

Spec'ssm TWELVE

for October
of 2009

YOU LOVE GREAT WINE ... but you also want some "everyday value wines" that taste really good. So do I. I love great wine, but \$15 is about my limit for my *everyday drinking wines*. To me, *value* mean a wine tastes like it costs more than it does and *everyday drinking* means wine that goes well with my life and the sorts of food I eat on a daily basis. Here are my twelve everyday value picks for October 2009, all priced under \$15.

- Bear Dalton, Spec's Fine Wine Buyer

VARICHON & CLERC Blanc de Blancs Brut, France, NV
12x750ml \$12.74 \$143.47
Tech: 12% Alc. Made utilizing the Champagne process from a mix of white grapes grown in eastern France in and around Savoie. Sensory: Varichon & Clerc offers a fresh yeasty nose that leads to good sweet fruit offering hints of lime, pear, and apple. With its clean, dry finish and fine mousse, it is very refreshing. Yum. This is one of my perennial personal favorite everyday-priced sparklers. **Really Fine.** BS: 90VHR

PEGOVINO Vin de Pays d'Oc 2006
12x750ml \$10.99 \$123.71
Tech: 13.5% Alc. 50% Grenache and 50% Syrah. Sensory: Medium red-deep red in color with good legs; dry, medium-to-full-bodied with balanced acidity and medium plus phenolics. Offers chewy, dusty, juicy, dark red & black fruit with dusty earth and accents of subtle garrigue, black pepper, and a hint of coffee grounds. Has a long, lively finish. Is elegant but a bit rustic; quite tasty. Fine. BS: 88+HR

LOOSEN "Dr. L" Riesling, Mosel, 2008
12x750ml \$13.65 \$153.72
Tech: 8.5% Alc. 100% Riesling mainly from growers in Bernkastel, Wehlen and Graach with some Brauneberger and Zelting and others. Sensory: Pale straw with green highlights, bright and clear; medium light-bodied with crisp acidity. Lovely apple and lime Riesling with lots of minerals and a hint of peach. Super fresh and alive in the mouth. Fine. BS: 89+VHR.

CA' MOMI Chardonnay, Sonoma County, 2007
12x750ml \$14.98 \$167.11
Tech: 13.5% Alc. 100% Chardonnay barrel-fermented with full malolactic fermentation and sur-lie aging for 6 months in medium toast French oak barrels (90% new). Sensory: straw colored, bright and clear with good legs; dry, medium-bodied with balanced acidity and very light phenolics. Elegant and restrained but still juicy with fresh yellow & white fruit offering lime, lemon, pear peel, and green pear with mineral earth and hint of mushroom along with subtle French oak and subtle floral notes. Refreshing, very long, lively finish. Bright, integrated, well focused. Pure and delicious; elegant. Great beam of minerality throughout. Excellent. BS: 91.

GRUET Chardonnay, New Mexico, 2006
12x750ml \$11.83 \$133.22
Tech: 13% Alc. 100% Chardonnay barrel fermented and aged 6 months in French oak (50% new) with no malo-lactic. Sensory: yellow straw in color, bright and clear with well formed legs; medium-bodied with balanced acidity and long finish. This is an earthy rich focused Chardonnay with a hint of iodine. Supple. Almost salty with minerals. Citrus and tree fruit with a bit of mushroom terroir and a stripe of oak. Try it with crab or pork dishes. Fine. BS: 89HR.

MICHEL DUTOIR Pouilly Fuisse La Roche 2007
12x750ml \$14.99 \$169.24
Tech: 12.5% Alc. 100% Chardonnay with barrel fermentation and full malolactic aged in French oak barrels (25% new). Sensory: Offers smooth pear and tropical fruit with a hint of banana, along with notes of vanilla, buttery oak, and a creamy richness. Although rich, it has plenty of acidity to keep it balanced and fresh. It is a classic Pouilly Fuisse at a value price. Fine. BS: 89HR

Special for SPEC's KEY holders:

Buy a mixed case consisting of one 750ml bottle of each of the TWELVE for October 2009 selections for only \$137.00, a savings of \$9.34 over SPEC's already low cash bottle price. This special price is good through 10/31/09. UPC: 00000656306

BOGLE Petite Sirah, California, 2007
12x750ml \$9.29 \$103.41
Tech: 13.5% Alc. 100% Petite Sirah from Lodi and Clarksburg. Sensory: This chunky juicy red is full of black berry, boysenberry, and blueberry fruit with notes of black pepper, warm spice, and earth. It is long, chewy, ripe, and delicious. Classic Petite Sirah and a consistent best buy. Really Fine. Bear's Score: 90 points.

MURPHY GOODE Wild Card Claret, Alexander Valley, 2004
12x750ml \$12.99 \$146.40
Tech: 13.5% Alc. 53% Merlot, 37% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Cabernet Franc, and 4% Petite Verdot aged 14 months in French and American oak barrels (20% new). Tasting Note: Purple in color, bright and clear with well formed legs; dry, medium full-bodied with balanced acidity and chewy phenolics. Rustic, chewy, fresh, and delicious with mostly black fruit and lots of character. Notes of pepper and spice with some tobacco nuance. Long, juicy-chewy, and full of flavor. Fine. BS: 88+.

KENDALL JACKSON Grand Reserve Pinot Gris, California, 2008
12x750ml \$14.95 \$168.36
Tech: 13.5% Alc. 100% Pinot Gris (82% Monterey Co., 10% Lake Co., 5% Russian River, and 3% Mendocino Co.) fermented in stainless steel tanks and aged briefly in seasoned French oak barrels. Sensory: Straw in color with a hint of copper, bright and clear with good legs, medium-bodied with fresh acidity and very light phenolics (which is typical for Pinot Gris). Bright with fresh lime and green pear fruit anchored with mineraly terroir. Long, clean finish; fresh and lively. Really Very Good. BS: 87+HR

IRONSTONE Cabernet Franc Lodi 2006
12x750ml \$9.74 \$108.27
Tech: 13.5% Alc. 96% Cabernet Franc and 4% Cabernet Sauvignon aged 12 months in 50% American and 50% French Oak Barrels (10% new barrels). Sensory: Red-black in color with well formed legs; dry, medium-to-full-bodied with balanced acidity and slightly chewy phenolics. This Claret-weight winner offers juicy red & black with mineraly-dusty-earthly terroir; and accents of tobacco, mint, cigar box, black flowers and a subtle coffee grounds note. Long finish; elegant, integrated, lovely-in-the-mouth. Fine. BS: 89+VHR.

SONALTO Rose, Beiras (Portugal), NV
12x750ml \$5.20 \$58.26
Tech: 11% Alc. A blend of 50% Bags and 50% Tinta Roriz (Tempranillo) Sensory: Think of this as a companion wine to Sonalato Vinho Verde (SPEC's best-selling Vinho Verde). Like the Vinho Verde, it is fresh, lively, fruit driven, and dry. As it is a Rose, the fruit is a mix of fresh berry with notes of citrus and mineral. It finishes fresh and clean; ideal pink wine for a simple picnic. Very Good. **SPEC's Score: 86VHR**

Domaine de l'ESPIGOUETTE Vieilles Vignes, Cotes du Rhone, 2007
12x750ml \$14.99 \$168.80
Tech: 14% Alcohol. 70% Grenache, 10% Syrah, and the final 20% is a mix of Mourvedre, Carignan & Cinsault all from 50 yr. old vines next to Plan de Dieu. Aged 15 months in Concrete and Stainless Steel tanks (no oak). Sensory: Medium purple in color with good legs; dry, medium full-bodied with balanced acidity and medium plus phenolics. Fresh and forward with spicy ripe black & red fruit with earthy terroir; accents of sweet spice, black pepper, and subtle garrigue. Long, clean finish; fresh, a bit rustic but still focused and bright. Great with braised dishes. Fine. BS: 89+VHR.

