

Spec's sm TWELVE

for JANUARY
of 2010

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 is my selection of the best of the Twelves of 2009**, all priced under \$15.

- Bear Dalton, Spec's Fine Wine Buyer

CA de CALLE Reserva, Luján de Cuyo - Mendoza, 2008

12x750ml \$14.56 \$163.97

Tech: 13.9% Alcohol. A blend of 75% Malbec, 20% Tempranillo, and 5% Syrah fermented using pump-over and aged 12 months in all French oak barrels (33% new). Sensory: Purple-red-black in color with well formed legs - stains the glass. Dry, full-bodied with balanced acidity and chewy phenolics. Dusty, dark, dense, black & red fruit with mineral earth; dusty with hint of coffee grounds along with dusty spicy oak and accents of cocoa, coffee, black pepper, dark, spice; a bit meaty. Very long finish. Focused and ripe; alive-in-the-mouth. Still very tight and young but opens nicely with lots of swirling. Fresher level of acidity than you'd expect from a Malbec blend. Would benefit from a rough decanting. Excellent. BS: 91+. (Winner of the "Top Argentine Wine" in the 2010 Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo International Wine Competition.)

NAPA LANDING Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, California, 2006

12x750ml \$10.99 \$123.71

Tech: 13.3% Alcohol. A blend of 86% Cabernet Sauvignon, 6% Ruby Cabernet, 2% Segalin, and 6% other varietals aged 6 months American Oak. Sensory: Red-black in color with well formed legs; dry, medium full-bodied with balanced acidity and lightly chewy phenolics. Offers lively juicy red & black fruit with a lot of Cabernet character along with mineral-dusty earth and accents of tobacco, cigar box, and black pepper. Long Finish. Really Very Good. BS: 87. (Winner of the "Top Value Wine" award in the 2010 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo International Wine Competition.)

SELBACH Riesling QbA, Mosel, 2008

12x1Liter \$13.59 \$152.99

Tech: 10% Alc. 100% Middle Mosel Riesling fermented in stainless steel tanks with no malolactic. Sensory: Pale straw in color, day-bright and clear with green highlights and good legs; semi-sweet, light-bodied with crisp acidity. It tastes and smells like fresh, crisp, refreshing, adult apple juice. There is a touch of mineral and floral underlying the juicy apple fruit followed by a hint of peach and citrus. Long & delicious, alive with sweet fruit and flavor but finishes clean. This is how basic Mosel Riesling should taste. Fine. BS: 88VHR.

SMYTHE & RENFIELD Pinot Noir, Marlborough - New Zealand, 2008

12x750ml \$14.99 \$167.83

Technical Note: 12.5% Alcohol. 100% Pinot Noir. Fermented in open tops with punchdowns. Sensory Analysis: garnet in color, bright and clear with good legs; dry, medium light-bodied with fresh acidity; light phenolics and hints of earth and gravel. Tasting Note: Light, elegant, subtle, freshly balanced Pinot offering red cherry and hints of red berry fruit with notes of black pepper and subtle cola. Alive in the mouth. Try it with salmon, fowl, pork, or veal dishes. Really Fine. BS: 91VHR.

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: 91VHR.

A-TO-Z Pinot Gris, Willamette Valley, 2007

12x750ml \$12.73 \$143.33

Tech: 13.5% Alcohol. 100% Pinot Gris fermented and aged in stainless steel for 4 months with no malolactic. Sensory: Straw in color with copper highlights, bright and clear with well formed legs; dry, medium light-bodied with fresh acidity and very light phenolics. Juicy and lively with fresh pear fruit, lime and mineral; alive in the mouth. YUM. Excellent. BS: 91.

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

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. BS: 90.

La PLANTA (Arzuaga), Ribera del Duero, 2007

12x750ml \$12.75 \$142.80

Tech: 13.5% Alcohol. 100% Tempranillo aged 6 months in a mix of French and American oak barrels. Sensory: deep purple in color with well formed legs; dry, medium-to-full-bodied with balanced acidity and moderately chewy phenolics. Dark with dusty juicy spicy black & red fruit, earthy rich terroir, and accents of black pepper, chocolate, coffee, savory spice, smokey meat, and leather. Very long finish. Rustic, robust, satisfying; quite tasty. Really Fine. BS: 90.

JRE Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa Valley, 2006

12x750ml \$14.99 \$167.83

Texan John Eppler assembled this 14.4% alcohol 100% Cabernet Sauvignon blend offering mostly black cherry berry fruit accented with notes of tobacco and dusty gravel with a hint of pencil shavings and black pepper. It is dark purple with fine legs, bright and almost opaque with a full body, blanced acidity, and chewy phenolics. Perfect with a grilled top sirloin. Fine. BS:90HR.

d'ARENBERG Stump Jump Shiraz, McLaren Vale, 2008

12x750ml \$10.08 \$112.32

100% Shiraz. Deep red-purple in color, slightly dull and slightly hazy with well formed legs; dry, medium-full-bodied with balanced acidity and chewy phenolics. Offers dusty fresh lively juicy black & red berry fruit with notes of raspberry, cherry, and red currant, earthy coffee grounds terroir, and accents of black & white pepper, cedar, red flowers, and a hint of bacon fat. Long, clean, refreshing finish; Although it takes a few minutes to really open up, it is complete and quite delicious. Lovely-in-the-mouth. Really Fine. BS: 90VHR.

HAHN Meritage, Central Coast, 2007

12x750ml \$13.43 \$151.23

This 14.5% alcohol blend of 31% Merlot, 31% Cabernet Sauvignon, 17% Petit Verdot, 12% Malbec, and 9% Cabernet Franc was fermented in pumpover tanks and aged all French oak barrels (60% new). It shows a dark red-purple color with good legs and is bright and medium clear; dry, medium-full-bodied with balanced acidity and moderately chewy phenolics. The result is a juicy fresh red and black fruit oriented wine with dusty gravelly earth, present oak, and notes of tobacco, black pepper, and exotic spice. Long and lively, it has a medium rich feel. Quite tasty. Really Fine. BS: 90HR.

Special for SPEC's KEY holders:

Buy a mixed case consisting of one 750ml bottle of each of the TWELVE for January 2010 selections for only **\$145.00**, a savings of \$10.12 over SPEC's already low cash bottle price. This special price is good through 02/04/10. UPC: 00000656306

