

Summer Recipes for Sauvignon Blanc • Paso Robles 2.0

# Wine & Spirits

**100**  
**TOP VALUES**  
**OF THE YEAR**  
**ALL \$15**  
**OR LESS**

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**When it comes to quality wines at bargain prices, here are the 55 brands that deliver.** If you're looking for a reliable Wednesday night bottle, these are names to remember in the chaotic, overstuffed world of wines priced \$18 or less. Out of the 3,000-some bottles we tasted blind over the past 12 months, these brands caught our attention, not just for one stellar value, but several.

Some will be familiar names, like Jacob's Creek and Robert Mondavi Private Selection, perennially great go-tos for value-priced bottles; others are less well known but worth seeking out, like Fox Run, for stellar riesling out of New York State, or Skylark, a collaboration between two San Francisco sommeliers with a taste for Rhône varieties. From backyard barbecues to summer fêtes, our *Value Brands of the Year* have your needs covered—affordably.

Reported by Patrick J. Comiskey, Carson Demmond, Joshua Greene, Christopher Hallowell, Peter Liem, Patricio Tapia and Tara Q. Thomas.



## FREI BROTHERS

**WHAT:** A range of affordable wines from across Sonoma County.

**STANDOUT:** The rich and spicy 2008 Dry Creek Valley Zinfandel (\$18), with its sunny warmth.

**WHERE:** Based in Healdsburg, with a focus on fruit from the Alexander, Dry Creek and Russian River valleys.

**WHEN:** The 2009 Russian River Valley Reserve Sauvignon Blanc (\$17), with its green olive and peach skin notes, would be ideal for cold roast chicken at a late-spring picnic.

*Frei Brothers, Healdsburg, CA*

## THE HOGUE CELLARS

**WHAT:** Well-priced appellation wines and robust, structured Genesis reserves from Constellation Brands' principle Washington property.

**STANDOUTS:** The 2007 Genesis Meritage (\$16), from long-established Columbia Valley growers, and a juicy, fresh 2009 Late Harvest Riesling (\$10) redolent of fresh pears.

**WHERE:** Based in Prosser, Washington, with fruit sourced from across the Columbia Valley.

**WHEN:** Open the Genesis Meritage with a steak dinner; and pour the Late Harvest Riesling with a pear tartlet.

*The Hogue Cellars, Prosser, WA*

## KENWOOD

**WHAT:** Reliable, value-driven wines from a Sonoma County cabernet and zinfandel specialist.

**STANDOUT:** The earthy, smoky and dense 2007 Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon (\$18).

**WHERE:** Based in Kenwood, just outside of Santa Rosa, the winery sources fruit from across Sonoma County.

**WHEN:** Pour the spicy 2009 Russian River Valley Gewurztraminer (\$11) with weisswurst and sauerkraut. Serve the Cabernet with braised beef.

*Kenwood Vineyards, Kenwood, CA*

## LAMOREAUX LANDING

**WHAT:** Scintillating riesling and impressive reds from a family-owned Finger Lakes estate.

**STANDOUTS:** The nervy, flinty 2009 Dry Riesling (\$13) and the '09 Semi-Dry Riesling (\$13), for its subtle tropical notes.

**WHERE:** On the eastern shores of Seneca Lake in New York State.

**WHEN:** These structured rieslings can pair with an elaborate Alsace feast.

*Lamoreaux Landing Wine Cellars, Lodi, NY*

## MIRASSOU

**WHAT:** A range of affordable wines from California's leading grape varieties.

**STANDOUT:** The 2009 California Pinot Grigio (\$12), for its tart pear flavors mingled with sweeter notes of apricot, litchi and passionfruit.

**WHERE:** Modesto, California.

**WHEN:** Serve the Pinot Grigio with a Cobb salad, and the tart, ripe, raspberry-scented 2008 California Pinot Noir (\$12) with roast turkey.

*Mirassou, Modesto, CA*

## O'REILLY'S

**WHAT:** Affordable bottlings of Pacific Northwest fruit, from David O'Reilly's Owen Roe Winery.

**STANDOUTS:** A succulent 2008 Oregon Pinot Gris (\$12) and an elegant 2007 Yakima Valley Riesling (\$9): Both are forward and inviting while remaining balanced and on point.

**WHERE:** Sourced from esteemed vineyards in the Columbia and Willamette valleys, including Outlook, an estate vineyard, and DuBrul, both in the Yakima Valley.

**WHEN:** The riesling and the gris make fine aperitifs or pairings with striped bass.

*Owen Roe Winery, St. Paul, OR*