

**WEIMAX BEST BUYS**

*A trend we've noticed at trade tasting presentations is that the wine in the glass is seemingly of secondary importance, as buyers are often paying more attention to the story about a wine than the contents of the bottle. For us the wine is of primary importance. We want to drink a good wine. Period.*

*And wine tastes better when it's honestly priced.*

*Gerald Ellen John Abinav*

**PEDRONCELLI "Frank Johnson Vnyd" CHARDONNAY SALE \$13.99**

American oak cooperage contributes a mildly toasty, woody note to this single-vineyard Chardonnay from this venerable Sonoma winery. A Best Buy!

**TAMELLINI SOAVE \$14.99 ❖**

This has far more charm than similarly-priced Pinot Grigio. It's made entirely of the Garganega grape vinified without oak. Peachy and dry. Very fine.

**GRUET "American" BRUT SPARKLING WINE SALE \$13.99**

The Gruet family hails from France's Champagne region and they make some delightful bottle-fermented sparklers in New Mexico. This is a mildly toasty bubbly and well-priced.

**CHÂTEAU LA CROIX CALENDREAU Bordeaux SALE \$12.99**

Benoit Richard's 3 hectare estate near St. Émilion and Pomerol produces a nicely showy little Merlot-based Bordeaux that's immediately drinkable...like tonight!

**BIRICHINO Monterey MALVASIA BIANCA \$14.99❖**

The Malvasia grape produces a beautifully aromatic white and this one from the Birichino boys is dry, yet tastes like a fruit basket with notes of jasmine and ripe pears. Great with Asian cuisine.

**FILIPPO GALLINO Langhe NEBBIOLO \$12.99**

This old feller is highly respected by his neighbors and Gallino and his son make terrific wines. At \$12.99 a bottle, it's a gift. Moderately tannic & typical of Nebbiolo. Very fine.

**SOBON ESTATE "Old Vines" ZINFANDEL SALE \$10.99**

Lots of juicy, berryish Zinfandel fruit to the Sobon family's "Old Vines" bottling. Their Rocky Top Zin (\$13.99 ❖) is a winner, too, showing a bit of oak and being fuller-bodied.

**ANTICO FUOCO Italian Red SALE \$10.99**

The grape of Valpolicella, Corvina, is blended with Merlot to create a soft, supple, moderately robust red which pairs well with pastas, pizza, sausages, etc.

**SOBON ESTATE Amador County "RED" SALE 11.99**

Here's a charming blend featuring Malbec with Tannat, Petite Sirah, Syrah, Zin & Barbera. It's medium-bodied and mildly woody...gentle as a Pinot Noir.

**CONQUILLA BRUT ROSÉ CAVA SALE \$12.99**

This comes to us from a Spanish sparkling wine specialist located near Barcelona. It displays notes of red cherries and raspberries, being dry and crisp. Remarkable value.

**CLOS DES LUMIÈRES Rhône White \$11.99 ❖**

Many perfectly serviceable white Rhône wines are based on Grenache Blanc. This one is a bit more "noble," thanks to 40% Viognier. No oak. Dry, mildly peachy and very flavorful.

**FIRE ROAD Marlborough SAUVIGNON BLANC 10.99 ❖**

If you're a fan of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, don't miss this magnificently grapefruity dry white. It's Ellen's "house white."

**MARIANA PORTUGUESE RED \$12.99 ❖**

From the Alentejo region, this is a terrific blend featuring Touriga Nacional. Six months in French oak smooths out the rough edges. Medium+ body. (Mariana was a 17<sup>th</sup> century nun, btw.)

**CIÙ CIÙ 2018 PECORINO \$15.99 ❖**

Italy's Marche region is home to the Pecorino grape...notes of ripe melon and peach...it's dry and has a suggestion of wood lurking behind the magnificent fruit.

**TUFO ROSSO TUSCAN RED BLEND SALE \$12.99**

Beautifully cherryish dry red based on Sangiovese with a modest percentage of Teroldego (!).

**COLLEFRISIO MONTEPULCIANO D'ABRUZZO SALE \$10.99**

Entirely Montepulciano vinified in stainless steel...great red for lasagna or pizza.

**COLLI della MURGIA "SELVATO" Primitivo/Aglianico Blend \$18.99 ❖**

From Italy's Puglia region, this deep, dark red has spice notes with hints of tobacco.

**PEDRONCELLI SONOMA "FRIENDS RED" & "FRIENDS WHITE" SALE \$9.99**

Sonoma wine for ten bucks? The Red is Merlot, Zin & Syrah while the white is Sauvignon Blanc with a splash of dry Gewurztraminer.

**TURONIA ALBARIÑO \$19.99 ❖**

Our favorite Spanish Albariño being dry, light yet full-flavored.

**WINETASTER'S****NOTEBOOK**

Check out the Weimax Facebook page, Twitter or Instagram for periodic tips about our latest discoveries.

**BAIA DEL SOLE VERMENTINO**

**\$21.99 ❖**

The Federici brothers make a stellar Vermentino in Liguria, right at the sea and close to the town of La Spezia. We like the stony notes of this snappy dry white which also has green apple fruit and a touch of spice.

**MONT-REDON CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-**

**PAPE \$47.99 ❖**

Our late colleague Bob Gorman always enjoyed drinking this wine on his annual Parisian jaunt. You don't have to go that far, though. This was our first place wine in a recent blind-tasting of Châteauneufs... Grenache-based, of course, but aged in small oak and in larger vats...very fine.

**SADDLEBACK Napa**

**ZINFANDEL SALE \$39.99**

Winemaker Nils Venge, an old-timer, in Napa, has this remarkably stylish Zinfandel from a northern Napa Valley site. Beautifully blackberryish with notes of pepper spice and a touch of oak. Delicious!!!

**DELILLE "CHALEUR BLANC"**

**\$34.99 ❖**

We've been fans of Château Smith Haut Lafitte's white wine, but now that it's north of \$100 a bottle, we've looked elsewhere. And Delille in Washington has often had a great alternative. The 2018 features 71% Sauvignon Blanc with Sémillon...it sees a fair bit of new oak, so the wood may be a bit strong for some.

We love it, though.

**GRAHAM'S 2004 VINTAGE PORTO**

**SALE \$64.99**

From the Quinta dos Malvedos vineyard, here's a stellar Port which is just hitting its stride, but still retains its youthful blackberry and blackcurrant fruit. Pair it with chocolate desserts or Stilton cheese. Best decanted.

**SOALHEIRO ALVARINHO**

**\$24.99 ❖**

Our favorite Vinho Verde wines come from the Soalheiro winery. We thrilled the judges at the San Francisco International Wine Competition with a double magnum of this. The 2018 is available in regular bottles and it's outstanding. Their fancier Primeiras Vinhas (old vines) bottling, sale-tagged at \$29.99, is exceptional.

