

Wine Gems for the Holidays

Fall/Winter 2011

Under \$15

NV Paul Cheneau “Lady of Spain” Cava – Rueda, Spain

A crisp and delightful sparkling wine from Spain, Cava is coming into its own as a go-to source of budget bubbles. This effervescent beauty from Paul Cheneau is clean and elegant with a touch of honey, almond and a trace of dried herbs. Slightly toasty in the background, this wine serves up luxury as an aperitif or when paired with an assortment of light appetizers.

2009 Bollini Pinot Grigio – Trentino, Italy

Bollini Pinot Grigio is styled to show intense varietal aromas, with an especially fragrant, perfumed bouquet, elegant, delicately focused white fruit flavors and a slightly flinty quality on the palate. The texture is crisp and clean in the mouth, with superb acid balance and a subtle nuttiness on the finish. The fresh, refined style is ideal for frequent, casual consumption.

2009 Allan Scott Sauvignon Blanc - Marlborough, New Zealand

A fresh and invigorating aromatic mix of tropical passionfruit aromas with a hint of varietal herbaceous notes adding to the complexity of the nose. The palate is crisp and lively with a flavorsome array of tropical passionfruit and pineapple underpinned with zesty citrus acid giving this wine great mouthfeel and a well balanced refreshing finish.

2010 Fireroad Sauvignon Blanc – Marlborough, New Zealand

Color: Pale straw with green lights. Aroma: A lifted nose showing aromas of gooseberry, passionfruit, kiwifruit and underlying herbal notes. Palate: A light-bodied dry, crisp wine with typical Marlborough flavours of gooseberry, stone fruit and net-tles with a mouthwatering acid-ity, leading to a long lingering finish.

2009 Bodegas Esmeralda “Tilia” Chardonnay – Mendoza, Argentina

The 2009 Tilia Chardonnay offers ripe tropical fruit on the nose accompanied by notes of flowers and citrus which give way to a full, rich mouth-feel with concentrated pear and fig fruit flavors along with layers of vanilla and sweet spice. The finish is clean and fresh with bright, crisp acidity.

2009 Peirano Estates Chardonnay – Lodi, California

"The aromas of vanilla, lemon meringue pie, and tangerines are complemented by hints of buttery notes entice a sip. The mouth fills with tropical fruit, homemade lemon pie and vanilla, which round out the wine and leave a lingering finish." -Winery

2008 Alto Almanzora “Este” – Andalucia, Spain

89 Points - The Wine Advocate

"The 2008 Este is composed of 50% Monastrell, 25% Tempranillo, with the balance Garnacha, Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Merlot aged for 6 months in French and American oak. Purple-colored, it reveals a lightly roasted bouquet of black cherry and blueberry, underbrush, spice box, and violets. Supple, sweetly-fruited, and forward, this tasty, friendly effort has no hard edges. Drink it over the next 3 years. "

2009 Espelt Saulo Garnacha Tinto – Emporda/Costa Brava, Spain

88 Points – Stephen Tanzer

Red with violet tones. Surprising on the nose with notes of small red fruits, spices, toasty notes and peat. Well structured, enveloping and lasting in the mouth, where the aromas found in the nose return. We envisage that it will develop favorably over the next 2-3 years. "Deep ruby. Spicy, pungent aromas of red berries and herbs, with a hint of cola gaining strength in the glass. Juicy and gently sweet, offering lively raspberry and cherry flavors and notes of candied rose and cracked pepper. Nicely restrained red wine with good finishing lift and spicy persistence."

2008 R Wines “Luchador” Shiraz – Barossa Valley, Australia

90 points Robert Parker's Wine Advocate (02/09) Chris Ringland and his band of winemakers have invented a wine that speaks to the label. Barossa-driven Shiraz, dark, rich, brooding, charismatic and out-and-out delicious. Lifted and ripe blackberry jam and kirsch aromas, complexed with oak chocolate characters, the palate has a rich smooth texture of black fruit and plums finishing with licorice and soft tannins. 100% shiraz sourced 85% from the Barossa Valley and 15% from Langhorne Creek.

2008 Post House Blueish Black – Stellenbosch, South Africa

32% Shiraz 32% Pinotage 18% Cabernet Sauvignon 18%Merlot. The name refers to a stamp collecting term when describing colour variations. A dark, blueish-black wine with good colour. A nose of mulberries, red currant and ripe strawberries with a hint of pepper and spice. Full bodied, rich wine with supple soft tannins for easy drinking. Enjoy now or keep for up to 5 years.



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Under \$20

NV Rosenblum Desiree Chocolate Port -California

Is crafted in a rich, tawny port style with heady, dark fruit and enticing chocolate character. On the nose, chocolate, vanilla and coconut aromas swirl around a rich fruit core, spilling forward through the senses and across the palate. Seductive and smooth, this wine borrows its name from the deep emotion it elicits: desire

NV Marietta Cellars Port Lot 3 – Sonoma, California

Continuing to follow in the footsteps of Old Vine Red, our port is periodically released in limited quantities in a non-vintage fashion designated by lot numbers, so as to allow for a highly consistent product. Lot 3 is a limited production blend of Touriga, Souzao, and Zinfandel. Aged in new and seasoned French Oak, it is not as sweet as traditional Portuguese styles, although it unquestionably has an emphasis on ripe, rich fruit complemented by a hint of vanilla and oak.

2010 Cune Monopole Blanco – Rioja, Spain

"Light yellow-gold. Reticent citrus and melon aromas are brightened by fresh floral and mineral notes. Tangy lemon and orange flavors become richer with air, taking a turn to honeydew and picking up a touch of warmth. An easy style that should be served well-chilled." In my mind the winery is a perfect example of how a large, modern winery, in the right hands, can churn out very good bottles of wine, year in, year out. The cuvee monopole, composed of 100% viura, is a fresh, balanced sipper to enjoy before a meal or with seafood.

2008 Maurados Prima Red Blend – Toro, Spain

91 Points – Robert Parker: Deep dark ruby, the aromas are centered around ripe red fruits - cherries, some kirsch, strawberries even after some time. To the background, a oaky, vanilla impression helps the whole set come together in a consistent, balanced bouquet

2010 Chronic Cellars Purple Paradise – Paso Robles, CA

70% Zinfandel, 30% Petite Sirah: Deep Dark Rich purple color! This wine is exploding with hints of cocoa, coffee, vanilla, chocolate smoky toast, leather and spice. A fruit bomb carrying hints of Strawberry Jam, Blueberries, Black Berry, Cherries, Boysenberry, Tobacco, and Plums. Paso Robles does it again!

2009 Castano Monastrell Tinto – Yecla, Spain

89 Points -Wine Enthusiast

This cuvée from Castaño is made from 100% Monastrell (Mourvèdre) from 30 year old vines. "Bodegas Castano's unoaked 2009 Monastrell (100%) is a glass-coating opaque purple color. Asian spices, incense, black fruits and chocolate compose the nose of this juicy, fruity, plush offering. Lengthy on the palate and well-balanced, this outstanding value will provide enjoyment for another 3-4 years"

2007 Santa Ema “Amplus One” Carmenere – Cachapoal Valley, Chile

90 Points – Robert Parker: Deep violet to ruby-red in color, this wine is expressive and long, recalling red and black cherries, prunes and a touch of tobacco and pencil shavings. On the palate, it is well-structured and powerful, with well-rounded tannins

that lead to a voluminous and seductive finish. Drink with pork, chicken breast and turkey. Also ideal with pastas and smoked cheeses.

2005 Jacuzzi Family Primitivo - North Coast, California

90 Points – Wine Enthusiast Magazine: Primitivo is thought to be a clone of Zinfandel. It has certain characteristics that make it unique from other clones - mainly it has small berries on a fairly large, loose cluster, is less susceptible to rot than other clones and ripens more uniformly than other Zin clones. Our Jacuzzi Primitivo is deep ruby red, has concentrated strawberry and cranberry flavors and a rich velvety mouth feel.

2007 Ciacchi Piccolomini Tuscan Rosso IGT

In recent years, Ciacchi's Toscana Rosso has established itself as one of the finest values in Tuscany, and the 2007 is no exception. Essentially a second selection of barrels from the Ateo and Fabius, the 2007 Toscana Rosso flows with generous, plump fruit and a juicy, irresistible personality. Readers will have a hard time finding a better value in Tuscan wine. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2012.

2008 Bodegas Goulart "The Marshall" Malbec – Mendoza, Argentina

92 Points Wine Enthusiast: "Lush, pure, welcoming and sturdy, with dense black fruit aromas leading to a healthy, racy palate that's full of live-wire blackberry and cassis flavors. Seriously stacked Malbec with no timidity and a finish that oozes layered black fruit, chocolate and complexity. Drink this winter or hold until fall-winter of 2011."

2009 Lockwood Vineyards "Block 7" Pinot Noir - Monterey, California

Best Value – Wine Spectator: This 2009 Pinot Noir has a nice balance of fruit and spice. Aromas of clove and nutmeg accent the strawberry and black cherry tones. As the wine unfolds, it offers flavors of dried cranberry, black tea and toasted French oak. A burst of red fruit complements the middle palate and the wine finishes with balanced tannin.

NV - J. Bookwalter "Subplot" Red - Columbia Valley, Washington

An amazing value this Washington red from the Columbia Valley is a blend of 30% Cabernet Sauvignon, 27% Merlot, 14% Syrah, 13% Malbec, 9% Petite Verdot, 4% Barbera and 3% Cabernet Franc. Intense aromas of choke cherries, red and black currants mixed with a bit of cola and sweet spices. The wine enters the palate sweet, has a medium to broad fruity mid-palate and coats the mouth with flavors of plums, maraschino cherries, baker's chocolate, all spice and nutmeg. The finish is long and elevated by the bright acidity and with time will age beautifully given the concentration and power of the fruit coupled with the natural acidity and tannins in the wine. Best from 2009-2018.

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Under \$25

2010 Josef Leitz “Dragonstone” Riesling – Rheingau, Germany

Extraordinarily aromatic, vigorous wines from a vintner who grows more commanding each vintage. This is the wine that once was called Rudesheimer Drachenstein, and it's the wine David Schildknecht said was the best Riesling value in the world, which is because Johannes sells it to us for much less than it's worth. For a large-production wine this receives the same care in the vineyards and cellar that every Leitz wine receives.

2008 Kiona Cabernet Sauvignon – Red Mountain, Washington

"Kiona's Washington Cabernet Sauvignon is produced by blending from selected vineyards emphasizing good fruit and supple structure. Utilizing entirely free-run juice the wine is often blended with Cabernet Franc and Merlot. A big drink-now cab with big currant and chocolate components. I'd try a sirloin steak, medium rare."

2008 Klinker Brick “Farrah” Syrah – Lodi, California

91 Points – Wine Enthusiast

"From a producer to watch in underrated Lodi, this intense, black cherry, bacon-fat and white peppery Syrah has an almost peat-like whisky aroma at first, very inviting, which then leads into more bacon and pepper that carries through on the palate, balanced by extremely smooth tannins and unexpected elegance. A really cool Syrah to try on its own that'll go very nicely with meaty, wintery foods."

2008 Spann Vineyards “Mo Zin” - Sonoma, California

The "Mo" is Mourvedre, and of course the "Zin" is Zinfandel, but really the name means that this Zinfandel-based wine offers way "mo" than most pure zins! This is a unique blend of complementary varieties that made a terrific wine when blended together. Juicy and rich, powerful, this is all black fruits like plums, blackberries and dark cherries, spicy with a hint of pepper, and smooth tannins.

2007 Woodward Canyon “Nelms Road” Merlot – Walla Walla, WA

89 Points – Wine Enthusiast: The warm 2008 vintage gave beautifully ripe fruit with deep, sweet flavors of dried black fruit, perhaps cassis and cherry. Complex aromas of graham, oak spices, vanilla and crème brûlée integrate, leading to a long generous finish. The wine is dark purple in color. This wine was bottled early to retain fruit and is quite drinkable for a wine so young. While this wine was produced for early enjoyment, it will improve substantially with additional time in bottle. With proper storage this wine should easily age well for five years.

2008 Kaiken Malbec Ultra – Mendoza, Argentina

90 Points - Wine Spectator Of purple color, our Kaiken Ultra Malbec combines notes of figs and wild flowers, finely blended with the elegance of the French oak. On the mouth it is an intense and powerful wine, showing the gentle and sweet tannins, characteristic of the Malbec variety and Kaiken's winemaking style. Its aftertaste showcases violet hints provided by the fruit of our Agrelo vineyard. A bold Malbec that shows a unique balance between alcohol and acidity, product of the wide thermal amplitude found in the highest zones of Mendoza and Uco Valley

2006 Chateau Malmaison – Moulis en Medoc

#84 Wine Spectator Top 100 of 2009: Its special soil yields mellow, fruity wines with a distinctive yet harmonious character and a rich bouquet. The harvest is matured in new and year-old casks that confer smoothness, elegance and finesse – female traits befitting the Baroness Nadine de Rothschild. Malmaison wine is best stored at a constant temperature of 12 to 14 degrees and should be brought up from the cellar several hours before serving. At an ideal temperature of 16 degrees, it provides an outstanding accompaniment for lamb, fowl and small game (partridge or pheasant, for example).



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At any Price:

NV Adami Prosecco Bosca di Gica – Veneto, Italy

91 Points – Robert Parker's / The Wine Advocate: "Straw yellow. Creamy mousse and delicate, long-lasting bead. The nose: Rich, with excellent fruit, releasing scents of yellow apple and peach, with notes of wisteria and acacia blossom. Wonderful balance and elegance complement a pleurably crisp spiciness. The palate: Delicious vein of acidity, displaying crisp, savoury mouthfeel. Generous, lingering flavours nicely mirror the nose and achieve perfect balance. Food recommendations: Ideal as an aperitif, but also a wine to be enjoyed throughout a meal. Excellent with fish, shellfish, and other seafood. Goes well with any light, delicate dish." – Wine Advocate

2008 Miguel Torres "Salmos" – Priorat, Spain

93 Points – James Suckling: From a beautiful, desolate region in eastern Spain, comes this Garnacha, Syrah, Cariñena and Cabernet Sauvignon blend. Intense and voluptuous in style, with toasty new French oak. Spanish reds will enjoy a long-awaited renaissance. This devastatingly attractive red wine from the cult region of Priorat has a heavenly scent of liquorice, woodsmoke, prunes and wild berries. On the palate it is a sensual treat, too.

2007 La Spinetta Langhe Nebbiolo – Piemonte, Italy

91 Points – Robert Parker's / The Wine Advocate: "The 2007 Langhe Nebbiolo is simply beautiful. Medium in body, it floats on the palate with red cherries, flowers, spices and minerals, showing an ethereal, delicate personality that is utterly convincing. The fruit blossoms nicely on the palate, with an attractive roundness that balances that tannins exceptionally well. This entry-level red is the hidden gem in La Spinetta's lineup, and it is highly recommended. La Spinetta's Langhe Nebbiolo is made from young vines in the Staderi vineyard and spends 12 months in French oak. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2017"–Wine Advocate

2008 Tenuta di Biserno "Insoglio del Cinghiale" – Tuscany, Italy

91 Points – Robert Parker's / The Wine Advocate: "The 2008 Insoglio del Cinghiale emerges from the glass with rather assertive aromatics, including grilled herbs, blackberry jam, smoke and scorched earth. Plums melt into wild cherries and an assortment of other dark fruit in this plump, juicy red. Some of the intensity of the fruit tapers off on the mid-palate, leading to a finish that is a touch slender. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2018. " 91 Points The Wine Advocate

90 Points – Wine Spectator: "Lovely blueberry aromas, with hints of meat, follow through to a full body. Offers soft and silky tannins, as well as notes of currant bush and hints of fresh herbs. Better than 2007. Best from 2011 through 2016. 17,300 cases made. " 90 Points - Wine Spectator

2010 Marengo Brachetto d'Acqui – Piemonte, Italy

The history of the Marengo family is made of passion and of vineyards, of a bond with the land and with the territory. As confirmed by the heraldic researches, the Marengo family has always been involved in the agriculture, in the real wine growing, because the best vineyards are always the most difficult to manage. The 2010 Brachetto d'Acqui : *“red with pink tendencies. Typical smooth scent of rose, with sweet flavor of crushed strawberry. It can be drunk during the different parts of the day. It matches well with desserts, strawberries and it can be drunk as aperitif. Grapes: 100% Brachetto”* – Winery

2004 Closa Batllet – Priorat, Spain

93 Points – Wine Advocate: The 2004 Closa Batllet is 67% Carinena, 16% Garnacha, 11% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Merlot, and 2% Syrah aged for 15 months in French and American oak. Inky purple, the wine has a wonderful perfume of scorched earth, truffle, graphite, black cherry, and blueberry. This is followed by an opulent wine with full-body, fleshy blue fruits, and a lengthy finish in a hedonistic package. Drink this forward effort over the next 12-15 years.

2005 Penfold's St. Henri's Shiraz – South Australia

95 points and one of the Wine Spectator's Top 100 Wines of 2009: "Aromatic, complex and silky, slipping in it's gorgeous blackberry, current and plum fruit against a seething background of toast, spice, mineral and loamy earth. The texture is seamless, and the flavors just take off, sailing through the long expressive finish. Best from 2011 through 2020."

2000 Colle Lungo “Campo Cerchi” Chianti Classico Riserva – Tuscany, Italy

92 Points -The Wine Advocate: "The 2000 Chianti Classico Campo Cerchi is Sangiovese made from the estate's best vineyards and aged for 18 months in French oak. This is an elegant, refined beauty that flows with layers of dark cherries, leather, licorice, earthiness, tobacco and French oak. Medium in body, the wine reveals gorgeous length and a long, polished finish. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2019."

2008 Penner Ash Pinot Noir – Willamette Valley, Oregon

91 Points Wine Spectator: "Firm in texture, but lively, offering a cherry glow to the flavor profile against crisp tannins. Finishes with impressive persistence. Best from 2012 through 2016. 4,500 cases made. " **91 Points The Wine Advocate:** "The medium ruby red 2008 Pinot Noir Willamette Valley displays an enticing nose of rose petal, incense, spice box, black cherry, and black raspberry. This leads to a medium-bodied wine with excellent grip, spicy black fruit flavors, good volume, and excellent length. It has the stuffing to evolve for 1-2 years but can be enjoyed now and over the next 6-8 years."

2006 DuNah Russian River Pinot Noir – Sonoma, California

Aromas for the first ten minutes are of forest floor, mushroom and damp earth after a spring rain ... then wild tropical and dark fruits, roasted coffee, and powdered cocoa ... to savory spices, pine duff and rich dark fruits. The palate continues the excitement with luscious, layered textures that show what tremendous Pinot Noir mouth-feel is all about, caressing the tongue with a toffee sweetness and a strength that holds weight, yet at the same time defies gravity. The late palate carries on the richness and texture with a long memorable fade. Decant it for aroma and taste uniformity, or let it breathe in the bottle and follow the changing nature as the bottle level declines. 14.2% alcohol 911 cases produced.

2007 Domaine Serene Evenstad Reserve – Willamette Valley, Oregon

91 Points The Wine Advocate: "The 2007 Pinot Noir Evenstad Reserve is more substantial with an alluring bouquet of toast, spice box, mineral, earth notes, raspberry, and cherry. Mouth-coating on the palate, it has layered savory fruit, ripe tannin, lively acidity, outstanding concentration, and a lengthy, pure finish. Give it 1-2 years of additional cellaring and drink it from 2011 to 2019."

2006 Halleck Vineyard "Hallberg Vineyard" Pinot Noir – Sonoma, California

Beautifully oaked and full of tightly coiled fruit strength, the nose of this clearly very youthful Pinot offers scents of sweet red and dark cherries, panetone, subtle smoky notes, vanilla and hints of white pepper in a focused and intriguing mix. It is tighter on the palate, but just as focused, with Bing cherry, panetone and lots of tobacconist shop spice. Needing three to six years to reveal all its dimensions, it will drink brilliantly within the next twelve to eighteen months. 295 cases produced.

2007 Soter Vineyard "Mineral Springs Ranch" Pinot Noir – Willamette Valley, OR

93 Points - Stephen Tanzer's International Wine Cellar

Robert Parker's Wine Advocate: 92 points - Wine Spectator: 91 points

Vivid red. Highly expressive floral bouquet of black raspberry, potpourri spices and subtle cola. Vibrant and red-fruity on entry, then gains heft and depth in the mid-palate, offering smoky dark berry and musky spice flavors and good tangy lift. Benefits enormously from aeration: I'd let this age for at least another five years. Incidentally, the 1999 Beacon Hill pinot is drinking extremely well right now, showing impressive energy, no rough edges and excellent tangy length.

2008 Merry Edwards Russian River Pinot Noir – Sonoma, California

This dark ruby colored Pinot opens with a ripe black raspberry bouquet with a hint of black pepper and oak. On the palate, this wine is medium bodied, balanced, and loaded with fruit forward flavors. The flavor profile is a spicy black raspberry with notes of pepper and plum. The finish is rather dry and its sticky oak tannins hang around for quite some time. This Pinot from Merry Edwards is very sturdy for a Pinot. I would pair it with shrimp and chicken paella.

2007 Chimney Rock Stag's Leap Cabernet Sauvignon – Napa Valley, CA

94 Points - Wine Enthusiast: The 2007 vintage brought us extraordinary fruit in the Stags Leap District. A dry spring and a warm year in comparison to the previous two vintages greatly reduced the berry size on our property. The result was a harvest which produced wines of great concentration and depth, power and elegance. "This is Chimney Rock's best Stags Leap Cabernet since the 2005, and continues a string of successful vintages. Dry and smooth and silky in the mouth, it's pretty tannic, but very rich, offering waves of cherry, blackberry, blueberry, cocoa and sweet cedar flavors. Absolutely delicious, wonderfully elegant, and should age well for a decade."

2008 Pride Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon – Spring Mountain

94 Points - Stephen Tanzer: "Deep medium ruby. Pure, lively aromas of blackberry, licorice, dark chocolate and smoked meat. Dense and lush, but with lovely energy and lift to the flavors of currant, licorice and herbs. Really lovely fruit here, with suave, ripe acidity and firm but sweet tannins giving the finish a juicy sweetness..."

2007 Trefethen “Oak Knoll” Cabernet Sauvignon – Oak Knoll District

92 Points – Wine Enthusiast / 92 Points – Wine Spectator: Aromas of coffee and black cherry with hints of bay leaf carry through onto the palate lengthening the flavor profile. Firm tannins build alongside flavors of ripe plum fruit and walnut in this classic Napa Cabernet. Serve with beef, lamb and game dishes, especially those incorporating oregano, thyme, mushrooms and black pepper. 2200 cases produced

2007 J. Davies Cabernet Sauvignon – Diamond Mountain District

94 Points – Robert Parker: The 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon is composed of 84% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Malbec, and 4% Petit Verdot. It offers beautifully sweet black and blue fruits (particularly cassis and blueberries) interwoven with hints of Chinese black tea, incense, charcoal, and forest flora. Full-bodied with silky tannins, a terrific texture, and a stunningly long finish, this impressive 2007 can be drunk now and over the next 20-25 years. The Davies family, long-time proprietors of the Schramsberg vineyards in Napa Valley, fashion these wines from Diamond Mountain." **2100 cases produced**

2007 J.R. Carter Cabernet Sauvignon – Diamond Mountain District

93 Points – Wine Enthusiast Magazine: For sheer palate seduction, you can't beat this rich wine. It used to be that Diamond Mountain Cabs weren't drinkable for years because of the tannins. Not so with this beauty. It shows pure, classic Cabernet flavors of blackberries, black currants, cherry-pie filling, violets and sweet, smoky sandalwood, with a distinct minerality. Although it's beautiful now, it should develop in the bottle for a decade. **70 cases produced.**