

From: The BrightWines Beacon 
Subject: September wines are here!
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To: The BrightWines Beacon Newsletter

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The BrightWines Beacon for 9/22/26 - 9/26/26: September Wines are here!

"September Days are here... with summer's best of weather and autumn's best of cheer."
(Helen Hunt Jackson, author and inspiration for the "Home of Ramona" wine brand of yesteryear)

Today's emailing, here on the first day of Autumn (officially arrives this evening) is a "belated" edition to begin this week, so you may rest assured that you did not miss one over the rainy weekend we just had here. I wasn't able to get a newsletter written and sent in time last week because I spent most of last week attending and evaluating "trade show" wine lists and wines and special offers from some of my favorite suppliers. There are a couple more to come yet that I am making time for, and there's a decent chance we will get to have an Italian winemaker event meet-and-greet here at BrightWines in a couple of weeks so stay tuned for that potential announcement.

September is trade show season in the local wine business traditionally, it's the time of year when wine wholesalers and importers want to showcase their selections for the peak quarter of the year - the October/November/December months, before retailers and restaurateurs are too busy to pay attention. All in an attempt to create some excitement in the wine business for the coming peak "wine season" which begins in the fall and peaks during the holiday season. And based on what I saw last week, and hope to see more of this week and next, it appears to be working! Most of my suppliers have put together something for this season. I can't personally attend them all of course, but thankfully my better suppliers also do a great job of bringing their trade show to me, by way of sneak previews of the official programs, having visiting suppliers visit me, and of course with samples galore.

So last week, instead of writing a newsletter, I spent a goodly part of my days at work with my nose in some price books and my glass full of wine samples, and yes, placing orders of my favorite wines/deals to arrive into stock at BrightWines in the coming weeks. Tough work, I know... but somebody has to do it!

There is more such work to do all the way through until early October for me. And the GOOD NEWS is that there's quite a lot of great wines and great deals that have already arrived into stock here, and there's much more to come! So stay tuned for more to come, and be sure to check out what's already here and ready to go at BrightWines!

Here are the HIGHLIGHTS for this week, in-stock and available in-store and by email:

**** is \$12.99 the new \$9.99 ??? ****

As you probably have noticed, the cutoff price where the better wine values - good interesting wine at an inexpensive price - are more readily available (and better wine) has increased incrementally over the past few years. Recent factors that are definitely raising prices (on everything) are tariffs (hits the import wine business especially hard) and the cost of diesel impacting freight (impacts domestic wines as much as imported wines).

You may have read about a glut of wine, excess wine and lower consumption, which is true. But it's mainly true at the extremes... bulk wine (that we don't tend to care about or bother to drink) and of course overpriced expensive wine brands too. But when it comes to GOOD wine and good VALUE, the market for those wines remains robust. But one thing I've noticed, and probably you too, is that there's not much out there under \$10 per bottle anymore.

Dare I say it... but I think perhaps \$12.99 is the new \$9.99 per bottle. Thankfully, I have found some great options to feature at that price! And today's wine is a perfect example...

INTRODUCING... **from the winery that made "Colossal" and "Confidencial" and made in the style of "Gaurda Rios"** (all of which were \$10-ish wines) and **sourced from an historic property in the DOURO region of Portugal** (where wines are rarely under \$15 per bottle) comes this **"Dave's Top Pick"** for value of the September trade-show season so far!!

Quinta de Porrais 2023 Douro DIVERSUS Red Blend @ \$12.99 per bottle

Quinta de Porrais originally belonged to the legendary Ferreira family. Casa Santos Lima (we loved both the Colossal and the Confidencial) has been partnered with the Ferreira family for the past 15 years and is full responsible for the production and marketing of the wines. The Douro vineyards offer classic **stoney and peppery aromas, dry wine structure and dark fruit tones** while the winemaking style of Casa Santos Lima shines through with the **emphasis on smooth and approachable wines of depth and character**. The "Diversus" red blend is a **classic Douro blending of Touriga Nacional** with Touriga Franca, Sousão, and Tinta Barroca. This is a NEW label for the Twin Cities market, BrightWines is the FIRST IN TOWN to feature this wine!! CASE PRICE: \$155.88 per case

**** Something old, something new... ****

Some of my favorite wines from my recent samplings with good suppliers bringing their "trade show" wines to me include...

New arrivals (yet 5 - 7 years prime maturity) Rhone style reds - AND - a quick tour of Italy by way of 4 new wines from 4 famous regions (and one is a mature example) including a sneak preview of a coming winemaker visit.

Cupertinum 2017 Copertino Reserva @ \$17.99 per bottle

(vintage is correct, and the current release) CASE PRICE: \$191.88 or **\$15.99 ea, mix/match**

Rated 90 points by Decanter. Negroamaro from Apulia (think Salice Salentino in Apulia) made only in the best vintages and released after several years of bottle aging.

This Apulian red from the historic cooperative in Copertino is one of a kind! 2017 is a ripe vintage with purple and fruit tones shining through, yet still abounds with a range of aromas of the charcuterie board including cured meats, cherry, balsamico, oregano, leather and tomato - a unique, savory and smooth southern Italian red. CASE PRICE: \$191.88 net \$15.99 ea)

Ciaccia Piccolomini d'Aragona (Montalcino) 2024 Toscana @ \$15.99 per bottle

Estate-bottled Sangiovese (Brunello clone) blend that is lighter than their Rosso di Montalcino but much prettier and ready to drink now! Really lovely wine!! Rated 90 points: "Based on Sangiovese with Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, and Merlot, the 2024 Ciacci Piccolomini D'Aragona Toscana Rosso pours a bright ruby color and is designed in a fresh style, meant to be enjoyed young. The aromatics are fruity and lifted, with ripe berries, blackberries, violets, and fresh earth. Medium-bodied, it has a plush texture, clean acidity, and an easy, balanced finish." (J.D.) CASE PRICE: \$191.88

Langa Style 2022 Langhe Rosso @ \$15.99 per bottle

CASE PRICE: \$191.88

50% Barbera and 50% Nebbiolo from Piedmont. The "Langa Style" label is a joint venture among winemaker and importer friends that some of you might recognize. HINT: two of the winemakers will be visiting next week from Piedmont, Italy and BrightWines is planning to offer a meet-and-greet tasting while they are here. Details to be announced soon, by email.

Ca Rugate "Campo Bastiglia" Valpolicella Ripasso Superiore @ \$25.99 per bottle

Original Retail: \$30 LIMITED STOCK

Valpolicella is having a moment! Some would argue the best versions of Valpolicella are the "Ripasso" styles where the wine is vinified along with Amarone lees in a "pass over" technique. They offer bright red fruit juiciness with extra depth and richness. If a Valpolicella is an ideal summer red, the Ripasso is perfect for autumn. The 2021 Cà Rugate 'Campo Bastiglia' was the official selection of the Gambero Rosso's "Tre Bicchieri" showcase in NYC recently. And in my sampling here recently, it's drinking superbly at the 5-year mark now! **Rated 91 points** by Falstaff: "Bright ruby red with garnet-coloured edges. **Appealing on the nose, lots of plum, cherry and violet.** Mediterranean herbs and lavender on the finish. **Juicy on the palate with good fullness.**"

Castellas (Rhône) vieilles vignes 2020 Vacqueyras @ \$25.99 per bottle

Original Retail: \$33 LIMITED STOCK

Old vine (vieilles vignes) Grenache, this red boasts intense cherry, raspberry and plum flavors, along with hints of spice. Vacqueyras is one of the best of the Cru Côtes du Rhône, equivalent to Gigondas and shares many stylistic similarities to Châteauneuf du Pape but for a fraction of the price.

MORGAN 2021 Monterey "Cote du Crow's" GSM red blend @ \$17.99 per bottle

Suggested Retail: \$22 (see Wine Enthusiast) Case Price: \$215.88

DAVE says: this was one of the fastest-selling wines of my "spring sale" this year, and I was able to get a few more cases of this same 94-point rated vintage again recently after the winery's national sales rep made a market visit in August. In lieu of attending their trade show this month, they offered BrightWines a shot at a GREAT price on a re-stock stack!

Rated 94 points and "Editors Choice" by Wine Enthusiast magazine!

Wine Enthusiast notes: "This Grenache-based blend also includes 27% Syrah, 6% Mourvèdre, and 4% Tempranillo. It is incredibly bright, fresh, and inviting on the nose, featuring aromas of strawberry, cherry, hibiscus, and white pepper. The palate is vibrant and refreshing, with cherry-candy flavors and a firm texture. \$22 retail. 94 points. Editors Choice." (Dec 2025 issue)

**** AVAILABLE THIS WEEK: the September "wine of the month club" Official Selections ****

NOTE from DAVE: **both of these selections are available for in-store and email orders to ALL newsletter readers and BrightWines customers.** I also have the necessary stock set aside for the multiple cases I need to cover the "Wine Club" wines-of-the-month customers (you know who you are) in the Affordable Luxury better bottles, and the Smart Buys version too.

(in-stock NOW) **Carmen 2020 "Frida Kahlo" (Chile) Red Blend @ \$14.99 per bottle**

mix/match Case Price: \$13.33 each (\$159.99 per case)

SOLID CASE PRICE: \$155.88 (\$12.99 per btl)

The official selection for the Smart Buys wine of the month club. With the "Day of the Dead" Frida Kahlo self-portrait label, this wine will get you in the mood for Halloween next month! A.I. results from a quick Google search says *The Carmen Frida Kahlo Single Vineyard Red Blend 2020 is a bold, structured red wine from the Apalta region of the Colchagua Valley in Chile, priced around \$15 to \$20 per 750ml bottle.*

Rated 90 points by Tim Atkin, a noted South American wine specialist (he's a conservative scorer too) **"medium-to-full-bodied red featuring smoky black cherries, spices, and elegant, plummy fruit with a smooth finish"**

DAVE says this was drinking superbly at a trade show I attended last week, and I love a good Carmenere from Chile, and the Apalta region of Colchagua is some of the best! This is a **blend of Cabernet, Carmerene, and Syrah.** I love this red, and want to share my love by making it the **September wine club pick "Smart Buys" version.**

(arrives here this WEDS a.m.) **Oak Farm Vineyards "Estate" (painted label) 2023 Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$25.99 per bottle**

Retail Price: \$28 CASE PRICE: \$299.88 (**\$24.99 ea, mix/match**)

Only 469 cases produced! https://www.oakfarmvineyards.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/2023Cabernet-Sauvignon_Estate.pdf

Rated 93 points by Wine Enthusiast. Only 14 cases shipped to Minnesota, and BrightWines has 10 of them! A no-brainer for the **Affordable Luxury September wine club pick.**

THE LAMP IS LIT: Store Hours this week!

**** TUESDAY September 22nd: OPEN until 6pm today** (long weekday)

BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours this week for in-store shopping, email order pickups, and for Dave-as-personal-shopper requests too. email orders are accepted, 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.

**** WEDNESDAY Sept 23rd: OPEN from 11am until 6pm** (long weekday)

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**** THURSDAY & FRIDAY & SATURDAY Sept 24th - 26th: OPEN after 10:30am** (regular weekend hours)

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And STAY TUNED for a regular “Friday edition” of The BrightWines Beacon covering September 25th - 30th... INCLUDING the official RSVP details for an **upcoming winemaker visit** here at BrightWines featuring two winemakers from Piedmont, Italy! The tasting details and wine selections are being discussed and finalized over the course of this coming week...

That’s all for now, my last thought for today is “*Try to Remember the WINES of September*” (to the tune of Try To Remember, from The Fantastiks). —Dave

The Right Wines are BrightWines!

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