

HIGHLAND FINE WINE JANUARY 2014 HALF CASE CLUB - WHITE

Nicolas Sauvignon Blanc – Cotes de Gascogne, France (Mixed and White Club) \$10.99

If you've been looking for the perfect simple, inexpensive wine, look no further. This French Sauvignon Blanc hails from Cotes de Gascogne, just southeast of Bordeaux. It's classic. It's crisp. It's refreshing. It's everything that one could ask for in a wonderfully balanced, crisply acidic wine. Ripe peach, pear, and apple flavors fill the mouth. A beautiful floral scent greets the nose. And the palate? Well it's refreshing! Pleasingly dry mineral makes for a superb finish. Enjoy with seafood, shrimp tacos, or a healthy salad!

Gen 5 Chardonnay – Lodi, California (Mixed & White Club) \$11.99

This California Chardonnay is, quite frankly, exceptional. Gen 5 is a certified sustainable winery in Lodi and is committed to Earth-friendly farming and policies. Five generations of the Lange family have been driving the success of the winery; in the 1870s, the great-great-grandparents of the now-owners emigrated from Germany to California. He started a small farm growing watermelons. In 1916, his son expanded the firm by purchasing a grape-ranch. That "ranch" ripened into a winery that now produces the likes of this clean, pure, and poignant chardonnay. It's focused with bright notes of kiwi, guava, pineapple, and prickly pear. There's juicy fruit and a hint of creaminess. The finish is long and bright. So wait not to open it! Pair with smoked turkey or baked salmon.

Le Rocher des Violettes "Touche Mitaine" – Montlouis, France (Mixed & White Club) \$21.99

Just across the river from Vouvrah is the tiny appellation of Montlouis. It's been home to one of the most amazing and compelling wine revivals of modern France. Do I have your attention yet? Thirsty for more? So was Xavier Weisskopf after he earned a degree in viticulture and enology. After working in Chateau de Saint Cosme in Gigondas, he went on to set up his own shop in the Loire Valley where he now farms by plow according to strict organic methods and harvests by hand. This Chenin Blanc has aromas of grilled peach, chalk, and dried green herbs. It's a focused wine with directed tart lemon palate with pineapple and minerality emerging on the finish. It's light to medium bodied and welcomes food! Halibut, trout, or even veal are wonderful pairings.

Amizade Godello – Monterrei, Spain (White Club) \$14.99

Receiving the No. 6 place in a NYT article on Godello wines from Spain and a coveted spot in the "best value" category, this Godello (a special Spanish wine of versatility and neat neutrality) was named Amizade ("friendship" in Galician) by grower Toni Mendez in tribute to his American friends who come to visit. The wine itself is a collaboration between the excellent albariño producer, Do Ferreira, and the American importer, De Maison Selections. Amizade is 100% Godello that grows in soil of sand and slate. The juice is fermented in stainless steel and uses only indigenous yeasts. Its lively aromas are reminiscent of local, wild herbs like thyme and lavender. Light minerality is evident, but the easy floral and citrus notes come through more notably. Serrano ham, squid ink pasta, or Tagliatelle all Carbonara are fantastic accompaniments.

Black Cabra Torrontes – Mendoza, Argentina (White Club) \$11.99

Torrontes is a white Argentine grape variety that produces an undeniable fresh, aromatic wine with moderate acidity, smooth texture and has a distinctive peach and apricot aroma. It bears more than a passing resemblance to the fragrant Muscat with highly aromatic, exuberantly floral with rich citrus aromas abounding. This Black Cabra, imported by VINO del Sol, encourages the drinker to take another whiff as white flowers and honeysuckle are potent on the nose. The flavor is fresh and the finish long. Asian fare or zesty Mexican dishes marry well with this wine.

Domaine du Chardonnay Chablis – Chablis, France (White Club) \$19.99

On a Chablis hill-side in Kimmeridge clay-limestone subsoil this Chardonnay (called "Beunois") goes through alcoholic fermentation by selected yeast. It then experiences controlled malolactic fermentation before fully maturing in tanks with a cold treatment for tartaric precipitation. The nose is fresh while being discrete, and beautiful nuances of honeysuckle and a very present minerality carry through the tasting experience. The Chablis has a pleasant mouth and is tasty through and through. Drink with crawfish or alongside a bed of fried mushrooms.

HIGHLAND FINE WINE JANUARY 2014 HALF CASE CLUB - RED

Altos de Luzon – Jumilla, Spain (Mixed & Red Club) \$16.99

The winegrowing region of Jumilla is located on a high plateau surrounded by mountains in southeastern Spain in the north of the Murcia province. The Mediterranean Sea influences the continental climate. With warm days and cool nights and over 3,000 hours of sunshine annually, the limestone rich soil welcomes this climate and relatively dry conditions. These characteristics result in the production of intensely colored, aromatic wines that are fruity on the palate. This blend is of 50% Monastrell, 25% Tempranillo, and 25% Cabernet Sauvignon sees 12 months in oak. Its powerful, ripe aroma of fruit, spice, and blackberry moves to a smooth, gentle palate of mineral, ripe tannins, good acidity, and a silky, well-balanced texture. Serve with winter stews or eggplant parm!

Domaine Marion Pral “Les Charmes” – Morgon, France (Mixed & Red Club) \$17.99

This wine is a true expression of Morgon. Hand harvested from 30 to 40 year old vines growing in granite soils on hillside vineyards and aged in older French oak barrels for 6 to 8 months, this 100% Gamay is contracted from a northern cru as it takes the lead of other growers in the South. Aromas of black raspberry preserves, bacon, and black pepper are evident. Stimulating on the palate by virtue of its peppery pungency, tart berry skin, and toasted hickory, this wine is complex and invigorating.

Fausti Rosso Piceno “Fausto” – March, Italy (Mixed & Red Club) \$13.99

Fausti uses 100% certified organic grapes in this blend of 60% Montepulciano, 40% Sangiovese. This artesian winery produces only 2,500 cases of wine per year. With color deep and bouquet blossoming with scents of violets and wild cherry with oak undertones, the palate is just as rewarding as the eyes and nose might expect. It's clean, crisp cherry flavors and notes of soft plum and balanced tannins beg for Tagliatele alla Bolognese and grilled sausages. Enjoy this Italian entertainer!

Mastroberardino Mastro Aglianico – Campania, Italy (Red Club) \$14.99

If you've never had the great pleasure of experiencing Aglianico, then ready your palate for something special! Aglianico is a black grape grown in the Basilicata and Campania regions of Italy, but its origin is in Greece. These grapes produce wines that tend to be full-bodied with firm tannins and high acidity, endowing them with good aging potential. The Mastro Aglianico has fruitful aromas of strawberry, cherry, and blackberry; its palate has a soft texture and medium body with flavors likened to its scent. Pair with grilled lamb chops or lemon-roasted branzino.

Velvet Devil Merlot, Columbia Valley, Washington State (Red Club) \$12.99

Charles Smith Wines never disappoint. Charles Smith created The Modernist Project that centers around that centers around the trend that most people generally consume wine without delay. The intent is to create wines to be enjoyed now. The Velvet Devil Merlot is 90% Merlot and 10% Cabernet Sauvignon, and it is ready for consumption! A classic merlot, the aromas of dark cherries, cedar, and pipe tobacco are captivating. Anise, stone, and cherry blossom notes grace the palate. Enjoy alongside beef bourguignon or roast duck!

Dante Robino Bonarda – Mendoza, Argentina (Red Club) \$14.99

This full-bodied Bonarda opens with a nose of tobacco and cedar and then surprises the palate with big, mouth-filling flavors of huckleberries and fig with hints of cedar. Its violet hues are deep red and lively. In black, fruit-nose characteristic of the variety, well-assembled with the aromas of coffee and cocoa, this wine sings. The Dante Robino line is made with grapes from vineyards rooted in traditional department of Lujan de Cuyo, Santa Rosa, and to the foot of the Andes, in the Valle de Uco. Bonarda is a grape of tradition and roots in Argentina, and this particular wine is an exceptional expression of Argentina's wine country. Drink with a rich chili or stew.