

From: The BrightWines Beacon - lighthouse@brightwines.com
Subject: Bracketbuster wine selections
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The BrightWines Beacon for between-the-snowstorms, 3/22/24: **Bracketbuster wine selections!**

Ladies and gentlemen, in the little moment (one day) that remains to us between the "crisis and the catastrophe" of Winter's Last Blast, we might as well have some wine!

(apologies to the famous - and one of my all time favorites - Champagne quote from Paul Claudel that goes "gentlemen, in the little moment that remains to us between the crisis and the catastrophe, we may as well drink a glass of champagne")

This weekend I'm offering bracket buster wine selections, so what do I mean by that? I'm offering wines that over-deliver their price, or overachieve compared to their competition, but also wines that live up their high standards as top producers too. So if you fill your wine basket with these picks, your brackets will be set for success. **These may all be bracket busters, but I guarantee "no upsets"** from today's edition, just great wines all around!

**** Bracketbuster wines in the Spain/Rioja wine bracket**

some truly great and highly rated Spanish wines (especially three very good Rioja, including a Gran Reserva) and more great Spanish white and red wines that range from top-rated bracket champions to over-achieving dark horse values too! *IN-STOCK NOW so read "Bright Lights" today for all the details.*

**** Bracketbuster wines in the California wine bracket**

New arrival Smart-buys from California! Several new wines just arrived, ranging from one of my favorite modernist California wineries - Field Recordings - alongside a new and impressive, and a very tasty, value-priced Pinot Noir made by one of California's most historic family wineries. Plus one last crack at the "bargain alert" 91-rated \$10 California Cabernet, and more too! *IN-STOCK NOW so read "Bright Lights" today for all the details.*

**** Bracketbuster Malbec picks** from Argentina, a trinity of great selections

a very impressive Affordable Luxury Mablec blend, and a 93-point rated customer favorite Smart-buy, plus a great value from a new-to-us winery too. *IN-STOCK NOW so read "Bright Lights" today for all the details.*

BRIGHT LIGHTS: Bracketbuster wine picks

**** NEW ARRIVALS and TOP PICKS from SPAIN/Rioja ****

Bodegas Muriel 2014 Rioja Gran Reserva @ \$26.99 per bottle (mix/match)

Suggested Retail: \$30

Rated 93 points by James Suckling: "Complex and ethereal dark plums, savory spices and tobacco with sweet spices, iron and dried orange peel. This is long and elegant on the palate, rounded by creamy and firm tannins. Drink or hold." Bodegas Muriel was founded in 1982, when Julian Murua revived his father's (Jose Murua) winery, which dates back to 1926 in the heart of the Rioja Alavesa (one of the three sub-regions that make up Spain's Rioja appellation). The cellars are in the quaint, historic village of Elciego, which is renowned for being surrounded by some of the best terrior in Rioja. The name "Muriel" comes from the combination of the family name (Murua) and the name of the town itself (Elciego). The vineyards for the **Gran Reserva, which is now hitting it's absolute peak/prime 10-year maturity**, average 40 year vines in Rioja Alavesa. Bottled with the **traditional gold wire mesh** too! (always classy) **VERY LIMITED STOCK** of the 2014 vintage. **Limited to 6 bottles per customer, please @ \$159 per 6pk = \$26.50 each** Bodegas Muriel 2014 Rioja Gran Reserva

Fernandez Gomez (La Bastida, Rioja) 2018 Rioja cosecha @ \$17.99 per bottle (mix/match case price = \$15.99 each)

Suggested Retail: \$20

Full-bodied Rioja Tempranillo that **drinks like a Ribera del Duero due to the aging in French oak** as well as traditional American cask aging. This winery was awarded "**Rioja Winemaker of the Year**" for 2021 by Tim Atkin, based partly on the quality of the 2018 vintage of this impressive Rioja bottling. One of the real customer favorites and definitely a Dave pick from the Como event, I just got in five more cases of this great Smart-buy. **MIX/MATCH Case Price \$191.88 = \$15.99 each** Fernandez Gomez (La Bastida, Rioja) 2018 Rioja cosecha

As Laxas 2022 Rias Baixas Albarino @ \$21.99 per bottle

Rated 91 points by James Suckling, who notes: "Aromas of apples, honeysuckle and citron. It's medium-bodied with bright acidity. **Fruity and flavorful with a vivid finish.**" Case price, mix/match of \$250 per case = \$20.83 each. **As Laxas 2022 Rias Baixas Albarino @ \$21.99 per bottle**

el Goru Gold 2018 reserve Jumilla red @ \$12.99 per bottle

Rated 92 points by Wine Enthusiast magazine. This full-bodied Spanish red from Jumilla is **80% Monastrell** with a but of Syrah and Cabernet in the blend. As Wine Enthusiast notes: "This dark ruby wine has a bouquet of black currant, espresso bean and aniseed. It is soft on impact, then plush tannins set into the palate with flavors of blueberry, dark plum, mocha and oregano that dissolve into a Valencia orange finish. 92 points." **el Goru Gold 2018 reserve Jumilla red @ \$12.99 per bottle**

**** historic California family wineries... new "passion project" wines from winemakers in the family who are doing their own thing ****

Karl Wente's new Pinot Noir passion project "Angels Ink"

ANGELS INK 2021 central coast PINOT NOIR @ \$14.99 per bottle (\$159.99 per case = **\$13.33 each, mix/match)**

Angels Ink is a Pinot Noir "only" label from the portfolio of Wente Vineyards, one of California's most historic and best family wineries. Customer might recall how much we loved the Dry Rose of Pinot Noir last summer, and now we finally get to enjoy the red Pinot Noir. Smooth, elegant, cherry cola tones. This reminds me of the good old days of Hahn Monterey and Santa Lucia Highlands Pinot Noirs and similar sorts of \$15 (or less) Pinot Noir offerings that use to be easier to find in California. This wine is going to be perfect for Easter ham, and is complex enough to compete with any California Pinot Noir under \$20 nowadays. This will be on my personal table next weekend for ham. (presuming stocks permit)

Matt Cline's longtime passion project, 100-year old vines Contra Costa Petite Sirah

THREE Wine Co. 2018 Mazzoni-Live Oak Petite Sirah @ \$21.99 per bottle (case price \$250 = **\$20.83 each, mix/match)**

This old vines Contra Costa single vineyard Petite Sirah is easily labeled a "passion project" for Matthew Cline (brother of, but not involved in, Cline winery from Sonoma). Matt's passion are the old vines and sandy soils of Contra Costa County. He was here at BrightWines several years ago and he spoke more about the vineyard terroir of Contra Costa than he did about the wines we were tasting. This is a single vineyard called Live Oak (for reference, the Cline winery Live Oak wine was always a \$30 wine). This is **from 100+ year old Petite Sirah vines**, and is **dark and powerful, but drinking superbly** already at just 5 -6 years of age. It was one of the best-showing wines at Como, in fact. THREE Wine Co. 2018 Mazzoni-Live Oak Petite Sirah @ \$21.99 per bottle

**** MORE New Arrivals from California, a bracket-buster bargain - plus a featured winery, Field Recordings ****

Precision Wines "Pyramid Scheme" 2021 California Cabernet Sauvignon (last handful of cases) just \$9.99 per bottle..

Rated 91 points and awarded a "Best Buy" designation at a \$20 original retail price by Wine Enthusiast magazine, who says "layered aromas and flavors of blackberry, boysenberry, black cherry, coffee, nutmeg, cumin and clove, and gamy meat just on the back. Smooth tannins dissipate slowly throughout the length of the tasting; an elevated acidity gives the fruit notes a sense of vivacity. The finish is lingering."

Featured Winery: FIELD RECORDINGS - Paso Robles

FIELD RECORDINGS 2022 Paso Robles FICTION Red Blend @ \$17.99 per bottle (\$199.99 per case, mix/match = \$16.67 each)

Andrew Jones has done it again! The reason this "kitchen sink" blend of 32% Zinfandel, 22% Cabernet Franc, 15% Alicante Bouschet, 10% Charbono, 7% Syrah, 6% Lagrein, 4% Cabernet Sauvignon, 4% Grenache has so darn much personality is that **he knows just the right vineyards to source from and is not afraid of small lots of great quality fruit**. In fact, that is precisely his long-standing reputation! No wonder **I always list Field Recordings as one of my favorite and one of the best of the modern California winemaking scene**. This wine is rated 91 points by Wine Enthusiast, who notes: "aromas of blackberry, cedar, toast and pepper show on the nose of this kitchen sink blend of nine varieties. The blackberry sauce flavors of the palate are elevated by star anise, cigar box and tobacco leaf elements." FIELD RECORDINGS 2022 Paso Robles FICTION Red Blend @ \$17.99 per bottle

FIELD RECORDINGS 2022 Edna Valley BLANC (un-oaked Chardonnay) @ \$15.99 per btl (mix/match @ \$14.99 with "Fiction" or "American Recordings")

this has been my most popular un-oaked Chardonnay from California of the last six months at least. It's a limited production run of mostly Edna Valley fruit (great quality there) that was bottled exclusively for our Minnesota market. When Andrew Jones was here at BrightWine, who knew that MN would become one of his favorite markets in the country? FIELD RECORDINGS 2022 Edna Valley BLANC (un-oaked Chardonnay) @ \$15.99 per btl

AMERICAN RECORDINGS 2021 Willamette Valley (oaked) CHARDONNAY @ \$15.99 per bottle (\$191.88 per case, mix/match)

American Recordings is a **joint venture between American Solera (a brewery) and Field Recordings (a winery) made in Paso Robles, California** - using Willamette Valley, Oregon Chardonnay. This wine is dry and food-friendly, yet barrel aged for oaky richness too. Vineyard sources are 40% Eola Springs, 40% Fern Creek, and 20% Chehalem Mountain. Only 5 cases available on an end-of-vintage clearance from the winery. AMERICAN RECORDINGS 2021 Willamette Valley (oaked) CHARDONNAY @ \$15.99 per bottle

**** the third part of today's bracket trinity (Spain, California, Argentina) top-rated MALBEC selections ****

TRINITA' (Piattelli Grand Reserve) MALBEC Blend 2020 Mendoza @ \$19.99 per bottle (\$119.95/6pk, limited stock)
Suggested Retail: \$27

Rated 92 points by Vinous, and rated 90 points RP who notes: "'the 2020 Grand Reserve Trinità, a barrel selection of 73% Malbec, 21% Cabernet Sauvignon and 6% Merlot from Luján de Cuyo in Mendoza with high ripeness, 14.9% alcohol and **plenty of spice, toast and smoke notes coupled with the ripe berries. It's round and juicy** with fine tannins and a tasty, spicy finish.'" DAVE SAYS: this is currently the **BEST** wine available from Piattelli winery right now, and is sourced from their best Lujan de Cuyo, Mendoza vineyard sites. The winery says "our icon from this region owes its name to the holy Trinity. A perfect blend of Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot from different soils, it has a complexity and deepness only found in the most exquisite wines. With primary aromas of raspberry, plums and black fruits, hints of chocolate, crème and eucalypt followed after a couple of minutes of the wine in the glass. Full bodied, long and elegant in the palate." I have a one-shot special-purchase of 10 sixpacks of this at a great \$19.99 price, fully 25% off the retail - and note that the Trinita is rarely "on sale" locally! TRINITA' (Piattelli Grand Reserve) MALBEC Blend 2020 Mendoza @ \$19.99 per bottle

(also available, a tasty, good-value Malbec from the Como list) Enrique Foster 2021 "Ique" Mendoza Malbec

Event Price: \$12.99 per bottle (\$155.88 per case = \$12.99 each, mix/match)

(also available, impressive smart-buy Malbec from the Como list) **Alhambra 2021 single vineyard La Consulta Malbec** (La Consulta, Mendoza)
Event Price: \$15.99 per bottle (\$179.88 per case = **\$14.99 each**, mix/match)

(also available, my favorite "Smart Buy" from Piattelli) **Piattelli 2020 Cafayate "Grand Reserve" Malbec @ \$15.99 per bottle** (\$191.88/case)
*** 93 points James Suckling** - only 7 cases in-stock *

Note: this is the "tan label" Grand Reserve Cafayate Malbec at 20% off the \$20 retail price. A truly great smart-buy Malbec. Rated 93 points James Suckling - only 7 cases in-stock. Piattelli 2020 Cafayate "Grand Reserve" Malbec @ \$15.99 per bottle

The Right Wines are BrightWines!

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