

**From:** The BrightWines Beacon [lighthouse@brightwines.com](mailto:lighthouse@brightwines.com)  
**Subject:** fairest of the fair, fair dinkum, cabin fare, savoir faire...  
**Date:** August 29, 2020 at 5:20 PM  
**To:** ~~newsletter@brightwines.com~~

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**The BrightWines Beacon for August 29th, 2020: the fairest of the fair (and I don't just mean the weather)**

Hey, no fair... there's no State Fair this year? Yeah, and you know what's also not fair is that this is the last weekend of August already with September and Labor Day nearly upon us. What's definitely not fair, is that in so many ways it seems the world we live in has not played fair all year! And if there ever was a "dog days of August" week, this past week was it.

Well... here at BrightWines I'm doing my best to play fair and to **bring my loyal newsletter readers "the fairest of the fair" in new arrivals, and to restock the most "fair dinkum" of this summer's favorites!** (*fair dinkum is an Aussie/Kiwi expression that means the real deal, the genuine article*)

**\*\* Hey, no fair... no BrightWines newsletter last weekend?**

Many of you noticed, but even if you didn't you did not miss anything. Last weekend was a "back to campus" weekend for my family which included a myriad logistical gymnastics and the "dog days of August" stretched into this week too with several family obligations, so the best I could do was to just keep on with my regular business. I did have a notion to send out an early-week and then a later-week edition this week, but when I looked at the calendar I realized that if I was going to send a midweek edition that NEXT week would be better because of the upcoming Labor Day weekend. So rather than send three newsletters in quick succession, I'm sticking to my regular schedule this weekend (albeit delayed) and then will plan to offer up some more timely pre Labor Day update editions next week. We'll just chalk up the missing newsletter to an inadvertent "at-work staycation" this past week.

**\*\* the fairest of the fair: Dave's Top Picks of many NEW Arrivals**, including new (and re-stocked) Affordable Luxury!

New California red and white wines at \$9.99 plus a smooth new Italian red for \$10.79 and a fresh new Spanish white for \$10.79 highlight the new value picks, a new and exciting Marlborough New Zealand Sauv Blanc and a new dry Rose and a great deal on an Oregon Pinot Noir highlight some new Smart Buys at \$12.99 or less, per bottle across the board. On the Affordable Luxury end of the spectrum there are new highly rated GSM blends, and 2 impressive Napa Valley based Cabernet Sauvignon options from Clos du Val and Whitehall Lane, both at very affordable prices for the luxury they provide. Read on to BRIGHT LIGHTS for a full listing of new arrivals and re-stocked favorites!

**\*\* some "Fair Dinkum" Customer Favorites recently re-stocked:**

Gris Marin, Colossal, Silk and Spice, Cote de Paradise, Parrallel 45 Cotes du Rhone, Greg Norman Santa Barbara Pinot Noir, Kalpela Vineyards Zinfandel, Li Veli "Orion" Primitivo, and more! Read on to BRIGHT LIGHTS for a full listing!

**\*\* Cabin Fare:** stay tuned next week for the return of "Cabin Cases" of tasty wines at bargain prices, pre-selected by Dave for one-stop shopping! (or if you can't wait until the midweek update, just email me and I'll get something put together for you upon request)

**\*\* Savoir Faire:** a limited selection of some very classy French wines available (a summer sequel)

This week BrightWines has the last cases available of some lovely Rhones and Burgundy as a sequel to the July/August feature. The last few cases of the great 2016 and 2017 vintages, with a chance to pick up some interesting horizontal sets.

**THE LAMP IS LIT: Store Hours and Shopping Preferences, August 29th - Sept 3rd**

*Remember, we're still preferring "curbside" nowadays for a variety of reasons (health and safety, masks mandated, remodeling of the office and soon of the front entryway too). Thanks for your continued support and patronage during these pandemic times. Thanks for your continued support and patronage during these pandemic times, but there is no in-store browsing and no in-store tastings until further notice. When you email an order, please indicate your pickup timing and plans.*

**\*\* SATURDAY August 29th:** OPEN regular hours today (enjoy the rest of this lovely weather weekend)

*note: email orders and replies to this newsletter will be responded to and confirmed as best as possible by midday on Monday, August 31st*

**\*\* SUNDAY August 30th:** CLOSED per usual (enjoy the rest of this lovely weather weekend)

*note: email orders and replies to this newsletter will be responded to and confirmed as best as possible by midday on Monday August 31st*

**\*\* MONDAY AUGUST 31st:** OPEN from 11am to 6pm (regular hours, curbside preferred)

*note: email orders and replies to this "Fairest of the Fair" newsletter will be responded to and confirmed as best as possible by midday on Monday August 31st.*

**\*\* TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY September 1st & September 2nd:** OPEN from 11am to 6pm (regular hours, curbside preferred)

**\*\* next THURSDAY & FRIDAY September 3rd and September 4th:** OPEN from 10:30am to 6:30pm (regular hours)

stay tuned for a midweek "update edition" for the upcoming Labor Day weekend, including "Cabin Cases" of tasty wines at bargain prices, pre-selected by Dave for one stop shopping!

**\*\* next SATURDAY September 5th:** OPEN REGULAR HOURS

stay tuned for "weekend update" for Labor Day weekend

**BRIGHT LIGHTS:** Dave's Top Picks, many august selections for late-August and early-September

**\*\* the fairest of the fair: NEW arrivals** from great Values to Smart Buys and Affordable Luxury too

(listed in price order, from \$9.99 to \$29.99 per bottle)

(new) **WITNESS MARK 2018 Red Blend @ \$9.99 per bottle** (sale price, ~~\$199.88/case~~)

from family-owned vineyards in the Central Coast south of Monterey, this is the BEST new California bargain red I've tasted all year. Fans of red blends take note, but so can fans of good Paso Robles or Monterey, California wines. This has a national retail of \$12.99 and is worth every penny (and then some) of the \$9.99 sale price. First ever release of this award-winning packaging in the MN market.

(new) **WITNESS MARK 2018 Chardonnay @ \$9.99 per bottle** (sale price, ~~\$199.88/case~~)

Smooth and classy, an all-estate central coast Chardonnay (think Monterey style) with balanced and elegant oaky/buttery tones. This has a national retail of \$12.99 and is worth every penny (and then some) of the \$9.99 sale price. First ever release of this award-winning packaging in the MN market.

(new) **VECCHIO MARONE 2018 Rosso Italia @ \$10.79 per bottle** (sale price, \$129.48/case)

Medium-bodied and smooth with subtle spice and nice red fruit tones. This is an importer's cuvee in a heavy glass bottle made using a blend of Italian varieties with "appassimento" techniques to make a table red that's styled like a "poor man's Ripasso della Valpolicella" Rosso from Italia.

(new) **El Coto 2019 RIOJA Blanco white @ \$10.79 per bottle** (\$129.49/case)

100% Viura. Crisp and refreshing, drinks like a "Pinot Grigio meets Albarino" and at great price for a fresh screwcapped Rioja white.

(new) **KOHA 2019 Marlborough, New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc @ \$11.67 per bottle** (\$139.99/case)

This is my new favorite smart-buy, and might become yours. It takes off where "The Loop" and "Wither Hills" styles meet up, but has just that certain-something extra. All from Awatere region, family-owned and indigenous to New Zealand vineyard sourcing. 4.5 stars out of 5 stars in the respected "down under" Wine State magazine.

(last of vintage) **HINMAN Vineyards 2014 Oregon PINOT NOIR @ \$12.99 per bottle** (\$139.99/case = \$11.67 per bottle)

Rated a "Best Buy" in Wine Enthusiast magazine, as noted: "a good vintage for inexpensive Oregon Pinot, as this fresh and flavorful effort proves. Hints of toasted marshmallows and coconut adorn light strawberry fruit." A bonus, is that this is a rather classy package for a bargain screwcap Oregon Pinot Noir, a lovely periwinkle color with elegant trees and butterflies - FWIW.

(new) **Landhaus Meyer (Vienna, Austria) 2019 Zweigelt Rose @ \$12.99 per bottle** (sale price)

new fresh shipment of a favorite "not French" Rose from last year. Dry and crisp, hints of strawberry and cranberry with some stony Gruner-esque undertones.

(affordable luxury, top-rated Aussie, fair dinkum) **John Duval "Plexus" 2015 Barossa @ \$29.99 per bottle** (very limited)

Rated 94 points by James Halladay, rated 93 points by Robert Parker's Wine Advocate, rated 91 points by James Suckling, and also rated 90 points by Wine Enthusiast magazine, who notes: "Renowned Barossa winemaker John Duval's reds have a certain style signature to them: savory, herbaceous and finely structured - polished without pretense - and this classic Aussie blend doesn't disappoint. The nose swims with plums, raspberries, oak spice, dried floral and green-herbal notes, backed by a savory streak and herbal tonic nuances. Medium to full bodied, the palate is gripped firmly by fine-grained, herbal tannins. Plums and oak spice round out the finish. 90 points." Shiraz/Grenache/Mourvedre, SGM blend.

(affordable luxury, Napa Cabernet drinking at peak) **CLOS du VAL 2015 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$39.99 per bottle**

Suggested Retail: \$52 (see winery website) \$239.94 per 6pk case, a 21% savings off retail - limited to just 5 sixpacks available

Rated 92 points JS, rated 91 points JD, rated 90 points RP, and rated 91 points VM. With tasting notes as follows: "The 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Estate is a gorgeous entry-level wine from Clos du Val. Dark, inky and voluptuous in the glass, but with plenty of structural underpinning, the 2015 is super-expressive today. The tannins are going to need at least a year or two to soften, but all the elements are nicely balanced throughout. A rush of dark cherry, plum, lavender, spice and menthol build in this attractive, mid-weight Cabernet Sauvignon from Clos du Val. Fruit sources are the estate vineyard in Stags Leap and State Lane in Yountville. 91 points. Antonio Galloni (Vinous Media). - and - "A tight and solid 2015 with plenty of blackberry and currant character and polished and silky tannins. Full body, pretty fruit and a fresh finish. Shows tension and focus. A blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot, 8% Cabernet Franc. Better in 2019. 92 points." (James Suckling) - and - "The 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon Estate is rock solid and offers impressive currant and blackberry fruit characteristics, notes of graphite and lead pencil, medium to full-bodied richness, and terrific purity. A blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot and the rest Cabernet Franc, aged in 66% new French oak, it's high-quality juice to drink over the coming decade or more. 91 points." (Jeb Dunnuck) - and - "Deep garnet-purple colored, the 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon—a blend of 80% Cabernet Sauvignon, 12% Merlot and 8% Cabernet Franc—features notions of cassis, black cherries and plums with hints of damp earth and cigar box. Medium to full-bodied, it has appealing vibrancy and freshness in the mouth, with a chewy frame and good length. 90 points." (Robert Parker's Wine Advocate)

**CLOS du VAL 2015 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$39.99 per bottle** (see above)

**\*\* Fair Dinkum** - customer favorites, re-stocked!

(fair dinkum is an Aussie/Kiwi expression that means the real deal, the genuine article)

listed in price order...

**Cote de Paradise 2019 Chenin/Viognier @ \$7.99 per bottle** (7 cases in stock)

**Silk and Spice 2018 Red Blend @ \$9.99 per bottle** (8 cases in stock)

**Gris Marin 2019 Rose (Sable de Camargue) @ \$10.79 per bottle** (4 cases in stock)

**Colossal 2015 Reserve Red @ \$10.79 per bottle** (8 cases in stock)

**Kalpela Vineyards 2019 Mendocino Zinfandel @ \$10.97 per bottle** (5 cases in stock)

**Li Veli "Orion" 2018 Primitivo del Salento @ \$12.99 per bottle** (4 cases in stock, and Salice Salentino too)

**Jaboulet "Parrallel 45" 2017 Cotes du Rhone rouge @ \$14.99 per bottle** (3 cases in stock)

**Greg Norman 2017 Santa Barbara Pinot Noir @ \$16.67 per bottle** (3 cases in stock)

(affordable luxury - back in stock) **WHITEHALL LANE (Napa) 2017 "RASSI Vineyard" SONOMA Cabernet @ \$24.99**

Suggested Retail: \$29.99 CASE PRICE: \$279.99 = \$23.33 each (7 cases in stock)

The first vintage ever for this Cabernet, and you saw it here at BrightWine first over Father's Day weekend. Originally called the Duncan-Rassi vineyard, this Sonoma single-vineyard was planted to Cabernet Sauvignon in the year 2001 at the foot of the Mayacamas Range. The vines are nearing their peak of quality and productivity (20 years is where that usually begins) and the vineyard terroir itself is ideally suited to Cabernet Sauvignon. The famed Whitehall Lane winery in Napa purchased this vineyard outright seven years ago. At the \$30 retail price, this wine is a great deal. It compares to the \$50 Napa Cabernet, but it costs just half that at BrightWines! DAVE SAYS: Dark and rich and full-bodied, with tons of the cassis and woody mocha and "lead pencil" tones that great Cabs are noted for. This tastes like a top Alexander Valley Cabernet crossed with a Napa Valley one, which is just as you'd expect from a Cabernet from a great Sonoma location made by Whitehall Lane. No press at all, it's smaller production and very limited distribution. But Whitehall Lane is going to make this "Rassi" vineyard famous, I'm sure! **WHITEHALL LANE (Napa) 2017 "RASSI Vineyard" SONOMA Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$24.99 per bottle**

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**\*\* Savoir Faire:** the last stock of the great vintages on these recent French selections

(last 5 cases of 2017 vintage available) **Roche de Bellene 2017 vieilles vignes Bourgogne rouge @ \$19.99 per bottle**

100% old vines Pinot Noir made by famed Burgundy winemaker Nicolas Potel. The importer has switched to new vintage, and the new stuff is not "old vines" and is screwcapped now so easy to spot the changeover. 2017 was a great Burgundy vintage that's nearly gone from the market at reasonable price-points. This wine comes recommended by both Wine Spectator and Decanter magazine, who notes: "From 55 to 88 year-old vines, vinified to preserve freshness and fruit, Nicolas Potel has produced a wine with vineyard definition, purity and depth."

**Jaboulet 2017 vintage "Parallel 45" Cotes du Rhone rouge @ \$14.99 per bottle** (\$159.99/case = **\$13.33 each**)

**Mas de Boislauzon 2016 Cotes du Rhone Villages @ \$17.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

This upper-tier Cotes du Rhone by a Chateauneuf-du-Pape winery that at its regular \$20 retail price competes with bigger "Villages" names like Vacqueyras and Gigondas. The 2016 is drinking well, with seriousness and depth.

**La Verde "Prelude" 2016 Vacqueyras @ \$19.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

A great track record of 89-91 points ratings across all the major Rhone reviewers like Robert Parker, Jeb Dunnuck, Vinous, etc. This sold out twice during my French features, and I just got a few spare cases of the great 2016 vintage in last week again.

**Aurelien Chataignier 2016 Saint Joseph @ \$29.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

100% Syrah from everyone's favorite "smart buy" AOC of the Northern Rhone, Saint Joseph. Peppery tones, blueberry richness. The last cases of a personal favorite Northern Rhone we've loved in multiple vintages!

**Saint Cosme 2017 Cote Rotie @ \$59.99 per bottle** (very limited, inquire, rated 93-97 points by three magazines)

That's all for this edition, it's gotten quite long, so thanks for your patience with that plus the delayed/missing versions of The BrightWines Beacon here in late August. It just means that I'll be all geared up for a big week next week ahead of Labor Day weekend! I don't want summer to end, but I'm ready to move on from the dog days of August! September is always a personal favorite month of mine anyway! —Dave

**The Right Wines are BrightWines!**

2420 Margaret Street

North Saint Paul, MN 55109 (use your favorite MAPS app, there's construction everywhere)

*open for existing email orders, for new email orders, and for new "dave as personal shopper" pre-packed orders*

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*When you email an order, please indicate your pickup timing and plans*