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Subject: Fwd: delightful wines for frightful weather
Date: December 16, 2025 at 12:24 PM
To:

TB

The BrightWines Beacon for December 12th/13th, 2025

Oh the weather outside was frightful... but the WINES are so delightful...

At least that's how that christmas classic goes around here... I'm sure Dean Martin would appreciate. And speaking of christmas songs, this year I'm convinced that **two more reindeer have been added to the team behind Rudolf**.... right after Donner and Blitzen... and **their names must surely be "Clipper" and "Wind-chill."**

I know we're all getting caught up in the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, so we'll make the best of it despite the wintry weather. Here at BrightWines, I am happy to offer up a cup or two of Christmas cheer!

Over the 25 (and counting) holiday seasons of BrightWines, I've made a point to organize my December newsletter themes to focus on seasonal concepts like **"Entertaining with Wine"** and **"The Gift of Wine"** and don't forget sparkling **wines to celebrate the season**. We're getting close to mid-December, and have fewer than three weeks of 2025 left to go, and we're under two weeks from Christmas now! For the next couple of newsletters, I'll do my best to include a little bit of all three of those traditional holiday season themes. Wines for entertaining, wines for gifting, and wines for celebrating... and include some of all of them in my newsletters this month. So on Dasher and Dancer... and yes Clipper and Wind-chill can come along too!

**** NEW ARRIVALS and re-stocked FAVORITES, in-stock at BrightWines this weekend!**

Highlights include:

NEW top picks for **"smart buys" in California Cabernet** (it's a very tasty Paso Robles) AND for **California Chardonnay (a 90-point rated, oaky classic style)**. Plus, I've restocked my best quality and best-selling **Red Blends** (both are great value smart-buys) from my fall sale (at the fall sale prices) namely the **Kiona "estates red"** and **"Illusion" by Peirano Estate**. I have also found **2 new favorites for \$19.99 per bottle Pinot Noirs**, and both are not what you'd expect but both are very tasty! *Read on to BRIGHT LIGHTS for all the details on these, and more.*

**** Entertaining with WINE, bargains and smart-buy to share with friends and family!**

Highlights include:

BARGAIN options like a nicely rated, very classy **bargain Pinot Noir** from California, and a **crisp interesting Chenin Blanc white** that's even more of a bargain! Plus I have a fun new arrivals in a **lush ripe red wine smart-buy** (with a screwcap too, handy) from off the beaten path, and a **perennially 90-rated Prosecco** too. *Read on to BRIGHT LIGHTS for all the details on these, and more.*

**** Seasonal traditional favorites are in-stock too!**

Fans of the **GLUHWEIN from the German Christkindlmarkt** will want to stop by this coming week (stocks are limited) and fans of this year's **Georges Duboeuf 2025 Beaujolais Nouveau** (the tastiest of them all this year) will also want to let me know before the stock runs out (limited, and running low) of this year's nouveau. *Read on to BRIGHT LIGHTS for all the details on these, and more.*

**** Celebrating (or gifting) with wine!**

Whether you need a bottle for a special meal, or as a gift, or as a toast, here are highlights of NEW ARRIVALS: Dave's Top Pick for **French Brut Sparkling (\$24.99 per bottle, Cremant Brut)** AND quite possibly **the best AMARONE I've had in a few years** is here (only a few 6pks remain available of this vintage though). And speaking of limited stock, special wines. I do need to update everyone that the **Turley Zinfandels all sold out**, and so did all of the 6pks of the L.E. "Ancellotta" red, from last week's newsletter. **There IS still some availability of the #25 Wine Spectator Top 100 Chianti Classico Riserva and the "Top 100" Pinot Gris too.** *Read on to BRIGHT LIGHTS for all the details on these, and more.*

All this and much MORE has come into stock, plenty of new arrivals and plenty of restocks too. So this dozen or more of wines I have time to highlight have plenty of companions in other prices and styles and regions. Read on to BRIGHT LIGHTS for all the details on today's wines, and STAY TUNED for MORE next week too!

Without further ado, **The Lamp is Lit** - as the BrightWines elves burn the midnight oil to keep pace with the season...

THE LAMP IS LIT: Store Hours for Saturday Decemr 13th, and December 15th thru 20th

**** SATURDAY December 13th:** OPEN from 10:30am until 5:30pm (regular Saturday hours)

BrightWines will be open regular hours this Saturday for order pickups from recent newsletters, to showcase new arrivals, 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.

**** MONDAY December 15th:** OPEN from 11am until at least 5:30pm

BrightWines will be open regular hours Monday for order pickups from recent newsletters, to showcase new arrivals, 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.

**** TUESDAY December 16th:** OPEN from 11am - 2pm (for regular business) and between 5pm and 6pm (order pickups)

please note: I am running a "split schedule" this coming Tuesday in order to attend an after-school event

**** WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY December 17th/18th:** OPEN from 10:30am/11am until at least 5:30pm

BrightWines will be OPEN regular hours most of next week for order pickups from BFS-25 and for Dave-as-personal-shopper requests too. email orders are preferred, 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.

**** NEXT WEEKEND: FRIDAY & SATURDAY Dec 19th and 20th: OPEN after 10:30am on the weekends**
BrightWines will be OPEN full days all weekend, next Thursday and Friday and Saturday for your holiday shopping convenience.

BRIGHT LIGHTS: delightful wines for frightful weather (top picks, new arrivals, restocked favorites, seasonal wines)

I've traditionally organized my December newsletter themes to focus on seasonal concepts like "Entertaining with Wine" and "The Gift of Wine" and don't forget sparkling wines to celebrate the season. I'll do my best to include a little bit of all three of those traditional holiday season themes. Wines for entertaining, wines for gifting, and wines for celebrating, and seasonal traditions...

I've got well over a dozen wines to highlight today. Plenty of NEW ARRIVALS, some re-stocked favorites too. There are Smart-buys galore, a few bargains too. And of course, there's Affordable Luxury to tempt us all with as well. And **just like digging into the presents under the tree, you never know which one to open first!** So in no particular order...

"Here by Chance" 2023 Paso Robles Cabernet Sauvignon @ \$19.99 per bottle

case price \$239.88 mix/match is okay

This is our second vintage of this relatively new project, based on a vineyard source in Paso Robles and made by a Sonoma-based winery that makes some very popular wines. This is a textbook, fruit-smooth Paso Robles style of Cabernet, **easy to drink and easy to share - but has complexity and Cabernet character** so it's easy for Cab-lovers to love! This new vintage comes **nicely recommended, at \$25 retail, by Wine Enthusiast magazine** who particularly likes the "mahogany, incense and berry aromas" to be found and also by James Suckling too, who notes the "upfront mixed cherries and currants are dusted with cocoa powder and a slightly char-edged, toasted vanilla and singed herb character."

KIONA 2020 "Estate Cuvee" Red @ \$16.67 per bottle

case price \$200 mix/match is okay

Red Mountain vineyard quality, all-estate grown. This red blend is a "meritage" or "claret" style of red blend from one of the best wineries and vineyard sources in Washington's Columbia Valley. Drinking in a serious - yet very approachable - style. It is perhaps best described by James Suckling in his recommendation when he said there is "a high level of varietal diversity in this **well-matured, well-mannered and full-bodied blend.**"

FOGSCAPE 2023 Arroyo Seco Chardonnay @ \$19.99 per bottle

case price \$225 mix/match is okay

Rated 90 points (at \$25 retail) by Wine Enthusiast magazine! This is a dry, but richly oaked, classic California Chardonnay. The winery, Arroyo Seco Vineyards, in the central coast also makes the "Montoya" Monterey Chard we loved this summer, this one is a full level up but less than five bucks more.

Peirano Estate 2022 artist series "Illusion" red blend @ \$13.33 per bottle

case price \$159.99 (same as my Fall Sale price, restocked favorite)

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!

Zardetto doc PROSECCO @ \$14.99 per bottle

case price: \$162 (\$13.50 ea)

a **perennial 90-pointer** by magazines like Wine Enthusiast, Vinous Media, and James Suckling. A crisp and refreshing dry Prosecco in a fun bottle by a well-known producer!

Domaine Rolet Blanc Brut CREMANT de Jura sparkling @ \$24.99 per bottle

This is a new wine for me, imported by a small local supplier directly to our market, and is already in the running for my favorite "not Champagne" of the season. I will write more about this one in my sparkling wines newsletter in a couple weeks, but fans of French sparkling Brut for reasonable prices will want to check this out right away. Very classy, and lovely. Mostly Chardonnay in the blend, so very much a "Blanc de Blancs" style Brut (Cremant de Jura)

GILLOT 2023 PINOT NOIR @ \$19.99 per bottle

case price \$239.88 mix/match is okay

The name sounds French, but it's not a Burgundy. The Pinot Noir tastes like a good \$20 west-coast Pinot Noir, but it's not from Willamette Valley, and it's not from California. The label looks like it's for Easter, not for Christmas. So that's what it's not. What it IS is a very classy and very likeable \$19.99 per bottle smart buy Pinot Noir... from Germany!

Castle Rock 2021 Monterey Pinot Noir @ \$9.99 per bottle

case price \$107.88 (\$8.99 ea)

Rated 88 points by Wine Enthusiast, and the best Pinot Noir of the three available cuvees of Pinot Noir by this reliable bargain winery. Wine Enthusiast notes: "cherry and toasted wood aromas show on the nose of this bottling. **The palate is familiar and reliable with wood, fruit and spice flavors aligning.**" Perfect for parties!!

INDABA 2024 Chenin Blanc @ \$7.99 per bottle

\$95.88 per case, mix/match is okay

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." Chenin Blanc is definitely having its moment, and this one is the best bargain by far. From South Africa. Perfect for parties!!

"Bruce Jack" 2021 Pinotage 'reserve collection' @ \$14.99 per bottle

case price: \$179.88

Combine this **Aussie Shiraz styled red** with the Indaba Chenin Blanc and you can have an off the beaten path (South Africa) wine theme to your party. There is no earthy or pipe tobacco in this Pinotage (well, maybe just a tiny bit) but there is tons of blueberry fruit and depth. Aussie Shiraz fans would love this wine, and since those are not around as much anymore - check this out instead! Drinks like \$20 wine, and looks like \$20 wine. From Bredeklouf, near Paarl.

(seasonal favorite, limited stock) **Gerstacker Gluhwein (Nurnberg, Christkindlsmark) @ \$10.97 per liter** (serve warmed)

(seasonal favorite, limited stock) **Georges Dubeouf 2025 Beajolais Nouveau @ \$17.99 per bottle**

My last couple of cases of this year's very successful version of the famous Beaujolais Nouveau. As Wine Spectator magazine said: "'Georges Duboeuf's workhorse, the widely available Beaujolais Nouveau bottling, was the highlight of its category, showing violet and blackcurrant jelly aromas and flavors with the vibrant, lifted character that Nouveau fans are looking for."

(seasonal favorite, very limited stock) **Lenotti ~~2017~~ AMARONE della Valpolicella Classico @ \$55.99 per bottle**

Every Christmas I look for a ready-to-drink Amarone for fans who love this with their holiday meals. This year, the one **I found has really charmed me**. I wish there was more available, but that's par for the course with Amarone. It doesn't help that I'm loving the ~~2017~~ vintage we have but the importer has **moved onto 2018**, and one of the sixpack cases broke in the delivery van too. So I apologize in advance for how limited stock this is. But if you want some bottles of Amarone this season, I highly recommend you get some of this one!! 6pk case price can be mixed/matched for \$53.33 each (\$320 per 6pk)

Last but not least, speaking of limited stock of great wines... I am sorry to report that the Turely Zinfandels in last week's newsletter are all sold out. So is the L.E. "Ancellotta" red by Piattelli. Sorry those were so fleeting... but the GOOD NEWS is that I do still have stock of the 2 wines from Wine Spectator magazine latest "Top 100" edition:

(#25 on W.S. Top 100 of 2025) **CARPINETO 2020 CHIANTI CLASSICO Riserva @ \$29.99 per bottle**

Case Price (mix-and-match is ok): \$324 per case = \$27 per bottle

3 cases remain available in-stock, only 5000 cases imported. Inquire with DAVE for full reviews and info, as featured in the newsletter of Dec 5th.

(#74 on W.S. Top 100 of 2025) **"The NED" 2024 Marlborough, New Zealand PINOT GRIS @ \$17.99** (last bottles)

only 1500 cases imported. Inquire with DAVE for full reviews and info, as featured in the newsletter of Dec 5th.

That's all for today's edition. I hope this email finds you in time to perhaps read about these delightful wines over a warm cup of coffee or tea, while you wait for the thermometer to climb above zero. BrightWines will be OPEN REGULAR hours this Saturday, and of course email orders are accepted if you prefer to pickup next week. But I encourage you to think like Dean Martin (and I'm paraphrasing)

*How I hate going out in the storm
But if you pick a wine that's "Bright"
All the way home you'll be warm!*

The Right Wines are BrightWines!

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