

Herb's Half Case Wine Club – February 2020
www.DecaturPackageStore.com 1220 Clairmont Rd. Decatur

Happy Winter or as close as we'll come to it. While it's still chilly outside I've chosen some heartier wines for you to enjoy. And before you light your last fire of the season, break open that bottle of port or sherry. 'Tis the season to enjoy them. Enjoy!

Cheers,

Herb

P.S. - My non-Wine Club selection for the month is the [2017 Airfield Dauntless](#). This Merlot-based blend (w/ Cab Franc & Cab Sauv) is a testament to the reds coming from Washington. Flavors of mixed berry fruit, vanilla and a hint of earth/toast make this a stellar red. Add a rich and lengthy finish and it really punches above its weight class. This is a great wine that really overdelivers!

- 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 Picollo Ernesto Gavi (Gavi, Italy)

Tasting Notes: This is another superb example of the variety and quality of Italian whites. This Gavi is from the Piedmont region in northwest Italy and uses the Cortese grape. I like the diverse flavors I found. Aromas of fresh apples lead to soft orchard fruits on the palate with just a touch of spritz, which dissipates with aeration. This white is an excellent combination of concentration and brightness. There's a ton of flavor here with near perfect acidity for balance. The finish shows stone fruit flavors – peaches and nectarines – with nice length. Another example of the vast diversity of Italian white wines!

Food Pairing: This is a great starter wine because it has so much flavor. Otherwise, I'd pair it with appetizers or lighter-bodied dishes.

2016 Ruffino Il Ducale Pinot Grigio (Friuli, Italy)

Tasting Notes: The Il Ducale bottling from Ruffino is 100% Pinot Grigio from the most prestigious vineyards in the Friuli region in northeast Italy. I really like the palate weight of this Pinot Grigio because it's a lot richer than most of its peers. This example has a slightly tropical fruit aroma. On the palate, I found bright and juicy flavors with ripe lemon curd and a slightly round texture. The finish has crisp apple and lemon fruits with a surprisingly lengthy finish. Sometimes, Pinot Grigio can be dismissed as thin lemon water, but not the Il Ducale, which has nice body and flavor.

Food Pairing: This white can be served with non-red sauced, pasta dishes with chicken or pork sausage as a protein. It also will pair nicely with poultry dishes.

2015 Particular Cariñena (Cariñena, Spain)

Tasting Notes: Cariñena or Carignan, as it's commonly known, is a workhorse grape for nearly every country on the planet. It produces a very flavorful everyday red. This example from Spain sees three months in oak, which gives it smoothness. It has a concentrated aroma with roasted berry fruits. There is nice complexity on the palate with baked raspberry fruit, notes of earth/underbrush and good acidity. The mid-palate sees more mixed, red berry fruits and the finish has lightly tart, red berry fruit, medium tannins and decent length. A great example of this worldwide varietal!

Food Pairing: This is a solid everyday red if there ever was one. Pair with seasonal, everyday meals. You can't really go wrong here.

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2018 Paso Grande Cabernet Sauvignon (Central Valley, Chile)

Tasting Notes: I'll admit that Chilean wine can be polarizing – I love it! I hate it! Chilean vintners are breaking this stereotype by softening the Chilean flavors consumers can find off-putting. This Paso Grande is Exhibit A in that movement. It has just enough Chilean flavor, so you know it's not from California, but also enough fruit, which you'll enjoy. It doesn't overdo it with the earthy/asphalt notes. I found solid fruit in this red – ripe cherry/berry flavors – with subtle hints of mineral/asphalt. I like that it's lithe on the palate with an enjoyable suppleness. The finish has bright cherry fruits, small mineral notes, medium grip and nice length. It's a great example of the new, more user-friendly Chilean Cabernet!

Food Pairing: This red is heavy enough to pair with just about any meat dish. Given the earthy, smoky notes in the wine, I'd try this Cabernet with grilled dishes, as well.

2016 Ruffino Il Ducale Toscana Red (Tuscany, Italy)

Tasting Notes: The Il Ducale super-Tuscan (60% Sangiovese, 20% Syrah & 20% Merlot) has been made by Ruffino since 2005. It's a mix of estate and purchased fruit and sees 12 months of oak aging. I like the unique stamp that Sangiovese puts on the red blend category – structure and a bit of complexity. It has a dried cherry and lightly earthy aroma. On the palate, it begins with medium-concentrated, bright cherry fruit with a hint of cedar and rose petal. As this wine aerates the fruit becomes rounder and richer and the acidity lessens. It's a nice transformation. The finish has dried berry fruits, small earth, and medium to fuller tannins.

Food Pairing: This is a food-friendly red that can pair with anything from pasta dishes, hearty stews and medium to fuller-bodied meat dishes. This is a diverse food wine.

2018 Lujuria Malbec (Mendoza, Argentina)

Tasting Notes: This unoaked beauty from Argentina is a winner! It has a superb aroma with fresh boysenberry and a light touch of spice. I was surprised by its weight, given its lack of oak. On the palate, I found darker boysenberry flavors mixed with fresh berry fruits. This red has good acid balance, as well, and a nice touch of spice for complexity. The finish isn't one dimensional either with dark berry fruit, spice, good concentration and medium tannins. This is why Argentine Malbec is such a successful everyday red - #overdelivers

Food Pairing: Malbec was made to serve with Argentina's national dish – grilled beef. I see no reason to break with hundreds of years of tradition!

