

**From:** The BrightWines Beacon lighthouse@brightwines.com  
**Subject:** the right wines for the rites of spring!  
**Date:** April 3, 2026 at 12:57 PM  
**To:** The BrightWines Beacon newsletter

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**The BrightWines Beacon for April 2nd - April 6th: *the right wines for the rites of spring!***

It's time to celebrate some of our most cherished rites of springtime, both the religious and the secular ones, that are taking center stage in the ongoing ballet (*cue Stravinsky's Rite of Spring*) of our lives. Easter is this weekend, and passover has begun. For those who believe in the "church of baseball" (*cue Bull Durham's opening line*) the Twins have their home opener on Friday afternoon despite all the gray and cool weather. In fact, I'm pleased to report that the Easter Brrrrr-nny will likely see it's shadow on a partly sunny, if unseasonably cool, day this Sunday. So let's take our cue from opening day and not let the gray and wet and cool days to start this weekend get us down. We all know what April showers means...spring is here!

This weekend at BrightWines will hopefully be a busy one, and I've been busy all week preparing for it! So whatever and however you plan to celebrate this weekend (*cue the "celebrate good wines" theme of this winter/spring*) I hereby offer the right wines for the rites of spring!

**\*\* Curated wine recommendations for holiday meals/celebrations this weekend:**

*HIGHLIGHTS include...*

**Pinot Noirs for spring:**

including an "easter bunny" appropriate label on a two-time customer favorite for \$19.99 (briefly last thanksgiving, and again at Como) PLUS smart-buys in Pinot Noir from California and Willamette Valley and from Burgundy (France) and more! *AND since a picture is worth a thousand words, check out this photo I just took of several of these highlighted wines.* [https://www.brightwines.com/20260402\\_163604.jpg](https://www.brightwines.com/20260402_163604.jpg)

**Chenin Blanc is continuing to have its moment:**

including the new vintage of a truly "old vines" Chenin Blanc from one of the very best wineries in Washington... and it just got ratd 91 points from multiple wine magazines. *Read Bright Lights today for all the details on this Chenin Blanc, and another fresh vintage favorite too!*

**Prosecco picks for brunchtime bubbles:**

including the last couple of cases of our favorites here from the holiday season and Valentines and Como PLUS a smart-buy Brut Rose from Tuscany made from Sangiovese getting in on the Italian bubbly action. *Read Bright Lights today for all the details on three tasty smart-buys for Easter brunch!*

**Bargain Alert:**

just arrived, 10 more cases of the impressive Red Blend Portugal for \$10.97 per bottle, made by the same winery as Colossal but a slightly different blend, that sold out in less than two weeks here back at the end of February. Rated 89-90 points by multiple magazines, and drinking so well that I'd give it an extra point or two for value too. *Read Bright Lights today for all the details on this bargain red that would be great for ham or lamb PLUS another 90-pointer "red blend" for just \$12.99- \$15.99 too!*

**curated "Easter Basket / Egg Carton" mixed sets of Dave's Top Picks:**

cover all the bases this weekend for just \$77.95 per 6pk or \$155.88 per case (average per bottle of \$12.99 each). *Read Bright Lights today for all the details on this holiday weekend time-saving option using Dave as your personal shopper!*

And MORE:

including "In Case You Missed It, ICYMI the "Great Scott" newsletter is online, plus other re-stocked favorites, and other fun wine selections for Easter!

*Read today's BRIGHT LIGHTS section (see below) for all the details on all of the right wines for the rites of spring!*

**THE LAMP IS LIT:** Store Hours thru "Easter Monday" and next week!

**\*\* FRIDAY April 3rd: OPEN from 10:30am until 6pm**

*BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours this Good Friday. for in-store shopping and/or 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. NOTE: I might stay a bit later than usual, depending on how the Twins game (on broadcast television here in my office) is going.*

**\*\* SATURDAY April 4th: OPEN from 10:30am until at least 5pm** (regular Saturday hours)

*BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours this Saturday for in-store shopping and/or 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.*

**\*\* SUNDAY:** closed (per usual) *have a lovely Easter.*

**\*\* MONDAY April 6th: OPEN from 11am until 5:30pm** (regular hours)

*BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours next week for in-store shopping and/or 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.*

**\*\* TUES/WEDS April 7th/8th: OPEN at 11am daily** (regular hours)

**\*\* NEXT WEEKEND Thurs April 9th - Saturday April 11th: OPEN after 10:30am daily**

## **BRIGHT LIGHTS: Dave's Top Picks... the right wines for the rites of spring!**

\*\* Pinot Noirs for spring \*\*

### **GILLOT 2023** (Kuehling-Gillot, Germany) **Pinot Noir @ \$19.99 per bottle**

Check out the “easter bunny” appropriate label on a two-time customer favorite (briefly last thanksgiving, and again at Como) when you get a chance:

[https://www.brightwines.com/20260402\\_163604.jpg](https://www.brightwines.com/20260402_163604.jpg)

This Pinot Noir is **smooth and medium-bodied with an ever so slightly applewood-smoked style** to it. It seems ideal for a baked ham. The flavor profile may be Californian (very Santa Lucia Highlands style) but the wine is actually a modern, new-era Pinot Noir from one of Germany's best Pinot Noir winemakers, Carolin Spanier-Gillot (owner and winemaker for Battenfield-Spanier and Kuhling-Gillot) with many top-rated Pinot Noirs. This has twice been a customer favorite, and I'm planning to serve this at my own personal Easter dinner (presuming I don't sell out).

*(affordable luxury / top-rated smart buy)* **Scott Family Estate 2023 Arroyo Seco Pinot Noir @ \$21.99 ea.**

Suggested Retail: \$24 Case Price: \$250 (\$20.83 per bottle, mix/match)

**Rated 92 points** by J.S. who notes: **"Excellent clarity in both color and aromas**, with pretty floral and tea notes perfuming red cherries and scrubby herbs. A serious core of coiled citrus and cranberry acidity provides spine for **mountain berries, raspberries and spices, as well as a forest floor note that lingers** in the finish. **92 points.**" Arroyo Seco is one of two premiere zones (along with the Santa Lucia Highlands) in Monterey. Using all dijon clone Pinot Noir and the cooler climate of Arroyo Seco, this is “peak” Monterey Pinot Noir (as the kids all say) style. Very classy, very flavorful, yet elegant for spring!

### **VINUM Cellars 2022 Monterey Pinot Noir @ \$17.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

My favorite \$15 - \$19 range California Pinot Noir right now is this \$17.99 option from Vinum... there's just so much to like about Monterey County! *Home to Santa Lucia Highlands and Arroyo Seco, both of those are praised in the two \$20 options listed above as Dave's Top Picks.*

### **CARDWELL HILL “Fenders Blue” estate Willamette Valley 2023 Pinot Noir @ \$19.99 ea.** (very limited stock)

#### **Charles de Grimont 2023 Bourgogne rouge Pinot Noir @ \$17.99 per bottle**

6pk price \$99.99 = \$16.67 each

This may be simple Burgundy, but it's 100% Pinot Noir (not to discredit the Gamay based ones that so many value Bourgogne rouge are) and it punches well above its price point. The reason for that being that it's a private label for an importer who has vineyard sources all over the Cote de Nuits including two grand cru's and Vosne-Romanee as well as several smaller family growers throughout Burgundy. Trust me, this wine definitely over-delivers! And I have good stock too! *(ALSO AVAILABLE: I have a small handful of great red Burgundy from my mid-winter feature here... priced from \$21.99 to \$44.99 including Chitry, Mercurey, and Ladoix reds. Inquire with Dave)*

#### **ELK COVE 2024 estate Willamette Valley ROSE of Pinot Noir @ \$12.99 per bottle** (sale price)

Suggested Retail: \$19 - \$20 (see various sources)

All estate-grown Willamette Valley, using free run juice, very classy and fun too. Made in a “blanc de noir” dry style, with a splash of red pinot noir at blending/bottling for the vibrant darker pink color tones. (the Champagne technique) So if you want a classy Dry Rose for an Easter pink wine or to pair up with ham, this my top pick Rose this weekend!

\*\* Chenin Blanc is continuing to have its moment \*\*

Perhaps it's the hints of honeyed pineapple (seems like a good fit for ham).

Or as an alternative to un-oaked Chardonnay (Chenin Blanc is rarely oaky, and never buttery).

Or the refreshing summertime orchard meets tropical citrus with dry hints of stone.

**Whatever it IS about Chenin Blanc, it's been having a moment** for a while now. *These two NEW fresh vintages of two recent favorites came into stock just in time for Easter...*

#### **L'ECOLE 41 old vines 2024 Yakima Valley CHENIN BLANC @ \$21.99 per bottle**

Suggested Retail: \$24 Case Price: \$250 (**\$20.83 per bottle, mix/match**)

**Rated 91 points JD:** “The old vines in the 2024 Chenin Blanc Old Vines were planted in the 1970s. **Inviting aromatics of peach and apricot... The texture is creamy and long-lived.** 91 points.” **AND also rated 91 points JS:** “Fragrant notes of jasmine, sliced pears and golden apples wait from the glass. It's **bright and creamy with a medium body. Pretty floral and mineral undertones to the fresh fruit.**” 91 rating.”

#### **INDABA 2025 Chenin Blanc @ \$7.99 per bottle** (yes, fresh 2025 vintage)

\$95.88 per case, mix/match is okay

From South Africa, home to some of the worlds best and most popular Chenin Blanc, which is also southern hemisphere meaning the 2025 vintage is fresh and already ready, already. The most recent (2024) vintages was fairly recently recommended by Wine Enthusiast magazine, as a \$12 retail, saying “Tropical aromas that include mango and pineapple take over the nose of this white wine. Soft ripe flavors of white fruit are backed by gentle acidity.” Dave says: the 2025 has the same fruit tones for sure, but is also quite lively and crisp and refreshing.

\*\* PROSECCO picks for brunchtime bubbles \*\*

#### **BOCELLI d.o.c. PROSECCO @ \$12.99 each**

Case Price: \$140 (but only 3 cases left at \$11..67 per bottle)

**Wine Enthusiast** recommendation: “From Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli and his family (vintners in Tuscany for 130 years) comes this **bright, cheerful sparkler. It shows crisp acidity, ease, tonic effervescence and overall harmony.** \$19 retail.”

#### **Particolare Gran Cuvee Brut** (Montecarlo, Tuscany) **Sparkling @ \$17.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

So this is not a Prosecco... but rather a **Brut ROSE of SANGIOVESE from Tuscany, a “Particolare”** made by Tenute del Buonamico.

Sangiovese makes wonderful dry Rose - and - this wine is better than any “Rose Prosecco” I've tasted in quite a long time. In fact, any fan of Rose Prosecco and/or any fan of Brut Rose from France (or anywhere) will want to try this wine. Elegant and delicate enough for brunch, flavorful enough for ham, and very lively bubbles that provide plenty of pop!

#### **ZARDETTO d.o.c. Brut PROSECCO @ \$14.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

A perennial 90-pointer by magazines like Wine Enthusiast, Vinous Media, and James Suckling. A crisp and refreshing dry classic Prosecco personality in a fun bottle by a well-known producer! *Compared to Bocelli, this one is less fruity and more dry... so Mimosa, or Aperol Spritz, or just for sipping in a crisp and clean style.*

**\*\* BARGAIN ALERT \*\***

Just arrived, 10 more cases of the impressive Red Blend Portugal for \$10.97 per bottle, made by the same (Lisboa, Portugal) winery as Colossal but a slightly different blend, that sold out in less than two weeks here back at the end of February. Rated 89-90 points by multiple magazines, and drinking so well that I'd give it an extra point or two for value too

**Casa Santos Lima 2020 Reserva CONFIDENCIAL red blend @ \$10.97 per bottle**

Case Price: \$125.95 per case (solid case price of \$10.49/btl)

Rated **90 points** by James Suckling, and highly recommended by Wine Enthusiast too, which notes: "More than 10 varieties (Portugal is a cornucopia of grape varieties) go into this wine. It is fruity and smoky, with attractive red fruits." The winemaker notes are eminently accurate based on my recent tastings, when they say " complex aromas, such as red fruits and vanilla. **Medium body in the mouth, it reveals again sensations of red fruit, harmoniously integrated** with wood notes provided by aging in oak barriques. It develops smooth and rich flavors, some acidity and complexity, **ripe red fruits, and chocolate notes.**" DAVE says: this is the same winery (from the vineyard regions near Lisbon) as "Colossal" red blend Portugal, and this 2020 vintage could easily pass for the more recent vintages of that former BrightWines favorite.

**\*\* and MORE too \*\***

My most popular **smart-buy California red blend (Illusion)** - AND - perhaps my best suggestion for **Italian reds for ham (or lamb) on a springtime afternoon... Valpolicella** (speaking of wines that are having a moment).

**Rizzardi 2023 Valpolicella Classico, cuvee XVII @ \$15.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

This very smooth and complex full-bodied Valpolicella was a dark-horse favorite among those who found their way into the historic entry of the palm dome. Rated 93 points by Falstaff "A rich, intensely bright ruby red. Powerful nose, notes of blackberry and cloves, dark cherry, black peppercorns. Robust and gripping on the palate, finely spiced, a very powerful Valpolicella, earthy notes on the finish." A classic Veronese blend of Corvinone & Corvina at 50%, with Rondinella 30% and Merlot and Croatina 10% from a winemaker that's taking the "Classico" seriously instead of opting for "ripasso" techniques. Fans of the style will understand, and there is great value here.

**Peirano Estate 2022 artist series "Illusion" red blend @ \$13.33 per bottle** (mix/match)

Case Price \$155.88 solid case price **just \$12.99** per bottle (5 cases available)

**Rated 90 points by Wine Enthusiast:** "This wine is concentrated, with aromas of red currant compote, dark plum, simmering spices and toasty oak." A blend of **old vine Zinfandel, with varying amounts of Cabernet, Merlot, and Petite Sirah.** A blend-lovers blend!!

**Lenotti 2022 "Rosso Passo" Merlot/Sangiovese blend @ \$15.99 per bottle** (limited stock)

Smooth and easygoing, fruit forward modern fruit ripeness that's drinkable now yet still shows character of the Bardolino and Valpolicella origins of this great winery, Lenotti. in the Veneto.

**Lenotti 2020 "Le Crosare" Valpolicella Ripasso classico superiore @ \$25.99 per bottle** (very limited)

Rated **94 points and "4 Stars"** by two of the top Italian wine publications, Luca Maroni and Vinibuoni d'Italia. This wine truly deserves the moniker "poor mans Amarone" not only because of the Ripasso designation (whereby the winemaking process has a brief "ripasso" or re-passing on the grape skins of actual Amarone which gives extra depth and flavor) but also because the wine is so darn good. This is the same winery who's Amarone was so spectacular this past Christmastime.

**\*\* ICYMI (In Case You Missed It) \*\***

Last weekend's **"Great Scott" newsletter is online** (PDF format) which also includes a **highly rated New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc** and a famous and **top-rated Cotes du Rhone** too!!

<https://www.brightwines.com/greatscott-winesoftheweekend.pdf>

**And last but not least...** if you'd like to save some time and just have Dave put together an "Easter Basket" or a full "Easter egg carton" worth for you...

**Curated "Easter Basket" mixed sets of Dave's Top Picks:** you can cover all the bases this weekend (*cue the baseball season*) for just \$79.95 per 6pk or for just \$159.99 per case (wines will range from **between \$10 and \$16 per bottle** for an average of \$13.33 ea) with this holiday weekend time-saving option using Dave as your personal shopper!

**\*\* MIXED CASE for \$159.99 - OR - "Mixed Six" for \$79.95 \*\*** (*mix/match case prices, plus tax*)

BOTH of these options are customizable... just tell me how many REDS / WHITES / Roses / Bubbles you'd like to have in the box! (repeats are possible, depending on the mix requested) A dozen tasty wines in all (or 6) including traditional Easter picks and recent favorite smart-buy reds, to hidden gems just waiting to be found... selections curated by Dave for brunch, or ham, or lamb, or April showers. (wines will range from **between \$10 and \$16 per bottle** for an average of \$13.33 ea) The right wines for the rites of spring!

That's all for today. **BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours all day this Friday and Saturday** if you plan to shop for wine before Easter. email orders are accepted while supplies last on all of the wines in today's newsletter AND **email orders can also be placed for pickup next week too**, so when you email an order be sure to mention when you prefer to pick up your order so we prepare accordingly.

**\*\* POSTSCRIPT \*\***

*When that Aprill, with his shoures soote, the droghte of March hath perced to the roote, and bathed every veyne in swich liquor, of which vertu engendred is the flour.*

- Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales (opening lines of the general prologue, in Middle English, circa 1387-1400)

During these rainy days of early April, I'm reminded of my high school English Literature class, where we were required to memorize the opening stanzas of the prologue to the Canterbury Tales - probably right around this time of year, as the tales themselves are the story of a pilgrimage that takes place at Eastertime. You know the Canterbury Tales... the Knight's tale, the Wife of Bath, the Miller's tale, etc. Reading the modern translation of those famous first lines, it's obvious the idea that "April showers will bring (May) flowers" goes back at least as far as medieval times.

*When that April with her showers sweet  
The drought of March has pierced root deep,  
And bathed each vein with liquor of such power  
That engendered from it is the flower*

I have also discovered that **the Canterbury Tales are "sop with wine"** (forgive the Chaucerian pun). Did you know that (depending on the translation) there are **at least nine references to wine in just the general prologue** (where the cast of characters is introduced) of The Canterbury Tales? Some are bawdier than others, some more genteel than others, but all are descriptive. One of the more appropriate references to wine, for the purposes of today's BrightWines Beacon, is this one from **the introduction for the Franklin** - which reads:

"To live in delight was ever his wont, for he was Epicurus' very son, who held the view that perfect delight, was the true felicity outright. **A hospitable householder was he**, Saint Julian (patron Saint of Hospitality) he was to his county. His bread and ale always second to none, and **no better wine than his was known.**"

I hope everyone has a lovely Eastertime, and finds a good opportunity to have a glass or two, and share a bottle or two, of fine wine as "hospitable householders." —Dave

**The Right Wines are BrightWines!**

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