

**From:** The BrightWines Beacon [lighthouse@brightwines.com](mailto:lighthouse@brightwines.com)  
**Subject:** a summery September Wine summary  
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**To:** The BrightWines Beacon newsletter

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## The BrightWines Beacon for September 12th, 2025

Welcome back Summer! And welcome back Dave, and welcome back BrightWines Beacon subscribers! I hope you had a great Labor Day and first full week of September. We knew the cool temps (yet muggy) and more gray-than-bright weather of that first week after the holiday weekend would not last, September is usually a lovely weather month and personally my two favorite months of the year are probably September/October.

Yes, I took some time off the past couple of weekends and I did not send a newsletter out last week, so you did not miss anything (if you were wondering) and I hope I did not miss anyone or anything important. But I'm back to work, doing the work of wine that September usually offers! It's wine "trade show" season, and winery -owner visits and importer "deals" season to prime us all for the 4th quarter season, and it's wedding season, reunion season, etc, too. The next three weeks of September are going to be busy ones here at BrightWines!

So let's get to it, while the "September Days are here... with summer's best of weather and autumn's best of cheer." (*Helen Hunt Jackson, author*)

### **\*\* special focus on the PACIFIC NORTHWEST... annual "mini-feature" on Oregon/Washington:**

Most of every fall, especially in early fall, I like to explore the wines of Washington and Oregon a little more deeply than usual. I am a true fan of the wines of the Pacific Northwest, so this feature is not the only time we do this. But there is a bit more to it this time, and certainly enough to proclaim this a "special focus" or "mini feature" right NOW...

HIGHLIGHTS include: the impressive - and impressive value - and highly rated estate **Willamette Valley Pinot Noirs by the famed Joe Dobbs** (I just met with the winery CEO here yesterday) **PLUS two new arrivals each from two of my personal favorite Washington wineries AIRFIELD Estate and KIONA with great Cabernets, and red blend, and an awesome CHENIN BLANC "old vines" white. See the Bright Lights section today** for all the details on these NEW ARRIVALS and many MORE too...

### **\*\* CHARDONNAY - classic styles, modern styles, oaky and un-oaked too - pick your FAVORITES:**

While I certainly endorse keeping the "summer wines" going as long as we can (Sauvignon Blanc, dry Rose, other crisp and refreshing chillable whites) there is no doubt that soon we'll be looking for a little less of a chill on the wine and a bit more heft to the style too. Autumn (as opposed to "fall") seems like Chardonnay season, especially to fans of the varietal - of which there are many! So whether you like your Chardonnay oaky/buttery and rich or more of a dry/crisp or food-friendly personality, I have recently re-stocked on some of ALL of the above!

HIGHLIGHTS of our Chardonnay Favorites include: the **un-oaked California value-priced "Collier Creek"** has been fully re-stocked, and so has the **Montoya by Arroyo Seco Vineyards for fans of the "poor mans Rombauer" style**, plus before Labor Day **the fantastic Russian River Chardonnay by Kokomo** was restocked too. I also still have some of the **French Chablis, and Chablis wannabe whites** here as well, **PLUS** as part of the Pacific Northwest feature, there is a **new and 90-point rated UN-oaked Chardonnay from Willamette Valley** at a great value price too! Be sure to **read the Bright Lights section today** for all the details on this wide variety of Chardonnay in-stock NOW.

### **\*\* For the rest of summer, drink the best of summer... ICYMI the Labor Day newsletter PDF is online**

**MOST of the wines from the Labor Day weekend newsletter are still available, in at least mix/match sorts of quantities**, so feel free to email orders or inquire with Dave. <https://www.brightwines.com/drinkthebestofsummer.pdf>

I also have a NEW ADDITION to include that just arrived this week, a **Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon (made in Napa Valley)** for \$19.99 per bottle. **See the Bright Lights section today** for all the details!

### **\*\* SAVE THE DATES: word to the wise on TWO different upcoming winemaker and winery owner tasting events!**

The next two consecutive **THURSDAYS (Thursday Sept 18th - and - Thursday Sep 25th) at BrightWines!** Two great wineries from ITALY will be visiting BrightWines, and a limited number of newsletter readers can join us for a tasting and winery meet-and-greets. **STAY TUNED** for RSVP details and see **THE LAMP IS LIT** for more information on who is coming to visit us and how the tastings will be formatted.

## **THE LAMP IS LIT: Store Hours and Upcoming Tasting Events**

### **\*\* SATURDAY September 13th: OPEN from (approx) 10:45am until at least 5pm (regular Saturday)**

*BrightWines will be OPEN this Saturday for order pickups from this newsletter, other recent newsletters, and for Dave-as-personal-shopper requests too. email orders are preferred, just reply to this newsletter or contact Dave and be sure to mention when you prefer to pick up your order so I can reply and prepare accordingly to fill your order.*

### **\*\* MONDAY & TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY September 15th - 17th: OPEN by 11am on the weekdays**

*BrightWines will be OPEN (mostly) REGULAR HOURS next week for order pickups from this newsletter, other recent newsletters, and for Dave-as-personal-shopper requests too. email orders are preferred, just reply to this newsletter or contact Dave and be sure to mention when you prefer to pick up your order so I can reply and prepare accordingly to fill your order*

### **\*\* NEXT WEEKEND Thursday-Friday-Saturday September 18th - 20th: OPEN after 10:30am on the weekends**

*BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours next weekend!*

**\*\* SAVE THE DATES: Thursday September 18th - and - Thursday September 25th**

**NOTE: please wait to RSVP until final details on the wines, times, and logistics have been published - early next week.**

**Thursday September 18th at BrightWines! SAVE THE DATE**

*What:* the Affordable Luxury, top-rated wines of **Carpineto, in Tuscany** (Italy)

*Who:* Anton R. Zaccaro (son of one of the owners of Carpineto) Anton studied winemaking at Geisenheim University in Germany and recently formally joined the family business.

*Format:* mostly red wines, mostly "Affordable Luxury" (Tuscany) wine tasting with the winery - Suggested Minimum Purchase (and confirmed RSVP)

**Thursday September 25th at BrightWines! SAVE THE DATE**

*What:* smart buy wines from Friuli - Venezia Giulia (Italy)

*Who:* Alessandro Pecorari, 2nd generation **owner and winemaker at Pierpaolo Pecorari** winery

*Format:* mostly whites and rose, smart-buy priced Italian wine tasting with the winery - confirmed RSVP required (no suggested minimum)

*MORE DETAILS (and rsvp/logistics) will be sent in a separate emailing, early next week... so stay tuned!*

**BRIGHT LIGHTS:** Pacific Northwest feature, and a summery September wine summary

Nearly every autumn, I like to take some time to explore the wines of Washington and Oregon a little more deeply than usual. I am a true fan of the wines of the Pacific Northwest, so this feature is not the only time we do this. But there is a bit more to it this time, and certainly enough to proclaim this a "special focus" or "mini feature" right NOW...

**\*\* special focus on the PACIFIC NORTHWEST... a "mini-feature" on Oregon/Washington wines \*\***

*(New Arrival - rose)* **Willamette Valley Vineyards 2023 "whole cluster" dry Rose of Pinot Noir @ \$15.99 per bottle**

Suggested Retail: \$18 - \$22 (from various sources) \$191.88 per case = \$15.99 mix/match

DAVE says: this is the only NEW rose wine I plan to bring in right now, it's 100% Pinot Noir (makes great Rose) and will be a great pick for this feature, for the early fall, and even for Turkey too if it's still around for that. The WVV whole cluster Rose of Pinot Noir has **10 consecutive vintages of 90-92 ratings from most major wine magazines** including Wine Spectator, Wine Enthusiast, James Suckling, and other reliable reviewers. Here is what James Suckling says about the current offering: "**Aromas of strawberries, watermelon, rose petals and citrus zest. The palate is bright and juicy, with fresh acidity and a light core of red fruit. Clean and refreshing, with a crisp finish. 90 points.**"

*(New Arrival - white)* **KIONA 2023 old vines Columbia Valley (Washington) CHENIN BLANC @ \$16.67 per bottle**

Suggested Retail: \$22 Rated at least 90 - 92 points by 5 major wine reviewers! \$199.99/case

WINE ENTHUSIAST magazine says: "**Wow, this mix of 90% Chenin Blanc, 8% Viognier and 2% Roussanne is quite a value.** (at \$19 retail) It treats the nose with its **passion fruit, orange peel and wet stone aromas. The flavors range from guava and lemon to cut grass and Golden Delicious apples.** Count on crisp acidity matched with a nice, fleshy texture. 90 points."

DAVE says: I've been saying all year that "Chenin Blanc is having a moment" which was confirmed yet again by my Google news feed showing me (totally unprompted of course, right) the most recent Food and Wine magazine declaring Chenin Blanc to be "the best value white you're not drinking yet" and "the insider white returns". Personally, this Kiona Vineyard old vines example is the BEST Chenin Blanc I've tasted all year, so the Wine Enthusiast was right to say "wow". (btw it's correctly pronounced Kye-OH-Na vineyards)

*(New Arrival - Red affordable luxury)* **KIONA 2021 Red Mountain Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$24.99 per bottle**

Suggested Retail: \$30 - \$36 (various sources, winery website) Case Price: \$288 (mix/match Pac NW) is **33% off** full retail.

DAVE says: this is always one of the most powerful and complex Cabernets out there at \$30 or less. It's bottled late with full barrel aging as 88% Cabernet Sauvignon, 8% Cabernet Franc, 2% Malbec, 2% Petit Verdot, from prime vineyards on Red Mountain. "Kiona (which means "brown hills") vineyards (with) more than 130 acres of prime Red Mountain real estate, are impeccably run and excellent in all vintages." (Paul Gregutt, The Essential Guide to Washington Wines)

Rated 92 points JS, who says "This creamy red has aromas and flavors of lavender, hazelnuts, black cherries and plums. It's full-bodied with ripe, very well- integrated tannins. A supple and approachable expression of Red Mountain fruit. **Delicious already, but will hold for a few years. 92 points.**" (James Suckling) - and - Rated 93 points by Vinepair, who notes the Red Mountain influence, saying "**Kiona shows us a uniquely Red Mountain expression** of this variety. A concentrated nose of brandied brambles, forest floor, an underlayer of pepper, and an overarching plot of oak. The palate has a slight savory note with more judicious oak and a great concentration of fruit and supportive acidity. **93 points.**"

*(New Arrival - Red affordable luxury)* **DOBBES 2021 "grand assemblage" Willamette Valley Pinot Noir @ \$29.99 per bottle**

**Rated 93 points by Wine Enthusiast** (at \$35 retail)

Wine Enthusiast notes: "This is one **complex set of aromas, with red currants and dark chocolate morphing into rose hips, balsa wood and espresso shots. The flavors of strawberries, black pepper, thyme** and lemon zest are fresh and vibrant. The acidity is lip-smacking, while the tannins are subtle. **93 points.** \$35." (Wine Enthusiast) - and -

DAVE says: we are catching the tail end of this vintage (so it's showing well) at the new supplier for Dobbes estate (as in the well-known winemaker, Joe Dobbes). I met with the CEO of this winery here this week, and put together a nice 10 case mixed order showcasing my four favorites available now! (stock is limited, \$359.88 per case, mix/match)

*(New Arrival - Red affordable luxury)* **DOBBES 2021 estate Eola - Amity (Willamette) Pinot Noir \$44.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

DAVE says: we are catching the tail end of this vintage, so it's showing very well... in fact, as it matures it's obvious to me that Wine Enthusiast gave an extra point to the "grand assemblage" for value, because **this estate Eola - Amity Hills designation Pinot Noir is VERY classy, and deserves 93 points** at least too! The only made 575 cases of this wine, and the new supplier for Dobbes estate (as in the well-known winemaker, Joe Dobbes) had a total of 5 cases available when I met with the CEO of this winery here this week. I put together a nice 10 case mixed order showcasing my four favorites from Dobbes, and just HAD to include a couple of cases of this beauty! available now! (very limited stock) Also rated 90 points Wine Spectator, who says "**Generous and polished**, with raspberry, rose petal and stony mineral accents that finish with medium-grained tannins. Drink now through 2030." And WINE ENTHUSIAST notes: "With its aromas of raspberry pastilles, rose petals and a handful of Madelines, **this wine should not be consumed when hungry. (LOL)** The flavors of dark raspberries, Marcona almonds and white tea are equally enticing. **92 points. (editors choice)**"

(New Arrival - Red smart-buy) **AIRFIELD Estate 2023 estate Yakima Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$17.99 per bottle**

Suggested Retail: \$20 Case Price \$215.88 = \$17.99 mix/match

**Rated 91 points Wine Enthusiast:** "I loved this wine's perfume of boysenberries, earth and vanilla. Its flavors are equally lovable as boysenberries mix with dark chocolate and orange zest. The wine's dialed-back alcohol and lively acidity make it a joy to sip, whether with food or on its own. 91 points."

(Washington red blend, last of vintage) **AIRFIELD Estate 2020 "Bombshell Red" @ \$19.99 per bottle**

I met last week with the national sales rep for Airfield, and they discovered a spare case of this wine locally. I grabbed it. It's like "Lone Birch" red (also Airfield) but more complex, with a fun label inspired by WWII aircraft nose art.

(Washington red blend, last of vintage) **"The Explorer" 2020 Red Blend (canoe ridge) @ \$10.97 per bottle**

see the Labor Day weekend newsletter (online now) for more details, last couple cases

(Oregon smart-buys) **ROCK POINT 2023 Oregon PINOT NOIR @ \$17.99 per bottle**

**Rated 90 points by Wine Enthusiast magazine** (at \$19 retail): "The Rock Point is always a great Oregon Pinot Noir value. This year's model is riper and juicier than the past few vintages, beginning with super-ripe blackcap raspberries, sweet Amarena cherries and a touch of earthiness. Zippy acidity and a crisp texture escort ripe red cherry and sweet-sour hoisin sauce flavors across the finish line. \$19 retail. 90 points." (Wine Enthusiast) Rogue Valley vineyards by Del Rio family. CASE PRICE \$199.99 = **\$16.67 each, mix/match** Very classy and complex.

(Oregon smart-buys) **WINE by JOE 2022 Oregon PINOT NOIR @ \$12.99 per bottle**

Easy-going, fruit forward, juicy, screwcapped, and actually is **mostly Willamette Valley** fruit too. **Casual but 90 rated!** Wine Enthusiast notes: "90 points. This is the **kind of wine you want to find when you're looking for the perfect porch or picnic pour**. It has lively acidity, a crisp mouthfeel and all the fruit you can handle. Aromas and flavors of blackberries, lemon sorbet and a touch of cedar are framed by velvety tannins. Great value here." \$155.88 per case, limited stock.

(Oregon smart-buys) **ROCK POINT 2023 Oregon PINOT GRIS @ \$14.99 per bottle**

CASE PRICE \$155.88 mix/match = **just \$12.99 ea.**

Light and lively with wet stones and lemon and chamomile aromatics (credit to Wine Enthusiast) with a refreshing personality that offers a 12.5% abv dryness and purity that seems less intense than many Willamette Valley Pinot Gris (at much higher cost) yet plenty charming and is a perfect "patio style" Pinot Gris. This offers a nice middle ground between "Pinot Grigio" and Willamette "Pinot Gris" Rogue Valley vineyards by Del Rio family.

(Oregon smart-buys) **WINE by JOE 2023 CHARDONNAY un-oaked @ \$12.99 per bottle**

Willamette Valley Chardonnay under \$15 ??? No wonder Joe Dobbies and "Wine by Joe" is famous. This is **90-point rated** too! Wine Enthusiast magazine notes: "90 points. \$14 retail. This is a **light-bodied and refreshing Chardonnay that over delivers on quality for this asking price**. It is a tropical paradise of aromas, with chilled slices of papaya drizzled with lime juice and plated with lavender and dried hibiscus flowers. The primary flavor here is almost-ripe pineapple, which is accented by notes of bay leaf and fennel." (Wine Enthusiast)

... and speaking of Chardonnay (whether un-oaked, or oaky) this new arrival from Oregon is not the only option...

**\*\* calling all Chardonnay lovers: pick your favorite in your favorite style \*\***

While I certainly endorse keeping the "summer wines" going as long as we can (Sauvignon Blanc, dry Rose, other crisp and refreshing chillable whites) there is no doubt that soon we'll be looking for a little less of a chill on the wine and a bit more heft to the style too. Autumn (as opposed to "fall") seems like Chardonnay season, especially to fans of the varietal - of which there are many! So whether you like your Chardonnay oaky/buttery and rich or more of a dry/crisp or food-friendly personality, I have recently re-stocked on some customer favorites!!

**Collier Creek 2023 "Front Coach" Lodi Chardonnay (un-oaked) @ \$12.99 per bottle**

This Chardonnay has all the richness you expect of Lodi wines, but does not use any oak to accomplish that richness, nor is it overly fruity either. It drinks more like a lush Lodi version of a white Burgundy Bourgogne Blanc style of Chardonnay. Stainless tank fermented with batonnage (lees stirring) and careful winemaking from certified green "Lodi rules" vineyards. It should appeal to fans of all sorts of California Chardonnay styles. CASE PRICE \$155.88 per case.

**WINE by JOE 2023 CHARDONNAY un-oaked @ \$12.99 per bottle (see above in the Oregon listings)**

**MONTOYA 2023 Monterey CHARDONNAY @ \$15.99 per bottle (mix/match case price = \$14.99 ea)**

Made by Arroyo Seco Vineyards, this is a classic oaky/toasty rich Chardonnay from California too, sometimes you just want the full-bodied lushness of a well-crafted classic style. This is my current pick for those fans, and I just got it restocked this week! (yes, it's been very popular)

**KOKOMO 2023 Peters Vineyard RUSSIAN RIVER Chardonnay @ \$27.99 per bottle (mix/match case price = \$25.99 ea)**

Suggested Retail: \$38 (see winery website) save 30% off retail at BrightWines!

DAVE says: there's a reason so many of us rank Russian River among our favorite styles and sources for California Chardonnay, and this was a big hit when I first introduced it around Father's Day. It's a rich and smooth (good quality 100% French oak barrels) classic California Chardonnay. This is a textbook example, reminiscent of the famous names like Dutton Ranch and Kistler, with smooth nutty undertones to the dry and serious purity of lively apple and pear tones. Winemaker Erik Miller (who was here in the store earlier this summer, thus our great price) says it's "reminiscent of a classic white Burgundy but with a California twist" and if that's Russian River Chardonnay in a nutshell.

**TE\_PA 2021 Marlborough "Oke" SAUVIGNON BLANC @ \$27.99 per bottle (limited stock)**

A rarity nowadays... **a lusciously oaked Sauvignon Blanc**, and from Marlborough at that! Fans of upper tier Pessac Leognan whites (Bordeaux) or wines like Ferrari Carano "Reserve Fume" will want to take note! Rated 90 points by Wine Spectator, who says: "Offers appealing plumpness, with fleshy mango and apricot, plus a hint of flintiness up front. Notes of mandarin orange and lime zest linger on the mouthwatering finish. 250 cases made, 150 cases imported." DAVE says: only 150 cases imported (and only 250 cases made). This was a wine I had to special order when the winemaker from Te Pa (and Koho) was here at BrightWines a couple of years ago, but the special order never materialized because the hoped-for winemaker visit did not happen. But I am very pleased that the supplier continues to stock "just enough" of this wine. It's really great white wine.... but I only have a couple of cases in-stock, but I am happy to include this wine for the consideration of oaky Chardonnay fans!

**Domaine Seguinot-Bordet 2022 CHABLIS @ \$29.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

This a true Chablis that is drinking superbly! Totally dry 100% textbook French Chardonnay with classic racy acidity with plenty of depth too. One of the best, and best-value, producers of true Chablis that is available here in our market. What others are saying... "The set of 2022 Chablis from Seguinot Bordet are not to be missed... unparalleled value."

***Last but not least....***

**\*\* For the rest of summer, drink the best of summer... ICYMI the Labor Day weekend newsletter PDF is online \*\***

<https://www.brightwines.com/drinkthebestofsummer.pdf>

*I also have a NEW ADDITION to include that just got re-stocked this week:*

**SPRING STREET 2022 Paso Robles CABERNET SAUVIGNON @ \$19.99 per bottle** (\$225 per case)

This is the new vintage of a Paso Robles project from Vinum Cellars by way of Oakville, in Napa Valley. The Wine Enthusiast liked the previous release, and the tasting notes ring true to me... "Dark strawberry, graphite and sandalwood aromas make for a mellow nose on this bottling. The palate shows a touch more density, with blackberry, crushed thyme and anise flavors, as herbs give balance to the thicker mouthfeel. 2021 vintage. \$20 retail." (Wine Enthusiast)

That's all for today's long edition, I guess I'm making up for lost time having skipped a newsletter last weekend. I hope you enjoyed this September Wine summary! —Dave

**The Right Wines are BrightWines!**

<https://www.brightwines.com/drinkthebestofsummer.pdf> *(IN CASE YOU MISSED IT, from Labor Day weekend)*

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