

Herb's Half Case Wine Club – January 2020

www.DecaturPackageStore.com 1220 Clairmont Rd. Decatur

Happy New Year! While I enjoy the hustle and bustle of the holidays, I'm ready for a slowdown and the perfect way to relax and ease into 2020 is the January Wine Club! It's a solid mix of everyday wines with a choice or two suitable for nicer meals or entertaining. Keeping it easy and pleasurable for you in 2020! Enjoy!

Cheers,

Herb

P.S. - My non-Wine Club selection for the month is the **2016 Chateau Sauman Cotes de Borg**. This Cabernet/Merlot blend is a great choice for immediate drinking or short-term cellaring. Aromas of berry fruit and light earth notes combine with dark berry fruits, toast and humus on the palate. This is a well-balanced Bordeaux with concentration and tons of flavor. It's the perfect choice for this season.

- Please feel free to visit us at 1220 Clairmont Road in Decatur (in between North Decatur Rd. and Scott Blvd., 2 doors down from the YMCA).
- If you would like to be added to or, heaven forbid, removed from my e-mail list or to learn more about Herb's Half Case Wine Club please e-mail me at DECATURWINE@AOL.COM or call me at 404-633-5250.
- Wine appreciation is about getting people excited about wine, so feel free to forward this newsletter as you wish.
- Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. If you are unhappy with a wine return at least 75% of the unused portion and I will be more than happy to replace the wine.
- As always, any defective bottles (i.e. corked, oxidized, etc.) will be replaced with bottles of the same type.

If you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

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2018 Mesa Primo Bianco Vermentino di Sardegna DOC (Sardinia, Italy)

Tasting Notes: Vermentino is the most widely planted white on the island of Sardinia (FYI – Cannonau, a relative of Grenache, is the most planted red). This example is a perfect blend of citrus and tropical fruit flavors. It has a waxy citrus aroma with a nice hint of minerals. It's smooth on the palate with a nice mix of tropical and soft citrus fruits. This white is crisp and refreshing with a superb fruit component. The finish shows expressive tangerine and orchard fruits with nice length. This is a great alternative white, especially if you like Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio.

Food Pairing: This is a great choice for any social gathering, either as a starter wine or with light appetizers. If you'd like to pair it with a main dish, try it with lighter poultry dishes.

2018 MAN Padstal Chardonnay (Coastal Region, South Africa)

Tasting Notes: This is my ideal Chardonnay because it sees just a touch of oak (20% for a mere 3 months), which tempers the fresh fruit and adds a bit of body to the wine. I found soft apple fruit aromas with nice brightness on the palate with lemon curd and apple flavors. I like the counterbalance of sweet and crisp flavors, which complement each other. The finish is pleasantly bright with crisp apple fruit and medium length. This is a great example of the varietal and a great example of the solid everyday wines coming from South Africa.

Food Pairing: The MAN has a bit more body than the Mesa, so you can pair it with slightly heavier foods like pork dishes or lighter stews.

2016 Albacea Monastrell (Jumilla, Spain)

Tasting Notes: I'm finding better and better Monastrell from Spain. They typically have a lot of flavor and much better balance than their American counterparts. The Albacea has a bright, slightly tart, brambly black raspberry aroma. It has nice concentration of flavor on the palate without tasting too dense. I found slightly bright, brambly dark berry flavors on the palate that ranged from blue to black fruits. The finish is medium dry with lightly spiced, slightly concentrated, dark berry fruit and nice length. Solid everyday red!

Food Pairing: This is a great everyday red that can hold up to heavier winter foods. Try it with chili, stew, pizza, burgers, etc. This is a versatile food wine.

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2018 Fly By Zinfandel (Lake County, Calif.)

Tasting Notes: This is a great alternative to the Zinfandel I used in the December Club and a great example of the different flavor profiles of this varietal. The Fly By starts with a fresh, spicy, blue fruit aroma. I get a ton of blueberry in the nose. This red is lithe and flavorful on the palate with juicy, medium bright, blue fruits and a nice touch of vanilla. This Zinfandel is jammy, but balanced, because it has nice acidity and isn't overripe. The finish is juicy with brambly, dark berry fruits, hints of violets, medium to low tannins and medium length.

Food Pairing: This is another everyday red for everyday meals. This Zinfandel is a bit more fruit forward than the Monastrell, so pair with fuller-flavored everyday meals.

2011 Vinos Sin Ley GRA² Graciano (Rioja, Spain)

Tasting Notes: Pre-aged, Graciano, which is typically a blending grape, as a single varietal? Yes, please! This 9-year-old Graciano is a winner! Aroma-wise, there's A LOT going on here - earthy, baked, dark berry fruits with a pleasant touch of rose petal. It's medium-bright on the palate with light earth/humus notes, dense baked berry fruit, light toast and a hint of vanilla. The finish has dark berry fruits, lighter tannins and nice length. This is one of the most balanced Gracianos I've tried. Well done!

Food Pairing: This is a fuller-bodied red, so pair with fuller-bodied foods, such as beef, game and heavier stews.

2015 Steele Cabernet Franc (Lake County, Calif.)

Tasting Notes: This is a great cold weather Cabernet. Franc, that is! I like Cabernet Franc as an alternative to Cabernet Sauvignon, especially the more rustic versions like this Steele. This example is more on the Bordeaux side of the spectrum with dark berry fruit and bell pepper notes in the aroma. It's nicely rich on the palate with roasted plums and hints of mineral and light bell pepper. The finish has dark berry fruits medium-dry tannins and good length.

Food Pairing: This is a full-bodied offering with some complexity. I would pair it with heavier meats, especially anything from the grill.

