

GRAPEVINE WINE & SPIRITS'

# drinks

THE MAGAZINE OF FINE WINE, SPIRITS, AND LIVING

WINTER 2011

## Italy's Sparkling Wines

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**PAIRING PERFECTION: CHOCOLATE AND WINE**  
**7 SPICY HOLIDAY COCKTAILS**  
**THE MANY FACES OF BEAUJOLAIS**

# MANAGERS' SELECTIONS



John Fields

**Jordan Vineyards  
Alexander Valley  
Cabernet Sauvignon 2007**



I believe this might be one of the most well-balanced '07 Cabs I've tasted yet. One drink will bring a smile as this amazingly juicy wine exudes dried tobacco, some leather and slate, and big ripe blackberries. Supple and well integrated finish with the tannins

only brushing off your palate; nice, clean, and wonderfully elegant. Guaranteed to bring the "wow" factor. Don't delay, though, supply is limited. **\$56.99**

**Feraud-Brunel Côtes du Rhône-Villages 2009**



A great value red from the Rhône! Many lower price range Rhône's don't deliver as much character and earthiness as the nicer bottlings, but this is a big exception! After a bit of breathing, this delivers tons of earth and "funk" that I've grown

to enjoy from most French reds. It also delivers powerful fruit and nice acidity. This is 70% old vine Grenache and 30% Syrah. Great dark fruit flavors and a peppery finish. Another amazing example of a great quality entry-level Rhône red that will be an amazing complement to your holiday fare. *Wine Spectator*, 91 points. **\$22.99**



Dan Dixon

**M. Chapoutier "Petite Ruche"  
Crozes-Hermitage 2008**



This Syrah by the well-known Rhône winemaker M. Chapoutier was an interesting bottle with surprises around every corner. It had leather and a briny quality on the nose followed by pine and hints of anise on the palate. It finished

with a subtle dryness and would make a great match to grilled meat. **\$28.99**

**Chateau Bel Air  
Bordeaux 2009**



This was a great little bottle of Bordeaux that could be appreciated by experienced wine drinkers and those that are new to Bordeaux wines. This blend of Cabernet, Merlot, and Cabernet Franc started with tart blackberries on

the nose with hints of toast. It was full bodied and had subtle tannins. The subtle cherry on the palate was tempered by oak. It had great acidity, fit for a juicy rib eye, and finished dry. *Salud!* **\$16.99**



Dawn Candelore

**Argyle Willamette Valley  
Pinot Noir 2009**



Argyle is one of the oldest and best-known vineyards in Oregon's acclaimed Willamette Valley AVA. This entry-level Pinot Noir is a stellar example of the grapes grown in this region! The initial aromas show classic black cherry notes and a

touch of smokiness. There is an ever-present spice from the first sip through the finish. A surprisingly full-bodied Pinot that is rich in fruit flavors with some nice earthiness presenting itself mid-palate and a dark fruit ending that lasts. It will definitely be a hit this holiday season! **\$22.99**

**JFJ Almond Sparkling**



I am always looking for an out-of-the-ordinary bottle to celebrate the holidays and this is a great alternative for your toasts this party season. This California sparkler displays rich aromas of almonds and apples.

There is a nice balance of tart and sweet between the sparkling and almond flavors that carries through on the finish. Great on its own or perfect for any sparkling cocktails. **\$9.99**



Josh Mulholland

**B.R. Cohn 2008  
Cabernet Sauvignon  
Olive Hill Estate Vineyard**



This comes from the 90 acres that surround the winery founded by Bruce Cohn in 1984. Aged 24 months in French Oak barrels. One sip brings a light cooling menthol that bursts open into plum, raspberry, and a nice "rainy" sweetness. It finishes in dry chocolate

and oak, and is an amazing value for such a great quality, single vineyard offering of California Cabernet. It was a bit tight right out of the bottle, but showed its stuff after 30-45 minutes in a decanter! **\$59.99**

**Patrick Piuze  
Petit Chablis 2009**



Patrick Piuze worked for famed Burgundian producer Olivier Lafflaive while in training as a wine maker. He began making his own wine in 2008, and this Petite Chablis (Chardonnay) is a great introduction to this budding winemaker's talents.

This is full of pear and tart apple. On the finish, it gets quite floral rounding out in more of the great crisp pear notes. An excellent, bright, refreshing white and a reasonable sticker price compared to many of the big names in Chablis gracing our shelves. **\$21.99**

# STAFF SELECTIONS



Rosa Devoe

## Broadside Proprietary Red Printer's Alley 2009



This is truly a unique wine made specifically for the Nashville market. Broadside Proprietary Red is a blend of mostly Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, so if you favor fuller bodied, yet easy to drink wines, this one is for you. It

holds a variety of flavors such as juicy currants and raspberries with a spicy finish of cloves and allspice. It pairs well with BBQ, other spicy southern dishes, or by itself on a cold Nashville winter night. **\$19.99**

## Joseph Carr Cabernet Sauvignon 2009



This is one of my favorite wines! You'll love this full-bodied, approachable wine that pairs with a variety of foods and can also be enjoyed on its own. This smooth, full-bodied Napa County Cabernet has an initial scent

of smoke, leather, and dark currants but contradicts itself in a flavor full of plumb, vanilla, cherry, and cocoa. Enjoy on a cold night alone or sipping with family during a holiday meal. I guarantee everyone will love this wine. **\$24.99**



Adam Partin

## Layer Cake Shiraz 2009



Produced in South Australia this wine is 100% Shiraz. In the glass it has a dark inky red color with a fruity nose of blackberry and other dark fruits. The fruit continues to the palate also with hints of dark chocolate and tobacco. It has a semi-dry finish

with notes of spice and still the dark chocolate. A smooth overall taste and body makes this one of my favorite Shiraz. **\$16.99**

## Layer Cake Primitivo (a.k.a. Zinfandel) 2008



This wine is 100% Primitivo from the boot-heel region of Italy. Some of the vines in this region date back to Roman times. Primitivo vines are genetically identical to Zinfandel vines. Italy's strict rules on wine labels dictate that even though

they are the same they must be labeled differently. This wine has a dark ruby color with a nose of dark fruits with earthy and spicy hints. The dark fruit follows onto the palate with a jammy, fruity flavor accented by the spiciness of a true Zinfandel. The finish is dry and long lasting. **\$17.99**



Zeb Barron

## Solane Valpolicella Ripasso 2008



The key word is *ripasso* or "pass over," since this has been passed over the Amarone grape. Why is that so special? Amarone wines are highly prized and can range from \$30 to \$400 depending on the year. Nice, right? Fantastic food wine! I had

garlic roast with potatoes, onions, and carrots. Not your traditional Italian fare but this paired nicely. At first sip the delicate tannins and nice acidity were pleasant. With notes of chocolate, leather, and a hint of cherries and earthiness this wine prepared me for my next bite. It's not going to please everyone but no one will be disappointed they tried it. **\$14.99**

## R Collection Field Blend 2009



You don't have to spend a lot these days to get good juice. The state of the economy has made it so we can enjoy quality wines at affordable prices. This is a great blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah, Petite Sirah, Zinfandel, Cabernet Franc, and Petit

Verdot. It's beautifully smooth and fruity and goes down easy. Black cherries, dark chocolate, pepper, wood, and tobacco leaves on the palate and finish. A daily drinker you won't tire of. **\$11.99**



Rich Stevens

## Quasar Gran Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon 2008



This Cab from Chile did not disappoint after a 93 Gold Medal rating from the BTI World Wine Championship. It starts with an earthy, peppery nose, hits you with a good healthy dose of tannins, and lingers with dark currant flavors. Enjoy this with richly seasoned red meats, stews, or a sharp cheese. **\$12.99**

## Four Vines Paso Robles Port 2007



This is the time of year that just calls for rich decadent treats like a good port to wind down a cool evening. Four Vines out of Paso Robles, California, known for their Zinfandel juice, has produced a port that tastes more like a super rich Zin than a typical Brandy-influenced ruby. Partner this with anything chocolate for a delicious dessert affair. **\$19.99**

# STAFF SELECTIONS



Jill Wildermuth

## Salvatore Principe Prosecco NV



Like its more famous sibling, Champagne, this sparkling wine is a perfect addition to your holiday table. However, unlike Champagne, this Prosecco has a refinement and delicacy that makes it stand out from the growing crowd of

sparkling wines. The first taste yields an explosion of lemon, vanilla, and tart citrus with a gentle bubbly sensation that doesn't distract from the flavors. Don't be fooled by the fruit—this is extra dry with a finish that never ends. Stony minerality balances the dryness nicely. As I tasted this several times over a few hours, I found a delicate flavor of the residual sugars that helped soften the bite of lemon and mineral. A light flavor of straw and grass played on the sugars for a unique combination that I found as pleasant as it was unusual. Pair with seafood, chicken, pasta, mushrooms, and anything salty, and add it to your cellar as your go-to holiday bubbly. **\$13.99**

## Bug Juice Moscato d'Asti 2010



For those of you who dread a New Year's toast with Champagne so dry it hurts your teeth, worry no more. Direct from the hills of Piedmont, Italy comes this delightfully bubbly Moscato di Asti. I found this to be pleasantly sweet without

the cloying mouthfeel of many overly-sweet wines we have come to associate with the Asti region. First, you'll notice the aromas. A full burst of sweet fruit and cool green apple lead into a first taste that's loaded with peaches, oranges, and strawberries. A second taste will yield a lightly grassy flavor and hints of mint that keep the fruitiness in check nicely. Through a dinner or evening, the wine will open up even more with a wider range of green fruit, from kiwi to melon to apple, then settle on a profile of oranges and apricots. This is a sipping wine perfect for any time of year, and a wonderful treat to have at the holidays. Pair with a special dessert or a pre-dinner fruit and cheese plate. **\$22.99**



Caitlin Duffy

## Victor Hugo Hunchback 2008



With its rich fruity aroma of plums and dark berries, this is a wine meant to be savored. The initial crisp taste of tannins transitions seamlessly into a soft, lingering finish with a hint of spice. This 2008 red blend is fairly complex so letting it breathe for a while after

uncorking only makes it better. It also ages well; I enjoyed it just as much on the second night as I did on the first! Pairs well with red meats, tomato-based pasta sauces, and cheeses. **\$16.99**

## Quasar Reserva Carmenère 2009



With winter approaching, I like wines that warm me up on cold nights and this might be my new favorite. Its uniqueness is evident from the moment you pour the first glass, as the virtually opaque crimson hue and sharp, peppery bouquet are impossible

to miss. Carmenères are typically smoky and spicy and Quasar's 2009 vintage is no exception, adding a hint of fruit and chocolate on the finish. This goes well with red meats but truly shines with spicy dishes! (Be sure to drink this soon after opening; I found it lost some of the peppery quality on the second night.) **\$14.99**



Charlie Caligdong

## Robert Renolds Zinfandel 2007



This old-vine Zin is amazingly robust. A nice smokiness hits the palate. Then you'll find fruit, spice, and dark chocolate. A great wine for the price, and it will definitely be a crowd pleaser if you're looking for something to bring home for the holidays. **\$11.99**

## Coppola Votre Sainte California Pinot Noir 2010



This is another great wine from Francis Coppola. It comes from California, and is made in the classic French style using Burgundian barrels. It ages in the barrels for ten months, and it definitely shows with a nice smokiness. The wine is elegantly light, flavorful, and aromatic. Upon your sip you'll taste cinnamon and cloves with vibrant cherries and cranberries on the lasting finish. The wine is well-balanced and versatile. It would pair well with poultry or a nice warm soup. **\$14.99**

# APPETIZING HOLIDAYS

Pair easy-to-make starters and wine for a delicious holiday cocktail party.



By Dan Dixon

The last quarter of the year brings us together. We get together and dress up in scary costumes and eat candy. We get together and eat, or I should say, overeat roasted bird stuffed with bread. We get together and decorate the heck out of our houses and celebrate many religious and secular occasions. But the end of the year also provides us with many opportunities to gather and share our fellowship in that most traditional of occasions—the cocktail party. My column this issue gives homage to those gatherings. I haven't included any cocktail recipes but I do have some good appetizers to go with them and wines to match. I hope that you find them as pleasant as the company you will no doubt be sharing at some upcoming social event. Or maybe more pleasant, depends upon the company.

The first appetizer, **fried eggplant**, could be served alone or as a side dish to a meal. It's fairly substantial, but it's simple to make and good. You make them by thinly slicing eggplant and dredging the slices in seasoned flour, dipping them in beaten egg, and then coating them in a mixture of breadcrumbs and grated Parmesan. Fry them in olive oil

until golden on each side. When they have cooled off a bit, spread some ricotta cheese on top of them and top that with chopped tomatoes that have been tossed with a little balsamic vinegar and olive oil. Top with shredded basil.

The second appetizer, **bacon-wrapped asparagus**, is even easier but makes a great presentation. You simply wrap about a half slice of bacon around trimmed asparagus. To trim the asparagus, just bend one piece until it snaps. Cut the rest of the bunch to the same length. Put in a preheated 400°F oven for 20 minutes or until the bacon is cooked.

Finally, there is the **crispy pancetta topped with goat cheese and pear**. This is one of my favorites; it is easy to make and delicious. Caution: these babies are addictive. Take 16 slices of pancetta and put them in a 400°F oven for 10 to 15 minutes until they are crispy. Just make sure to keep an eye on them. Drain them on paper towels and let cool. Smear some goat cheese on top of the pancetta and then top with a slice of pear. Again, simple, but amazing.

For the wines I chose two of my standard before-dinner selections—Chardonnay and sparkling wine. The Chardonnay is a Burgundian wine from the Mâcon area of Vergisson. The sparkling wine was actually from the Vouvray region in the Loire Valley in

France. They were both awesome with the appetizers but for different reasons.

The Chardonnay, **Rey Mâcon Vergisson "La Roche" 2009**, had pear and spice on the nose. It had notes of vanilla and oak on the palate and finished lush, but with a bit of minerality. It was great with the appetizers, especially the pancetta bites. Its fruity and floral qualities complemented the pear and contrasted with the salty pancetta and goat cheese. It also went well with the bacon-wrapped asparagus for the same reason.

The sparkling wine was a great little surprise from Vouvray—**Margalleau Vouvray Brut 2007**. Vouvray produces some great little wines made from the Chenin Blanc grape. This was the first sparkling version that I have had, however. It had floral aromas with apple and hints of yeast. There was vanilla and pear on the palate. It finished fruity and light. This was great with the eggplant appetizer but matched very well with the other two apps as well.

If you find yourself suddenly responsible for hosting a cocktail party at the end of the year—and since you are reading this I am guessing you will—try out these simple appetizers. They are all very tasty and come together quickly. Don't forget the wines to match the food and the other cocktails you'll be serving. Enjoy! 🍷



FRIED EGGPLANT



BACON-WRAPPED ASPARAGUS

# THE SPIRIT REVIEW

Spirit Manager, Josh Mulholland, John Fields, Dawn Candelore, Adam Partin, and Jill Wildermuth's standout selections!

## Angel's Envy Kentucky Straight Bourbon



Maker Lincoln Henderson is the former distillery manager at Woodford Reserve and Old Forester Bourbon. Louisville Distilling Company is his new distillery and Angel's Envy his

first product. It's aged from five to seven years then "finished" in large port barrels for three to six months. This whiskey has fresh cut oak and sweet maple on the nose. The palate has sweet corn, raisin, and dries up towards the finish of black pepper and allspice. It gets better with each glass so be careful! —Josh Mulholland **\$49.99**

## Prichards Tennessee Rye Whiskey



The newest release from our friends down in Kelso, TN. In addition to some oak notes, this rye has some fruitiness to the nose and palate and finishes

semi-dry compared to many "ryes." McIntosh apples and toasty oak round out the lingering finish on this great addition to the Prichard's product mix. If you haven't tried all the quality offerings from this small Tennessee distiller, then you're just missing out. This is a great, mellow rye to add to your collection. —J.M. **\$44.99**

## Glen Grant 10yr Single Malt Scotch Whisky



Recently released into Tennessee, this affordable Speyside single malt has a nose similar to a nice Madeira. Light-bodied and crisp, it tastes of nuts, dried fruits, apple pie and crust, almonds, and hazelnuts lead into a great tight finish. If you want to

step out a bit, we also have in stock its big brother, the 16yr Glen Grant. Its flavors are similar to the 10yr, but much more intense. Either one would be a great addition to my stocking or under my tree! Hint! —J.M. **\$39.99**

## Jefferson's 10yr Straight Rye Whiskey



A dried, rye grain and maple syrup smell awaken your senses on this great value rye. On the palate, it's quite

spicy with some crisp lemon peel rounding out what is a great, smooth finish for an inexpensive 94-proof, rye whiskey. The oak and level of sweetness (or lack thereof) are excellently balanced making this a superb gift for your whiskey fan in the family this winter. *Salud!* —J.M. **\$39.99**

## The Black Grouse Blended Scotch Whisky



The Black Grouse is a brand new addition to the Famous Grouse brand of blended Scotches. This whisky is dark, toasty, and more full-flavored than their flagship, well-known offering. The Black Grouse is produced with heavy peated Islay malt and smoke giving

it a decidedly more powerful nose and taste. It tastes of campfire smoke, caramel, and toasty oak, but has a bit more subdued finish for an Islay whisky. This is a nice brand addition to a steady favorite at the Grapevine! —John Fields **\$29.99**

## Chateau de Saint Aubin Bas-Armagnac Reserve



This Armagnac is truly unique and very historic in its origins. It is created in the Bas-Armagnac region of France using Ugni Blanc grapes and distilled in a way that dates back to the middle ages. Distillation takes place on the property of Chateau de St. Aubin, a property dating back

to 1296. After filling to casks, this is placed on ships and toured around the world for three months, which exposes the contents to different temperatures and humidity lending flavors like nothing else can. This is one of the best Armagnacs on the market; it's very smooth with a refined flavor profile. It would make a great holiday gift for the "man who has everything." —Adam Partin **\$71.99**

## Dr. McGillicuddy's Apple Pie Schnapps



Nothing says cool weather more than apples! Dr. McGillicuddy's new Apple Pie Schnapps is available just in time for the holiday party season. This easy drinking spirit can be

enjoyed on its own, as an alternative addition to your martinis and mixed drinks, or in your own special concoction created for your gatherings with friends and family. —Dawn Candelore **\$14.99**



## Oream Strawberry and Peach Liqueurs

Light and delicate without the heavy alcohol taste. The silky smooth strawberry is balanced with sweetness and a small tart kick of vodka. The peach will remind you of summer—flavorful and bright, but minus cloying sugar of many other fruit liqueurs. Sip these chilled or on the rocks with a mint leaf. Mix the strawberry with Godiva Chocolate or White Chocolate for a smooth dessert drink, or mix with a splash of coconut vodka for a fun cocktail. Combine the peach with spiced rum and amaretto, or add with ginger liqueur or pure coconut water and get a taste of the exotic. 25 proof. —Jill Wildermuth **\$21.99** 375ml • **\$29.99** 750ml

# THE GRAPEVINE BEER COMMITTEE

Enjoy these handpicked selections from Spirit Manager Josh Mulholland, John Fields, Charlie Caligdong, and Adam Partin that are perfect for the season.



## VICTORY STORM KING IMPERIAL STOUT

Now this is one massive stout. Be afraid! The nose is full of fresh hops and citrus with light roasted coffee beans. Bitter chocolate, coffee, and powerful hops control on the palate and it is amazingly full flavored with a great lingering finish. Enough said—this is my new favorite beer! —Josh Mulholland **\$11.99** 6pk



## GUINNESS FOREIGN EXTRA STOUT

Finally, a high-gravity (high alcohol) addition is now available from the famed Irish stout producer. It is quite similar to its predecessor, but has a much more powerful nose of roasted coffee and thick, dark chocolate. It is still that deep, dark black color in the glass with a brown or golden head that thickens up just enough to leave you a nice “Guinness-stache” on your first sips. You can only slightly detect the additional alcohol, but the beer is a bit “stickier” than traditional Guinness. It still delivers the great flavors of toasted almonds, more roasted coffee, dark chocolate, and a hint of hoppy brown sugar. If you are a fan of Guinness, then Christmas has come early folks! Cheers! —John Fields **\$9.99** 4pk



## MEANTIME LONDON PORTER

Brewed in London, England this porter is based on a recipe from 1750. It has a classic bottle shape with a traditional label and is sealed with a cork. It has a dark brown, almost red, color in the glass with a medium head. This porter has a nose of toasted malt, dark chocolate truffles with a slight nuttiness. The nuttiness follows to the palate as do the dark chocolate truffles. The finish is long and only slightly bitter with hints of the toasted malt and tobacco. A nice medium body makes this porter a good everyday choice. —Adam Partin **\$10.99** 750ml



## NAPA SMITH LOST DOG

This is a very unique beer from the Napa Valley region. They believe their beers should be enjoyed with certain foods, as wine is. As you pour it you’ll notice its burnt orange color. This beer has a great rich and smooth flavor, with a crisp hoppy finish. It is very drinkable and has definitely become a new favorite of mine. —Charlie Caligdong **\$9.99** 4pk



## NAPA SMITH ORGANIC IPA

The organic IPA has a traditional bold malty flavor. It’s slightly sweet and mellow. On the finish you get grapefruit and fresh hops. Enjoy ice cold with buffalo wings and aged blue cheese. —C.C. **\$9.99** 4pk