

From: **The BrightWines Beacon** lighthouse@brightwines.com
Subject: **the Gift of Wine (part 1): Christmas Cabernets**
Date: December 18, 2020 at 3:45 PM
~~To: newsletter@brightwines.com~~

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The BrightWines Beacon for 12/18 - 12/21, 2020: Christmas Cabernets, in 2020 Vision

... making a list, checking it twice, going to find out who's naughty and nice, Santa Claus is coming to town!

Wow, where did THIS week go? Santa's elves have been working overtime all week... **as this holiday season that's been "faced with existential despair" enters the final two full weeks of 2020, "now we are in our Cabernet stage"** (to paraphrase an author/journalist and former presidential speechwriter).

For those of you wondering where the "Cabernet newsletter" was, thanks for your patience - like Santa's sleigh, it's finally ready to fly! Here is a quick rundown of the December newsletters thus far, and yet to come:

**** Christmas Cabernets in 2020 Vision:** see Bright Lights today for a **wide-ranging selection of Dave's Top Picks for Cabernet**. Over a dozen selections in Cabernet Sauvignon and "meritage" style cabernet blends, priced from \$10.79 to \$49.99 per bottle. HIGHLIGHTS include: plenty of 2017 vintage (a very good vintage) Cabernets and blends, from the \$10.79 "The Other Red" Cabernet blend by Peirano Estate, to a \$17.99 Napa Valley Cabernet and a \$19.99 Paso Robles Cabernet, on up to "reserve" level Napa Valley 2017 for \$39.99 AND in between all that there are "new releases" of impressive 2018 Paso Robles Cabernets priced from \$17.99 to \$49.99 (95 points). And don't forget the "meritage" or claret styles too! Washington, Chile, Bordeaux, Santa Barbara, and more. Plus some extra bottle age on some impressive 2016 vintage wines too. All this is encompassed in a "baker's dozen" of Cabernet to recommend! See BRIGHT LIGHTS for the details.

**** Today's edition is actually the 2nd of 4 full newsletters worth of wine recommendations for the holiday season of 2020.** Last week we had "Christmas Cookies: wine comfort food favorites and good value wine selections for the entire holiday season. This weekend we have The Gift of Wine (part 1) with Smart Buys and Affordable Luxury recommendations, with a special focus on Cabernet Sauvignon. Next week I'll send The Gift of Wine (part 2) "Making Spirits Bright" with more seasonal smart buys and affordable luxury in wines, Champagne, and a limited but exiting selection of spirits too. **For more updates and sneak previews of the newsletter cycle for December 2020, read The View from The Top.**

**** note from Dave:** before I get to "The Lamp is Lit" and "The View from the Top" and Bright Lights" let me just say a **quick word of "thanks" for all the wonderful business** that has come my way the past couple of weeks. It's been a very busy time here at your favorite wine shop. In fact, **it was much busier that I expected during the middle of this past week.** But then my wife pointed out that many folks were probably preparing for a 7-10 day quarantine to be able to safely see people at Christmas. If so, that's wonderful and I appreciate the advance business and I appreciate all the e-mail orders that gave me some advance notice. Thank you for helping me to help you! And on that topic, **if you prefer to do a Curbside Pickup next week so you can maintain a quarantine, BrightWines has been gladly offering Curbside Pickup** right along!

THE LAMP IS LIT: Store Hours and Shopping Preferences

BrightWines is OPEN regular hours for curbside and/or for in-store pickup and I do prefer to focus one new-or-existing orders only. I do realize it's not always possible to be 100% "orders only" and still offer good responsive customer service, so I'll do my best to be flexible... but just remember that I am limiting the in-store browsing and not holding in-store tastings until further notice. And if you prefer the in-person shopping experience, it's still a good idea to begin with an email to Dave so we can be on the same page and efficient over the process. Help me help you, in other words!

When you email an order, please indicate your pickup timing and plans (advance notice is preferred) and remember that masks are required inside BrightWines during in-store pickup.

email Dave@BrightWines.com OR just REPLY to this newsletter. For call-ahead, my office number is 651.748.0793 (landline, no texting).

~~** FRIDAY December 18th: OPEN until 6:30pm tonight~~

~~Open for new email orders, for existing email orders, and for new "dave as personal shopper" pre-packed orders (curbside, or in-store pickup) email Dave@BrightWines.com OR call 651.748.0793 (landline, no texting) OR just REPLY to this newsletter
When you email an order, please indicate your pickup timing and plans, and remember that masks are required inside BrightWines for in-store pickup.~~

~~** SATURDAY December 19th: OPEN from 10:30am to 6pm or later~~

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**** SUNDAY:** closed per usual

**** MONDAY & TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY December 21st & 22nd & 23rd: OPEN from 11am to 6pm, or later**

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When you email an order, please indicate your pickup timing and plans, and remember that masks are required inside BrightWines for in-store pickup.

AND stay tuned for "part 2" of the Gift of Wine newsletter, with more details about my store hours the weekend of the 24th - 27th

THE VIEW FROM THE TOP: STOCK UPDATES and recent newsletter themes

Today's edition is actually the 2nd of 4 full newsletters worth of wine recommendations for the holiday season of 2020. Last week we had "Christmas Cookies: wine comfort food favorites and good value wine selections for the entire holiday season. This weekend we have The Gift of Wine (part 1) with Smart Buys and Affordable Luxury recommendations, with a special focus on Cabernet Sauvignon. Next week I'll send The Gift of Wine (part 2) "Making Spirits Bright" with more seasonal smart buys and affordable luxury in wines, Champagne, and a limited but exiting selection of spirits too.

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** Dave as Personal Shopper: let Dave pick out a range of wines to fill your pantry for the holidays. Just tell me how much wine, what sort of styles, and what sort of prices and I'll pick out mutual favorites to save us some time and keep the crowds to a minimum this weekend and next weekend at BrightWines. Please give me a "24 hour courtesy" on personal shopper requests. Cheers!

** Weekend of 12/11: Christmas Cookies (comfort food wines, good values and smart buys for the whole holiday season)
<http://www.brightwines.com/holiday-season-2020vision.pdf>

If you need to "stock up" on wines to have around during the holidays, here's a rundown of what's still available for THIS weekend. Some supplies may be limited... in fact, if it is NOT on this list, you can presume it's sold out and cannot be re-stocked quickly enough to be of use for Xmas.

~~(in-stock) HOFBURG (Germany) GLUHWEIN @ \$7.99 per liter bottle (\$47.94 per 6pk case)~~
(in-stock) PINTA NEGRA Red @ \$8.99 per bottle (\$107.88/case)
(in-stock) SILK and SPICE 2018 Red @ \$9.99 per bottle (\$119.88/case)
(in-stock) El Circo "Acrobata" 2018 Garnacha (Carinena, Spain) @ \$9.99 per bottle (\$119.88/case)
(in-stock) WITNESS MARK (light-to-unoaked) 2018 CHARDONNAY @ \$9.99 per bottle (\$119.88/case)
(in-stock) Peirano Estate Lodi Chardonnay (the oaky/creamy style) @ \$10.79 per bottle (\$119.99/case)
~~(in-stock) Chateau GIGON 2017 Cotes du Rhone @ \$9.99 per bottle (\$119.88/case)~~
(in-stock) CALCU 2015 reserve Colchagua CARMENERE @ \$10.79 per bottle (last few cases of the vintage)
~~(in-stock) The Immortal Zin old vine Lodi Zinfandel @ \$10.79 per bottle (\$119.99/case)~~
(in-stock) Kalpela Vineyards 2017 Mendocino Zinfandel @ \$10.97 per bottle (\$129.99/case)
(in-stock) KOHA 2019 Marlborough, New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc @ \$12.99 per bottle (\$139.99/case)
(in-stock) HUGL 2019 Gemischter Satz @ \$12.99 per bottle (Gruener Veltliner, etc)
(in-stock) Zenato "San Benedetto" 2018 LUGANA white @ \$12.99 per bottle (more "oomph" than a inot Grigio)
(in-stock) La Grange de Piaugier 2018 Cotes du Rhone rouge @ \$12.99 per bottle (\$155.88/case)
~~(in-stock) Highlands 41 - Paso Robles - DARKNESS red blend @ \$13.33 per bottle (mix/match \$159.99/case)~~
(in-stock) La Posta "Pizzella" Malbec @ \$13.33 per bottle (mix/match \$159.99/case)
(in-stock) TREVERI Cellars - Blanc de Noirs - BRUT @ \$14.99 per bottle (\$179.88/case)
(in-stock) Pedroncelli 2018 Russian River Pinot Noir @ \$14.99 per bottle (\$179.88/case)
(in-stock) Elk Cove 2019 Willamette Valley Pinot Gris @ \$15.99 per bottle (\$191.88/case)
(in-stock) Fuego Blanco 2016 Malbec-Syrah (Argentina) @ \$15.99 per bottle (\$191.88/case)
(in-stock) The Fableist" central coast Malbec @ \$15.99 per bottle (\$191.88/case)
(in-stock) Field Recordings "PETS" Petite Sirah - Primitivo blend @ \$15.99 per bottle (\$191.88/case)

(new addition) **Villa des Anges 2019 Languedoc dry ROSE of Cinsault @ \$10.79 per bottle** (\$119.88/case)

(new addition) **Domaine Chantepierre 2019 TAVEL Rose @ \$14.99 per bottle** (\$179.88/case)

** THIS WEEKEND of 12/18: Gift of Wine (part 1) Christmas Cabernets
Read on to Bright Lights: SEE BELOW

** NEXT WEEK December 21st - December 26th: Gift of Wine (part 2) Making Spirits Bright
COMING SOON: selections of specialty liquors, more "Affordable Luxury" (not Cabs, necessarily) and of course, Champagne.

** December 28th - December 31st: Champagne, and Sparkling, and more!
There will not be the annual round of Champagne class/tastings this year - instead, I will put together some small "sampler sets" like we did with the Beaujolais Nouveau before Thanksgiving. And speaking of Beaujolais, there is still a modest range of Beaujolais available in-stock for those of you who like to ring out the old year and ring in the new with them.

BRIGHT LIGHTS: Christmas Cabernets

Prime rib? Beef Wellington? Cold weather is Cabernet weather? Need a gift for a wine lover who mostly drinks Cabs? You are not alone!

As this holiday season that's been "faced with existential despair" enters the final two full weeks of 2020, "now we are in our Cabernet stage" (to paraphrase an author/journalist and presidential speechwriter). BrightWines has a wide-ranging selection of Dave's Top Picks for Cabernet. Over a dozen selections in Cabernet Sauvignon and "meritage" style cabernet blends, priced from \$10.79 to \$49.99 per bottle. HIGHLIGHTS include: plenty of 2017 vintage (a very good vintage) Cabernets and blends, from the \$10.79 "The Other Red" Cabernet blend by Peirano Estate, to a \$17.99 Napa Valley Cabernet and a \$19.99 Paso Robles Cabernet, on up to "reserve" level Napa Valley 2017 for \$39.99 AND in between all that there are "new releases" of impressive 2018 Paso Robles Cabernets priced from \$17.99 to \$49.99 (95 points). And don't forget the "meritage" or claret styles too! Washington, Chile, Bordeaux, Santa Barbara, and more. Plus some extra bottle age on some impressive 2016 vintage wines too. All this is encompassed in a "baker's dozen" of Cabernet to recommend!

Listed in price order...

(meritage/claret style) **Peirano Estate 2017 Lodi "The Other" Red @ \$10.79 per bottle** (\$119.99 solid case = \$9.99 each)
60% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 10% Syrah from one of the best bargain family wineries in Lodi.

(pure Cab) **MacPherson Wine Company 2016 Victoria Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$14.99 per bottle**
MWC is a Victoria winery. In a blind tasting I thought this Aussie Cab was a Merlot-based Bordeaux or possibly Chilean.

(pure Cab) **The Lost Chapters 2017 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$17.99 per bottle** (\$199.99 solid case = \$16.67 each)
Mitch Cosentino and Paul Scotto. A favorite from a couple years ago is back in a very good Napa vintage.

(pure Cab) **Ancient Peaks 2018 Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$17.99 per bottle**

classic Paso Robles, with purple fruit undertones to the smooth Cabernet with some nice structure

~~(Pure Cab) San Simeon 2017 Paso Robles estate Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$19.99 per bottle (limited stock)
91 points Wine Enthusiast, listed as a \$35 retail. Powerful Paso Robles Cabernet, cellar or have with steak.~~

(pure Cab) **Whitehall Lane 2017 "Rassi Vineyard" Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$24.99 per bottle** (limited stock)
last case, and some loose bottles, of my top-selling Cabernet from Father's Day into early fall.

(meritage/claret style) **DUNHAM Cellars (Walla Walla) "Trutina" 2016 @ \$29.99 per bottle** (\$319.99 solid case = \$26.67)
Smooth and complex. Rated 90 pts W.S. and 92 J.S. and 93 IWR, at \$39 retail. Cabernet, Merlot, Malbec, Cab Franc.

(meritage/claret style) **MAQUIS LIEN (Colchagua, Chile) 2014 red @ \$31.99 per bottle** (very limited)
47% Carmenere, 20% Cabernet Franc, 19% Syrah, 14% Cabernet Sauvignon.

(meritage/claret style) **Chateau Lanessan 2015 Haut Medoc @ \$35.99 per bottle** (\$215.94 per 6pk, wood case)
93 points James Suckling, who notes: "Impressive ripe blackberry and darker plum fruits with notes of earth and warm stones. The palate has a supple, even-paced and fresh-fruited heart of red cherry and plum. Smooth tannins flow long. 93 points." note from Dave: a Chateau I have personally visited, and one that is always a classic old-school producer that holds vintages back longer than most. Cellaring is still recommended, even though this is a late-release 2015 Haut-Medoc that is comprised of 60% Cabernet Sauvignon with an eye toward 2025 and beyond. Approachable now with some breathing for fans of the style, which is big tannin with earthy mineral shadings, but it would be worthy of the wait too. 60% Cabernet plus 30% Merlot 5% and 5% Cab Franc and Petit Verdot.

(speaking of Petit Verdot) **Desparada "The Suitor" 2017 Santa Barbara @ \$39.99 per bottle** (limited stock)
Only 368 cases made. Rated 92 pts Robert Parker's Wine Advocate. 60% Petit Verdot, 33% Cabernet Sauvignon, 7% Cab Franc.

(pure Cabernet) **RAYMOND 2017 Napa Valley Reserve Selection Cabernet @ \$37.99 per bottle** (limited stock)
the "red velvet" label, rated 92 points Robert Parker's Wine Advocate. Historic Napa name, modern Boisset family flair.

(meritage/claret style) **Chateau La Tour de Mons 2016 Margaux @ \$49.99 per bottle** (limited stock)
94 points Wine Enthusiast, the 2016 vintage is a truly great vintage for the left bank - Medoc wines. Historic Margaux property:

~~(pure Cabernet) **AUSTIN HOPE 2018 Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$49.99 per bottle** (very limited)
Rated 95 points (again) and top 10 of the top 100 (again) by Wine Enthusiast magazine!~~

email orders are accepted on all of the wines in these newsletters, subject to confirmation. I especially appreciate e-mail orders that gave me some advance notice. Thank you for helping me to help you! If you prefer to do a Curbside Pickup next week so you can maintain a quarantine, let me know as part of the email when you indicate your pickup plans and timing preferences.

And of course, I will continue to offer "Dave as Personal Shopper" as well. Let Dave pick out a range of wines to fill your pantry for the holidays. Just tell me how much wine, what sort of styles, and what sort of prices and I'll pick out mutual favorites to save us some time and keep the crowds to a minimum this weekend and next weekend at BrightWines. Please give me a "24 hour courtesy" on personal shopper requests.

That's all for today. After this weekend I will send out "part 2" of the Gift of Wine newsletter, to list out more Smart Buys and Affordable Luxury wines (not necessarily Cabs) as well as a list of Specialty Liquors and also Champagne, and more. Thanks in advance for your support and patronage at this busy time of year! —Dave

The Right Wines are BrightWines!

2420 Margaret Street

North Saint Paul, MN 55109

email Dave@BrightWines.com and/or call 651.748.0793 (landline, no texting) and/or just REPLY to this Newsletter!

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