over the top rich and bold--I'd call it's style a halfway point between Burgundy and Cali. Always well-made and always a great value. Apple, pear and some hints of tropical fruit and lemon pie. -JL

Bastianich 'Vini Orsone' Chardonnay, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, ITL-\$19.99- This is a really cool wine and I mean both it's fun and it comes from very cool climate vineyards in northern Italy. This wine probably has more in common with Chard from Chablis, France than it's Napa counterparts. Cool climates lead to a lean mineral driven wine. Good tart citrus upfront with nice acidity makes this a great wine for shellfish or other light seafood. The lean sharp body would also make it good for creamy mild cheeses too. -CU

Beringer Luminous Chardonnay, Oak Knoll District, Napa, CA-\$31.99--Classic Napa elegance plus power. Deep yellow with a ripe nose of candied orange and vanilla spice. Apples, melons, lemons, guava, baking spices, smokey oak--Ok, enough of that. This is a rich and voluptuous wine (think Marilyn Monroe, not Meryl Streep)--let's put it on the other side of the spectrum from French Chablis; but why? First, California sunshine and warmth--that ripens the fruit to a level that few places can. Second, battonage--the wine making technique of stirring up the lees (dead yeast cells)--this contributes some of these more eccentric fruit flavors as well as the rich, creamy mouth-feel. Last, but not least, the barrel aging (we sometimes refer to this as 'oak treatment') This wine has definitely seen some toasty new oak barrels. The one

technique that they didn't use is malolactic fermentation or 'malo' (this secondary fermentation converts the malic acid to lactic acid and creates an oily, viscous, mouth-feel and that buttery flavor (which I happen to hate--just a personal taste ;-)) If rich Cali chards are your style, and, you're not a fan of overly malo wine--you are going to love this one! -JL

Beringer 'Private Reserve' Chardonnay, Napa, CA-\$36.79--Arguably, the classic epitome of Napa Chards. Now in its third century of producing benchmark wine from Napa, very few wineries can compete with Beringer at this level and value. This wine has great structure and depth with complex flavors of ripe, golden apples and Meyer lemons Creme brulee and vanilla from toasty oak barrels results in a broad, complex and powerful wine, yet beautifully fresh, balanced and complex. Hard not to love this with fish, fowl or cheeses, just make sure to focus on all the wine has to offer--serve chilled, but it will open up even more as it warms up a bit. JL

Broadbent Vinho Verde, PRT-\$13.59-- This is a super fun wine from Portugal. This spritzzy little wine has palate refreshing drinkability full of citrus and pears. The little bubbles give it a fun feel on the tongue and glasses of this disappear quickly. (I've been known to not even involve a glass when drinking this) This is the ultimate pool wine! -CU

Cakebread Chardonnay, Napa, CA-\$39.99--over the past 30+ years, Jack Cakebread has built a Napa classic. Over 90% of these grapes come from the cool Carneros with the rest coming from Napa. It sees about a third new, French oak with time on the lees (yeast cells) and about 20% malolactic fermentation (a secondary fermentation that converts the acidity to a softer type). Ripe, golden apples and peach notes that only Napa Valley delivers to this extent, balanced with acidity and minerals. Really a fine example of classic Napa chard. JL

Campanile Pinot Grigio, ITL-\$13.59- The classic white wine of Italy. We liked this wine when we first tasted it and it checks all the boxes of good Italian Pinot Grigio. Good fruit, refreshing and quaffable. Throw this in a bucket of ice and grab a seat on the patio, as this is what we call patio pounder! A great way to start a fun night of wine and food! -CU

Cavalerie D'Oro Pinot Grigio, ITL-\$13.59—A great example of a quality everyday Pinot Grigio, fresh, clean and easy drinking. Lots of citrus and apples with a crisp mineral finish. This wine drinks better real cold and is perfect for quenching a thirst on a Texas patio. Crack one and let it flow! -CU

Château Garreau, Bordeaux, FRA-\$19.99--Bordeaux produces some of the world's greatest Sauvignon Blanc. This wine is 100% SB with no oak treatment. It's clean and crisp with medium acidity and bright notes of lemon zest, grapefruit and nice minerality. A great food wine due to its acidity but also a refreshing afternoon aperitif--chilled well it's the perfect summertime white. -JL

Chez Jerome-- SW FR-\$15.19--This little gem comes to us from one of our favorite importers, Mel Masters. Mel's an English gentleman who's led quite the life as a musician, author, restaurateur and wine importer extraordinaire. I've travelled the South of France with Mel and

met many of the families that grow these grapes and make his wines. We've been friends for a long time, and he comes to Houston several times a year to visit and host wine dinners. This wine comes from the Cotes du Gascogne and is made from 100% Colombard (a grape that few people know of and therefore don't purchase). I've always loved this wine and feel that it way over delivers for the price. We possibly purchase more of it than anyone else in the world and perhaps that's why he named it after moi :-). A nice balance between crisp and clean and beautifully ripe fruit. Keywords--fruity, stone fruit and citrus, no oak, highly quaffable. Drink cold with cheese, light meats/fish or by itself--ideally outside! -JL

Domaine Delaporte 'Silex' Sancerre, FR-\$36.79--the region of Sancerre on the eastern side of the Loire valley provides some of the world's greatest Sauvignon Blanc. Short, hot summers and cold winters together with clay, limestone, gravel and flint (silex) soils create racy, citrus dominated, with high minerality SB. Domaine Delaporte, located in the beautiful village of Chavignol (renowned for its goat cheese) is a family business passed down from father to son since the 17th century. This wine is pale gold with a beautiful nose of white flowers and lemon zest. In the mouth, enjoy a round, silky texture that is somehow both delicate and powerful at the same time. Complexity from exotic fruit, spices and wood leave me very happy. Cody and I tasted Sancerres for a year and a half, searching for one with some serious swag--this is it! JL

Drumheller Chardonnay, WA-\$13.59--A great example of quality Washington Chardonnay. Though not as famous as their California cousins, this wine brings a lot the same style with ripe apples, pears and lemons wrapped up in a creamy body. This wine is creamy but not heavy on the oak giving it great balance and mouthfeel. This wine is great for a warm Texas afternoon sitting on the patio and enjoying good company.-CU

Glatzer Sauvignon Blanc, Carnuntum, AUT-\$19.99—What a super cool wine from some of the nicest people you could meet. I had the opportunity to visit Austria last fall and this was our very last winery visit. Their hospitality was legendary, even in a country where over the top hospitality is the only way. This wine is Sauvignon Blanc with a fine-grained mineral finish. Lemons and grapefruit rind up front and rocks on the back end. Great for hot crispy schnitzel or with a charcuterie plate. Only a handful of bottles left. -CU

Golbelsberg Gruner Veltliner, AT-\$17.59--It's getting hot and sunny outside and few wines are more crisp and refreshing than a good Gruner. The prized heritage grape of Austria, this wine is not as common as wines like Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, or even dry Riesling, though it drinks in a similar fashion. Citrus fruit driven, vibrant acidity, and a mineral finish. This is a tasty offering from one of the most famous and historic wines in all of Austria. Gobelsberg has winemaking history spanning back several hundreds of years. Their winery is even housed inside of a historic manor house that predates the United States. Lean and clean and easy to drink. A versatile food partner with everything from roasted vegetables and salads to bold cheeses and meats of all colors. -CU

Guado Al Tasso Vermentino, Tuscany, IT-\$21.59--From the ancient hamlet of Bolghery on the Tuscan coast, the vineyards sit in a natural amphitheater blessed with a microclimate of

constant sea breezes and ample sunshine--pale straw color, citrus and passion fruit with high acidity and minerality. Like many of the Antinori wines, this vermentino always strives for excellence. JL

Jaboulet 'Parallel 45', Cotes-du-Rhone, FR-\$13.59—I really like this wine! It's one of my favorite finds of recent memory. We made a deal for a killer price, so we made sure our members did too! This is traditional from this region of south east France. A blend of local varietals (Grenache Blanc, Viognier, Roussanne) resulting is a wine that is fresh and easy full of citrus and mineral. There is a touch of roundness from Grenache, but the wine is more on the lean side especially with the lively acidity. Great to sip or great with appetizers or cheese. -CU

Justin Girardin Bourgogne Blanc, Burgundy, FR-\$18.39- The Girardin family is famous in Burgundy as they've only been there since the 1500s. Justin represents the 13th generation of wine makers in his family. He is young and energetic and this wine shows his openness to a more modern style (he even put "Chardonnay" on the label). Aromatic apples and lime zest with a nice round easygoingness. I always talk about the spectrum with Chardonnay and this wine fits closer to the center. It's neither lean and acidic nor uber-rich and creamy. While it's aged partly in oak, I don't pick up an oaky taste, just the softness imparted. I'd open this wine right at 5p when I start cooking dinner. A little bit is used to deglaze my sauté pan and most keeps my mouth moist and happy while I cook. Works through dinner if it's lighter fish or fowl, or goes back into the fridge as I open the right bottle for the main course.- JL

Justin Sauvignon Blanc, Central Coast, CA-\$15.99-SB Cali style! Bigger, and lusher than its counterparts in FR and NZ, this is an exciting alternative to the angular, acid/mineral driven SBs and shows what SB is capable of when grown in CA soil and sunshine. In addition to citrus and green apple, I get the rounder pear and tropical notes that tip me off to its new world origins. Very enjoyable with grilled seafood (or fried calamari--yum), but sturdy enough to handle simple herbed fowl or grilled chops--enjoy! JL

Jordanov Riesling, Macedonia, GRE-\$13.59-This is a tasty little dry Riesling from...Greece?!. This wine is dry, as in not sweet or no perceptible sugar. It leads with citrus and apple fruits, has a nice level of acid and finishes light and a touch of mineral. This shows what Riesling can do in other climates and soils. It is light and refreshing. Plus with the acidity you get a food friendly wine perfect for cheese or seafood. Fried seafood and this? Perfect! -CU

La Grave-Martiac Bordeaux Blanc, FR-\$27.99--At its best, this is one of my favorite modes for realizing a craving for sophisticated, elevated white wine. This is the second label (an amazing value)for Latour-Martiac, and for several vintages in the past it's been my absolute favorite sauv blanc to cellar by the case and enjoy as it gets a few years aging. Our latest vintage, 2016 can still use some aging and is very good, but not where I've seen this wine go when fully mature. The SB brings bright citrus notes and tastes that dominate but the 40% semillon softens the mouthfeel, adds peach and pear notes and builds a sum that is greater than the parts--a shining example of what makes Bordeaux famous. JL

Lange Twins Prince Vineyard Chenin Blanc, Lodi, CA-\$19.99- Super fun little wine. A single vineyard Chenin Blanc grown in Lodi, which is not a combination you hear often. The warm days of Lodi ripen the Chenin to make a real fruity style that is a little too easy to drink. Fruity, easy and very clean. Fresh and youthful. I like this wine straight out of an ice bucket, nice and cold. A perfect patio wine for a hot Texas summer. A couple bottles and a couple friends = good times. -CU

Landmark Overlook Chardonnay, Sonoma CA-\$18.39--This packs in all the flavors that Cali Chard lovers want--ripe and luscious fruit, plenty of smoky oak and creaminess! Think baked apples, some tropical notes, e.g., pineapple, guava, and plenty of spice. Solid acidity and minerality to balance it out. Huge value for those who love this style! – JL

Le Parisien Chardonnay, FR-\$-13.59-French chardonnay that's light and easy drinking. This is not an oaky buttery chardonnay, but a light, crisp and easy drinking quaffer that's perfect for the summer months. Green apple and lemon notes with lighter acidity. Serve well chilled, pairs well with just about everything! -JL

Marbriza Vinho Verde, PRT-\$13.59—This is a perfect wine for this season. When its hot outside, few wines are as perfect as a good VV, especially if you are sitting around the pool! Light and easy with just a touch of added liveliness from some effervescence. This wine is the famous white wine of Portugal and is great for throwing in a cooler and hitting the beach. A wine glass may not even be needed, as I can tell you most of my Vinho Verde was consumed right out of the bottle! -CU

Martin Saint Croix Bordeaux Blanc, FRA-\$15.19—This has been a great addition to our white wine line up. This is a Sauvignon Blanc based blend from Bordeaux France and is a great value. Bright and citrusy with a clean mineral finish. It is hard to find a \$15 bottle this good. This is great for sipping but will also do well with light appetizers and seafood. Shellfish and light fish or it even has the acidity to do well with some cream based pastas. I keep this wine at the house for everyday sipping. -CU

Masquerade by Raymond Chardonnay, Napa -\$23.99- A great value in Napa Chard that over delivers in its price point. It drinks like a much more expensive Napa Chard. The parent company Boisset owns many wineries and vineyards around the world so their access to quality fruit comes much easier. This is that classic old school Napa chard. Big and rich, with caramel apple and ripe pears and full body. This isn't a total butter bomb as it retains some natural acidity which lends itself to accompanying food. Some good aged firm cheese would stand up, especially with some good dense crusty bread. -JL

Max and Jacques Chardonnay, SW FR-\$15.99--Direct from South of France from importer extraordinair, Mel Masters, this chardonnay is a pure example of what the grape tastes like unadulterated. This wine sees no oak (stainless steel) and warm sunny days and dry evenings.

Green apple notes, lemons and nice minerality make this an enjoyable wine by itself or paired with lighter meats, fish and definitely with cheese. Serve chilled and enjoy! -JL

Neil Ellis Elgin Chardonnay, South Africa \$20.39--I really like this wine. It is a single vineyard Chard from South Africa and made by Neil Ellis and I consider his name a stamp of quality on a bottle of wine. This isn't old school Cali Chard, rich buttery and creamy, this wine is about purity of fruit, a textured body and mineral finish. This wine retains great acidity and structure. This wine gives you enough to think about as a sipper or does very well with food. Fish of all colors, soft cheese and for some reason I think of breakfast tacos. Warm tortillas, buttery eggs, a scoop of cheese and a cold glass of this Chardonnay. Sounds like a great way to start the day! Cheers!-CU

Neil Ellis Sincerely Sauvignon Blanc, South Africa-\$20.59- This is a super cool wine and one we were happy to be able to share with BDWC members. This is Sauv Blanc from South Africa and from one of my top 5 SA producers, Neil Ellis. From Sauv blanc to Chardonnay and Syrah I have enjoyed all his wines. He does not over manipulate the wines and allows the fruit and vineyards to shine. This is no different. This wine is full of juicy limes as great citrus is the sign of a great SB. This wine also shows bunches of herbs and a nice minerality. This wine is a little more serious than some of it's New Zealander cousins, but you can see the resemblance, especially in its refreshing nature. This is a patio sipper or a fun food companion and a great way to start the meal! -CU

Newton 'Unfiltered' Chardonnay, Napa Valley, CA-\$51.19- This is an old school Napa Valley classic white wine. Before starting this winery, Peter Newton started Sterling Vineyards in Calistoga. They are the originators of 'unfiltered and unfined' Napa Chard and in years past were known for very rich wines. Now they show more vibrancy and a balanced style. Refreshing acidity is at the core of these ripe citrus and stone fruit flavors and it gives an easy drinking nature to such a powerful wine. Beautifully crafted. This wine is my ultimate lobster wine! Whether you're poaching with butter or doing a fried tail at MAXs, this is the way to go. -CU

Patient Cottat Sancerre, Loire, FR-\$26.36--I love Sancerre! This small region in the Loire Valley of France produces my favorite Sauvignon Blancs. I'd describe them as less fruit forward than NZ or Napa SBs with more minerality. This one is plush and soft yet still delivers big, bold flavors tucked into bright acidity. I get lemon-lime and cantaloupe! Great food wine, pair with cheese, fish or fowl. -JL

Patz n Hall, Chardonnay, Sonoma, CA-\$27.99--Donald Patz and James Hall are long time winery pros and work closely with their growers to source exceptional fruit from some of the top vineyards in Cali. I like this wine for its balance between lush and ripe fruit (sweet lemon, apricots, pears plus some tropical notes) along with spicy notes from good oak integration. This is a fuller bodied, weightier Chardonnay that really delivers the goods. -JL

Prieler 'Reid Sinner' Chardonnay, Burgenland, AUT-\$23.19- Seriously what a cool wine. I got to visit Georgie Prieler last fall and tour his little family winery, have his dad take us on a tractor ride (while drinking rosé) tour of his vineyards and have dinner at his house. Great people making great wine from a great region. The name Burgenland has to do with the French heritage of wine growing in this area. They make wines more like their French friends in Burgundy than their Danube brethren. This is a light Chardonnay, no cream or butter and minimal oak flavors. This wine is about purity of fruit and the soil it comes from. I always see a sandy type mineral flavors in this wine. Really well made, very elegant. This is also a single vineyard wine, Reid = Vineyard. Very cool stuff. -CU

Provenance Sauvignon Blanc, Napa CA-\$26.39--I've admitted that I favor the Sancerre region for my SB, however, I'm always thoroughly delighted when I taste this crowd pleaser. Much more lively, ripe fruit--lemon zest and meringue (like pie) bring a smile to my face every time. I detect a touch of semillon (commonly blended with SB in Bordeaux) which creates a rounder mouthfeel and possibly some muscat and light oak treatment. These elements add to the complexity and delightfulness of this wine. Great all by itself or with light colored fish/fowl. JL

Selbach Riesling 1 Liter, Mosel, GER-\$22.39- As all my friends know, I LOVE RIESLING. From the sweet to off dry to bone dry, I drink it all. Riesling is the grape that most shows its vineyard personality in the glass. This is a very good example of off-dry from the Mosel River Valley. This wine has that sweet and sour style I dream about. Sweet ripe fruits up front are balanced out with shockingly refreshing acidity. Peaches and apricots have fresh citrus juice squeezed all over them. The finish on this wine is all mineral, as it should be. I drink this wine frequently and I tell myself it works great as a post workout refresher. Also, it comes in a 1liter making it a 1/3rd bigger than normal, more for everyone! -CU

Stags' Leap Chardonnay, Napa -\$23.99- I Don't tend to drink Napa Chardonnay because stylistically, it's typically too rich and creamy for my tastes--I lean more towards acidity and minerality and that comes from cooler climates such as in Burgundy, FR. With that all said, this is one of my Cali go-to's. Stags' (apostrophe outside the s--the other way is a different company) Chard is a more elegant and finessed example of what can be done in this subregion (Stags Leap) in Napa. Apples and pears with some flinty minerality and enough acidity to cut keep vibrant on the mouth. JL

Talbott SHV Chardonnay, Santa Lucia Highlands, CA-\$34.39- A classic Cali Chard from a classic producer. Talbott's legendary Sleepy Hollow Vineyard produces high class Chard and Pinot. This wine shows great structure and texture with plenty of fruit. Yellow apples and ripe pears give way to a creamy body that still shows acidity and grip on the finish. There is some popcorn butter on the nose but don't let that fool you into thinking this is an old school 90s butter bomb. This is an elegant Chard that would do well with a piece of grilled fish, especially when finished with a cream sauce. As I'm sitting in MAXs Wine Dive writing this, with the smell of fried chicken in the air, it reminds me these would make for an epic meal! Fried Chicken and Chardonnay? Why the hell not?!-CU

The Crossing Sauvignon Blanc, NZ-\$15.19-My favorite SB from New Zealand. The nose on this wine is incredibly aromatic (make sure that you take a good sniff right after pouring). What causes this? First, Sauv Blanc or SB is an aromatic grape. Secondly, the climate; these grapes were grown in the Awatere valley, a sub region of Marlborough, which is famous for its SB. Snow covered mountains on one side and cool blue Pacific Ocean on the other creates a huge diurnal temperature shift (hot, sunny days and cool, dry nights). Put all this together and you get spectacular NZ SB--like you just zested a lemon onto fresh squeezed grapefruit outside on freshly mowed grass--can you tell that I like this one? JL

The Calling Chardonnay, Sonoma Coast, CA-\$27.99-This is not a buttery, oak bomb! This is a balance between its linear nature, from acidity, and its rounder nature, from ripe fruit notes of lemon and melon. Really a beautifully made wine with a cool Houston connection with Jim Nantz (UH Cougar and CBS commentator) who partnered with Peter Deutsch (famous wine guy) on this highly acclaimed project. Enjoy before, after, during dinner! JL

Trimbach Riesling, Alsace, FRA-\$23.99- Trimbach is a legendary producer, who creates some of the most fascinating white wines in the world. The region of Alsace is right on the German border, with 'ownership' of the area changing hands between countries on more than one occasion. Like their German cousins, Riesling is their pride and joy, with their emphasis on the dry styles. This is their entry level wine and shows you the style of quality dry Riesling from Alsace, with its stone and citrus fruit, lean body and mineral finish. Lean and mean and very clean. This is a gateway drug to a very expensive habit as vintages of their Clos Ste. Hune Riesling can fetch several hundreds of dollars a bottle. More people should be drinking Riesling!
-CU

Rosé

Gobelsburg Rosé 'Cistercian', AT-\$17.59—This is a super cool rosé from one of my favorite wineries on the planet. This is a winery with hundreds of years of heritage and has one of the best winemakers in all of Austria (AND his mentor, many will tell you is #1). Made from native grapes Zweigelt and St Laurent with a splash of the more familiar Pinot Noir This is a little more of serious rosé, less fruity and fun, and more like a wine made for the dinner table with its structure and acid profile. Still full of red fruit it has a tasty mineral finish. A very versatile wine.
-CU

Lab Rosé, PRT-\$12.79- This is a tasty little wine. Blending some native grapes of Portugal with the famous Cabernet Sauvignon led to a wine with great fruit while still being highly quaffable. The fruit is ripe but not cloying and the acidity keeps it refreshing. Tasty little wine that will be gone when it's gone. We were only able to get a few cases. (yes, I am sad too) -CU

Lange Twins Sangiovese Rosé, Lodi, CA-\$15.99- What a fun wine! First off, it's an Italian grape grown in California, which is cool to see. Second, this wine is super tasty. It tastes like

watermelon juice! Super easy to drink and really cool. I think I need to get a bottle open; I'm getting thirsty thinking about this wine! -CU

Le Charmel Rosé, Loire Valley, FRA-\$13.59- Another little gem from our buddy Mel Masters. This is a fruit forward easy drinking rosé with some red wine fruit flavors. More of the cherries and raspberries than some of the Provence strawberries. This wine has just a touch of earth on the finish. Crisp and dry and great for the pool! A cooler of ice, toss these bad boys in and you've got a party! (Invite me!) -CU

JNSQ Rosé, CA-\$23.19—This was a surprise for us. If you got this wine, you know it has a unique package meant to look like a French perfume bottle. Generally, when a wine has an over the top bottle, that is the best part and the contents don't hold up. This is not the case here. This wine drinks like good French rosé, even using their grape formula (Grenache/Syrah). It is fresh with ripe fruits and an easy drinking style and you get a fun souvenir! -CU

Manon, Cotes du Provence, FR-\$14.99--This is a great example of wine from this region. It checks all the boxes. Fruit, check. Nice acid and mineral, check check. Easy drinking, check. Fun bottle, check. Like many of it's brethren, don't overthink it. This wine is just great to pop some bottles with friends and watch the bottles disappear. -CU

Rabble Wine Co. Rosé, Lodi, CA-\$15.99- We were really excited about this wine. What a cool label! Yet you have to be careful, as many times a cool label is to cover for a poor wine. This is not that. This is Syrah from Lodi and drinks in a ripe fruit forward style with a touch of savory notes. Easy enough for most drinkers, but serious enough for a red wine drinker's glass. Another wine I wish we could have bought more of (for me!). -CU

Rouquefeullie 'Rosé in the Air', Cotes du Provence, FR-\$20.99--This is fun and tasty wine. I would say it sits somewhere between the Manon and Olema. It has the light fruit style of Manon but more of the crisp brighter body of the Olema. This wine gives you the strawberries and peaches you'd expect with a mellow aspect from a little extra time in the bottle. The jolt of acidity makes it a great food wine or a refreshing partner for a day by the pool. -CU

Rosé du Patron, S. France--\$15.19—This has been my go-to rosé for many years. The formula for success is simple but not easy; it's dry, crisp and delicious (and won't break the bank). Light peach in color, beautiful fresh fruit and flowers on the nose. Medium acidity for brightness with an underlying minerality. This excels around the pool yet still has enough style to invite to dinner. I love it with cheese and fruit plates as well as charcuterie. -JL

Reds

A. Bichot Bourgogne Rouge Vieilles Vignes Pinot Noir, Burgundy, FR-\$20.79 —There are a lot of words on this bottle. First and foremost, this is Pinot Noir, if you are seeing the word Bourgogne (Burgundy) on a bottle and it's red, 99% chance it's Pinot. Vieilles Vignes = Old Vines. Old vines produce less fruit, but they put more effort and concentration into those clusters creating a wine of more depth and complexity. This wine, utilizing their access to older vines, allow them to create a wine that over delivers in this category. Light in body yet very good concentration of fruit flavors like cherries and cranberries balanced with nice acidity and earth tones. Burgundy is always food friendly and pairs well with assorted styles of cheese and charcuterie. Roast Duck is always a next level pairing for red Burgundy. -CU

Amici Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, CA-\$43.19- We love these guys. Though I may be biased from years of a great partnership, those years should be a testament to the quality of their wines. I believe I can say without bias, this is the best Cab on our menu, including those with a much higher price tag. This for them, is their 'basic' Napa Cab and I would put it against any other in its weight class. Big ripe fruit and fresh earth and floral coming out of the glass. The body has great structure while still being soft and elegant. The oak is present but not overwhelming. Tony Biagi is one of the best winemakers in Napa, and this is a wine that showcases his talent. -CU

Amici 'Winemakers' Pinot Noir, Sonoma, CA-\$38.39- Our good friends at Amici Wine Cellars make this wine just for us. It is a special privilege to have a winery of such a high caliber make a wine we can share with our friends. Amici sources their Pinot fruit from the Sonoma Valley. This vintage sees a hearty helping of grapes from the well-known Russian River Valley, and the wine sure drinks like classic RRV. Cherry cola and ultra-fresh floral tones are all over this wine. Loads of fruit rolled up in a fresh pastry. Very high drinkability level- CU

Andrew Rich 'Verbatim' Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley, OR-\$23.99 —This is a quality Oregon Pinot. It has a great easy drinking ability with a ripe fruit character. Pinot is always on the lighter side and this is even on the lighter end of that spectrum. It has a dark hue to the color and a delicate nose. The ripe fruit have a dark character too. Faded flower and fresh turned earth. Delicate wines need delicate food. -CU

Apolloni 'Special Selection' Pinot Noir, Willamette Valley, OR-\$28.79 —Coming from our friends at Apolloni, this custom bottling is a beautiful expression of Oregon Pinot., and many experts will tell you Oregon is the best spot for Pinot in this country. In the glass, our Special Selection has a crazy cool red color and is very aromatic. Typical OR Pinot aromas of cherries, red flowers and some forest floor and black tea. This wine's body is light and silky with a pretty structure and generous amounts of fruit. This wine has the fruit to stand alone but the acid profile to be great with a variety of meals. It's a GREAT burger wine or class it up with a cheese board. -CU

Argam Tempranillo, La Mancha, SPN-\$14.39--This is a great intro to the wonderful heritage grape of Spain, Tempranillo! This is a collaboration between Jerry and legendary Spanish wine importer, Jorge Ordonez. Jorge put Spain on our map and is possibly the most influential figure

in Spanish wine. This was a wine we sought out to offer a great Tempranillo at the by the glass level. (We like BtG wines that deliver big value) You get all the ripe cherries and blackberries you expect with a nice baked earth character on the finish. Great to sip on and great with food like cured Spanish ham and firm cheeses. -CU

Argiano Brunello di Montalcino, Tuscany, IT-\$70.39-The King of Sangiovese based wines. This is a great expression of Brunello (local name for Sangiovese) from the town of Montalcino. It shows all the great ripe cherry fruit Brunello is known for with loads of dried spices, faded floral and fresh earthy tones. Intense structure and juicy acidity make this wine a great food partner. Classics like tomato sauces and hard Italian cheeses are no brainers. A big juicy ribeye would be a fantastic dance partner. This wine is drinking well now but can gracefully age for the next 10 years +. -CU

Beaulieu Vineyard BV Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa, CA-\$23.99-For me, this sets a solid benchmark for quality Napa Cabernet Sauvignon. BV set the bar with their original winemaker, Andre Tchelistcheff, in the first half of the 1900's. This wine checks all the boxes for Napa Cab, a rich body, ripe fruits, toasty oak notes with texture and tannin. BV believes in building wines of balance and try to never overpower the palate. This is my trusty go to when a guest asks for a good glass of Napa Cab. Easily one of the best values in Napa, which is not a common phrase in that area.-CU

Bedrock Zinfandel, CA-\$27.99- What a super cool wine! Zinfandel is thought to be the heritage grape of California, with its roots (wine pun) lying with immigrants from Italy and Croatia, in the 1800's. Zinfandel loves California and few produce better Zins than Morgan Twain Peterson.(If a Peterson making Zin catches your attention, that is because his dad is Joel Peterson, legendary Ravenwood Zin producer) Zin is in Morgan's blood, and he makes wines from the highest quality old vine vineyards and does not overly extract or use too much oak. His wines allow Zin to shine! All that brambly fruit is wrapped in a lean body that has a spicy finish. I LOVE THIS WINE! -CU

Bedrock Wine Co. Evangelho Vineyard, Contra Costa County, CA-\$35.99-One of the coolest wines in all of the BDWC! This is another great wine from Morgan Twain Peterson's Bedrock Wine Co. This is a single vineyard wine (all the grapes come from one vineyard as opposed to many, like big production wines) but is what we call a "field blend". A field blend will generally come from a single area that is planted to more than one varietal, and in some cases like this, MANY varietals at that. The idea is to produce a wine that showcases the earth and vineyards as opposed to the single grape itself. This blend is heavy on Morgan's beloved Zin and has a great supporting cast of Carignan and Mataró (Mourvèdre). This is also a 130yo vineyard that adds complexity to this wine. Bright red fruits, pops of acidity, lean and silky, smooth and concentrated. Truly a pretty wine. It could easily pair with light red meats and other grilled meat, but I would get it nice and cool and pop the cork and sip away. -CU

Beringer Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa, CA-\$28.79- This wine shows us that not all great Cali Cabernet comes from Napa Valley. From the Cab producing area of Knights Valley this wine

shows loads of dark fruit on a full body with a touch of graphite and baking spice. This wine is rich and supple and has easy going tannins. This has been a long-time guest favorite at The Tasting Room. With its high drinkability and rich yet easy-going style, this is a great bottle to share with friends. -CU

Beringer 'Quantum' Red Blend, CA-\$47.99- This is Beringer's take on a modern 'Bordeaux blend'. Leaning heavy on Cabernet Sauvignon, with compliments of Merlot, Cab Franc, Malbec and adding Petite Sirah. This wine is big and powerful, yet goes down smooth. For such a dense wine it has great drinkability. Loads of dark fruits like raspberries and cherries are tossed in cocoa. This plush wine has silky tannins and a long finish. It is drinking great right now and begs to be paired with a nice steak on the grill! -CU

Bodegas Franco-Españolas 'Crianza, Rioja Bordón, SPA-\$15.19- Rioja! Rioja is a really cool region who took a lot of direction from their French cousins to the north in Bordeaux while maintaining their roots with the local grape Tempranillo. Blended with some Garnacha (Grenache) aged in American Oak (very common here to use American) with additional age in bottle this 2012 is ready to drink! Tart cherry fruit a little dusty road and spice and you have a great wine for steak! "Ribeyes and Rioja... why the hell not?!" Viva Espana! -CU

Bodegas Numanthia 'Termes' Tinta de Toro, Toro, SPN-\$27.19- First off this is Tempranillo and it is from the region of Toro, which is west of its more famous cousin Rioja. Toro is a hot sandy region, home to vineyards full of older than average vineyards. This wine is dark as it looks almost black and is packed full of ripe Tempranillo cherry fruit and deep earth tones. If you are pairing this with food, go big! A hearty steak or maybe even smoky brisket with a sweet BBQ sauce. One of my fav wineries in all of Spain. -CU

Borderon Rouge, Bordeaux, FRA-\$15.99- This is a great little Bordeaux Rouge (red) based around Merlot with a scoop of Cab in there. This wine is a nice first peak at Bordeaux if you are unfamiliar. They show you the potential of the region without breaking the bank. (Bordeauxs can get into the 100's and thousands of dollars of bottle) This wine has dark red fruits, good acidity and an earthy and tannic finish. This wine shines with food like beef stew or even does well with pizza. Pizza and Bordeaux? Why the hell not?! -CU

Cavalerie D'Oro Chianti Classico Riserva, Tuscany, IT-\$21.59--There are a lot of letters on this bottle but really pretty straight forward. They call this wine Cavalerie D'Oro and it hails from the area called Chianti Classico in Tuscany. The addition of the words Classico and Riserva means it comes from the original wine zone of Chianti and that is from the better vineyards and sees more time in oak. This Sangiovese based wine is medium bodied with light cherry fruit, dried spices and earth tones. The classic Italian food wine. -CU

Château Les Belles Murailles, Bordeaux, FR-\$23.99- This is a badass little bottle of Bordeaux. This has been a crowd favorite of ours for many years. A great bottle to put in the middle of the table for all to enjoy. This wine gives you a bit of everything, from ample fruit, a

rich body and an easy drinkability. This wine drinks well by itself or with a variety of food. Cheeses, meats or just a good group of friends. -CU

Chateau Pedesclaux, Pauillac, Bordeaux, FR-\$47.99- Really a great wine and one of our most limited items from the Diamond Level. This is a great example of left bank Bordeaux. Quick rundown; Bordeaux for simplicity, is broken down into Left and Right banks, with the left focusing on Cabernet grown in their gravel soils and the right leaning heavily on Merlot/Cab Franc in their clay rich vineyards. This wine gives you the fruit driven power of Cabernet Sauvignon and the supple texture of Merlot that has been enhanced with bottle age (this is a 2011 and ready to rock!). Big purple fruits, dark floral tones and some graphite and minerals. This wine has a big body and will do well with a hearty meal like steak and potatoes or a big ol' bacon cheeseburger. Bordeaux and burger? Why the hell not!?-CU

Clos de Siete, Mendoza, AR-\$18.99- This is a Malbec based blend from superstar winemaker Michel Rolland. He is Bordeaux born but has found his talents work in many places around the world including Argentina where some of the lesser known Bordeaux grapes shine. Deep, rich and full of oak and fruit, a signature of Rolland, this wine, like many of his, score very well with wine critics like Robert Parker.-CU

Domaine du Pertuisane 'Le Nain Violet' Grenache, FR-\$23.19- Badass wine. This is grenache from the south west corner of France, tucked up in the Pyrenees mountain sides near the Spanish border. This is a BOLD wine. Big, deep and rich. It benefits from air and a heavy decant. The wine is packed with over ripe dark fruit, creamy chocolate, and has a chewy finish. Grenache soaks up the sun, and when it gets a ton it makes a powerful wine such as this. This has been a staff favorite for many years. Speaking of many years, this is a 2011 and is showing its age through added complexity. You are getting the last of our lot, so cheers to you! Enjoy! -CU

Duckhorn Merlot, Napa Valley, CA-\$47.99- This is the gold standard of Merlot in Napa Valley. This Bordeaux blend, (generally 75-80% Merlot with a scoop Cabernet Sauvignon for depth and texture) for those who follow this wine, see it as amazingly consistent with the quality and power in vintage after vintage. Big, dark, rich with an earthy finish. Fresh dark fruits like black cherries and plums are up front and a finish that leaves you thinking of a full Napa Cab. During the "Sideways-I'm not drinking F-ing Merlot" era, this was my go-to for changing the minds of many sceptical guests. Merlot is a great varietal to base wine upon along with its ever-present dance partner of Cabernet Sauvignon. VERY few great Napa Cabs do not rely on Merlot to bring balance to the force. Cab is intense and rugged, while Merlot is soft, supple and deep. They are soul mates. -CU

Drumheller Cabernet, WA-\$15.19-- Comes from Washington State where it sees long, hot sunny days along with cooler nights. This is perfect weather for growing the best cabernets. This wine is a bit lighter in body with no oak treatment. Dark cherries and berries with some

herbal notes. Drinks easy and well with a light chill (I like to pop it in the fridge for about 30 minutes prior to drinking--cool, but not cold). Pairs with meat dishes and stronger cheeses. -JL

Drumheller Merlot, WA-\$15.19--Comes from Washington State where it sees long, hot sunny days along with cooler nights. This is perfect weather for growing great merlot. This wine is a bit lighter in body with no oak treatment. Dark cherries and berries with some velvety chocolate notes. Drinks easy and well with a light chill (I like to pop it in the fridge for about 30 minutes prior to drinking--cool, but not cold). Pairs with meat dishes and stronger cheeses. -JL

E. Guigal St. Joseph, FR-\$32.79- Guigal is one of the most famous producers in all of France and more specifically the Rhone Valley. Guigal sources this fruit from the vineyards around the village of St. Joseph and is 100% Syrah. St. Joseph generally produces fuller bodied Syrah with lots of red and black fruit and a dash of pepper. There is a lovely lavender aromatic and fresh earth as well. This wine has enough fruit to be enjoyed as a sipper or does well with bolder food like roasted red meats, hearty sauces and bold cheeses. One of my go-to's.-CU

Etude 'GBR' Pinot Noir-Etude, Sonoma, CA-\$34.39 are highly respected producers of top-quality Pinots. The GBR in this title stands for Grace Benoist Ranch, making this a single vineyard wine. Vintage after vintage this wine shows why this estate vineyard is prized. Like great Sonoma Pinot, this wine can be lighter than their RRV cousins, but maybe even more complex in flavor. Lovely cherry fruit and raspberries with a little pepper and fresh dirt tones. The body is light but retains great structure. Consistently a truly well-made wine, which speaks to the quality of the vineyard. -CU

Famille Perrin Cotes Du Rhone Villages, Rhone, FR-\$15.19-- The Perrin family are the owners of one of the most iconic domaines in all of wine, Chateau Beaucastel. They are one of the biggest and most reputable producers of wines from the southern Rhone. This Cotes du Rhone, which we abbreviate as CDR, has the addition of the word Villages, meaning it is from higher grade vineyards than just a standard CDR. I think this wine kicks butt and over delivers. The Perrin's massive holdings and buying power allow them to over deliver in this range of wines. (The rose is awesome too) Big for a CDR and dense, yet easy to drink. It's a mixed bowl of fruit combined with earthy aromas. CDRs are a great way to start the night with cheese or appetizers and will even be complex enough to stand up with dinner. Red meat and pork do well, or even boldly seasoned poultry can pair well. -CU

Fincas Del Sur Malbec, AR-\$15.90-This is a great fruit forward Malbec made just for our company. Our partners at Santa Julia really over deliver for us on this Mendoza Malbec. Bright red fruits are mixed with ripe dark fruits in a smooth and soft body. One of our guests' favorite wines and a staple by the glass offering. This is almost too easy to drink! – CU

Forager Cabernet Sauvignon, Mendocino, CA-\$17.59- Great little everyday Cab. Mendocino produces some great wines that do not carry the price tag associated with Napa and Sonoma. A

cool region that allows for a lot of different varieties to be grown. This is a straightforward Cab that is great for a casual night and easy to sip. Smooth and easy. -CU

Ghisolfi 'Maggiora' Barbera d'Alba-\$31.99- There are a lot of weird words on this bottle, let's decode! Attilio Ghisolfi is the winemaker/producer. Maggiora is what he names this wine. Barbera is the grape and it comes from the village of Alba. Barbera is a favorite of ours, but this wine stands heads and shoulders above the rest. Barbera plays the 3rd wheel to the iconic wines of Barolo and Barbaresco, but this wine hangs right there with their big boys. Generous amounts of fruit, earth, what reminds me of clay, and purple flowers all rolled up in a dense body that has great drinkability. Like most Italian wines, save this for dinner. It pairs well with so many classic Italian dishes as well as a perfect complement to a big juicy burger. Burger and Barbera? Badass! -CU Cody wrote a beautiful review, but I'd like to chime in. I've visited Attilio Ghifolsi several times at his Piedmonte home and he's a generous and unassuming farmer/winemaker. We carried this wine many years ago when we first discovered it/him. The price has gone up since then, but of all the barberas in the world--this is our absolute favorite. I'd call it the poor man's Barolo (and drink it as often as possible :-) JL

Goldeneye Pinot Noir, Anderson Valley, CA-\$47.99- This wine is the Pinot driven arm of the Duckhorn family of wines. Hailing from Anderson Valley, a Californian habitat for high quality Pinot, this wine delivers vintage after vintage after vintage. This Pinot is generally on the full-bodied spectrum of Pinot, though this vintage shows great structure and purity of fruit. Ripe cherries, fresh floral aromatics are balanced over natural acidity and a concentrated finish. Always a go to when asked for quality Cali Pinot. -CU

Guado al Tasso 'Il Bruciato', Tuscany, IT-\$29.59-- A Red Blend, this is one of my favorite fuller bodied reds going right now. A blend of French varietals (Cab, Merlot and Syrah) but grown in the village of Bolgheri in Tuscany. This wine opens up with a bunch of ripe fruit and chewy tannins. Time in the glass or decanter reveals more fresh floral tones, light spices, and another layer of fruit. This is a well-made wine from a legendary winery and consistently punches above its weight class. This win drinks well by itself or does really well with grilled red meat. One night, Jerry and I enjoyed a bottle of this with an amazing steak from Chef Beto at The Tasting Room. We still talk about that meal. -CU

Inglenook Cabernet Sauvignon, Rutherford, Napa, CA-\$68.79- Inglenook is one of the great historic wineries of Napa Valley. Owned by Godfather director, Francis Ford Coppolla, this winery has a history that dates back to the late 1800s but finally saw its return to glory in the 90's thanks to Mr. Coppolla. The chateau is historic, and wines are world class. Showcasing the famous Rutherford AVA, this is classic old school Napa Cab. Big rich and smooth. A well-balanced wine that leads with classic Cab fruit flavors and ends with the "Rutherford dust", which is a dusty earth character that is a hallmark of wines from this area. This wine is ready to rock right now especially with a nice decanting but will cellar well for a decade or two. But who wants to wait 20 years right? Pop it! -CU

Justin Isosceles, Lodi, CA-\$61.59- I love wines from Justin and have never been disappointed. From my dive into their late 90s and early 2000's Syrahs to the modern style of Justin wines like this. Isosceles, like the triangle it's named after, has three "points", Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cab Franc. Cabernet Sauvignon is usually the heavy lifter. Full bodied and complex yet not overly extracted or tannic. The blend always leans towards balance over brute force. Cassis, dark cherries and raspberries are layered over earth, cedar and spice. This wine is ready to be enjoyed now but would do well to be laid down if you chose so. Most of us can't wait that long so pop away!- CU

Landmark 'Overlook' Pinot Noir, CA-\$19.99- Landmark over delivers on value with this wine. Many times you are really paying for the name of the region a wine comes from and that does not always translate to quality. Overlook takes a multi-appellation approach and hangs its hat on quality over depending on a famous region's name. This wine is deep and dark for Pinot. Rich, generous and full of California fruit. A real crowd pleaser. -CU

Last Judgment Red Blend, CA-\$18.39- This is one of our pride and joys, and possibly the most popular wine we have sold over the past 5-7 years. This wine is made specifically for our company with our guests in mind. A true Cali red blend with a little bit of everything but leaving the heavy lifting to Cab, Merlot and Zinfandel. Sweet aromatics jump out of the glass with LOADS of ripe red fruit and frosted pastries. The palate is rich and soft and full of more fruit. Bold enough for Cab drinkers yet easy drinking enough for Cali Pinot enthusiasts to enjoy as well. The most crowd-pleasing crowd pleaser we offer! If this is your style, you will want more of this! - CU---This ripe Californian blend has been our number one selling wine for the past 10 years! It's ripe fruit, medium body and rich flavor with a velvety smooth mouthfeel make this a tried and true crowd pleaser. On the jammier fruit side with dark cherries, black berries and spice. Good with food or on its own--serve slightly chilled. -JL

Le Parisien Merlot, FR-\$13.59-This is a fun little wine from France. Merlot is the unsung hero of bold red wine. Usually playing back up to Cabernet, Merlot brings a lot to the table in the same way though. Lots of ripe dark fruit, rich body and soft tannins. Smooth and easy drinking. I even enjoy this wine after a bit of time in the fridge, especially with Texas temperatures climbing up. A good everyday wine that does well for a wide array of wine drinkers. -CU

Lucas and Lewellen 'High 9 Vineyard' Pinot Noir, Santa Maria Valley, CA-\$35.60- One of best Pinot finds in some time. These wines are the passion project of two longtime friends who wanted to share their passion with the world. Lots of cool stuff about them, Family owned, female winemaker and a focus on sustainable farming. This wine has a great ripe fruit style but well crafted with nice structure and acid. It will do well with food or can be enjoyed before a meal. I might be picking up a few more of these for myself. -CU

Massolino Barolo, Piedmonte, IT-\$47.99--Barolo, known as the 'King of Wines', has been one of my favorite reds for many years. However, it has two main challenges: first, it's expensive, second, it takes a long time (aging) before it's ready to drink--historically, the rule was 10 years before you should touch it. Hailing from the hilly area of Piedmont in north west Italy (a beautiful

place to visit if you love this wine, especially in November during white truffle season!) It's a rugged and rustic area that produces world renown, age worthy wines. This Massolino is built somewhere between the old world, needs many years to age, and the newer world philosophy of drinkable right off the bat--I think this is a good thing. This Barolo is lean yet intense with a concentrated mouthfeel full of ripe red fruits, forest floor? ;-), roses and a sprinkle of spice. Fatty rich foods are a perfect complement to Barolo. Roasted meats are ideal. -JL

Max and Jacques Pinot Noir, FR-\$18.39-Direct from South of France from importer extraordinair, Mel Masters, this pinot is a pure example of what the grape tastes like unadulterated. This wine sees no oak (aged in stainless steel) and warm sunny days and dry evenings. An incredible value for pinot noir with ripe cherry fruit a rich and smooth mouth feel with medium acidity and minerality. Pinots are great food wines and very versatile, pairing well with darker fish like salmon and trout, along with all meats from roasted chicken to pork and steak. Also drinks well with a light chill all by itself. -JL

Maxale Appassimento Primitivo, Puglia, ITL-\$19.19-What a cool wine! Lot's to unpack here. The wine is called Maxale, the region of Italy is Puglia and the varietal is Primitivo (which is another name for Zinfandel). Zin made its way to the eastern coast of Italy from its home in Croatia many years ago. The wine uses the word Appassimento to describe the practice of drying the grapes to concentrate flavors. In other parts of Italy, they do this after picking the fruit, but here they twist the cluster's branch to stop the vine from providing nourishment to the grapes. The resulting wine is deep, rich and complex. The already unique flavors of Primitivo are concentrated into dark fruits and earth tones like pipe tobacco and potting soil. It is interesting enough to sip on or can be a great addition to a hearty meat heavy dinner. -CU

Michael-David 'Inkblot' Cab Franc, CA-\$29.59- Really a fun wine. Cab Franc is one of the genetic parents of the more famous Cabernet Sauvignon and where a lot of those great Cab fruit flavors come from. In true Michael-David fashion, this wine is big, rich and inky (the name sure makes sense). Truckloads of fruit are jammed into this wine. Big fruit, big body and easy drinking. This can be enjoyed by a wide array of wine drinkers. -CU

Michael-David 'Rapture' Cabernet Sauvignon, Lodi, CA-\$47.99- Michael-David turned the wines of the once relatively unknown Lodi wine growing region into some of the most popular wines of the last couple decades. M-D set the blueprint for many to follow, with their heavily extracted wines, big fruits! And dashes of Petite Sirah. This wine is no different. An ultra-rich body is wrapped around a core of dark fruit. This wine is highly aromatic with fresh flowers and earth coming out of the glass. The color of M-D wines is always striking as the Petite Sirah adds extra flash. This is a crowd favorite with a high drinkability level. Glasses will empty quickly, so be careful! HA Cheers!-CU

Paraduxx Proprietary Red Blend, Napa, CA-\$42.39- Paraduxx is an offshoot of the classic Napa producer Duckhorn. They started Paraduxx to focus on red blends, initially offering several blends labeled with a letter for the main varietal. (Z = Zin, C =Cab etc.). They changed it now to the single red blend driven by a heavy dose of Cab. This wine delivers high quality Napa

juice for a reduced cost as it is not a full Cabernet (Napa Cab grapes are some of the pound for pound most expensive fruit in the world) They also allow Cabs blending partners to shine and create a wine of spectacular balance. This is one of my go to wines for service on the dining room -CU

Paducci 'Sustainable Red', Mendocino, CA-\$13.59- A very solid producer with an eye on giving back to the earth where they pull their fruit from. This is a unique blend of Syrah, Zinfandel and Merlot. I love all these grapes but do not see them in a bottle together too often. Dark fruit up front, medium bodied and easy drinking. This wine over delivers in that 'everyday wine' category. It was a good find -CU

Patz & Hall Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast, CA-\$32.40- This is a big and deep Sonoma Coast Pinot. Warm days load this wine with fruit, while cool nights and ocean breezes leave great acidity. This wine has a firm backbone that is topped with loads of red fruits, fresh floral tones, baking spice and soft earth. This is a really well-made wine from a top-quality producer. This wine is bold yet elegant and very easy to drink. Really, really good. -CU

Penfolds 'Bin 389' Cab/Shiraz, AUS-\$52.79- Nicknamed 'Baby Grange' because the wine's components are aged in the same barrels as the legendary Grange. They use the term Bin because they deal with so many different lots, they need a numbered system to keep track. (Bin 407, 707, 21 to name a few) Generally, around a 50/50-60/40% split of Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz. This wine is opulent and very polished. Generous amounts of ripe dark fruits are layered with spice and fresh earth. The wine smells great, like good Napa Cab. This wine can hold up to a well-seasoned steak or if you have some left in the bottle would do great with chocolate desserts. If you are not familiar with Australian wines, this is a great intro, especially if you are into the wines of Napa. -CU

Quinta do Crasto Vinhas Velhas 'Reserva', Douro, PRT-\$39.19- This is my fav full bodied red wine we sell. Quinta do Crasto is my favorite producer of full-bodied wine, ON THE PLANET. This old vine (Vinhas Velhas) reserve wine from Crasto seems to get better year after year. Loaded with mixed fruit (their vineyards contain dozens of unique varieties) both on the nose and in the glass, the first word that always comes to my mind is fresh. I love these wines in their youth because of this freshness. The wines, for being so full bodied, are very easy drinking with tannins that are present yet smooth. I have converted many a Napa Cab drinker to these Portuguese beauties. -CU

Red Schooner Malbec, AR/CA-\$30.39-- This ultra-rich Malbec is made by the Wagner family who bring us Caymus. Their style really shows on this wine. They ship fruit from Argentina up to the Cali winery and go to work. Loads of extraction of color and time in oak make this a decadent wine. Dark red fruits, like plums and cherries, are packed in the bottle. This is a flashy wine that has a big wow factor. If this is your style, you will probably want more! -CU

Ridge 'East Bench' Zinfandel, Sonoma, CA-\$29.52-Man... this is a great wine. When you think of California Zin a few names may come to mind, but the first should be Ridge. In the Wine

and Somm community they are heralded as Grand Cru. This wine made it into our line up as Jerry and I were looking for a Zinfandel and knew Ridge needed to be that winery to take the original slot. We blind tasted 3 of their top Zins, and East Bench came out on top for the highest marks in quality and as the wine that was the most "Zin like". Big dark brambly fruits are covered in zesty spice and crushed purple flower petals. This wine drinks big, yet smooth. Zin is thought of as the heritage grape of California as its roots (wine pun) stretch back to it's trips with Italian and Eastern European immigrants in the 1800's. It's big, wild and a lot of fun. Sounds like California to me! -CU

Señorío de Aldaz Tempranillo, Navarra, SP-\$15.19- This is a great everyday Tempranillo from northern Spain and a great introduction to the varietal. This has classic cherry fruit and earth tones of Tempranillo but leans in the fruit forward easy drinking style. It is floral and aromatic on the nose leading to a medium body with spice and a smooth finish. Bold enough to open for the dinner table and fun enough to throw in a bucket of ice and enjoy on a hot day. This wine out drinks its price point. -CU

Señorío de Aldaz Garnacha, Navarra, SP-\$15.19- Garnacha is native to Spain and has become a work horse grape up and down the Mediterranean coast where they call it Grenache. Like it's Tempranillo counterpart from this producer, the wine is fruity and fun. Simple and easy. Grenache generally has an easy drinking style packed with fruit. Grenache loves soaking up the sun and allowing it to get very ripe and accentuating those fruit flavors. I do not mind this wine being a little colder than usual especially during a hot Texas summer. This wine is a great value. -CU

Sequoia Grove Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa, CA-\$39.99- My first love in Rutherford Cab. Rutherford is a sub AVA of Napa Valley, and is known for adding an earthy tone to their wines called 'Rutherford Dust'. This tone is a prized quality that adds to the texture that is not seen elsewhere. This is a great Napa Cab, with ripe dark fruit, great structure and full body. Add in a sprinkle of Rutherford Dust and you have a truly great Napa Cab. -CU

Skyside Red Blend, North Coast, CA-\$22.39- This is a very solid wine from a famous California producer, Newton. This is a way for a high-end winery to make some wines that can be enjoyed on a more everyday basis. They source quality fruit from the broad North Coast region to keep costs down while keeping the wine quality high. This wine is driven by rich Merlot and has a dense body. There is a bunch of dark ripe fruit up front and tannins and grip on the back end. This is a great representation of Cali juice. -CU

Spring Valley Vineyards 'Uriah', Walla Valley, WA-\$48.79- When they are ready to put me out to pasture, this is where I want to go. A working wheat farm turned winery (the actual winery is inside of the barn) this property has a history going back several generations, with all the wines being named for a family member. A beautiful place that makes beautiful wines. This is a Merlot based blend that is dark dense and nicely polished. Loads of plums and black cherries

are dusted with earth and floral tones. A crowd pleaser wine that is great for popping a few bottles and just putting them out for everyone to enjoy. -CU

Stags' Leap Winery Petite Sirah, Napa, CA-\$30.39- What a fun wine! This is Petite Sirah (no relation to Syrah/Shiraz) from Napa Valley. This wine gets you the overloaded fruit style of Napa without paying for Cab. Big bodied, densely compacted with fruit. Lots of floral notes come out on the nose. I like this wine chilled down a bit to increase the already high drinkability. It's a rare full-bodied red that can act as a patio wine. This has been a staff and guest fav for many years. -CU

Stags' Leap 'Investor', Napa, CA-\$42.39- This is one of the best wines that got sent out in June's cases. A ripe red blend from a historic Napa winery with a fine pedigree. The Investor is a Merlot, Malbec, Petite Sirah based blend that showcases the ripe fruit and big body that Napa is famous for, without paying extra bucks for it being made from Cabernet Sauvignon. Loads of purple fruit up front with a lavender floral accent. The wine is full-bodied but very well crafted to be quite easy drinking. Another crowd pleaser and goes well for sipping or dining. A real Napa powerhouse and hard to find a wine that delivers like this in its price point. -CU

Talbott Kali Hart Pinot Noir, Monterey, CA-\$23.19- I really like this wine. It has some deep dark concentrated fruit all over it and has quite an earthy finish, more like potting soil than dirt. It has a ripe style of fruit which also adds to the fullness of the body. This reminds me more of a light Russian River style Pinot with lower acidity which for me makes this a great wine for sipping or before dinner (the bottle you open while you are cooking!). Talbot makes great wines period. -CU

Terrazas de los Andes Malbec Reserva, AR-\$21.59--Terrazas is an iconic name in Argentinian Malbec and pioneers of high elevation production there. Some Malbecs end up overly fruity or jammy, but cool nights leave levels of acidity and a more interesting structure than most. Being a Reserva, it is selected from the higher quality fruit and sees a touch more time in oak. Black cherries, plums and other dark fruits are touched with spice. A soft earthy finish is wrapped in supple tannins. This is a great steak companion-CU

Teso la Monja 'Almirez', Toro, ES-\$23.99-This is 100% Tempranillo. Tempranillo is the famous heritage grape of Spain and made most famous in the region of Rioja. This on the other hand is Toro. A much area known for higher temperatures and gnarled old vines. Tempranillo from Toro produces wines of deep concentration and high power. Almirez is no different. This wine is big and rich. Dense, deep and concentrated. (Pro Tip- a little air transforms this wine) Loads of dark fruit are intertwined with earthy spice. I drank my fair share of this wine and gave it to friends. -CU

Teso la Monja 'Victorino', Toro, Spain-\$36.80- WOW, this is a MASSIVE wine. Right now, I will tell you to DECANT THIS WINE if you can and use glassware with the biggest bowl. This is from the old vine, sand filled and overly hot region of Toro in Spain and is 100% Tempranillo. Toro, unlike most all of the great vineyards of Europe including it's famous Spanish cousins in

Rioja, did not see the decimation brought on by phylloxera in the late 1800's. This leaves the oldest close of Tempranillo in the world in Toro. Couple old vines with the hot temperatures of Toro and the resulting wines are deep, dark and very rich. This wine shows dense structure and immense power and fruit. Truck loads of over ripe fruits are covered with dust and spice. The tannins are big and chewy and will soften with air or time in the bottle. I personally bought a couple cases of this wine- 1. because I love it and it reminds me of it's Portuguese cousins to the west 2. I want to see what such a complex wine unfolds into over the next decade plus. This is a special wine, I hope you enjoy it!-CU

The Calling Pinot Noir, Sonoma, CA-\$31.19- The Calling is a joint project from the Deutsch Family of wine and Houston legend Jim Nantz. They combined their love of wine and passion instilled in them from their fathers to chase their dreams. One of the creations of their dream was this lovely Russian River Valley Pinot Noir. The RRV produces world class Pinot and may be the finest example of high-quality Cali Pinot. This hits all the hallmarks of RRV Pinot. A big rich Pinot body, cherry cola, fresh floral, and dark earthy tones. This wine is very big for Pinot but supple and soft. Really just a great bottle of wine-CU

The Verge Cabernet Sauvignon, Alex. Valley, CA-\$34.39- The Verge is a great bottle of Alexander Valley Cab. Alexander Valley, you may already know from Silver Oak fame. This wine is made specifically for us by our friend Nick Goldschmidt. Nick is a New Zealander who has made wine all over the world but found his calling in California. This wine is drinking great right now! Big fruit! A mixed bag of red, black and blue fruit. A load of fruit up front but the wine still retains acidity which lends to structure and makes it a good food companion. This wine is elegant and not overly jammy and too full bodied like some Cali cabs. There is enough oak on there to be comforting but not overbearing and leaving it very easy to drink. Glasses disappear fast when this gets poured! -CU

Tolaini 'Valdisanti', Tuscany, IT-\$31.99- Wines like this are my jam right now. Tuscany has been famous for 100s of years for thin wines based on Sangiovese, but years back, renegade wine makers brought in Cabernet Sauvignon and Cab Franc down from France to add body and fruit to their wines. I love wines like this that blend in the French grapes with the local Sangiovese. This is also a 2012, which I appreciate, as the extra years of age tone down the youthful ripeness and allow the wine to be more elegant and food friendly. This wine is full bodied and packed full of fruit and has a great mouthfeel from it being left unfiltered. The Cabs make it great for sipping and the Italian earth and acid make it great for food. Pizza and pasta with red sauce for sure, but also a GREAT steak wine -CU

Tommasi 'Rafael' Classico Superiore Valpolicella, ITR-\$23.99- Pretty fun wine here. There are a lot of words and vowels on this bottle. Let's break that down; Tommasi is a famous producer, Valpolicella is the village it comes from, Rafael is the name of the cuvee, and it is a Classico Superiore meaning it's from select grapes and see's more time in oak. " Valpos" use a trio of local grapes and a process called appassimento to dry the grapes and give the wines their distinct raisin quality. This medium bodied wine feels richer due to this process and gives a

darkness to the fruit and a bit more earthy quality. These wines can stand up to a heartier meal as well as simple cheese and meats. -CU

Tormaresco Primitivo 'Neprica' Puglia, ITL-\$19.99- This is a cool little bottle of wine from the heel of the boot. Primitivo is a varietal you see a lot of down there. It produces medium bodied wines that can have a bit of a baked earth or clay kind of thing. They give you some fruit up front and earth on the back end. Great wine to crack open while your cooking some "red sauce". Little for your glass, little for the sauce (and maybe a little more for you) Tasty and food friendly -CU

Vermillion Red Blend, Sierra Foothills, CA-\$36.79- Vermillion is easily in my top 3 red blends we sell, right there with the Quinta Do Crasto Old Vine Reserva from Portugal, though both are pretty different. Helen Keplinger is a rock star winemaker who loves Rhône Valley varietals like Grenache, Syrah and Mourvèdre. A majority of this fruit comes from the Sierra Foothills with the remainder from Sonoma County. Most of Helen's Keplinger line of wines would be hard to even get them in Diamond Level, but luckily, she created Vermillion to allow us all to get a taste. For an 'entry level' wine this wine is a total smoke show. Truckloads of blue, red and purple fruit are layered on a velvety smooth body and a soft finish. The wine though being full bodied has an easy mouth feel. This is a hip wine from a cool winemaker. -CU

Vignetti del Sole Montepulciano D'Abruzzo, IT-\$15.19- That's a big name huh? Here is a little breakdown- Vignetti del Sole is the name of the wine. Montepulciano is the name of the grape and D'Abruzzo means it comes from the village of Abruzzo. See? Easy enough! We L.O.V.E. this wine. Tons of tart raspberries, fresh purple flowers and a pleasant earthy finish. This wine has a jolt of acidity that makes it an awesome food wine. Pizza, pasta, cheeses, and anything rich and creamy that it can cut through. It does great with a nice chill. I keep this in the fridge for the "let's start cooking" time of the night. -CU

William Chris 'Lost Draw Vineyard' Cinsault, High Plains, TX-\$23.19- Our first Texas selection for BDWC! We have been super excited to partner with these guys since pre-COVID days. The BDWC gave us a chance to get this up and running! This is a French grape called Cinsault (Sin-So). This wine for me, is at the top of the category of chillable reds. I throw it in a bucket of ice for 10mins or so, and let it get refreshingly cool. Bright red fruits pop! It's adult kool-aid. It drinks like Beaujolais or good fruit forward Pinot. My fav light body red going right now. -CU