

**From:** The BrightWines Beacon [lighthouse@brightwines.com](mailto:lighthouse@brightwines.com)  
**Subject:** try to remember the kind of September  
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**To:** The BrightWines Beacon newsletter

TB

**The BrightWines Beacon for 9/22/23:** try to remember the kind of September

*Try to remember the kind of September when life was slow and oh, so mellow. Yes, we're deep in September now although here is over one full week left of this month of transition from summer to fall. It's been a little slow but there are busy times to come soon this season, so follow... follow, follow, follow, follow...*

**BRIGHT LIGHTS:** Dave's Top Picks for the last week of September

**\*\* the fire of September:** 2 smart buys from the Marche, Italy for wood-fired pizza (and more) \*\*

*Earlier this month I visited my brother who built himself a brick and adobe wood-fired oven in the backyard (we had stuffed Pitas) which reminded me that I recently tasted a wine that seems perfect for wood-fired Pizza. It's a style of red that a very famous local wood-fired pizza restaurant first introduced me to the pairing... Montepulciano d'Abruzzo. This always-popular red wine from Italy's March is 91-point rated, on a good deal from the importer AND I have also added a good seafood-friendly white wine smart-buy from the Marche to match!*

**Podere Castorani 2017 "Cadetto" Montepulciano d'Abruzzo @ \$12.99 per bottle** (last cases of the vintage from local supplier)

Suggested Retail: \$15 Case Price: \$155.88

Rated 91 points by James Suckling, who says this wine has "Lots of clean, fresh black-fruit character to this. Medium-bodied with slightly chewy tannins but the fruit persists through the finish." AND it's also rated 90 points by Wilfred Wong who quite accurately notes: "pleasing and sturdy on the palate... this wine offers aromas and flavors of ripe berries, charred earth, and black fruits."

**Lucchetti 2022 "Birbaccio" Verdicchio Dei Castelli di Jesi classico @ \$15.99 per bottle** (\$14.99 each, mix/match case price)

The most famous white wine of Italy's Adriatic coast, Verdicchio di Castelli di Jesi classic (100% Verdicchio) and the second vintage in a row that I have loved this wine. If it's new to you, it's more than just a seafood wine. One of the famous "V" whites of Italy (Vermentino, Vernaccia, and Verdicchio) that fall somewhere between Pinot Grigio and Sauvignon Blanc. A good Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi has plenty of mineral stoney salinity due to the coast influence, so perhaps you can think of it as a Pinot Grigio meets a Graves Blanc. Regardless, today BrightWines is featuring the new fresh and lovely 2022 vintage of this wine, which just arrived locally. It's worth noting that the 2021 vintage rated 90 points by Wine Enthusiast, saying "aromas of lime blossom, honeysuckle and roasted lemon zest. The wine shifts gears and highlights the Marcona almonds, candied lemon zest and sea spray. The palate is vibrant and fresh." This dovetails nicely with what the winemaker notes say from the winery on the new-release 2022 vintage: "Brilliant straw-yellow color with a green shimmer. Very aromatic and opulent with uplifted varietal aromas paired with pronounced mineral notes... clean, full-bodied flavor what is quite soft and creamy with a refined and fresh finish."

**\*\* Try to Remember:** In Case You Missed It, last week's newsletter is re-Stocked and online now \*\*

<https://www.brightwines.com/back-to-basics-9-15-23.pdf>

**Highlights of LAST weekend's BACK TO BASICS newsletter include...**

**David Finlayson 2019 Stellenbosch Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$10.97 per bottle** (importer clearance price)

This wine has RATINGS of: 91 points James Suckling, 92 points Decanter, 90 points Tim Atkin (southern hemisphere specialist) saying "Aromatic, serious and still youthful, David Finlayson's Cabernet offers a lot of flavour and structure for the price. Textured, deeply coloured and plush with dark cherry and fresh herb flavours and stylish oak.." Suggested Retail: \$16 - \$20.

**Luna Nuda 2022 vigneti Dolomiti Pinot Grigio @ \$10.97 per bottle** (fully restocked)

**Bodegas Care (Carinena, Spain) old vines Garnacha @ \$14.99 per bottle** (the missing cases arrived)

for all the details on these wines, and a dozen more, check out last weekend's newsletter online at <https://www.brightwines.com/back-to-basics-9-15-23.pdf>

**\*\* The Fantasticks:** new arrivals in Affordable Luxury \*\*

**FULLERTON 2019 "Five Faces" Willamette Valley PINOT NOIR @ \$29.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

Suggested Retail: \$36 (see Wine Enthusiast and winery website) Case Price: inquire for solid 6-bottle pricing (limited)

**Rated 94 points and "Editors Choice" by Wine Enthusiast**, who notes: "Have as many faces as you like if you are this good. Brilliant acidity lights the path for a brisk mouthfeel and flavors such as blackberries, saline, white tea and a lemon granita. Super fragrant, with burst of blackberry pie, violets and basil. **\$36 retail. 94 points.**" (482 cases made)

DAVE SAYS: the winery just released the 2019 vintage, which means it's actually two years more mature than most comparably-priced Willamette Valley Pinot Noirs (many of whom skipped over 2020 smoke into 2021). This wine is very classy and very classic Willamette Pinot Noir. Elegant with depth, complex with fruit, dry and structured yet smooth. The first shipment to Minnesota of the 2019 got snatched up very quickly, and BrightWines was one of just a handful of retailers allowed to order as many as 5 cases (5 cases for 5 FACES... an acronym for their family names) as the **winery only produced 482 cases** of this wine! There is one more shipment arriving the first week of October. My current inventory will be dedicated to filling confirmed email orders for pickup this week - and I'll take email orders for the October shipment on a first-come, first-served basis. *Please be sure to indicate your pickup preferences when you email your order so I can confirm back accordingly, asap.*

*(recapping)* FULLERTON 2019 “Five Faces” Willamette Valley PINOT NOIR @ \$29.99 per bottle (limited stock)  
Suggested Retail: \$36 (see Wine Enthusiast and winery website) Case Price: inquire for solid 6-bottle pricing (limited)

**Domaine Rochebin 2020 Bourgogne Blanc (Chardonnay) @ \$19.99 per bottle (limited stock)**

Case Price: inquire for solid 6-bottle pricing (limited)

My new favorite “white Burgundy” smart buy / affordable luxury. This Macon-based producer sources most of its wine from vineyards that were formerly the property of the Abbaye de Cluny. The 2020 vintage of the Macon-Villages whites was both classic and generous. This may be labeled simply “Bourgogne” Chardonnay but it drinks like a much classier AOC. This is my new benchmark for the quality I look for, and although it’s too bad that the 2021 (bad and small) vintage put so much price pressure on 2020 and 2022 that we have to raise the bar a little, at least this example clears that bar with ease! I have limited stock for now, but the supplier has plenty!

**\*\* POSTSCRIPT:** I’m trying to remember... ah yes, I remember now!

“Try to Remember the kind of September” is the opening line of the most famous song from the Broadway musical The Fantasticks. Why do I remember that? Because in my youth our school put on a version of The Fantasticks as our school musical one year, probably around 1979. And although I was not (yet) in any such performances, the song kind of stuck around for a year or two amongst the (maybe not so) hip crowd I was in.  
—Dave

**The Right Wines are BrightWines!**

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