

WEIMAX BEST BUYS**WEIMAX BEST BUYS**

Having five decades' worth of experience in tasting and evaluating wines, we have a pretty good idea when it comes to identifying good value. There are some expensive wines we consider to be "good values," but our Best Buys list spotlights wines you can open any day of the week without breaking the bank. Here's the current roster...

Gerald Ellen John Ryan

DREYER Sonoma CHARDONNAY SALE \$10.99

Most "everyday" Chardonnays are made at the direction of a marketing department, so the wines are made cutting corners...artificial oak, filler varieties to hit a low price point and some sweetness.

Not this one! It's made from Sonoma fruit and matured in real oak barrels...

GREENSTONE POINT 2016 New Zealand PINOT NOIR SALE \$9.99

Usually when customers say they're looking for a good ten-buck Pinot Noir we respond with "Me too!" But here's a delicious smooth, cherryish red that even has a touch of oak. Remarkable.

FILIPPO GALLINO NEBBIOLO LANGHE SALE \$12.99

The Gallino family make old-school wines. Nebbiolo, the grape that makes prestigious Barolo and Barbaresco, displays red fruit notes and it has a mildly tannic quality (as it should).

TAMELLINI SOAVE \$13.99 ❖

Many years ago "Soave" was *the* Italian white wine. If more of them tasted like this wine from the Tamellini brothers, is still would be *the* Italian white. Beautifully aromatic with hints of peach and melon, this is a non-oaked, dry white. Beats the hell out of most Pinot Grigio, too.

PEDRONCELLI "Frank Johnson Vineyard" CHARDONNAY SALE \$13.99

Old timers such as the Pedroncelli family are dedicated to making good wines and offering them at old-time, honest prices. A single vineyard bottling with a touch of oak. It's dry, too.

CHIROULET CÔTES DE GASCOGNE WHITE \$11.99 ❖

The Sauvignon Blanc, blended with Gros Manseng & Ugni Blanc, really shines with a mildly citrusy tone...It's a top-of-the-market white from France's Gascony. Dry.

SOBON ESTATE "Old Vines" ZINFANDEL SALE \$10.99

Fruit from the old D'Agostini vineyards in Amador produces a dark, berryish red...if you prefer something with a touch of wood, their Rocky Top Zin (\$13.99 ❖) is a winner, too.

CANTELE "SALICE SALENTINO" Italian Red \$10.99 ❖

Salice Salentino hails from Italy's Puglia region. It's a warm place and the Cantele family makes a flashy red that's softer than a Chianti or Nebbiolo. Medium+ in body. Remarkable value.

BODEGAS LAN RIOJA CRIANZA SALE \$9.99

Great ten buck Tempranillo displaying a nice touch of wood. Perfect for paella or grilled meats.

LE LOUP DANS LA BERGERIE FRENCH RED \$10.99 ❖

If you're a fan of Châteaufort-du-Pape and want a daily drinker, L'Hortus makes this beautiful Grenache-based blend that's supple, medium-bodied and soulful. Nobody pegs this as costing \$11.

VALE DO BOMFIM Portuguese Red \$10.99 ❖

It's made of Touriga Franca, Touriga Nacional and a mixed black field blend grown in Portugal's "Napa Valley," the Douro. It's from the prestigious Dow's Port winery.

CHÂTEAU LESTILLE ENTRE-DEUX-MERS (Sauvignon Blanc) \$11.99 ❖

The Entre-Deux-Mers region can be a good source of Sauvignon Blanc and our friend Estelle Roumage routinely produces a stellar dry white Bordeaux. Fresh and citrusy. No oak.

MARIANA PORTUGUESE RED \$12.99 ❖

From the Alentejo region, this is a terrific blend featuring Touriga Nacional. Six months in French oak smooths out the rough edges. Medium+ body. (Mariana was a 17th century nun, btw.)

JF QUÉNARD 2017 CHIGNIN (French Alps White) \$14.99 ❖

From steep, rocky slopes in France's Savoie region comes this delicious dry white made entirely of the Jacquère grape. It's a bit along the lines of a Chablis. Our go-to white in some SF eateries.

CRETA "ROBLE" Spanish Red (Tempranillo) \$14.99 ❖

From 30 to 50 year old vines in Ribera del Duero, this showy red is matured in small French oak.

RUNQUIST "1448" RED TABLE WINE SALE \$14.48

Jeff Runquist's vinous "minestrone" red blend features Zinfandel & friends...nice fruit/oak.

HENRI BOURGEOIS FRENCH SAUVIGNON BLANC \$12.99 ❖

We love the \$55 Sancerre from Henri Bourgeois, but this "everyday" bottling of Sauvignon Blanc does the trick for a good, daily drinker.

SOQUEL VINEYARDS "TRINITY ROSSO" SALE \$11.99

Petite Sirah, Zinfandel and Merlot comprise the trinity...nicely oaked California red value.

PEDRONCELLI SONOMA "FRIENDS RED" & FRIENDS WHITE SALE \$9.99

Sonoma wine for ten bucks? Smooth red and fruity, flowery white...great everyday wines!

WINETASTER'S**NOTEBOOK**

Check out the Weimax Facebook page, Twitter or Instagram for periodic tips about our latest discoveries.

CASTELLO DI NEIVE BARBERA

\$24.99 ❖



Our old friend Italo Stupino (and he is a young 80+ years of age) planted Barbera on a hill famous for expensive Barbaresco wines. His "Santo Stefano" Barbera is exceptional showing dark fruit and a whiff of oak. Exceptionally-priced, too.

COTO DE IMAZ RIOJA \$23.99 ❖

We wrote this up last newsletter, but a new vintage is in and it's another show-stopping red for a most attractive price. Perfect with steak.

MIRO CUVÉE SASHA \$19.99

We included this a blind-tasting of West Coast Grenache/Syrah blends. It was the least costly wine in the tasting (against wines in the \$50-\$60 range) and this was our First Place winner! Lots of red berry notes to this terrific wine.

BAIA DEL SOLE**VERMENTINO \$21.99 ❖**

There's a site in Liguria that's famed for its Vermentino called "Sarticola." This is a few miles inland from the sea and produces wines of crisp, snappy acidity and stony minerality. Some skin contact makes for a beautiful seafood white.

CHARLEUX 2016 MARANGES**BLANC 1er Cru "La Fussièrre" \$27.99 ❖**

This comes from a small father & son domaine in the southernmost part of the Côte de Beaune. Maranges is an unheralded appellation which means its wines are typically underpriced.

There is very little Premier Cru level white wine there. Charleux's is a beautifully toasty, lightly smoky white Burgundy

SOALHEIRO ALVARINHO \$24.99 ❖

Our favorite Vinho Verde wines come from the Soalheiro winery near the Spanish border in Portugal. The aromas and flavors are reminiscent of citrus and peach with a light stony element. We drank a bottle recently at Dumpling Time in San Francisco with Dim Sum. It was outstanding!

BREGEONNETTE**MUSCADET \$14.99 ❖**

Excellent Muscadet from a small estate in France's Loire Valley. Bone dry, crisp and ideally paired with oysters and other seafood.