


From: The BrightWines Beacon 
Subject: top picks, new arrivals, and "cabin cases"
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The BrightWines Beacon for Memorial Day Weekend, 5/22/26 thru 5/25/26

It's already here, Memorial Day Weekend is upon us! If it feels a bit early this year, that's because it's the earliest date it can be (there is a full entire week of May left in the month even after Memorial Day Monday) but a holiday weekend is always welcome (!!) and the weather looks like it's going to cooperate especially as we get further into the weekend with some great late-May days, with a hint of summertime to come too. They say that Memorial Day Weekend is the "unofficial" first weekend of the summer season! Perhaps this weekend will include some grilling out and hosting of friends/relatives or other outings and festivities, and perhaps it will include some cabin time too. However you plan to enjoy this weekend, I wish you a wonderful holiday weekend!

BRIGHT LIGHTS: top picks, new arrivals, and "cabin cases"

It's going to get warm and sunny, time for new fresh lovely dry Rose, PLUS Dave's Top Picks for RED wines for the "unofficial first weekend of summertime."

**** New Arrivals (and some restocks) for fresh 2025 vintage Roses ****

(alpine Austria) **Hopler "Pannonica" 2025 Rose @ \$14.99 per bottle**

From the Burgenland, a perennial favorite here. 40% Pinot Noir, with Blaufrankisch and Zweigelt too!

(Italy/Sardinia) **ARAGOSTA (Catina Santa Maria la Palma) Alghero 2025 Rose @ \$15.99 per bottle**

The one with the langostino on the label, made from Monica on the west coast of Sardinia in the Alghero DOC.

(south of France) **GRIS MARIN 2025 Sable de Camargue 2025 Rose @ \$11.99 per bottle**

Another perennial favorite, with the lighthouse label, in the Provence style from the Languedoc/Rhone coast.

(west coast USA) **Frog's Leap "La Grenouille Rougante" 2025 Mendocino Rose @ \$22.50 per bottle**

The rarely seen before rose by Frog's Leap, the label and style meant to emulate BANDOL and is sourced from Mendocino Carignan.

(Pacific Northwest) **"French for Water" Brut Rose sparkling (Columbia Valley) @ \$15.99 per bottle**

Wine Enthusiast recommended, saying ""The wine is aptly named, as its scent of a fresh mountain stream mixes with wisps of cantaloupe and clover. This Syrah-driven blend is light and airy, with flavors of peach, strawberry and tonic water. While the wine's acidity is soft, its force-carbonated bubbles are frisky. \$19 retail."

(south of France) **CAMPUGET 2025 "Tradition" dry Rose (vdp Gard) @ \$12.99 per bottle**

blend of Syrah/Grenache from the southern Rhone that has a pale provençal pink and notes of red berries with stony acidity and dryness.

(alpine Italy) **SCAIA 2025 Rosato (Veneto, Italy - dry Rose) @ \$14.99 per bottle**

This new vintage has added notes of peach and orange citrus overtop the usual red berries and stony freshness. This is the one with the glass stopper, if you recall that nice feature.

(south of France) **Moulin de Gassac 2025 "Guilhem" dry Rose (Daumas-Gassac, L'Herault) @ \$12.99 per bottle**

Perfectly pale pastel pink, Provençal style... made from 40% Carignan, 40% Grenache, and 20% Cinsaut.

(darker pink tradition) **Gran Sasso 2025 Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo @ \$15.99 per bottle**

The name cerasuolo literally means "cherry red" is inspired by the deep pink/red color the wine obtains from even very brief skin contact with the highly pigmented Montepulciano. In Abruzzo, cerasuolo has always referred to the rosé style of wine made in the region. It has been produced under the rules of the Montepulciano d'Abruzzo DOC since it was established in 1968, and in 2010 it was promoted to its own separate Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo DOC. In all respects for this delicious and exuberant dark pink, the name says it all.

(darker pink tradition) **Domaine Chantepierre 2025 Tavel @ \$17.99 per bottle**

The classic dark rose of the Cotes du Rhone, made across the way from Chateauneuf du Pape. Tavel is often released later, but we're lucky to have this classic, tasty and textbook, example from a very good co-operative here at the start of the season, it has good herb and dry bright cherry tones too.

**** Dave's Top Picks for Smart-buy REDS for Memorial Day Weekend ****

Piattelli 2019 "Grand Reserve" (Lujan de Cuyo, Mendoza) Malbec @ \$15.99 per bottle

Suggested Retail: \$20 - \$24 BrightWines CASE PRICE: \$14.99 each, \$179.88 solid case

Yes, the 2019 vintage is correct... and yes this is in the prime drinking window! Piattelli's best pure Malbec is always the ones from their great Lujan de Cuyo district vineyards, and the Grand Reserve version is designed to age 7 - 10 years. DAVE's TASTING NOTES: first and foremost, this is drinking superbly... additionally this does have a nice 92-point rating, as J.S. notes: "Aromas of blueberry, cocoa, tar, graphite and hot stone. It's full-bodied with firm, powdery tannins. Intense and chewy with lots of dark fruit, spice and stones. Rich, yet balanced. Try from 2023. 92 points." note: the "Grand Reserve" is the one in the white parchment label, Bordeaux bottle shape and listed as "limited production."

Silvan Ridge 2023 Reserve Willamette Valley Pinot Noir @ \$15.99 per bottle

Suggested Retail: \$30 - \$36 BrightWines CASE PRICE: \$14.99 each, \$179.88 solid case

Silvan Ridge is a label that is being discontinued, but the wines will continue on under a new label and new ownership. The name "Silvan" was a portmanteau of two family names, "Silva" and "Hinman" combined to make "Silvan" Ridge. These are winemakers and winemaking families that go all the way back to 1979 in the early years of the Willamette Valley as an important wine region of the Pacific Northwest. The new labels and

wines will all be consolidated as Hinman Vineyards with new ownership. DAVE's TASTING NOTES: this is a textbook modern-era "Reserve" bottling, with some oak aging and some **riper fruit tones (black cherry, and some raspberry) alongside the dryer personality and subtle spice** we love about Willamette Valley as opposed to California. I am SURE that all of my Willamette Valley Pinot Noir drinkers will enjoy this limited production "grown, produced, and bottled" Pinot Noir from southern Willamette Valley.

LUKE 2021 Columbia Valley "The Companion" Red Blend @ \$17.99 per bottle (WSS-26 sale price)

Suggested Retail: \$24 - \$28 BrightWines Case Price: \$215.88 (\$17.99 ea)

"Luke" is named for the Wahluke Slope growing region just east of the Cascades in Washington. This is a Cabernet-based blend of mostly Cabernet with some Merlot and Syrah too. Rated **90 points Wine Spectator, rated 90 points Wine Enthusiast** who says "There is a **lot of bang for the buck in this Cabernet Sauvignon-driven blend.**" And it is also rated 92 points JS, who notes "Aromas of ripe red and dark berries with hints of spiced oak, ground cloves and cedar. **Full-bodied with an opulent mouthfeel** and generous fruit. It has some sandy texture to its tannins. Plush and velvety on the finish. **92 points.**"

**** CABIN CASES (no cabin required) ****

This weekend marks the return of "Cabin Case" season! This newsletter feature is the very popular offering of "Dave Pick" selections of seasonal wines (lots of screwcaps, red wines for casual fare, patio and pontoon favorites, etc) including Reds and Whites and Roses, from Bargains to Smart-buys! High-quality, value-priced, pre-selected "Cabin Cases" (no cabin required) curated by Dave (with your input, as desired). A variety of options to choose from are available upon request (just email Dave, or reply to this newsletter) for quick pickup this weekend or next week is fine too.

So what's a cabin case?

1. a mixed case of good values and smart buys that lean toward "casual" consumption, not fancy - just tasty!
2. emphasis on screwcaps if possible, fun labels if possible, but always GOOD wines!
3. includes the "usual suspects" for whites and definitely a dry Rose or two, and of course RED WINES that are good quality but flexible for casual fare and outdoor settings. Most of the wines are "BrightWines favorites" and many have been featured in recent newsletters, of course.
4. You can even pick your own mix of how many bottles each for Reds/Rose/Whites/sparkling... 5/4/3 is a good mix, so is 4/4/4 and 4/3/3/2 etc. So just tell me what you'd like, any mix is fine! When in doubt, I'll probably mostly offer 6/4/2 sorts of mixes of Red/Rose/White given recent newsletter stocks. Some variations will occur, the cabin case mix is stock dependent and inspired by individual parameters and will mostly be 1's and 2's and 3's in order to give good variety, unless you make a particular request.

OPTION #1: the "bargain lovers" Cabin Case, for an average \$9 - \$11 per bottle (**\$125.99/cs**, tax included is approx \$139)

OPTION #2: the "Smart Buys" Cabin Case of bargains and more, for an average \$12 - \$15 per bottle (**\$159.99/cs**, tax included is approx \$177)

OPTION #3: the "Life is Good" Cabin Case, which adds in a few nicer wine too! (**tax included is \$212.79** for the mixed case)

reply to this newsletter or email Dave directly any time this weekend if you want a pickup Saturday or Monday (and later next week is fine too) and just let me know when to have it ready.

**** postscript ****

What's a Memorial Day newsletter without a brief mention of the holiday itself? BrightWines' hometown of North Saint Paul takes Memorial Day seriously, offering a Noon service at the veterans memorial park at the Margaret Street bridge. So if you find yourself pondering a visit to BrightWines on Monday, you can freely partake and remember the memorial part of this holiday weekend. As a purveyor of fine wines, an historic beverage used for toasting and for honoring at ceremonies since ancient times, and I am always willing to raise a glass in honor. *"Ceremonies are important. But our gratitude has to be more than once-a-year Memorial Day ceremonies. We honor the dead best by treating the living well."* (Jennifer Granholm - author, governor, and former US Secretary of Energy) I find this sentiment to be especially appropriate, given that wine is proof that God loves us and wants us to be happy (Benjamin Franklin).

Have a wonderful Memorial Day Holiday weekend! —Dave

The Right Wines are BrightWines!
2420 Margaret Street
North Saint Paul, MN 55109
651-748-0793 (office number)