

March is a funny month. We could have snow as easily as a heat wave. I've hedged my bets with some warm-ish weather whites and chilly weather reds. The Wine Club has you covered. Enjoy!

Cheers,

Herb

P.S. - My non-Wine Club selections for the month are not wine, but beer - **Guinness Over the Moon Milk Stout** and **Arches Brewing Lloyd's Light**. One heavy and one light! Guinness Milk Stout uses lactose sugar for a sweeter style than their flagship offering. The Lloyd's Light is a low ABV (3.8%), light lager with flavor and substance. The two choices will serve you well on the cold and warmer days this month.

### **2019 La Playa Viognier/Chardonnay (Colchagua Valley, Chile)**

**Tasting Notes:** Why didn't I think of that? Take a semi-polarizing grape, Viognier, and make it more appealing by adding a little Chardonnay. Well done, La Playa! This Viognier blend (85/15) has a big aroma of fruit cocktail and honeysuckle, typical traits of the varietal. On the palate, though, the La Playa is very flavorful, but not overdone, thanks to the addition of Chardonnay, which smooths and softens the expressive fresh fruit cocktail and stone fruit flavors. It also helps that this white has very good acidity. The finish is full-flavored with mixed tropical fruits and nice length. Excellent example of the benefits of blending.

**Food Pairing:** This wine has enough flavor to serve by itself. Otherwise, pair it with lighter dishes like poultry or salads.

### **2017 Cono Sur Sauv. Blanc – Organically Grown Grapes (Valle de San Antonio, Chile)**

**Tasting Notes:** This is a different style of Chilean Sauvignon Blanc, that shows more of the tropical characteristics of the grape. It starts with an aroma of tropical fruits with a touch of mineral. It's pleasantly bright on the palate with passionfruit and litchi flavors with light herbaceous and mineral notes. The acidity is good throughout – not too much and not too little – and the finish has refreshing lime and herbaceous flavors.

**Food Pairing:** Like the Viognier blend, this white has enough flavor to serve by itself or as the cocktail wine when your guests arrive. Otherwise, pair with lighter-bodied dishes.

### **2017 DeLoach Vineyards Block 1950 Pinot Noir (Sonoma Coast, California)**

**Tasting Notes:** I really like Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir. It's the perfect balance of ripeness and acidity. I was lucky to find this one for the Wine Club. The DeLoach has a lightly dusty and earthy aroma with high toned red fruits. It's smooth on the palate with medium-dark red fruits, baking spices and good acidity. This wine needs to aerate a bit before serving (open at least 30-45 minutes prior). When I revisited it, I found the fruit has greatly expanded and all components seemed better integrated. The finish has a slight creaminess with crisp red fruits, low tannins and medium length.

**Food Pairing:** I love Pinot Noir with salmon, but feel free to pair with lighter (poultry) to medium-bodied (pork) main dishes, as well.

### **2017 High Note Red Blend Uco Valley (Mendoza, Argentina)**

**Tasting Notes:** I'm a big fan of imported red blends. They typically have better structure than their West Coast counterparts. The High Note, from the Uco Valley, a more prestigious region within Mendoza, is a 50/20/20/10 blend of Malbec, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Bonarda. It has a nice roundness on the palate with medium-dark berry fruit, hints of vanilla and just the right amount of acidity. I like this style – pleasantly round and a bit soft up-front, then balancing acidity on the mid-palate. The finish is juicy and fresh with solid dark berry fruits, medium tannins and nice length. Well done!

**Food Pairing:** This has enough body and flavor to pair with medium-bodied dishes as well as beef themed, heavier-dishes.

### **2017 Oxford Landing Shiraz (South Australia)**

**Tasting Notes:** I've recently revisited the Oxford Landing wines and I must say they are superb everyday wines. Their Shiraz is a great example of the varietal. It has a juicy dark berry/blue-ish fruit aroma with a hint of spice. This red has nice richness on the palate with soft black raspberry fruit, a hint of eucalyptus and nice acidity. This everyday red has body, structure and finesse, which you don't often find in wines at this price. The finish has juicy cassis and blue fruits with medium tannins and length. Solid wine!

**Food Pairing:** This is a wine with flavor and structure, which makes it a versatile food wine. You can't go wrong here with any medium to full-bodied dish.

### **Locations F6 Red (France)**

**Tasting Notes:** This is an interesting wine. It's a multi-appellation blend of Grenache, Syrah and assorted Bordeaux varietals from the Rhone, Roussillon and Bordeaux regions that's then barrel aged for 10 months. Very unique in the wine world! The raspberry flavors from the Grenache and Syrah really shine in the aroma. I would aerate this before serving, open about an hour prior, to let the flavors show their best. I found rich, liqueur-like red raspberry fruit on the palate with just enough acidity for balance. This red is lush, but not overdone. The finish has pretty red fruits, medium tannins and nice length.

**Food Pairing:** This is a full-bodied wine to pair with the fuller-bodied foods of the season – hearty stews, chili and heavier dishes.

