



On Wine by Dan Berger
Archive Contact

Values of the year

- Story
- Discussion

Values of the year

Dan Berger Napa Valley Register | Posted: Thursday, December 22, 2011 3:45 pm | (0)
Comments

Font Size:

Default font size

Larger font size

- 1 retweet

- [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends recommend.

The best values I have found in wine over the past year are little discoveries from less than well-known producers, many of them from overseas.

Of course, I had to taste a lot of wine and discard the vast majority to find such treasures, and the following list is by no means complete. There are a lot of wine bargains out there.

Also, some of what follows may be hard to find because they were found months ago and may be sold out in some markets. Most of these wines are in the \$12 and under category and often discounted.

2010 Tercos Torrontes, Mendoza (\$12): Wild spiced aroma sort of like a Gewürztraminer, with hints of marmalade, apricot and other spices. Relatively dry, a wine to try with spicy Asian foods. Imported by Global Vineyard Importers, Berkeley.

2009 Alois Legerer Pinot Grigio, Alto Adige, “Riff” (\$10): From one of the coolest regions of Italy, this bright, steely and lemon/pear-scented wine is a fresh and crisp alternative to so many of the generally overpriced PGs out there. Imported by Dalle Terra, Napa.

Nonvintage Seven, Spain (\$22/3 liters): In an octagon-shaped box, this warm, deeply flavored red wine is a blend of seven varieties based on tempranillo. Blended by brilliant winemaker Adam Richardson for Underdog Wine Merchants.

2008 Cupcake Shiraz, Barossa Valley (\$14): There's a lot of uninteresting syrah out there, but this one is a cut above most in the price range, with broad, rich, dark berry fruit, chocolate and a bit of the earthy, forest floor aroma we associate with the grape. Another Richardson wine.

2009 Matua Valley Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough (\$12): There are a lot of New Zealand sauvignon blancs out there in the \$10 to \$16 range, but few as reliable as this fresh, green-herb, lime peel-scented wine.

2010 Porcupine Ridge Sauvignon Blanc, Boekenhoutskloof (\$10): A delightful South African wine (with a regional name that takes a bit of practice!) with dried herbs, tea, lime, and real freshness.

2010 Marques de Caceres Dry Rosé, Rioja (\$9): Spiced aroma of maraschino cherries and berries and a light, dry, fruity mid-palate. A reliable dry pink wine from Spain.

2010 Seaglass Riesling, Monterey County (\$10): Stylish, fresh apple-scented wine with hints of tea and flowers. This medium-dry Riesling from Trinchero Family is a steal.

2010 Biehler Pere et Fils Rosé, Coteaux d'Aix en Provence (\$12): There is an amazingly fresh aroma in this syrah/grenache blend that's succulent in the entry and dry in the finish.

2010 Rancho Sisquoc Sylvaner, Santa Barbara County (\$10): A delightfully fruity white wine that offers citrus, tea and minerals, a great accompaniment to slightly spicy Asian foods.

2010 Corte Gardoni Bianco di Custoza, Veneto (\$13): This bone-dry white wine from local grapes has an aroma of grapefruit, earth and a lovely crisp, light finish. Imported by Kermit Lynch, Albany.

2010 Fernz Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough (\$12): A rival for the best value NZ SB.

2009 James Oatley Sauvignon Blanc/Semillon, Western Australia, "Tik Tok" (\$12): A truly complex white wine that's getting better as it ages. A wine that, under other circumstances, would sell for \$25 or more.

2009 Newman's Own Merlot, California (\$12): This bargain brand made a spectacular wine in 2009, with near-perfect balance and lovely fruit.

2010 Domaine du Tariquet Chardonnay, Vin de Pays de Côtes de Gascogne (\$11): The only chardonnay in our list, and a lovely rendition leaning on fruit, lemon, tropical fruit, and dried herbs. Nicely balanced.

Wine of the Week

2009 Donelan Cuvée Moriah, Sonoma County (\$40) – For those looking for a superb red wine that’s a splurge, but worth it, this terrific grenache-syrah blend is a winner. Loads of character and a wine that will only improve in the bottle. Chances are the only way to get it is to call the winery: 866-769-7262.

Dan Berger lives in Sonoma County, where he publishes “Vintage Experiences,” a weekly wine newsletter. Write to him at winenut@gmail.com.

Copyright 2011 Napa Valley Register. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.