


From: The BrightWines Beacon lighthouse@brightwines.com 
Subject: drink the best of summer
Date: August 28, 2025 at 4:36 PM
To: The BrightWines Beacon newsletter

TB

The BrightWines Beacon for 8/29/25 (Labor Day weekend recap of summertime favorites)

For the rest of summer, drink the best of summer! Featuring NEW ARRIVALS - and - plenty of RESTOCKED favorites...

**** Top Pick of the Weekend ****

The EXPLORER (Canoe Ridge) 2020 Red Blend @ \$10.97 per bottle (\$131.64 per case)

Save 50% off retail! (suggested retail \$22)

The Explorer series is an upper-level version of the always well-rated "Expedition Series" of wines by Canoe Ridge, in the Columbia Valley. This is a textbook style of Washington Cab-forward blend on a great deal (end of vintage) from the winery and the local supplier. 20 cases available on a one-time shipment.



**** Summertime Screwcaps ****

RIVER FARM 2022 Awatere, Marlborough SAUVIGNON BLANC @ \$13.33 ea

Suggested Retail: \$18 (multiple wine magazines) \$159.99 per case (\$13.33 per bottle, mix/match) is 25% off retail

Rated 93 points by Natalie Maclean (we always like her reviews) as follows: "River Farm 2022 Sauvignon Blanc is perfumed and intense on the palate with passionfruit, apple, pear, and lemon zest aromas and flavours with a mouth-wateringly long and silky finish. Enjoy it now through 2025. Scrumptious seafood wine." (Natalie's Score: 93 - reviewed by Natalie MacLean, 2024) And DAVE says: note the Awatere subzone of Marlborough designation, many of our favorites for balanced and complex NZ sauvignon blanc have been from the Awatere!

BAUER 2024 ROSE (Austria) @ \$15.99 ea. (screwcapped - with the Austria flag - full 1-liter bottles)

Estate-grown dry Rose of Zweigelt, by Familie Bauer nearby the Wagram/Kremstal region of Niederosterreich. Zweigelt is a famous red in Austria, but I always seem to prefer it when done as a dry Rose! This is lovely wine, **complex and juicy with subtle herb and expressive red fruit tones. This is nice and dry, and quite mouthwatering** actually - so thank goodness it's a full liter bottle! I bought this **end-of-season offer on their liter bottles** in conjunction with the Gruner Veltliner. The net price per standard bottle is only \$12 and this great quality for that price. LIMITED to stock on hand, this shipment only.

Oak Farm Vineyards 2023 Lodi Sauvignon Blanc @ \$12.99 per bottle (sale price, \$155.88/case)

Suggested Retail: \$19 (see W.E.) Save 30% off retail for the rest of summer!

Rated 92 points by Wine Enthusiast, at \$19 retail. "This wine is fresh, lively with aromas of candied lime, green papaya, vanilla and white flowers on the nose. The midpalate has flavors of citrus blossom, jalapeño, lime zest, dried herbs, mineral and a dry finish. \$19. 92 rating." (Wine Enthusiast)

DAVE says: a Sauvignon Blanc that we love, and on that is not a "New Zealand" style necessarily. This new vintage does have more lime citrus and herb/stoney character and a little less of the "melon" tones from the previous vintage. It still has a more rounded and juicy mouthfeel like it did, and

none of the gooseberry/grapefruit of New Zealand. O.F.V. has a new assistant winemaker in charge of white wine production and she's from Italy, so perhaps this slight shift in style is from the new insights there. But you can't argue with 92 points from Wine Enthusiast, and we're getting a great special-purchase sale price here for the "rest of summer" at 30% off retail - and fans of last year's version will enjoy this new vintage too.

ALSO AVAILABLE: **Oak Farm Vineyards "Tievoli" Red Blend** (\$15.99 each) - and - **O.F.V. 2023 Grenache Rose** (\$14.99 ea)

*(NEW and classy, upper-tier Vinho Verde in the **vinho branco - escolha** style)*

FIO a FIO 2024 Vinho Verde @ \$12.99 per bottle (\$139.99/case = **\$11.67 mix/match**)

("Thread by Thread")

I just got the first shipment ever of a new, upper level version of **Vinho Verde with premium varietals, not as bubbly**, styled like the lovely seafood and salads and summertime **style of Vinho Verde - an *escolha* / *vinho branco* style - so easy to find over in Portugal but not as widely exported**. It reminds me of the style of Vinho Verde on the first pages of the wine menus at the restaurants in Portugal. This is a white wine blend of **Alvarinho** (Albarino) and **Loureiro and Fernao Pires varietals**. Looking for a summer refreshing Vinho Verde that's less fizz and more finesse? Check this out. DAVE says: **BrightWines is among the very first to feature this new label**, at a great price too, which comes to us courtesy of my longtime connections with Silk & Spice and Gazela!

"The Retreat" 2023 Marlborough, New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc @ \$12.99 per bottle (\$155.88/case)

Wine Enthusiast magazine calls this a "classic Marlborough" Sauvignon Blanc, and maybe because it has a **lakeshore/cabin sort of theme to the labeling and name**, this has definitely been one of our favorites here this summer, and I'll be including it (while supplies last) in cabin cases for Labor Day too. Rated 90 points (at \$20 retail) noting the "passion fruit, pineapple, lime leaf and bell pepper... the palate is dry, crisp... **classic Marlborough. 90 points.**" (Wine Enthusiast)

MULDERBOSCH 2023 Stellenbosch SAUVIGNON BLANC @ \$12.99 per bottle (lowest price of the summer)

Mulderbosch is one of the very best wineries in Stellenbosch and is actually mostly famous for their white wines! **Rated 90 points JS**, who notes the **"limes and gooseberries on the nose of this fresh and crunchy sauvignon blanc. It's medium-bodied and zesty."** Fans of my recent picks from Marlborough will want to be sure to check out this Stellenbosch too!

MULDERBOSCH 2024 dry ROSE of Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$12.99 per bottle (new arrival)

Mulderbosch might be famous for white wines, but Stellenbosch is famous for Cabernet Sauvignon. Actually, Cabernet Sauvignon is notoriously difficult to make Rose from, but when it works - the wine has herbal tones combined with a more expansive mouthfeel than most, think Tavel perhaps but with less "fruit" from Grenache and more "herb" from Cabernet.

BAUER 2024 GRUNER VELTLINER (Austria) @ \$15.99 ea. (screwcapped - with the Austria flag - full 1-liter bottles)

Estate-grown by Familie Bauer nearby the Wagram/Kremstal region of Niederosterreich. This is **rounded and flavorful and dry, the current vintage of classic Gruner Veltliner** that I bought in conjunction with an **end-of-season offer on their liter bottles** of Rose too. The net price per standard bottle is only \$12 and this great quality for that price. LIMITED to stock on hand, this shipment only. Gruner fans with friends need to grab a few of these liter bottles.

Moulin de Gassac (Mas de Daumas Gassac) 2024 Pays d'Oc **un-oaked Chardonnay @ \$12.99 per bottle**

fans of WHITE BURGUNDY need to check this out. Great value here from one of best producers in the Pays d'Oc. This could easily pass for good Bourgogne Blanc or Macon Villages, etc. CASE PRICE \$155.88 per case, limited stock.

MONTGRAVET 2024 vin de France ROSE @ \$10.97 per bottle

This is made in a Provence style, and really pulls it off! From the pale color and dryness with depth and complexity. Previous vintages of Montgravet have been more powerful, using Syrah from Gascony. This new fresh and beautiful dry Rose 2024 bottling is now sourced from Saint Chinian in the heart of the Languedoc, a cooperative winery in Cebazan.

**** Beat the heat with these 5 "sparkling wine" highlights of the season ****

SAINT HILAIRE 2022 estate sparkling Vintage BRUT Blanquette de Limoux @ \$15.99 per bottle

Always the most popular of all the value-price French Brut I offer. If you know you know, and if not you should check it out. Made at the historic Benedictine monastery of Saint Hilaire, making "champagne method" sparkling wine in the south of France since before the times of Dom Perignon, or so they proudly proclaim. As they say about Friends episodes, this is "the one with" the classic old bottle shape with the orange label that looks like Veuve Clicquot from across the room.

Dopf and Irion Cremant d'Alsace Brut Rose @ \$22.50 per bottle

100% Pinot Noir rose! A delicious, beautiful, and very classy sparkling Brut Rose that's rated 90 points Wine Enthusiast. This is "wow" good. Like I mentioned above, two of my favorite Roses of the season have been sparkling, and this is one of them.

RAZA 2024 vintage Vinho Verde ROSE @ \$9.99 per bottle (\$107.88/case = \$8.99 ea case price)

Our favorite Vinho Verde of the past few recent summers, Quinta da Raza has a family history back to 1758 in Portugal. This summer, well fell in LOVE with the new Rose version! It's been out-selling the regular nearly two to one. Super tasty with nice fizz and exuberant red berries and melon aromas and flavors, with a crisp refreshing personality.

Breaking Bread 2024 dry Rose of Zinfandel PET NAT @ \$29.99 per bottle (very limited stock)

dry sparkling Zinfandel Rose from Dry Creek... diamonds in the glass indeed!! My best PET NAT since Carboniste (if you know, you know). Breaking Bread is the "fun" set of labels (great artwork too) by the winemaker at Kokomo (Dry Creek, Russian River, and Alexander Valley)

"La Guardiense" BRUT Sparkling Falanghina @ \$14.99 per bottle

As they say about Friends episodes, this is "the one from that winemaker visit." It's back in stock, finally. At the same \$14.99 tasting price. Crisp and refreshing with lemon drop citrus tones. Made fully sparkling (not Prosecco style) from 100% Falanghina from one of our favorite (truly) wineries in Campania called Janare. The "La Guardiense" sparkling Falanghina is also "the one with the frosted glass bottle" to help you remember.

**** Summery Smart-buys and Affordable Luxury ****

ROCK POINT 2023 Oregon PINOT NOIR @ \$17.99 per bottle (\$16.67 each, mix/match \$199.99 per case)

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). DAVE says: the secret to the great value? This is from the Rogue Valley, not Willamette Valley, but it seems that Rogue and Applegate in southern Oregon are on the cusp of greatness.

SAINT COSME 2023 Côtes du Rhône @ \$17.99 per bottle (new arrival)

Suggested Retail: \$18 - \$20 "Case Price" of \$199.99 = \$16.67 each, mix/match (5 cases in stock)

Rated 90 points Wine Spectator! This is a famous and top Gigondas producer whose flagship Cotes du Rhone is a northern Rhone styled (Syrah focused) grown in the south. Wine Spectator says "There's a pure core of fresh blackberry, crunchy plum and violet in this vibrant version, with the subtlest brushing of vanilla. Layers of graphite and fine-grained tannins provide a solid framework. Compact, with savory details emerging toward the solid, medium-bodied finish, which is grounded in salty mineral notes and a waft of alder smoke. Drink now through 2028. 90 points." AND this current vintage also **rated 91 points by James Suckling**, who notes "Brimming with wild-blackberry fruit and so fresh, this is a joy to drink. So lively and bright on the medium-bodied palate. The softness of the tannins fits this profile beautifully. Pure syrah from the South of the region. 91 rating."

Domaine Seguinot-Bordet 2022 CHABLIS @ \$29.99 per bottle

This a true Chablis that is drinking superbly! Totally dry 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." Limited Stock.

Domaine le Loup Bleu 2024 Cotes de Provence Rose @ \$19.99 per bottle

One of several very impressive 2024 "true Provence" dry Rose we've had here this summer... coming from Aix, from Bandol, and this "Blue Wolf" from the Cotes de Provence.

LAND of SAINTS 2024 Santa Barbara SAUVIGNON BLANC @ \$22.50 per bottle (limited stock)

This wine rally stood out in my samplings - and in my newsletter earlier this summer, as it's a unique style of Sauvignon Blanc (in a good way). The best description I can give is that it shines with delicate minerals and crystalline quince. Land of Saints is one of my favorite "cult" labels from California. I say "cult" as in they may be lesser-known, but savvy winelovers should know and love them... and not in the "impossible to get and cost way too much" kind of way necessarily... in point of fact, these two \$22 affordable luxury summer wines from Santa Barbara are among the handful of the best-liked and best-tasting California wines I have been able to feature this summer, and this is the very first vintage of Sauvignon Blanc I've had from them.

DEL RIO 2023 estate grown Rogue Valley VIOGNIER @ \$17.99 per bottle (\$16.67 each, mix/match \$199.99 per case)

"100% estate-grown Viognier is grown at the vineyard's lowest elevation in mineral-rich, ancient riverbed soil. It is light gold in color and opens with an expressive nose of orange peel, apricot, lemon zest, and hints of white blossom. On the palate, vibrant flavors of citrus, peach, apricot, and honeysuckle shine through. Subtle mineral undertones and delicate spice add to this wine's mouthfeel and complexity." (winery notes)

"We drink wine with diamonds in the glass

By the case, the meaning of expensive taste." (lyric from the song, Lady Marmalade)

MARMALADE (by Breaking Bread / Kokomo) 2024 "Orange Wine" (skin contact dry white) @ \$22.50 per bottle

Simply put, this is the BEST "orange wine" I've tasted since the trend hit California. Unfiltered "diamonds in the glass" and Marmalade is the perfect name how this wine tastes! Breaking Bread is the "fun" set of labels (great artwork too) by the winemaker at Kokomo (Dry Creek, Russian River, and Alexander Valley)

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. I only have 3 cases in-stock, but I am happy to mix-and-match the case price with the luscious oaky Sauv Blanc (see below) for a special wine-on-a-stick case price!

TE_PA 2021 Marlborough "Oke" SAUVIGNON BLANC @ \$27.99 per bottle (mix/match case price = \$25.99 ea)

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 mix-and-match the case price with the Russian River Chardonnay (see above) for a special wine-on-a-stick case price!

Here's hoping for a lovely Labor Day weekend. **Enjoy the rest of summer**, and while we're at it... **drink the best of summer!** —DAVE

The Right Wines are BrightWines!

2420 Margaret Street
North Saint Paul, MN 55109