

Tasting Notes
August 2018 Pick-up
South American Picks



It's time for the August 2018 Smart Wine Club pickup! You'll enjoy 6 bottles featuring a fun assortment of varietals grown in Argentina and Chile. I know it's still summer and hot as heck, but we'll be moving into fall soon enough and it's always nice to have some rich, drinkable reds on hand as the weather cools down.

Don't forget to open your Smart Wine Club wines with your local-area friends and tell them about this great value-oriented club. We are happy to welcome new members anytime!

As always, if you find something in this selection that you especially love, we can almost always order more for you – just let us know.

- **NV Cruzat Brut Rosé, Luján de Cuyo, Mendoza, Arg** – I always enjoy finding good-value sparkling wines made in the classic Champagne method, and this one is no exception. Also, you may have noticed I have a strong preference for pink bubbles, and I hope you enjoy them just as much as I do – so lovely and festive! This rosé is a pale salmon pink with fresh, red fruit aromas. It is well-balanced with great acidity. It is made from 80% Pinot Noir and 20% Chardonnay grapes, so a classic champagne blend here as well. Reg retail: \$16 Smart price: \$14

Pairing: Open it for brunch and serve omelets with brie and smoked salmon. Your guests won't know what hit them.

- **2016 Viu Manent, Sauvignon Blanc "Secreto", Casablanca Valley, Chile** – This one is a lovely crisp white, perfect for the final days of summer. It's fun to talk about terroir here – the grapes were grown on hillsides above the Pacific Ocean in the Casablanca Valley region of Chile, which provides a surprising salinity to the wine. The vines grow in granite soils encrusted with quartz, giving a mineral character. Aromas of citrus and tomato leaf lend a pleasant freshness. Reg retail: \$10 Smart price: \$9

Pairing: Chill this down and enjoy with gazpacho or ceviche on one of the final hot nights of summer when you don't feel like turning on the stove.

- **2017 Zolo, Signature Red Blend, Mendoza, Arg** – This is a fun, easy-to-drink blend of four of the most popular red grapes planted in the Mendoza Valley region – 30% Bonarda, 30% Merlot, 25% Cabernet Sauvignon and 15% Malbec. Both Zolo and Tapiz (the next winery on the list) are well-regarded for making high-quality, great value wines in the region. One of their supervising winemakers, Jean Claude Berrouet, was the former winemaker for over 40 years at Château Pétrus, possibly the most famous wine estate of Bordeaux. Reg retail: \$11 Smart price: \$10

Pairing: This wine is similar in style to a young red Bordeaux, so try it with the cheeses that pair so well with that type of wine – hard, nutty, aged cheeses like cheddar, gouda, manchego or gruyère will be lovely.

- **2014 Tapiz, Malbec "Alta Collection", Uco Valley, Mendoza, Arg** – This Malbec comes from the *Alta* (high) Collection by Tapiz, which celebrates grapes grown in their high-altitude vineyards. Intensely red-violet in color, with aromas of blackberry, pepper, vanilla and toasted nuts. Full-bodied with a smooth finish. This wine is drinking very well right now. Reg retail: \$19 Smart price: \$17

Pairing: Malbec plays well with meat and herbs. Try it with a flank steak topped with a classic chimichurri sauce.

- **2010 Familia Durigutti, Bonarda Reserva, Luján de Cuyo, Mendoza, Arg** – I'm happy to be able to include this delightful Bonarda, one of the new "trendy" reds from the region. This one is a little unusual in that it's been aged in French oak and undergone malolactic fermentation, which provides a buttery mouthfeel. You'll find intense red fruit and strawberry notes on the nose and taste. Note – this wine is unfiltered and may contain some sediment. Decant it if you like. Reg retail: \$26 Smart price: \$23

Pairing: Try this with cedar-plank grilled salmon and you will not regret it!

- **2015 Axel Carménère, Colchagua Valley, Chile** – This is a bold one! You'll enjoy dark, ripe fruit aromas with a hint of nutmeg on the nose. Well-structured, with velvety tannins and tasting of delightful coffee and chocolate notes. The grape originated in France and is part of the Cabernet family. The name comes from the French word for red (*carmin*) due to the intense red color of the vine leaves at harvest time. Reg retail: \$19 Smart price: \$17

Pronunciation: This grape is pronounced car-meh-NYAIR

Pairing: Try it with spicy smoked sausages on the grill – it holds up well to bold flavors.