

**From:** The BrightWines Beacon <lighthouse@brightwines.com>  
**Subject:** Dave's Top Picks of Spring SALE (WSS-15)  
**Date:** May 21, 2015 12:11:47 PM CDT  
**To:** The BrightWines Beacon

---

**The BrightWines Beacon for 5/15/15 through Memorial Day: Dave's Top Picks of Spring SALE 2015**

**THE LAMP IS LIT: Wine Stirs the Spring!** The annual BrightWines SPRING SALE is on NOW through Memorial Day. The sale list (WSS-15) has been **UPDATED and EXPANDED to 3 full pages!** <http://www.brightwines.com/wss-15.pdf>

**THE VIEW FROM THE TOP:** would you prefer your Pinot Noir to be red, or pink, or white?!?

(note: this opening paragraph is from a recent San Jose Mercury News wine article, a good source for wine insights)

"What do you get when you pick cool-climate pinot noir grapes early, press them ever so gently, and limit skin contact?

White wine. But not just any white wine. **Pinot Noir blanc, a rare, dry white wine that's popping up... is a bracing beauty: complex, earthy and clear as crystal, it's unusual enough to stump even the geekiest oenophiles.** The method isn't unusual. In Champagne, it is how producers craft blanc de noirs, sparkling wine made from red grapes. The still version is becoming increasingly common in Oregon." They even go so far as to say **"it's like Champagne without the bubbles."**

Dave says: just what Pinot Noir fans need, more options for Pinot Noir drinking - well, YES actually! Certainly as a red wine the popularity of Pinot Noir is well-established, and with recent upsurge in popularity of dry Rose/pink wines it's also well established that Pinot Noir makes wonderful dry pink wines too. Just for example, I have rose of pinot noir choices on my current spring list from Oregon, France, and Germany too. Now winemakers (especially in Oregon) are exploring the possibilities of good dry WHITE wines made from Pinot Noir too. When I visited Oregon a couple of years back, this was still a very new trend - offering white wines made from Pinot Noir. At the time I tasted 3 different ones, at the dozen or so wineries I sampled with. **Two of those wineries and winemakers are definitely pioneers in Willamette Valley WHITE pinot noir production.** Anne Amie's Thomas Houseman who I met and tasted with, and also Left Coast Cellars where I also toured/tasted.

**The wines were new enough that there was (and still is) alot of discussion of what to name this new dry white wine.** Should it be called "Blanc de Noir" which implies that it is a sparkling wine or perhaps a pink, or should it be called Blanc de Pinot Noir (several wineries have selected that idea) or should it be called Pinot Noir blanc which might create confusion with another popular white wine in Willamette - Pinot Blanc, which is a white varietal - or should it be simply called "white" Pinot Noir even if that conjurs up images of pink sweet (as in White Zinfandel). But no matter WHAT they call them, the wines are plenty good and plenty dry and definitely white wines. Pinot Noir fans might know the blog "the prince of pinot" which recently had an article on the white pinot noirs, and even mentioned Thomas Houseman of Anne Amie as well: "A white wine can be produced from Pinot Noir if the grapes are pressed after harvesting avoiding any skin contact with the juice. The resulting wine is the essence of Pinot Noir grape juice, or Pinot Noir Blanc. Thomas Houseman, winemaker for Anne Amie Vineyards in the Yamhill-Carlton District of the Willamette Valley, turned me on to Pinot Noir Blanc. He crafts an example labeled "Prisme" and told me it was his favorite wine to make." (dave says: his style for it is fuller and richer, yet emulating a white burgundy perhaps) Interestingly, "Pinot Noir Blanc was a central player in the acrimonious parting of winemaker Anthony Rynders from Domaine Serene in 2009. A number of allegations were made by Domaine Serene against Rynders, but one main issue was the winery's winemaking process used to produce its Coeur Blanc white wine from Pinot Noir grapes. Domaine Serene was concerned that Rynders would use the winery's proprietary winemaking process to make his own competing Pinot Noir Blanc. Rynders argued that the method of making white wine from Pinot Noir grapes is not proprietary and common knowledge to many winemakers. (And) Pinot Noir Blanc should not be confused with Pinot Blanc, which is a white grape genetic mutation of Pinot Noir." (princeofpinot blog)

Here at BrightWines, I had not had any "white" Pinot Noir (or Pinot Noir Blanc) since my trip to Oregon, unless you count a sparkling Brut "Blanc de Noirs" or Champagne, which is not what I'm talking about - even if they say that some of them taste like "Champagne without the bubbles". But recently one was brought to my attention, and lo-and-behold it was from one of my favorite wineries in Willamette Valley for high quality at moderate prices. As noted in **Wine Enthusiast** about Pinot Noir Blanc and Left Coast Cellars: **"White seems to be the new black when it comes to Oregon Pinot Noir, as more and more winemakers give it a spin. This (Left Coast Cellars) is one of the better ones."**

This wine was called to my attention by a very excited sales rep of mine who said it was one of the best and most interesting wines of a very wide-ranging Pinot Noir trade show her company put on. And then as if to prove the point, I received an excited email from on of my

customers (a friend too) who was at the open-to-consumer portion of that Pinot Noir event too. My sales rep and I did a count of the cases available of the proper vintage in the warehouse, and cut a great deal for my spring sale! **LEFT COAST CELLARS 2013 dry "white" Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley) @ \$17.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price).

So while today's newsletter features MANY "top picks" this white wine from Pinot Noir is my TOP PICK of the "top picks" for anyone looking to have a new experience in white wine this spring. I have about 10 cases available, and that is ALL that's left of the drinking great 2013 (the jury is still out on the newer 2014) but at the \$17.99 sale price it's still a bit of an "affordable luxury" so no need to buy a full case, just grab a bottle or two in the mix of your WSS-15 purchases - and you'll be glad you did!

### **BRIGHT LIGHTS: Dave's Picks of the Wine Stirs the Spring SALE (wss-15)**

The annual SPRING SALE is on NOW through Memorial Day. **The sale list (WSS-15) has been UPDATED and EXPANDED to 3 full pages!** <http://www.brightwines.com/wss-15.pdf>

This newsletter is the traditional "Dave's Top Picks" edition for my annual/seasonal sales. Every wine is listed with brief annotations, and all of them could easily be a "top pick" in their respective styles and price-ranges. In today's newsletter I will be highlighting with fuller reviews some of the most exciting wines in a variety of categories.

**\*\* Dave's TOP Pick of the Top Picks (see above in the article on "white" Pinot Noir) \*\***

### **LEFT COAST CELLARS 2013 dry "white" Pinot Noir (Willamette Valley) @ \$17.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

As noted in Wine Enthusiast about Pinot Noir Blanc and Left Coast Cellars (reviewing the 2012 version): "White seems to be the new black when it comes to Oregon Pinot Noir, as more and more winemakers give it a spin. This (Left Coast Cellars) is one of the better ones." This wine was called to my attention by a very excited sales rep of mine who said it was one of the best and most interesting wines of a very wide-ranging Pinot Noir trade show her company put on. And then as if to prove the point, I received an excited email from one of my customers (a friend too) who was at the open-to-consumer portion of that Pinot Noir event too. My sales rep and I did a count of the cases available of the proper vintage in the warehouse, and cut a great deal for my spring sale! This white wine from Pinot Noir is my TOP PICK of the "top picks" for anyone looking to have a new experience in white wine this spring. I have about 10 cases available, and that is ALL that's left of the drinking great 2013 (the jury is still out on the newer 2014) but at the \$17.99 sale price it's still a bit of an "affordable luxury" so no need to buy a full case, just grab a bottle or two in the mix of your WSS-15 purchases - and you'll be glad you did!

**\*\* Dave's Top Picks of the NEW ADDITIONS to the WSS-15 sale list \*\***

NOTE: STOCKS MAY BECOME LIMITED OVER THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND - get yours soon!

### **BOGLE 2103 CHARDONNAY @ \$7.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

Rated 90 points in March 2015 Tastings.com who notes: "Bright clear light medium golden color. Delicate, toasty, fruity aromas of nougat, pineapple cake, and candied lemon peel with a soft, vibrant, dry-yet-fruity medium-to-full body and a tingling, refreshing, medium-length pineapple, apple sauce, and brazil nuts finish with fruit tannins and light oak. A juicy, mouthwatering chardonnay that will cover a lot of bases." AND also rated 89 points in the May issue of the Wine Enthusiast too! "Nicely balanced and complex in flavor, this blends bright apple and pear aromas with more subtle and spicy flavors like nutmeg, cinnamon and vanilla. The texture is smooth and sleek, livened up by good acidity, and the finish is long and lively. 89 points."

### **Chateau Le Grand Moulin 2011 Blaye cotes de Bordeaux rouge @ \$11.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

Gold Medal in Paris, and the best "drinkable now - yet seriously proportioned" of all of the 2011 petite chateaux Bordeaux I've run across. My first shipment sold out last fall/winter, the importer still had 10 cases left so I grabbed them and sale-priced them!

### **Alexander Valley Vineyards 2012 "Temptation" Zinfandel @ \$8.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

NEW ADDITION, just in time for bbq season and stocking up the cabin. Screwcapped Zin from a Zinfandel expert, AVV. As Robert Parker noted on this 2012 vintage AVV Temptation Zinfandel: "It offers lots of strawberry and black cherry notes, not as much spice as its two siblings and medium body. Alexander Valley Vineyards has always done a good job with value Zinfandels."

ALSO AVAILABLE: **2012 Alexander Valley SIN ZIN @ \$12.99 per bottle!**

**\*\* Dave's TOP PICKS of the \$7.99 Days in May feature (Bargain Alert) \*\***

NOTE: STOCKS MAY BECOME LIMITED OVER THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND - get yours soon!

**MONTECILLO 2010 RIOJA Crianza Tempranillo @ \$7.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

88 points Wine Enthusiast, who notes: "Subtle raspberry and plum aromas are lightly herbal and traditional for the region. A fresh, medium-bodied palate delivers upfront oak and cocoa flavors backed by spicy plum and berry fruit tones. A light, chocolate-dusted note rounds out the finish. 88 points. \$10 retail."

**TRIVENTO 2013 MALBEC (Mendoza, Argentina) @ \$7.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

Wine Spectator recommended, perennially a favorite here, at the lowest price in years! Wine Spectator notes: "creamy hints to the red currant, dried berry and brambly flavors, flanked by cedary notes. Juicy finish. \$11 retail." The best bang-for-the-buck in Mendoza!

**MAN Family Vintners 2014 "free run Steen" dry CHENIN BLANC @ \$7.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

90 points! Robert Parker's Wine Advocate notes on this South African dry Chenin Blanc: "The 2014 Free-Run Steen Chenin Blanc has a focused, clinical bouquet with pineapple and lemon zest, hints of passion fruit developing just behind. The palate is very well balanced with a fine line of acidity: plenty of tropical fruit on display here but neatly delineated on the tense and citric finish that linger in the mouth. Quite simply, this represents unbeatable value. **90 points.**"

(from Borsao) **MONTE OTON 2013 GARNACHA (Spain) @ \$7.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

Wine Spectator recommended, and Robert Parker's Wine Advocate rates 88 points, saying "More intense and complex than Borsao's Vina Borgia is the 2013 Monte Oton, a 100% Garnacha. Its deep ruby color is followed by notes of kirsch liqueur, licorice, loamy soil and spice. Delicious, medium-bodied, exuberantly fruity and boisterous, it is the perfect choice for inexpensive bistro drinking. 88 points."

**YELCHO (by Ventisquero in Chile) 2013 SAUVIGNON BLANC @ \$7.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

impressively powerful citrus and herb with good body and zing

**BOGLE 2103 CHARDONNAY @ \$7.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

Rated 90 points in March 2015 Tastings.com who notes: "Bright clear light medium golden color. Delicate, toasty, fruity aromas of nougat, pineapple cake, and candied lemon peel with a soft, vibrant, dry-yet-fruity medium-to-full body and a tingling, refreshing, medium-length pineapple, apple sauce, and brazil nuts finish with fruit tannins and light oak. A juicy, mouthwatering chardonnay that will cover a lot of bases." AND also rated 89 points in the May issue of the Wine Enthusiast too!

**PEIRANO Estate 2012 "six clones" Lodi MERLOT @ \$7.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

From the family that makes my most popular, and the smoothest, old vine Lodi Zinfandel, The Immortal Zin, comes this direct-from-the-winery blowout pricing on their 2012 Merlot. Smooth cherry/chocolate tones in this medium bodied "classic" California Merlot!

**\*\* Dave's Top Picks in Dry Rose/pink selections \*\***

Hint, the best ones from last summer might be the best ones again this year: including a direct-from-importer shipment of a full-bodied TAVEL and a Provence-styled Cotes du Rhone, and 2 exotic ones from the Loire. **When it comes to rose, the French are the standard-bearers!** But fear not, ALL of my Rose/pink wines from all around the world are on sale - and I have 19 different selections in-stock now!

**Baron de Breban Sparkling Brut Rose (Provence) @ \$9.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

Fresh shipment, direct from the importer's warehouse in Chicago. The best "bargain" in a true Provence rose (from Brignoles) just happens to also be a refreshing Brut sparkling wine too!

**Chateau Beauchene 2014 Rose Cotes du Rhone @ \$9.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

Last summer's fastest sellout, new shipment direct from the importer's warehouse in Chicago. In a first for what I've sampled so far, the 2014 might be even better than the 2013 was!

**"lieu dit Cocagne" 2014 Rose Coteaux du Vendomois (Loire) @ \$9.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

Two summer's ago this was the fastest sellout of the season. Exotic and quite dry, a rose made from Pineau des Aunis varietal in the Loire.

**Chantepierre 2014 TAVEL (Rhône) @ \$12.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale price)**

Once again, the BEST value and quality in a true Tavel CdR rose is this one! Direct from the importer's warehouse in Chicago.

**\*\* Dave's TOP PICKS in "Smart Buys" from important wine regions around the world \*\***

NOTE: STOCKS MAY BECOME LIMITED OVER THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND - get yours soon!

(Australia / New Zealand)

**WITHER HILLS 2014 Wairau Valley - Marlborough SAUVIGNON BLANC @ \$11.67 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

Perennial favorite around here. The key is the consistency of fruit sourced exclusively from the Wairau subzone of Marlborough. This always has pink grapefruit and mineral, and the new 2014 is better than the 2013 was - if my instincts are correct.

**Heartland "Spice Trader" 2012 Langhorne Creek Shiraz/Cabernet @ \$12.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

rated **90 points** by Robert Parker's Wine Advocate: "The 2012 Spice Trader Shiraz Cabernet Sauvignon is deep garnet-purple in color and shows off a pronounced cassis and black plum nose with hints of eucalyptus, star anise, cloves and pepper. Medium to full-bodied with lots of mouth-filling and juicy blackberry flavor, it is supported by medium level, grainy tannins and refreshing acid before finishing with very good length. Drink it now to 2017." AND this wine is also rated 89 points Wine Spectator, at \$18 retail! **Heartland "Spice Trader" 2012 Langhorne Creek Shiraz/Cabernet @ \$12.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

(Chile / Argentina)

**Concha Y Toro 2010 Serie Riberas - GRAN RESERVA MERLOT @ \$10.79 per bottle** (sale price = 40% off retail)

Wine Spectator recommended: "A toasty red, boasting layers of nutmeg, vanilla and smoke to the fleshy plum and black currant fruit character, with a cedary finish. \$18." AND Wine Enthusiast recommended: "berry and cassis aromas accented by campfire and chocolate. In the mouth, it's drawing but lively, with firm acidity and toasty flavors of oak-rich blackberry and dark chocolate. 88 points."

**El Porvenir 2014 "Amauta" Cafayate/Salta TORRONTES @ \$11.67 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

Simply put, this is the best new Torrontes I've tasted in a while, and one of the few that's both high quality yet also a good "intro" style too. A Paul Hobbs project in the Cafayata/Salta high-altitude region north of Mendoza. Fun and fresh and exotic, signature white of Argentina.

AND: **see above for the TRIVENTO MALBEC @ \$7.99 sale price** (full notes previously listed, above)

(France)

**Chantepierre 2013 LIRAC Cotes du Rhone rouge @ \$12.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 price)

Famed Cotes du Rhone region right across the river from Chateauneuf-du-Pape! Full-bodied, big dark purple fruit and plenty of pepper too. Classic Grenache/Syrah/Mourvedre blend. New shipment, direct from the importer's warehouse in Chicago.

AND: **Chateau Le Grand Moulin 2011 Blaye cotes de Bordeaux rouge @ \$11.99 per bottle** (full notes listed previously, above)

**FELINES JOURDAN 2014 PICPOUL de PINET @ \$8.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

The only "domaine" estate Picpoul available in our market, always one of the best. This new fresh 2014 is as good as ever, and the local supplier decided not to wait until my summer sale to offer me a good sale price. One of the most "summery" of all the French whites - unless of course you count all the great Rose/pink wines as "white wine alternatives" I suppose...

(Austria / Germany)

**Hopler PANNONICA 2013 GRUNER VELTLINER @ \$10.79 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

Bone dry, crisp, floral/citrusy white blend from the Burgenland of Austria, a blend of Gruner Veltliner (mostly) and Pinot Blanc, and more. New to the market from a very good winery, Hopler, that I've met both father and son over the years.

(Italy)

**Fontaleoni 2012 CHIANTI Colli Senesi @ \$11.67 per bottle** (WSS-15 price)

Wine Spectator recommended, as a \$17 retail! From the Siena hillsides of Tuscany. Wine Spectator notes: "Cherry, earth and smoke notes highlight this fresh, elegant red, remaining focused through the moderately long finish. Drink now through 2016."

**Aragosta 2014 VERMENTINO de Sardegna @ \$9.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 price)

the popular "langoustine label" dry white from the island of Sardinia is back in a new fresh vintage. Yay!

**MORGANTE (Sicily) 2012 NERO d'AVOLA @ \$12.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 price)

Wine Spectator notes: "Ripe blackberry and cherry fruit is fresh and juicy in this medium-bodied red, with grippy tannins. Clean and modern in style, with accents of oak spice, sweet smoke and mocha. 88 points. \$18 retail."

(Spain / Portugal)

see above for the **MONTECILLO Rioja Crianza Tempranillo @ \$7.99 per bottle** (full notes above)

AND: all **3 of the Vinho Verde selections on the WSS-15 list are NEW shipments!** 2015 bottling GAZELA @ \$4.99 per bottle, 2015 bottling Casal Garcia @ \$7.99 per bottle, and the NEW screwcapped - and Wine Enthusiast "Best Buy" label - on PAVAO @ \$5.99 per bottle (WSS-15 sale prices)

(west coast examples: one California, one Oregon, one Washington)

**Alexander Valley Vineyards 2012 SIN ZIN @ \$12.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 sale price)

Robert Parker notes: "the **2012 Sin Zin, a broad, round, juicy Zinfandel revealing lots of briery, brambleberry fruit, good pepper and spice.**" Note, this wine lists for anywhere from \$18 - \$20 per bottle, but BrightWines only handles it once per year when I can do a great sale price! **ALSO available for just \$8.99 is the 2012 "Temptation Zin"** which as Parker himself notes: "Alexander Valley Vineyards has always done a good job with value Zinfandels."

**McKinley Springs 2010 Horse Heaven Hills Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$17.99 per bottle** (WSS-15 price)

Robert Parker's Wine Advocate recommended (listed at \$24 retail) who notes: "moderately concentrated, yet with good Cabernet character on the nose, the 2010 Cabernet Sauvignon (91% Cabernet and 9% Petit Verdot) was aged 18 months in 33% new oak barrels (75% French/25% American). Showing plenty of spice, raspberry, currant and dried tobacco aromas and flavors, it is medium-bodied and well textured through the mid-palate."

**RAINSTORM 2014 Oregon PINOT GRIS @ \$10.79 per bottle** (WSS-15 price)

Perennially recommended as "good value" in Oregon, the key is it's not just Willamette Valley there is also Columbia Valley fruit sourcing too - just as good for quality, and much friendlier for price!

That's all for today. I hope you enjoyed this rather extensive look at my annual Spring Sale list. Naturally, all 3 pages worth of this list are full of "top picks" of some sort or other! Be sure to check out the FULL LIST online The sale list (WSS-15) has been **UPDATED and EXPANDED to 3 full pages!** <http://www.brightwines.com/wss-15.pdf>

e-mail orders are accepted, while supplies last and subject to confirmation, with pickup by Memorial Day preferred.

"**Wine stirs the spring**, happiness bursts through the earth like a plant,  
walls crumble, and rocky cliffs, chasms close, as song is born.  
A jug of wine, and thou beside me in the wilderness, sang the ancient poet.  
Let the wine pitcher add to the kiss of love its own." (Pablo Neruda)

**The Right Wines are BrightWines!**

<http://www.brightwines.com/wss-15.pdf>

www.brightwines.com 651-748-0793

2420 Margaret Street North Saint Paul, MN 55109